

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [Sunday Worship Service Video](#)

- **For Children: A New Cool School video** is available by clicking here: [CUC Cool School Video 4](#)
You are welcome to share this with others but please note that you must use the link provided. It is not available by search.
- We will be holding a **White Gift Week** November 30 – December 5 to encourage donations for our Christmas Hamper Program. Information including the grocery list and how to donate can be found by clicking here: [CUC Christmas Hampers](#)
- Our annual **Women's Advent Service** will be posted online on **Monday, November 30**. A link will also be sent out on our email network.
- For news and events please have a look at the **Life & Work** insert: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- You can **support the ministry** of Charleswood United Church by visiting: www.charleswoodunited.org/donate. Thank you to all those who have continued to contribute regularly.
- Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The **link for sharing** is: <https://youtu.be/IN4qexrgdI4>
- **Did You Know** that our YouTube channel contains a **subtitles feature**. If you would like to read the sermon or prayers while listening you can do so by activating the subtitles button on the lower bar of the YouTube screen.

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, November 22, 2020.

Happy New Year!!!

On the Christian calendar this week is the last Sunday of the liturgical year and is often referred to as Reign of Christ Sunday. Among other things it means that the first Sunday of a new year on the Christian calendar begins next week, something more familiarly known as Advent 1.

I wouldn't call Reign of Christ (sometimes called 'Christ the King') a much celebrated observance in our tradition. The texts, colours, and prayers of Reign of Christ are for the most part borrowed from our friends in the Roman Catholic Church where the day has more significance. It is probably true that we look past it because of our consciousness about the season that follows, and which in many ways has already begun in our thoughts and preparations. When my Starbucks cup is already proclaiming *tidings of coffee and joy* at the beginning of November, it is difficult to put on the brakes and say we need to bring the Christian year to a proper end.

But how about a concentrated paragraph or two for Reign of Christ Sunday? On one hand, as a church that marks the seasons of the church year, it is important to bring that practice to its annual close. By that I mean that we are a congregation who gladly takes advantage of the teaching aspects of the Christian calendar. Advent prepares us for Christmas whose twelve day celebration brings us to Epiphany.

Following Epiphany our lessons focus on the teachings of Jesus until we arrive literally at the journey to Jerusalem called Lent. After six weeks on the Lenten road we enter Jerusalem with Jesus by waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna. We are thus in Holy Week remembering the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus which inexorably leads us to Easter morning and the great day of Resurrection. Easter, you may recall, is a fifty day festival culminating on Pentecost, the dawning of the Holy Spirit, and often thought of as the birth of the church. With the high holy days behind us we enter into the longest season of the year, Ordinary Time (not the most original name, I grant you). Ordinary Time may be thought of as the season of the Spirit, of ministry, of mission, of civic observances, of care for creation. But Ordinary Time must come to an end in order for a new year to begin and it does so on Reign of Christ.

When you look at the Christian calendar as a whole you can see how important it is for us at Charleswood. Our weekly readings, our hymn selections, our children's lessons, the layout of our hymnbooks, the colours in the sanctuary, the quilts hanging above, and our beautiful stained glass windows all take their cue from the Christian (or liturgical) calendar. Reign of Christ signifies that we are ready to walk this annual path once again.

I hope that is a helpful reminder because I want to say that Reign of Christ is much more than a marker of time or a transitional Sunday. It is also how we give expression to one of the most essential components of our faith. For the central theme of Reign of Christ is HOPE. In Christ we have found One whose love has conquered the greatest plague of all time, the fear of death. With that victory we live as though it is inevitable that a day will come when all that is promised in Jesus will be fulfilled. This is the reason we pray, *Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done*. When we pray this way we are asking for a coming day when Christ reigns and all is on earth as it is in heaven.

The gospel lesson for this week is a classic Reign of Christ text. It is sometimes called The Parable of the Last Judgement and it describes how it must be at the end of time. It will be a time when the hungry are fed and the thirsty are given drink. It will be a time when the naked are clothed and the stranger is welcomed. It will be a time when the sick and imprisoned are cared for, or more precisely, are no longer sick or in prison.

We live in hope for the coming day. And one week to remind ourselves that this is how it must be warrants our attention.

So once again, Happy New Year!!!

Grace and peace,

Michael

P.S. Would you like to follow along with today's Bible reading on the video? Click here: [Matthew 25:31-45](#)