

**Matthew 25:31-46**  
**God's New Year's Resolution**



**November 22, 2020**  
**Christ the King Sunday**  
**First Presbyterian Church**

1315 Central Avenue  
Great Falls, Montana 59401  
(406) 453-1411

Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.

[www.firstpresgfmt.org](http://www.firstpresgfmt.org)

[secretary@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:secretary@firstpresgfmt.org)

 firstpresgfmt

## **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

*Christ Jesus, reestablish your reign in our hearts every day,  
so that we live as emissaries of your love.*

**Welcome** to worship on Christ the King Sunday, also known as Reign of Christ Sunday. Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17 ESV) May the Holy Spirit strengthen us for service in the kingdom. With voices full of excitement, attitudes full of enthusiasm, and spirits full of joy let us actively give our worship to God.

Last week, from Matthew 25, the Parable of the Talents opened our minds to the understanding that we have been entrusted with the generous and valuable Gospel message of forgiveness and reconciliation...of peace and justice...of welcome and acceptance...until Jesus returns. How did you use your gift last week?

Be sure to check-in through **Social Media** or text message to let your family members, friends and followers know you are here to praise God. And like us on Facebook.

Please use the time before worship begins to prepare yourself for your **offering of worship** to God. Feel free to listen to music; read and meditate on the Scripture reading for today; or silently meditate on God’s grace, emptying your mind of all distractions.

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\* Please stand as able

*We are the Body of Christ  
Joyfully Worshiping God  
Compassionately Caring for One Another  
Humbly Serving God  
Continually Growing Together in God’s Word  
And Actively Sharing the Good News of Christ  
**May our worship be pleasing to God!***

## GATHERING BEFORE GOD

Gathering Music

*Oh Praise Him  
Draw Me Close  
You are My King*

Welcome

\*Call to Worship (Leader **People**)

“I will search for my sheep,” says the Lord.

**Like lost lambs or scattered sheep,  
the Lord seeks us and calls us home.**

“I will gather them from far and near,” says the Lord.

**A cherished fold, a beloved flock,  
the Lord sustains us and gives us rest.**

“I will be their shepherd,” says the Lord.

**We listen for the voice of the God who seeks us,  
and follow with devotion and gratitude,  
praise and worship!**

Who is the king that we worship?

**We worship Christ,  
who makes a home among the least and the lost.**

Who is the king that we worship?

**We worship Christ,  
who is hungry, is thirsty, is in prison, is a stranger.**

In caring for the least among us  
we serve and worship Christ.

\*Song of Praise

*He is Exalted*

\*Call to Confession (Leader **People**)

With sincere and repentant hearts,  
**we name our sins against Christ and one another.**

\*Prayer of Confession (**Unison**)

**God of mercy,**

**who has compassion for the lost and the least,  
in disbelief and denial, we ask:**

**“When did we see you among us?”**

**We should have seen you in the classmate on the playground  
whom we did not invite to join our game.**

**Or in the stranger on the sidewalk  
whom we crossed the street to avoid.**

**Or in the neighbor at the nursing home,  
whom we left to carry her pain alone.**

**We should have seen you  
in the man begging for work or a warm meal,  
in the woman struggling to overcome addiction,  
in the child seeking refuge from the terrors of violence.**

**But, instead,  
we turned away.**

**Forgive us, Lord.**

**Break our hearts for what breaks yours,  
and give us compassion and courage  
to respond to the suffering of this world...**

*(Silent Personal Prayers for Forgiveness)*

\*Assurance of Forgiveness (Leader **People**)

see Psalm 100:5

However long we wander,  
however far we stray,

**God’s steadfast love endures forever.**

Sisters and brothers, be assured:

**in Christ Jesus we are forgiven,**

\*Praising God for God’s Forgiveness #634

*To God Be the Glory* (v 1, Refrain)

## HEARING THE GOOD NEWS

Message in Music

*He Reigns*

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture & Message

Matthew 25:31-46  
God's New Year's Resolution

### RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

\*Affirmation of Faith (**Unison**) A Brief Statement of Faith, Presbyterian Church (USA)

**In life and in death we belong to God.**

**Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,  
whom alone we worship and serve.**

**We trust in Jesus Christ,**

**fully human, fully God.**

**Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
preaching good news to the poor  
and release to the captives,  
teaching by word and deed  
and blessing the children,  
healing the sick  
and binding up the brokenhearted,  
eating with outcasts,  
forgiving sinners,  
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.**

**Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,**

**Jesus was crucified,  
suffering the depths of human pain  
and giving his life for the sins of the world.**

**God raised this Jesus from the dead,  
vindicating his sinless life,  
breaking the power of sin and evil,  
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

**We trust in God,**

**whom Jesus called Abba, Father.**

**In sovereign love God created the world good  
and makes everyone equally in God's image,  
male and female, of every race and people,  
to live as one community.**

**But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.**

**Ignoring God's commandments.**

**we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,  
accept lies as truth,  
exploit neighbor and nature,  
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.  
We deserve God's condemnation.**

**Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.**

**In everlasting love,**

**the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people  
to bless all families of the earth.**

**Hearing their cry,**

**God delivered the children of Israel  
from the house of bondage.**

**Loving us still,**

**God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.**

**Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,  
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,  
God is faithful still.**

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,**

**everywhere the giver and renewer of life.**

**The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,  
and binds us together with all believers  
in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

**The same Spirit**

**who inspired the prophets and apostles  
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
engages us through the Word proclaimed,  
claims us in the waters of baptism,  
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.**

**In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

**In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,  
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
and to live holy and joyful lives,  
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,  
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

**With believers in every time and place,  
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death  
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

\*Song of Response

*We Fall Down*

Offering

*Crown Him With Many Crowns*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, Which Art in Heaven,  
Pattinson*

### **SENDING FOR SERVICE**

\*Sending Song

*God You Reign*

\*Charge (Leader **People**)

**We are the Body of Christ;  
Joyfully worshiping God,  
compassionately caring for one another,  
humbly serving others,  
continually growing together in God's Word,  
and actively sharing the Good News of Christ.**

\*Litany for the Reign of Christ (Leader **People**)

Let the heavens be glad  
and let the earth rejoice!

**Christ will reign forever and ever.**

The Lord is robed in majesty  
and girded in strength.

**Christ will reign forever and ever.**

God has established the world,  
and God's realm will never be shaken.

**Christ will reign forever and ever.**

God will judge the world with righteousness  
and the peoples with equity.

**Christ will reign forever and ever.**

The kingdom of this world  
has become the kingdom of our Lord.

**Christ will reign forever and ever.**

**Amen.**

\*Sending Music

*Oh Praise Him*

*May our service be pleasing to God!*

### **WORSHIP NOTES**

**Christ the King Sunday** is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday before Christmas. Embracing the authority of Jesus which leads us to seek the “peace of Christ” in the “Kingdom of Christ”. Christ the King Sunday celebrates the reign of Christ over all creation as our risen and exulted King. Christ the King Sunday was first celebrated in 1925 on the last Sunday in October. Since 1970 it has been kept on the last Sunday before the beginning of Advent. The liturgical color for Christ the King Sunday is white. White represents the light of Christ, innocence, purity, joy, triumph, and glory.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our times of worship are now **live-streamed** on our YouTube channel; search for “First Presbyterian Church Great Falls MT” on the YouTube website. Recordings of previous live-streams will remain on our YouTube channel. Links to upcoming live-streams can be found on our website and our Facebook page.

**Tithes and Offerings** may be mailed to the church office or made online through our website.

The praise band is currently looking to welcome a few **female vocalists** to the crew! If you are a female vocalist, love working with others, and are passionate/energetic about serving and leading through music then please contact Johnny Ritchie at [praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org) or call/text at 260-224-5790.

The praise band wants to learn and lead your **favorite worship song**. Genre of the song does not matter, they can be contemporary praise, hymns, spirituals, etc. Please submit your request to Johnny Ritchie at [praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org) or call/text at 260-224-5790.

During this time of social distancing, the Mission Committee has an opportunity to touch hearts and bridge the gap of our necessary distancing. Matthew 25:40 states “...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” Our annual “Angel Tree” is now **“Operation Santa”**. We are once again partnering with Longfellow Elementary to provide gifts to a number of their students. This year, instead of shopping and donating gifts, the school has asked us for monetary donations. A group of Longfellow teachers will then do the shopping. Please prayerfully consider a generous donation for these kids. Donations may be made to the church and marked Longfellow School by December 4<sup>th</sup>. Our goal is \$2000! Thank you for your support!!

**“Illuminating Advent”** Starting Sunday, November 29 at 8:15 a.m. (and repeated each following Thursday at 10:00 a.m.) this study looks at Advent through the four themes that are often used in connection with Advent wreaths and candles in churches: hope, peace, joy, and love. These terms are rich with biblical and theological meanings for the church and also have personal meanings for the disciples of Christ Jesus. Study of the images surrounding these four themes can enrich our Advent celebrations. We will also spend a week looking at Christmas, when the Word made flesh lived among us. And a week looking at Epiphany, which celebrates the message that Christ Jesus is for the whole world. Participant books are available in the office and can be delivered or mailed as desired. Let

John or the office know if you need the Zoom link sent to you, and videos of all sessions will be posted to our YouTube page.

Presbyterian Women are collecting children or adult winter hats, mittens, glove, scarves and socks during the holidays to be given to the Rescue Mission. **Donations** may be dropped off in the lobby near the office at the church until December 20<sup>th</sup> where there will be a Christmas Tree they will be put under. Look for pictures during the scrolling announcements on Sunday morning to see the growing pile of gifts!

If you are not receiving **emails**, including the Saturday morning “Church Update”, please send your current email address to the office, [secretary@firstpresfmt.org](mailto:secretary@firstpresfmt.org).

**Souler Energy**, our weekly Sunday Worship broadcast, can be viewed every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on KFBB TV Channel 5 (cable channel 9).

### **COMING WORSHIP THEMES**

#### **Next Sunday, November 29, 2020**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16

1 Peter 1:3-9

Romans 8:18-25

Illuminating Advent: Advent Hope

#### **December 6, 2020**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Communion

Isaiah 9:1-7

John 14:25-31

Ephesians 2:11-22

Illuminating Advent: Advent Peace

#### **December 13, 2020**

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Christmas Pageant

#### **December 20, 2020**

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

Exodus 34:1-8

John 13:31-34

1 John 4:7-21

Illuminating Advent: Advent Love

## **MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK**

*All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted*

Today, Sunday, November 22	8:15 a.m.	Creeds & Confessions Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
	11:30 a.m.	Children & Youth Ministries Committee
		Decorate for Advent/Christmas
Tuesday, November 24	6:30 p.m.	Board of Deacons
Wednesday, November 25	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
Thursday, November 26		The Office will be Closed.
Friday, November 27		The Office will be Closed.
Next Sunday, November 29	8:15 a.m.	Illuminating Advent Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time

## **UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER**

*All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted*

Tuesday, December 1.....	Souler Energy Committee, 12:00 noon
Thursday, December 3 .....	Worship Committee, 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 8.....	Finance Committee, 4:00 p.m.
	Property Committee, 5:30 p.m.
Thursday, December 10.....	Spiritual Life Committee, 12:00 noon
Saturday, December 12.....	PW, 9:30 a.m.
Tuesday, December 15.....	Session, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, December 22.....	Board of Deacons, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, December 24.....	Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00 p.m.

The Officers and Staff of First Presbyterian Church welcome you  
to this time of worship and invite you to join us in ministry!

**Head of the Church**

Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior

**Session**

John Ritchie (Moderator)

Ginger Blevins	Sara Buley	Mary Fagenstrom	Scott Royce
Alissa Brown	Rees Davies	Kathy Herman	Dean Schamp
Jan Brown	Dave Dobbs	Randy Houtz (Clerk)	

**Deacons**

Stuart Brown	Shirley Davis	Chris Pfof	Robb Sparks
Bruce Buer (Mod.)	Tom Hazen	Deb Skinner	Marla Wilckens
Kitty Cornwell	Dave Herman		

**Staff**

Rev. John E Ritchie, Pastor (906-322-9490)	Liza Nosich, Accounts Payable/Payroll
Alissa Brown, CE Director	Financial Secretary
Joan Schmidt, Ministry of Music	Butch Steele, Worship Video Coordinator
Craig Anton, Facilities Manager	Alex Rosenleaf, Choir Director
Keyna Myers, Office Manager	Kari Rosenleaf, Bell Choir Director
Faith Janes, Publications Secretary	Johnny Ritchie, Music Assistant & Praise Band Director

**The Simplest Prayer** An eccentric blind man nicknamed Joybubbles reportedly loved Mr. Rogers so much he listened to 10 hours of the TV show daily until he'd heard them all. One night, when Joybubbles was in a kind of awake dream state, he said Mr. Rogers visited him and offered to teach him how to pray. Joybubbles protested that he couldn't pray because he always forgot the words. To which Mr. Rogers said not to worry; the prayer he'd teach had only three words. "What kind of prayer has only three words?" Joybubbles asked. "Thank you, God," Mr. Rogers replied.

—adapted from *The Wired Word*