



November 24 2024 Reign of Christ Sunday

❖ All **bolded** text is a congregational response.

Welcome and Announcements

Good morning and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Today is November 24, and it is Reign of Christ Sunday. My name is Rev. Lynne Gardiner, and I welcome all of you into this place, whether you are worship with us in our sanctuary, or from home through our Live Streaming.

This week, our service is being led by: Ruth Anne Johnson and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Kathleen Williamson and Nancy Clark.

A quick reminder of our regularly scheduled Bethel activities: Chat and Chew on Tuesdays at 1:30 and our Zoom Prayer and Share at 10am on Thursdays. If you have any questions about our weekly activities, you can access a calendar on our website: www.bethelchurchrideauferry.ca. The calendar will appear on the first screen and has all of our activities listed.

After worship today, we will be sharing a Soup and Sandwich Lunch. Following lunch, all members of the Board will be gathering for a meeting.

*White Gift Sunday here at Bethel will take place next Sunday, December 1. Our contributions this year will go to the The Table Community Food Centre in Perth and the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank, as many in our communities are struggling with food costs and food bank use continues to increase.
If you would like to contribute a White Gift, we invite you to do so using one of the white envelopes which are in the pews beginning this morning and which will be collected next Sunday, December 1.
Thank you for your generous support for others in the community.*

Are there any celebrations this week? Where have you seen God at work this week?

Please join me in singing a brief song of celebration:

VU 958

"Halle, Halle, Halle"

Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Halle, halle, halle-lujah!

Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

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Land Acknowledgment (Unison)

For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

Mission and Service Story

Gifts with Vision: A Gift to All

"I have everything I need."

"I can't think of anything I want."

"No gifts for me this year."

This is something many of us have heard, and maybe something we've found ourselves saying. And while it may be true, despite not wanting or needing anything, we know gifts are going to happen anyway. Instead of searching "gifts for someone who is hard to buy for," why not give Gifts with Vision?

Gifts with Vision is a way to give gifts from the comfort of home, with no packaging or wrapping needed. Instead of gadgets and fleeting trends, Gifts with Vision is full of gifts that will help transform lives throughout Canada and around the world. When placing your order, you'll be able to add an e-card, including a delivery date, for each gift.

Every Gift with Vision provides support for a specific Mission and Service partner offering a unique project. Without Mission and Service, projects would not be possible. Thank you for supporting both.

When Christmas rolls around, remember that a meaningful gift is a simple click away. If madly dashing around the mall on Christmas Eve has been your gift-buying style, kick back and relax. Gifts with Vision has you covered!

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Come, let us celebrate the goodness of God.

God has blessed us with God's great love.

Let us come to this time, letting go of our worries.

Let us come to this time praising God.

Come, now is the time to worship.

We come, rejoicing, for God is so good to us. AMEN.

Sung Call to Worship

VU 652 (vs 1)

"Be Still, My Soul"

**Be still, my soul, for God is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Trust in your God, your saviour and your guide,
who through all changes faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul, your best, your heavenly friend
through stormy ways leads to a peaceful end.**

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Lighting of the Christ Candle and the World Candle

Today as we light our Christ Candle and our World Candle we consider what it means for us to have our faith determine how we make our choices in our community and in our world.

A moment of silent reflection:

How would God order things differently in this church, in this community and in this world? Do we need to make different choices to recognize the Reign of Christ?

Listen to God's words for you this morning from John 18:

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Opening Prayer

Today we come with joy, into the presence of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. At his birth the angels proclaimed his name to be Emmanuel, God with us. Today in this place, in this time of worship, may we feel the power and presence of Jesus Christ in our lives. May our hearts and spirits be warmed and challenged to proclaim with our lives, "Christ is Lord!". AMEN.

Opening Hymn VU 25 *"Lo, He Comes with Cloud Descending"*****

**¹ Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
see the Lamb for sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending
join to sing the glad refrain:
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign.**

**2 Every eye shall then behold you,
robed in awesome majesty;
all who jeered, and mocked, and sold you,
pierced, and nailed you to the tree,
deeply grieving, deeply grieving, deeply grieving,
shall the true Messiah see.**

**3 Now redemption, long expected
see in solemn pomp appear;
all the saints, by us rejected,
thrill the trumpet sound to hear:
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
See the day of God appear!**

**4 Yea! Amen! Let all adore you,
high on your eternal throne;
crowns and empires fall before you,
claim the kingdom for your own:
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!
Everlasting Christ, come down.**

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Passing the Peace

Prayer for Reconciliation

We have trouble recognizing a King in our lives. Kings, for us in Canada are figureheads, and play no active role in our governance. But today we are asked to recognize Jesus Christ as the King of our lives, our sovereign ruler. God's kingdom is based on the laws of love; loving God as God has truly loved us and loving our neighbor as we ourselves want to be loved. That love extends beyond the borders of our lives, into a world in which there is fear and alienation, hunger and disease, hopelessness and darkness. Jesus, our sovereign ruler, our friend, our Master and guide has asked us to reach out to feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked, visit the sick and those imprisoned; welcome the stranger. These words are not unfamiliar to us, yet somehow we have treated them as nice words but not an active part of our life of faith. Forgive us, Lord, for the meagreness of our faith and the weakness of our witness. Rule our lives again with your powerful love, that we might truly be worthy disciples of yours. Help us to find the forgiveness which you have given to us and to do your will. AMEN.

Assurance of Love

Even though we have often failed to do as our Lord Jesus has asked, yet there is eternal forgiveness and a chance to again follow his ways. Be assured, dear friends, that the love of Jesus Christ will never leave you. Be his witnesses throughout the world. AMEN

Theme Conversation

If Jesus was in Charge

Our Scriptures Today

John 18: 33–37

- Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you king of the Jews?"

A Litany Based on our Scriptures

Reflection

Hymn

VU 334

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

¹ All hail the power of Jesus' name!

**Let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem,**

***Refrain* and crown him, crown him, crown him,
crown him Lord of all.**

**² O seed of Israel's chosen race
now ransomed from the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace *Refrain***

**³ Crown him, you martyrs of your God,
who from his altar call;
praise him whose way of pain you trod, *Refrain***

**⁴ Let every tongue and every tribe,
responsive to the call,
to him all majesty ascribe *Refrain***

**⁵ O that, with all the sacred throng,
we at his feet may fall,
join in the everlasting song,
Refrain and crown him, crown him, crown him,
crown him Lord of all.**

Invitation to the Offering

Offering Music

Offering Response VU 542 "We Give You But Your Own"
**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**
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Offering Prayer

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

From the first day of Advent, so long ago, we have come full circle to the celebration of the Reign of Christ, also known as Christ the King Sunday. We have witnessed the wonderful birth, the great healing moments, the teachings that have sustained people throughout the centuries. We cried in sorrow at the Crucifixion and rejoiced with absolute joy on the sunrise of Easter when Jesus conquered our greatest fear, death. We celebrated the great good news of the disciples as they risked everything to finally proclaim the good news to all people. Now on this Sunday, we invite Jesus to enter our hearts.

Sovereign Lord Jesus, come into our hearts today and take your reign. Remind us that your kingdom is a kingdom of hope and light, in which there is no darkness, fear, or sadness. You have called us to be the Kingdom people, living our lives in the knowledge that peace, justice, and hope are not only possible, but can actually be the ruling factor of the world, for those who follow you. There are many who do not acknowledge your presence and your name, O Lord. But in your infinite love and mercy, you have acknowledged and claimed them. Help us to be the kind of disciples that welcome everyone with the words of kindness, that offer acts of mercy and peace to all in need, to proclaim Christ risen and glorified. As we have brought before you, O Lord, the names of people and situations needing your healing and comforting touch, may we also open our hearts for that same healing and comfort. Remind us that we are never out of your grace and mercy. We know that you will give us the strength and wisdom to be true disciples and we celebrate and honour you, now and forever. AMEN.

Today, we have special prayers for:

Leona	Lennox	Abby
Joy	Maddie	Yasmina
Helene	Hudson	Rev. Takouhi & family
Liam	Joanne	Cathy & family
Dennis and Stella	Sandy	Manfred
Cleo	Marc	Sandra M.

And together as a community we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying, **Our Father....**

Closing Hymn

VU 213

"Rejoice the Lord is King"

- ¹ Rejoice the Lord is King! Your risen Lord adore!
Rejoice, give thanks and sing and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!**
- ² Jesus the Saviour reigns, the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our sins, he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!**
- ³ God's kingdom cannot fail; Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!**
- ⁴ Rejoice in glorious hope, for Christ, the judge, shall come
to glorify the saints for their eternal home.
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!**

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Living our Faith this Week

Today I encourage you to consider what it would mean for you to recognize a different way of ordering our government and the choices we make with our resources. What does it mean for you to use God's eyes to view our community and our world?

Commissioning and Benediction

Sung Benediction

**Go now in peace, never be afraid,
God will go with you each hour of everyday.
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true,
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching us in love.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen. Amen. Amen**

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Bethel United Church Women - Bake Sale

Saturday, December 7th

Plans are underway for the annual UCW Bake and Cookie Sale

and we need your help

- **Anyone** in the congregations with a talent for baking can contribute to this worthy cause (we need 6,000 to 7,000 cookies). The criteria: **smaller size cookies** (2"-2½" for easier packing); **not too soft; no strong flavoured cookies** (ginger, molasses, peanut butter) to go in the boxes. These will be sold at the bake table.
- Friday, December 6th we will pack cookies starting at 1:00pm. Your cookies can be dropped off either Thursday, December 5th from 2-4 or Friday from noon to 1:00.
- Other baked goods for the bake sale are much appreciated.

Upcoming at Bethel

Today - Soup & Sandwich lunch/Official Board meeting
December 1 Advent 1/White Gift Sunday
December 6 1:00pm pack cookies
December 7 9:00am UCW Bake Sale
December 8 Advent 2/Communion/Reception of new members
December 15 Advent 3
December 22 Advent 4/Soup & Sandwich lunch/Christmas sing along
December 24 Christmas Eve family worship at 4:30pm
December 29 no service at Bethel
January 5 no service at Bethel
January 12 Emily Gardiner leads worship (*no live stream*)
January 19 "Christingle" service (*no live stream*)
January 26 Hymn sing (*no live stream*)

Community Events

Trinity UC (Smiths Falls)
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Friday, December 6th at 11am.
Tripoly & The Grenville Troubadours
Friday, December 13th at 7:00pm (doors open 6:30)
\$20 in advance. \$25 at the door
Amnesty International "Write for Rights"
Saturday, December 14th drop in from 1:00-3:00. Sample letters available.

Grace UC (Gananoque)
Annual Christmas Market Saturday, November 30
10:00-2:00; hot lunch available