

The Gathering

1 - Welcome - [KELVIN]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hello and welcome to this service of worship. Today we reach the end of the liturgical year. It all starts again next week with Advent Sunday. But let us not get ahead of ourselves. There's one more festival to keep and that's today – the Feast of Christ the King.

But how shall we think of Christ the King? The pomp and the pageantry? Christ enthroned in glory? Or the babe in a manger born to a family who would soon be on the run? These two ideas bump right into one another on this feast day. As they do so, perhaps we'll discover something new about God that we've never known before.

Welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow

3 - Collect for Purity - [SISTER AJ]

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

5 - Confession

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

7 - Gloria - [MORVEN]

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

8 - Collect - [KELVIN]

Almighty and eternal God, to Jesus Christ, the first-born from the dead, you have granted everlasting dominion and a kingship that shall not pass away. Remove from us every desire for privilege and power, that we may imitate the sacrificial love of Christ our King and, as a royal and priestly people, serve you humbly in one another. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

11 - GOSPEL: John 18:33-37 – [SOPHIE]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious gospel

Praise to Christ our Lord.

12 - Sermon [OLIVER]

Making an introduction—the act of introducing people—is an art. There’s a reason why most speakers or performers don’t just hop on stage or go directly to the mic. Setting up a presentation, a show, or product launch is a big deal ... and a big responsibility.

My husband Joe tells of an introduction that went wrong when someone introduced him as a ‘gym bunny’. Now, it’s true Joe does like going to the gym. And Joe is cute, like a bunny. But Joe wasn’t pleased with this label and the baggage that came with it. It made it sound like all Joe did—or that his only interest—was the gym. And there’s a whole lot more to Joe than that.

One of the illustrative titles people gave Jesus was king. It was a designation provoking an intense response. And while it may be right (Jesus was the leader of a religious movement among Jewish people) and he didn’t directly deny it, ‘king’ wasn’t a title he seemed wholly contented to use. Instead, in his ministry, Jesus tended to talk more about being a servant. Rather than being untouchable or exalted like a king, Jesus was vulnerable, humble. In parables, he spoke of the kingdom of God. His kingdom, he tells Pilate, is not from this world. The title king just wasn’t adequate on its own.

I’ve seen a similar kind of uneasiness from people for whom traditional categories or expectations don’t work either—those whose gender identity doesn’t fall into established types. Some people share having internal experiences not related to their chromosomes or external physical characteristics. The terms male and female don’t accurately or systematically describe how they experience life. Some people understand this instinctively. But many others find this idea challenging to wrap their heads around.

Ambiguity or fluctuation—especially when it comes to gender—isn’t a comfortable place for everyone. Some want—or need—things to be one thing or the other—like this or like that. There are no gradations or complications. Boys should look like boys, and girls should look like girls.

Gender norms become apparent in the language we use to describe ourselves and others. Many struggle to adapt vocabulary to notions that aren't definite. Indeed, a lot of traditional terminology about gender is constraining and prescriptive. It doesn't accommodate what some feel is, in fact, not so simple—not so black and white. The words 'he' and 'she' or even a sense of fixed or consistent identity aren't accurate signifiers for everyone. Things change from one day to the next or from one situation to the next, and that's not a good fit for narrow concrete categories. And some people find the mere constructs of gender into any type unsuitable.

Identities are complicated, and the words we use to label people don't always accommodate that complexity. As human beings, we are not simply one thing or another. That's true in many aspects of our lives. It was true for Jesus, too. Calling Jesus a king works on many levels, but it fails to describe who he is on others. Jesus is a king, but he is also a servant. Jesus has power but also empties himself. Jesus is rich, but he is also poor. Jesus is a warrior, but he is also a peacemaker. Most terms fail to define who Jesus is exhaustively.

No one, including Jesus, has a one-dimensional personality, and if we think they do, we probably don't know that person ... or really want to. If we're going to love someone, we must discover who they are, which takes time. It means asking questions and listening to the answers. And it means adapting to and respecting all aspects of who someone is and that person's nature—even when it's ambiguous and complex.

The Feast of Christ the King is a time to celebrate the unconventional. (And Jesus' kingship certainly was that.) Nothing about Jesus is plain. If we cannot engage with that, there's no way we're going to engage with God. We must unstick our language. We must be willing to vary our expressions—to hold lightly to limiting concepts. No boundary or label will deliver all the information there is to know, because God is limitless and without bounds. Let us not fear that which is not delineated clearly but

honour it, recognising there may be multiple aspects of being and, in fact, in being a child of God.

14 - Intercessions [ROBERT]

To the bidding 'O Lord,'
please respond, 'your kingdom come.'

Holy God, in your Son Jesus Christ you show us the nature of Kingship, and of Your Kingdom. Teach us to pray that we may help to build the Kingdom of God

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

Eternal God, we pray for all the peoples of the world; that the tremendous expenditure of the world's resources on weapons may be turned to feeding the poor; that all may know you as the God of peace, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For the communities in which we live; for all those who work for justice: for the courts and legal professions, for prisons, chaplaincies and probation services; that you watch over their going out and their coming in; we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For nations, for leaders and governments; that integrity may mark all their dealings; for those who must continue the struggle to face climate change; we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For all who labour for righteousness; for a just meeting of the needs of the poor; that your presence and help may give them courage, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For communities torn by dissension and strife; that your forgiveness may bring them healing, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For the anxious, the lonely, the bereaved; that consolation and peace may be theirs, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For the Church, your household and family; for The Church of Bangladesh; for Kevin our Bishop, the congregations of Good Shepherd & Ascension, Hillington, and Holy Trinity & St Barnabas, Paisley; for the AGM here at St Marys, and the ongoing work of the Vestry; that God's people may be firm in the confession of their hope, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

For those who are separated from us by death; in our Years Mind for Muriel Dickins, and for James Heatlie, that theirs may be the kingdom which is unshakeable, we pray to you,

O Lord, **your kingdom come.**

Holy God, may we your people learn what it is to be servants of Christ the King; and knowing, may live our lives in truth and justice.

Amen.

Communion

17 - Offertory - [KELVIN]

We make offerings to God throughout our worship. Everything that we offer here is an offering to the King of Kings. That includes our financial offerings which allow us to offer all the rest, including the worship that we are enjoying together right now.

There's details on the cathedral website of how to give to support the ministry of the cathedral. Just go to thecathedral.org.uk and click on the words "donate to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow"

Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory,
the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in
heaven and on earth is yours.**

All things come from you, and of your own we give you.

18 - Eucharistic Prayer

[KELVIN] The Lord be with you.

[OLIVER] **And also with you.**

[KELVIN] Lift up your hearts.

[OLIVER] **We lift them to the Lord.**

[KELVIN] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[OLIVER] **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours.

You created the heavens and established the earth;
you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.
He made his home among us
that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit
you call us to new birth
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [MORVEN]

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,
most loving Father,
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh
He is the Word existing beyond time,
both source and final purpose,
bringing to wholeness all that is made.
Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.
By your power you raised him from the dead.
He broke the bonds of evil
and set your people free
to be his Body in the world.

On the night when he was given up to death,
knowing that his hour had come,
having loved his own,
he loved them to the end.
At supper with his disciples
he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread,
and gave it to them, saying:
"Take, eat.
This is my Body: it is broken for you."
After supper, he took the cup,
he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all,
that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,
and send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation,
we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all God's children living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end.

Amen.

19 - Breaking of the Bread - [KELVIN]

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

20 - Lord's Prayer - [OLIVER]

As our Saviour has taught us,
so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Do not bring us
to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

21 - Communion - [KELVIN]

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds
that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and
was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for
yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.
Amen.

24 - Post Communion Prayer - [SISTER HELENA]

Almighty God, you have made us a royal priesthood in the
kingdom of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Make known his
victory through us, we pray, that all the world may see his light. We
ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Amen.

25 - Blessing - [KELVIN]

Thank you for sharing in the worship today.

I don't know whether you will meet Christ in pomp and majesty this week or whether you will meet a more vulnerable Christ. But my prayer is that you meet God and know God and feel the love of God this week.

The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Voluntary - [STEVEN]

A 2 choeurs (Verset pour le Te Deum) - Nivers