

# Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit

Home Worship Sheet – 22<sup>nd</sup> November

This short act of worship has been prepared and written for you by Canon Julia Francis.

An opening thought from the writings of John Ruskin:

If you do not wish for the kingdom, do not pray for it.  
But if you do, you must do more than pray for it; you must work for it.

Let us pray:

Eternal Father, whose son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King. Keep his body, your Church in the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet. **Amen**

Jesus Christ is exalted to the throne of heaven, may we not be weighed down but the things of earth, but may set our affections on the things above.

**We acknowledge his kingship, we worship and adore him.  
Accept our homage, come and reign over us.**

Hymn: **The King of love my shepherd is**

To listen to the hymn in a new tab: press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1 The King of love my shepherd is,  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his  
and he is mine for ever.
- 2 Where streams of living water flow  
my ransomed soul he leadeth,  
and where the verdant pastures grow  
with food celestial feedeth.

**3** Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,  
but yet in love he sought me,  
and on his shoulder gently laid,  
and home rejoicing brought me.

**4** In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;  
thy rod and staff my comfort still,  
thy cross before to guide me.

**5** Thou spread'st a table in my sight;  
thy unction grace bestoweth;  
and O what transport of delight  
from thy pure chalice floweth!

**6** And so through all the length of days  
thy goodness faileth never:  
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise  
within thy house for ever.

Henry Williams Baker (1821–1877)

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### **A reading from Daniel 7: 9 -11, 13 &14.**

To listen to this reading, by David Suchet from BibleGateway in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

**As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.**

**The court was seated, and the books were opened.**

**Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.**

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

New International Version

Our second hymn brings to mind the majesty and glory of the victorious crown of our crucified king.

### **Hymn: Christ triumphant , ever reigning**

To listen to the hymn in a new tab: press **Shift** and **Ctrl** together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1      **Christ triumphant, ever reigning,  
Saviour, Master, King!  
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,  
hear us as we sing:  
    *Yours the glory and the crown,  
    the high renown, the eternal name!***
  
- 2      **Word incarnate, truth revealing,  
Son of Man on earth!  
Power and majesty concealing  
by your humble birth:  
    *Yours the glory and the crown,  
    the high renown, the eternal name!***
  
- 3      **Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,  
victim crucified!  
Death is through the cross defeated,  
sinners justified:  
    *Yours the glory and the crown,  
    the high renown, the eternal name!***

**4**      **Priestly king, enthroned for ever  
high in heaven above!  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
stifle hymns of love:**

***Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name!***

**5**      **So, our hearts and voices raising  
through the ages long,  
ceaselessly upon you gazing,  
this shall be our song:**

***Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name!***

Michael Saward (b. 1932)

Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 319

### **A reading from the Gospel of John. Chapter 18 verses 33 – 38**

To listen to this reading, by David Suchet from BibleGateway in a new tab press Shift and Ctrl together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the reading.

**Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”**

**“Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”**

**“Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”**

**Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”**

**“You are a king, then!” said Pilate.**

**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.”**

**“What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him.”**

Let us pray for the gift of the Holy Scriptures

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word, may it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength to our lives, take us and use us to love and serve you.

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of your Son , Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

### Reflection

I love celebrating the Feast of Christ the King. The last of the Sundays of the circle of the yearly lectionary, before we begin again our tracing of the ministry and mission of Christ. It is the culmination of all we have striven to learn as the readings and themes of the year have been opening out the message to us.

During the 1990s the congregation of which I was a part decided they would like to put on a pantomime

As they were mostly novices to acting and for all their enthusiasm no one wanted lots of lines to learn; hence we needed something to fit the situation rather than an off the peg pantomime.

I set about writing the first of three in a row and a show for the Millennium. Now in Panto Land there is one character everyone needs as almost the starting point. Panto land is a disorganised place, where misadventures and chaos need an authority figure to attempt to put into order.

Nursery Rhyme Land and Floriana were two of the backgrounds we used for our stories.

Now everyone knows what kind of a king you would imagine for these places. The first was Old King Cole, and because he is described as a merry old soul and rather chubby in all my books I made him out to be so. He was round and jolly, with his fiddlers three and much merriment at his court.

In Floriana I used herbs and flower names for the characters and our king was Basil. Quite an opposite for King Cole, in that he was tall and thin; he too however, was of upright character and was used to a merry court.

Basically the role involved making pronouncements, listening to the problems and needs of his subjects and giving rewards for tasks undertaken on behalf of the kingdom.

He was accessible; sorting out problems; approachable and above all he made his people happy.

The next thing was his place of abode. It must be a castle or a palace. At very least something large and bright and he must have a bright and obvious costume with a crown to denote his majesty.

Over the almost 70 years since our Queen was Crowned in Westminster Abbey, the rather grainy film of that occasion has been shown to us on our screens very frequently. It is an occasion of great pomp and tradition and ritual. The spoon for the oil of blessing has been in use since the 12th Century. Of the rest of the ceremonial items many go back over 400 years.

The procession of carriages to Westminster Abbey and the glorious splendour of the Abbey and all who attend bear witness to the significance in the kingdom of this event; the robes of the many priests and attendees in their greatest finery.

As the Archbishop places the crown on the head of the new monarch it is both solemn and sacred. Finally the words of the blessing of the monarch confirm the vows of both monarch and people to honour the duties and position of the head of state.

This then is the accepted style of a King. And we see in Matthew's gospel that in the days following the birth of Christ, travellers from the East who sought a king as foretold in their writings and observations have sought the child in a palace. Seeking a king in a bright robe with the fine garments of a young prince at the centre of government.

We all, I'm sure, know how Queen Elizabeth II takes great pleasure in her horses; breeding, racing etc. She was once attending a point to point event wearing her familiar headscarf to keep the wind off her hair and face, when a lady nearby came across to her (don't ask me how she came to be so close but it was some decades ago) and said. 'Do you know you look very much like the Queen.' To which she received the answer 'How very reassuring.'

I tell this story because our King, Jesus Christ, is found in unexpected places and looks very different to the accepted style of a King. We seek for a king who is approachable and compassionate far more than we need one in the bright splendour of ritual that puts him beyond our reach.

The King we require is one who is apparent through his grace. The tenets of a king are to enable his people to feel they belong to the kingdom.

To go back to Panto Land. There is always one other character who is extremely important and cannot be left out of the story. He is the one who makes the proclamations of the King; invites the people to the feast on the King's behalf; he will also be trusted with the news of the happenings of the kingdom so that the messages are flung out to every corner. This character is the one who makes the introductions at court and urges the people to attend. He or she is, of course, the Herald.

The Herald too, can be in unexpected places. The Herald won't let the news fail, or the way to the King be closed. The Herald rushes back and forth to reassure the King that all is being done to ensure the work of the kingdom. That the people honour and perform the duties of the people of such a monarch.

As we head into Advent next week we shall spend four more Sundays looking at the work of the various Heralds of our King, as we prepare once again for the nativity stories and the circle of the churches year that brings us to understand and acknowledge our King of truth.

Yet, we too have to take up this role. It is we too who are today the Heralds of the Kingdom.

We have access to every corner of our communities, because we are numerous throughout the world. There are places we are afraid to venture and also there are times we fear for ourselves, and doubt our grasp of the message or its being heard when we speak it. But our role cannot be written out of the story of the kingdom of God. It is an integral part of the ongoing rolling out of the mission of the church.

Remember too that we as Heralds are sent out to proclaim and to invite. That we too are searchers after Christ in all the corners of the world and in every kind of need. As such we stand in the place of Christ before all

whom we meet. There is a lovely saying attributed to founder of the Society of Friends (Quakers) George Fox, 'Travel over the world honouring that of God in all whom we meet.' It's a succinct way of looking at the role of those who honour the authority of the king and strive to do his will to bring about the Kingdom.

Now, let us pray together in the word our saviour taught us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

Come to the Feast. Our King invites us.

Let us Pray

Today, we celebrate Jesus, our King.

We pray for all who are now themselves part of the kingdom and serve the church in all its ministries and with such a variety of gifts and we pray for those still to join us in finding the joy of belonging.

Silence for your own additional prayers

Lord in your Mercy. Hear our prayer.

**We pray for all who have authority, and especially those who have been given the authority of monarchy, that they show in their lives the true character of responsibility of office.**

**May all who have government and rule of law and justice show humility, compassion and service to the people of their countries.**

**We especially pray at this time for our own governments and assemblies; as they grapple with the challenges of the tasks before them. We pray for awareness across the world that rights and position bring responsibility.**

**Silence for your own additional prayers**

**Lord in your Mercy. Hear our prayer.**

**May all who are separated from their loved ones feel the closeness of a bond of love which enables them to be comforted and share in the joy of friendship with neighbour and across the miles through all ways they can reach one another. We especially pray for communities scattered by war and conflict. Those who have poverty and disease above and beyond that which has been added to their pain this year in the global pandemic of Covid 19.**

**We pray for all who are still striving to escape their situations in dangerous ways because of fear and persecution, that they find solace and safety.**

**Silence for your own additional prayers**

**Lord in your Mercy. Hear our prayer.**

**We pray for those who have the anxiety of illness, especially those awaiting surgery. For the recently bereaved and grieving. For all who have this day felt lonely and isolated.**

**Silence for your own additional prayers**

**Lord in your Mercy. Hear our prayer.**

**We pray for the renewal of hope in a world of uncertainty. Especially for the young, the unemployed, and those for whom the passage of change this year has been a means of bringing them into desperate situations and loss of hope.**

**We pray for all who have care of them. And we pray for all who are as yet working toward enabling this United Kingdom, and the battered world, to rally into a hope for the future.**

**Silence for your own additional prayers**

**You Lord, know the secrets of our hearts. Forgive us our shortcomings**

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

And now let us join once again in singing the praises of our Saviour and King in the lovely hymn written by Caroline Maria Noel chiefly based upon the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

**Hymn: At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.**

To listen to the hymn in a new tab: press **Shift** and **Ctrl** together and click [here](#). Close the tab after the hymn.

- 1 At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess him King of Glory now.  
'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,  
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.**
- 2 Humbled for a season, to receive a name  
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,  
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,  
brought it back victorious when from death he passed:**
- 3 Bore it up triumphant with its human light,  
through all ranks of creatures to the central height,  
to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast;  
filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.**
- 4 For this same Lord Jesus shall return again,  
with his Father's glory, with his angel train;  
all the wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,  
and our hearts confess him King of Glory now.**

Caroline Maria Noel (1817–1877)

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Jesus said. 'For where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also.'  
As we praise and Worship Jesus our King may we once again enthrone  
him in our hearts  
May we set our affections upon those things which draw us to that  
place where our real treasure is to be found.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the  
fellowship of the Holy Spirit surround us this day and all whom we love  
and would enfold, now and forever more.

Amen.

