

St Peter's Anglican Church, Bundoora

Sunday – Christ the King

Sunday 24/11/2024

Reading 2 Samuel 23:1-7 / Ps 132:1-12 / Revelation 1:4b-8 / John 18:33-37

(Readings are from New Revised Standard Version)

Sermon Theme: *Seek the Lord and live,*

By Rev'd Stephen Monsieigneur

2 Samuel 23:1-7

¹ Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man whom God exalted,
the anointed of the God of Jacob,
the favourite of the Strong One of Israel:

² The spirit of the Lord speaks through me,
his word is upon my tongue.

³ The God of Israel has spoken,
the Rock of Israel has said to me:

One who rules over people justly,
ruling in the fear of God,

⁴ is like the light of morning,
like the sun rising on a cloudless morning,
gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

⁵ Is not my house like this with God?

For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.

Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?

⁶ But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up with the hand;

⁷ to touch them one uses an iron bar
or the shaft of a spear.

And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

Ps 132:1-12

¹ Lord, remember David and all his trouble:

how he swore an oath to the Lord,
and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob;

² 'I will not enter the shelter of my house:
nor climb into the comfort of my bed;

³ 'I will not give sleep to my eyes:
or slumber to my eyelids,

⁴ 'Till I find out a place for the ark of the Lord:
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.'

⁵ Lo, we heard of it at Ephrathah:
we found it in the fields of Ja-ar.

⁶ Let us go to the place of his dwelling:
let us fall upon our knees before his footstool.

⁷ Arise, O Lord, into your resting-place:
you, and the ark of your might.

⁸ Let your priests be clothed with righteousness:
and let your faithful ones shout for joy.

⁹ For the sake of David your servant:
do not turn away the face of your anointed.

¹⁰ The Lord has sworn to David:
an oath which he will not break;

¹¹ 'One who is the fruit of your body:
I will set upon your throne.

¹² 'If your children will keep my covenant
and the commands which I teach them:
their children also shall sit upon your throne for ever.'

Revelation 1:4b-8

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood,

⁶ and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,

even those who pierced him;

and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

⁸ 'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

John 18:33-37

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."

SERMON

One who rules over people justly, ruling in the fear of God, is like the light of the morning, like the sun rising on a cloudless morning, gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

When we pray the Lord's prayer, that prayer which when asked by the disciples 'teach us to pray' Jesus taught, we say "thy [your] kingdom come." In this statement we are expressing our recognition of Jesus as a king, and importantly our king. We are calling for the earthly realm to be a place of God's kingdom. Being part of the body of Christ Christians work toward that reality by working every day to make that truth a reality for all to know.

God's kingdom is not like the kingdoms of earth that are bound by three realities of time and space, beginning and ending. Unlike earthly kingdoms where squabbles over resources, even differing traditions and perceptions lead to wars, poverty and all manner of suffering, Heaven is a kingdom free of such wasted and foolish exercise. Heaven is a realm where war and pain have no place but are made extinct by the glorious love that like the sun shines brilliantly and freely from God. This realm is the Kingdom of Jesus authority. Jesus a King whose love is evident in his willingly laying down his life for us that we could be free. The kingdom of God is our destination, our hope.

Today as the church we celebrate that great promise as we celebrate Christ our King. But as we celebrate, we are reminded that the church is not the buildings and traditions, but the people. Therefore, the church is sacramental. It is the gift from God through which we its members, the body, are able to manifest God's love and generosity to the world.

Through the year we have heard of the miraculous work of Jesus, we have seen the growth and maturing of his disciples as they walked with him listening, questioning and learning. We have also witnessed great suffering and a humility that at times seemed impossible to explain except to say that is his love of me, his love of us.

God our king is a king of love, compassion; a king who knows every subject by name and who feels every joy and sorrow with us. This king has died for us and his resurrection assure his place for eternity. Earthly kings are part of the earthly realm but like the earth and all that is in it they whether human or some other thing that may draw us from God are finite, they will end but not Christ who rules over all.

It is very clear that Pilate and Jesus have very different ideas of what a king is. For Pilate it is about power over others while for Jesus it is about empowerment of others.

How do we the part of the body of Christ known as St Peter's Bundoora show the love of God to the world?

How do we as a faith community and as individuals empower others through love to know God as we do?

While these can seem like daunting questions, we need only look first at the small things already taking place. When we,

- feed the hungry, clothe the naked and help the poor.
- Just be present to share in the burden of pain of another.
- Refuse to hide our faith for fear of offending or being persecuted.
- Through true generosity.

While we are called to live this human life, to be as fully as we can part of its fabric we are today called to remember it is not only for our personal benefit but for every one, whether powerful or not we will be called to answer. All the universe, even earthly kings are subjects to the divine majesty of God. A king who loves us beyond comprehension and desires to share all with us ... eternally. A king who lived among us as a simple carpenter of an occupied people yet who defeated death itself.

AMEN