

Last Sunday after Pentecost: Christ the King, Sept. 24

The Collect and Psalms will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer. The Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel will be read from the New International Version Bible

The Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Track 1 Old Testament: 2 Samuel 23:1-7

23 These are the last words of David:

“The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse,
the utterance of the man exalted by the Most High,
the man anointed by the God of Jacob,
the hero of Israel’s songs:

2 “The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.

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

‘When one rules over people in righteousness,
when he rules in the fear of God,

4 he is like the light of morning at sunrise
on a cloudless morning,
like the brightness after rain
that brings grass from the earth.’

5 “If my house were not right with God,
surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant,
arranged and secured in every part;
surely he would not bring to fruition my salvation

and grant me my every desire.

6 But evil men are all to be cast aside like thorns,
which are not gathered with the hand.

7 Whoever touches thorns
uses a tool of iron or the shaft of a spear;
they are burned up where they lie.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 1 Psalm: Psalm 132:1-13 (14-19)

1 Lord, remember David, *
and all the hardships he endured;

2 How he swore an oath to the Lord *
and vowed a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

3 “I will not come under the roof of my house,” *
nor climb up into my bed;

4 I will not allow my eyes to sleep, *
nor let my eyelids slumber;

5 Until I find a place for the Lord, *
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.”

6 “The ark! We heard it was in Ephratah; *
we found it in the fields of Jearim.

7 Let us go to God's dwelling place; *
let us fall upon our knees before his footstool.”

8 Arise, O Lord, into your resting-place, *
you and the ark of your strength.

9 Let your priests be clothed with righteousness; *
let your faithful people sing with joy.

10 For your servant David's sake, *
do not turn away the face of your Anointed.

11 The Lord has sworn an oath to David; *
in truth, he will not break it:

12 "A son, the fruit of your body *
will I set upon your throne.
13 If your children keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I shall teach them, *
their children will sit upon your throne for evermore."
14 For the Lord has chosen Zion; *
he has desired her for his habitation:
15 "This shall be my resting-place for ever; *
here will I dwell, for I delight in her.
16 I will surely bless her provisions, *
and satisfy her poor with bread.
17 I will clothe her priests with salvation, *
and her faithful people will rejoice and sing.
18 There will I make the horn of David flourish; *
I have prepared a lamp for my Anointed.
19 As for his enemies, I will clothe them with shame; *
but as for him, his crown will shine."

Track 2 Old Testament: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

9 "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.
10 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.

13 "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. 14 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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 2 Psalm: Psalm 93

1 The Lord is King;

he has put on splendid apparel; *

the Lord has put on his apparel

and girded himself with strength.

2 He has made the whole world so sure *

that it cannot be moved;

3 Ever since the world began, your throne has been established; *

you are from everlasting.

4 The waters have lifted up, O Lord,

the waters have lifted up their voice; *

the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.

5 Mightier than the sound of many waters,

mightier than the breakers of the sea, *

mightier is the Lord who dwells on high.

6 Your testimonies are very sure, *

and holiness adorns your house, O Lord,

for ever and for evermore.

Epistle: Revelation 1:4b-8

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the

seven spirits before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

7 “Look, he is coming with the clouds,”

and “every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him”;

and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”

So shall it 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.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: John 18:33-37

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

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

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

36 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.”

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

The Gospel of the Lord

On November 26 we celebrate the life of Isaac Watts, Hymnwriter. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Isaac Watts is remembered as the father of English hymnody. He was born in Southampton, England, in 1674, the eldest child of a devout Nonconformist family. His academic

capabilities, and particularly his ability with the English language, were recognized at an early age. He was offered the resources to enroll at Oxford or Cambridge and pursue ordination in the Church of England, but Watts remained faithful to his background and, in 1690, enrolled in a Nonconformist academy at Stoke Newington. In 1702, Watts was ordained and served the Mark Lane independent congregation in London for a decade before his health made it impossible to continue.

As a hymn writer, Watts wrote more than six hundred hymns, about a quarter of which continue in popular use. Among his works was his Psalms of David, a metrical psalter that versified the psalms in English for hymnic use. Perhaps his most enduring contribution in this genre is “O God, our help in ages past” (The Hymnal 1982, #680) based upon the opening verses of Psalm 90.

Watts also wrote a wide variety of other hymns and spiritual songs that are well beloved. The attractiveness of his texts is often said to be reflective of Watts’ own personal faith: gentle, quiet, sturdy, and deeply devout. This can easily be seen in the final stanza of “When I survey the wondrous cross” (#474):

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Among his more enduring hymns are “Jesus shall reign” (#544), “Joy to the world” (#100), and “I sing the almighty power of God” (#398).

Due to ill health, Watts spent the last decades of his life in semiseclusion, rarely preaching, but devoted his time to writing, as he was able. During this period, his writings took a new turn, and he completed books on logic, human nature, and the English language, in addition to sermons, devotional literature, works for children, and more poetry and hymns.

Watts died in 1748. He is honored with a memorial in Westminster Abbey.

Let us Pray: God of truth and grace, you gave Isaac Watts singular gifts to present your praise in verse, that he might write psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs for your Church: Give us grace joyfully to sing your praises now and in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.