

Sunday 23rd November 2025



Celebrating the Festival of Christ the King
St Barnabas | Christ Church | St Wulstans

The Festival of Christ the King

The final Sunday of the liturgical year is rich with significance. Known as the Festival of Christ the King, it celebrates the supreme authority of Jesus over all creation. This day is also known as Stir-Up Sunday. The term "Stir-Up Sunday" originates from the opening words of the Collect in the Book of Common Prayer for this day:

"Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Historically, this prayer coincided with the week families began making their Christmas puddings. The call to "stir up" served as a reminder to start mixing the dried fruits and spices (and brandy!) that would develop their flavours over the coming weeks. This simple household task became a spiritual metaphor for preparing our hearts for Christ's reign and the Advent season that follows.

On Christ the King Sunday, we reflect on the nature of Jesus' kingship. He is a ruler whose power is expressed through love, humility, and self-sacrifice. As we "stir up" the ingredients of Christmas pudding, we are reminded to stir up our faith, our hope, and our actions—preparing for Christ's coming, not just in the manger but also in glory.

This joyful day ties together worship and tradition, encouraging us to look forward to the Advent season with renewed purpose and dedication. So, as we stir up our puddings and our lives, may we do so with the prayerful expectation that Christ, our King, reigns now and forever.



WELCOME AND OPENING WORDS

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

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.

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

Revelation 1.4b-8

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall
proclaim your praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
**as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Praise the Lord.
The Lord’s name be praised.

MAKE WAY, MAKE WAY

**Make way, make way,
for Christ the King in splendour arrives.
Fling wide the gates and welcome him
into your lives.**

***Make way! Make way
for the King of kings!
Make way! Make way
and let his kingdom in!***

**He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free.
The deaf shall hear, the lame shall
dance, the blind shall see.**

***Make way! Make way
for the King of kings!
Make way! Make way
and let his kingdom in!***

**And those who mourn with heavy
hearts, who weep and sigh,
with laughter, joy and royal crown
he’ll beautify.**

***Make way! Make way
for the King of kings!
Make way! Make way
and let his kingdom in!***

**We call you now to worship him
as Lord of all,
to have no other gods but him:
their thrones must fall!**

The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all. Let us come to him, in sorrow for our sins, seeking healing and salvation.

Lord, you are gracious and
compassionate:

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

You are loving to all
and your mercy is over all your creation:

Christ, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Your faithful servants bless your name
and speak of the glory of your kingdom:

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has
given us a kingdom that cannot be
destroyed, forgive you your sins, open
your eyes to God's truth, strengthen you to
do God's will and give you the joy of his
kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

We sing this as a round

King of kings and Lord of lords

Glory Hallelujah

King of kings and Lord of lords

Glory Hallelujah

Jesus, Prince of Peace

Glory Hallelujah

Jesus, Prince of Peace

Glory Hallelujah

THE SPECIAL PRAYER FOR TODAY

The Collect for the last Sunday of the year

God the Father, help us to hear the call of
Christ the King and to follow in his service,
whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one
glory. **Amen**

TODAY'S READINGS

PSALM 131

O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes
are not raised too high; I do not occupy
myself with things too great and too
marvellous for me. But I have calmed and
quieted my soul, like a weaned child with
its mother; my soul is like the weaned child
that is with me. O Israel, hope in the Lord
from this time on and forevermore.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus

Christ according to Luke

Glory to you O Lord

When they came to the place that is called
The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with
the criminals, one on his right and one on
his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive
them; for they do not know what they are
doing."

And they cast lots to divide his clothing.
The people stood by, watching; but the
leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved
others; let him save himself if he is the
Messiah of God, his chosen one!"

There was an inscription over him, "This is
the King of the Jews." The soldiers mocked
him, coming up and offering him sour
wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the
Jews, save yourself!"

One of the criminals who were hanged
there kept deriding him and saying, "Are
you not the Messiah? Save yourself and
us!"

But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.”

Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ

LUKE 23:33-43

PRAYER AS HOME

ONE | WHAT STANDS OUT?

On this Christ the King Sunday, think over the kinds of kings you remember from childhood — fairy tales, history lessons, storybooks.

TWO | WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In Luke 23, the thief’s prayer is just a few words: “*Jesus, remember me.*” Why do you think that prayer has lasted through the centuries?

THREE | HOW DOES IT CONNECT?

Psalm 131 pictures a child safe with its mother. How does that image connect with prayer as home?

FOUR | WHAT ARE THE DEEPER QUESTIONS?

If prayer is as simple as talking with God, what different kinds of prayer can you see at work in this scene at the cross?

FIVE | WHAT CHALLENGES YOU?

Coming home to God can sound simple. But past hurts, doubts, distractions, or fear can make that return feel distant. Which of these feels most real for you — and what helps you move, even slightly, toward home?

SIX | HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

Since our Harvest festival, we’ve been thinking through seven dimensions of prayer. As Gratitude, as Persistence, as Honesty, as Remembrance, as Solidarity, and as Resistance. Which of these prayer-themes has felt most like home to you — and which would you like to carry with you into Advent?

WE SEEK YOUR KINGDOM

tune: Abide with Me

**We seek your kingdom
throughout every sphere
We long for heaven’s
demonstration here
Jesus your light shines
bright for all to see
Transform, revive,
and heal society**

**Before all things,
in him were all things made
Inspiring culture,
media, and trade
May all our work
serve your economy
Transform, revive,
and heal society**

**Peace, truth, and justice
reigning everywhere
With us be present
in our public square
Fill all who lead
with your integrity
Transform, revive,
and heal society**

**Forgive us Lord,
when we have not engaged
Failing to scribe
your heart on history's page
Make us again
what we were made to be
Transform, revive,
and heal society**

**Faithful to govern
ever may we be
Selfless in service,
loving constantly
In everything
may your authority
Transform, revive,
and heal society**

WE PRAY TOGETHER

In our prayers today, we think about the people and places that need the help of Jesus the King.



We finish our prayers with these words:

God of peace and love,
we welcome your kingdom,
in the world and in our hearts.

We seek your kingdom,
trusting that we will find it.

We anticipate your kingdom,
working toward peace,
providing for the poor,
healing the sick,
loving our enemies.

We trust in your love
to provide for us in our seeking.

Whether your Spirit comes to us
as a wind or a whisper,
**may we know your presence
and be useful in your kingdom work.**
Amen

WE SHARE THE PEACE

For the kingdom of God is righteousness,
peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The peace
of the Lord be always with you
And also with you

Let us offer one another a sign of peace

WE SING THE STORY OF OUR FAITH

tune: Austria

**We believe in God the Father,
God almighty, by whose plan
Earth and heaven sprang to being,
all created things began.**

**We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
Virgin-born, the child of Mary,
upon whom the Spirit came.**

**Christ, who on the cross forsaken,
like a lamb to slaughter led,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
he descended to the dead.**

**We believe in Jesus risen,
heaven's king to rule and reign,
To the Father's side ascended
till as judge he comes again.**

**We believe in God the Spirit;
in one Church, below, above:
Saints of God in one communion,
one in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven,
Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
We shall rise with him in glory
to the life that knows no end.**

PRAYERS AT THE TABLE

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

Yours, Lord, is the kingdom:
and you are exalted as head over all.
Alleluia, Alleluia. Amen.

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give thanks and praise

It is always right to give you thanks, God our Creator, loving and faithful, holy and strong. You made us and the whole universe, and filled your world with life.

You sent your Son to live among us, Jesus our Saviour, Mary's child. He suffered on the cross; he died to save us from our sins; he rose in glory from the dead.

You send your Spirit to bring new life to the world, and clothe us with power from on high. And so we join the angels to celebrate and say:

**Holy, holy, holy, holy,
Lord of power, Lord of might.
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Sing hosanna evermore.
Blest and holy, blest and holy
he who comes from God on high.
Raise your voices, sing his glory,
praise his name for evermore.**

Father, on the night before he died, Jesus shared a meal with his friends. He took the bread, and thanked you. He broke it, and gave it to them, saying:

*Take and eat;
this is my body,
given for you.*

Do this to remember me.

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine. He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying:

*Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood,
the new promise of God's unfailing love.
Do this to remember me.*

Father, as we bring this bread and wine, and remember his death and resurrection, send your Holy Spirit, that we who share these gifts may be fed by Christ's body and his blood.

Pour your Spirit on us that we may love one another, work for the healing of the earth, and share the good news of Jesus, as we wait for his coming in glory. For honour and praise belong to you, Father, with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit: one God, for ever and ever.

Amen!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

Communion is shared

MAJESTY

Our song during Communion

**Majesty, worship His Majesty:
Unto Jesus
be glory, honour and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority,
Flow from His throne
unto His own,
His anthems raise.**

**So exalt, lift up on high
the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify
Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship His Majesty,
Jesus who died, now glorified,
King of all Kings**

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**You have opened to us
the Scriptures, O Christ,
and you have made yourself known
in the breaking of the bread.
Abide with us, we pray,
that, blessed by your royal presence,
we may walk with you
all the days of our life,
and at its end behold you
in the glory of the eternal Trinity,
one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

*Words of blessing and sending
as we conclude our service*

CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

**Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
those wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.**

**Crown him the Lord of peace;
whose pow'r a sceptre sways,
from pole to pole, that wars may cease
absorbed in prayer and praise:
his reign shall know no end,
and round his pierced feet
fair flow'rs of paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.**

**Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime:
all hail, Redeemer, hail!
for thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.**

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2025

Fri 28 Nov eAdvent begins
Sat 29 Nov TEABAG morning [w]
1pm Scouts Fayre [w]

SUN 30 NOV FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10AM ST BARNABAS COMMUNION SERVICE
11.15 ST WULSTANS COMMUNION SERVICE

Wed 3 Dec 10am Communion [B]

SUN 7 DEC SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10AM ST BARNABAS COMMUNION SERVICE
11.15 ST WULSTANS COMMUNION SERVICE
4pm iSingSUNDAYS [B] in the church hall
4pm Christmas Brass Band [B] in church

Tue 9 Dec 7pm St Wulstans PCC meets

Wed 10 Dec 10am Communion [B]

SUN 14 DEC THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10AM ST BARNABAS COMMUNION SERVICE
11.15 ST WULSTANS COMMUNION SERVICE

Wed 17 Dec Morning Prayer online 8am
10am Communion [B]

Thu 18 Dec 8am Morning Prayer online

Fri 19 Dec 8am Morning Prayer online
5pm Tolly Carols event

Sat 20 Dec 8am Morning Prayer online
Carols on the Green [B]

SUN 21 DEC FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8AM MORNING PRAYER ONLINE
10AM ST BARNABAS COMMUNION SERVICE
3.45 ST WULSTANS COMMUNITY CHRISTINGLE

Mon 22 Dec 8am Morning Prayer online
10.30 iSingCHRISTMAS [B]

Tue 23 Dec 8am Morning Prayer online

WED 24 DEC CHRISTMAS EVE

8AM MORNING PRAYER ONLINE
3.45 ST WULSTANS CHRISTMAS COMMUNION
5.15 ST BARNABAS CRIB SERVICE
11PM ST BARNABAS MIDNIGHT MASS

THU 25 DEC CHRISTMAS DAY

10AM ST BARNABAS COMMUNION SERVICE

SUN 28 DEC SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
10.30 CLUSTER SERVICE AT ST WULSTANS

THE IGNATIAN PRAYER

During the Season of Prayer we listened for which prayers stayed with us and helped us pray with honesty and purpose. This Ignatius prayer was one of them. Its straightforward call to generosity, perseverance, and doing God's will without looking for reward resonated across the weeks.

**Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.**

Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) did not begin as the man this prayer describes. He was a soldier hungry for honour, quick to prove himself, and eager for the rewards of victory. Only a devastating injury halted him long enough to notice the emptiness of that pursuit. As he recovered, the life of Jesus unsettled and re-shaped him. The proud fighter became a man learning humility; the seeker of glory became one who served without reward. This prayer is the mirror-image of his early life: no counting, no grasping, no applause — only the deep, surprising freedom of doing God's will.

Advent asks us to wait, watch, and keep steady attention on Christ's coming; this prayer trains the heart in exactly those disciplines. Its call to serve without calculation steadies our waiting, its courage in the face of weariness strengthens our preparation, and its longing to do God's will keeps our focus sharp. Choosing this prayer would anchor our Advent in generous purpose and a deep, uncluttered readiness for Christ's arrival.

THE SERENITY PRAYER

Our second choice emerging from the Season of Prayer is this well-known Serenity Prayer, whose opening lines have travelled far through recovery groups and communities seeking steadiness in hardship. Its structure is simple but searching: acceptance where we have no control, courage where we do, and wisdom to tell the difference. Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) wrote it as the world slid toward war, when anxiety and idealism both ran high. A pastor and public theologian, he understood how easily fear or wishful thinking can distort faithful living. The longer version of the prayer adds realism, patience, and trust — a way of praying that neither denies the world’s brokenness nor surrenders to it.

**God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.**

Advent, too, is a season lived between what is and what will be. Choosing this prayer for Advent would cultivate that balance: accepting the limits we cannot alter, acting bravely where God calls us, and seeking wisdom to discern the difference with clear eyes. Its patient, day-by-day trust offers a counterweight to seasonal pressure, and its quiet hope aligns us with the promise that Christ will indeed make all things right. This prayer would steady our Advent waiting with grounded, courageous faith.

A D V E N T C O U R S E A T S T N I C H O L A S



Rosie and Nick invite us all to join their Advent course based on the film "Elf" --- a much-loved modern Christmas Classic.

- Wednesday 26th November
- Wednesday 3rd December
- Wednesday 10th December
- Wednesday 17th December

Contact the team via stnicholaswr4.org/contact to sign up

Our ABIDE resources for Advent this year are available by email. Please send a blank email to ABIDEresources@outlook.com and you will receive a confirmation message once you are registered. After this, you will receive a daily email from Friday 28th November.

ABIDEresources@outlook.com

eAdvent 2025

Daily Resources for the Advent Journey

A daily email to help us slow down and see with wonder again, guided by the Advent scriptures and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's Novella 'The Little Prince'

Friday 28th November to Thursday 25th December

Quizzes Coming

Fancy an **Daily Advent Calendar Quiz**? Try one short, playful challenge each day from Mon 1st December, right up to Christmas Eve --- calorie free! Everyone is welcome to join in, and it's an easy way to add a little fun to the season. But the puzzles don't stop there. From Christmas Day through to 5 January, we will also run a **Twelve Days of Christmas Challenge**, offering a fresh festive quiz each day of Christmas itself. Both sets of puzzles will be hosted on our new website, [Quizzles](http://quizzles.wordpress.com/), which is a sandbox space for games, puzzles, quizzes, and all sorts of playful challenges. If you visit the site and click on the welcome message, you will find a space to enter your email address. This means that you will receive any posts and puzzles direct to your inbox. We will also use the website to keep people up to date with our Big Quiz Nights at St Wulstans and at St Barnabas, and the games afternoons we will be running at Christ Church.

<https://quizzles.wordpress.com/>