

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
November 24th, 2013

Early Morning Service



THE REIGN OF CHRIST SUNDAY

Call to Worship

Come and worship Christ, the visible image of the invisible God, the firstborn of creation, the eternal God: the one through whom all things were created, and in whom all things are held together. This is our God! Let's worship together.

Hymn: Christ is the King (1-3)

612

Opening Prayer: *In these moments, Remembering God, we bring to you all the ways we have not lived as your people:*

*we stand by watching
while those in need struggle to survive;
we cast our lots with those
who worship power and success;
we offer insults rather than words of grace
to those who care for us;
we scoff at your words
which call us to a different lifestyle.*

Forgive us, God of Mercy, for not knowing what we do to you, to others, to ourselves. Speak to us through Jesus Christ, our King and our Saviour, who bears words filled with your tender mercy and gracious hope. (Silence is kept)

Assurance of Pardon: This is the good news: God remembers! Not our sins, not our foolish lives, not our rebellion. God remembers us – and redeems us!

God prepares the way for us: the way to grace, to hope, to new life. Joyfully, we offer our thanks to God. Amen.

(~ written by Thom Shuman)

Hymn: Christ is the King (4-5)

612

Focus Reading **Luke 23:33-43** 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. And 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!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour

wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.' 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.'

Hymn: Christ is the King (6-7) 612

Reflection from the Church of Scotland: G B Caird ("Saint Luke") asserts, 'We have to allow for the possibility that the stories of Jesus have undergone some legendary accretion in the process of transmission, but sober criticism cannot get behind the gospel record to a plain, commonplace tale, devoid of the miraculous and supernatural.'

The early Christians believed that, in Christ, God had been at work in new and astonishing ways and they had the evidence of their own eyes to support their faith. Luke cannot justly be accused of exaggerating the miraculous element of his narrative.' Luke believed that Jesus was the servant of a divine purpose, which he had found to be outlined and confirmed in the Scriptures with which he was so familiar, therefore he constantly portrays him as acting under the authority of a divine necessity. The crucifixion narrative seeks, therefore, to portray such a Jesus, and the way the story unfolds has an authenticity which is devoid of frills and unnecessary overlay. The conversation with the criminals who were crucified with him communicates something which is fundamental to Luke's portrayal of Jesus – that the outcast can be rescued. The reign of the Kingdom is supreme, both now and in the future. It must be what we seek, and, ultimately, is what we are promised.

Hymn: Let all mortal flesh keep silence 542

Invitation: *In company with all believers in every time and beyond time,*

we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.
This is the Lord's supper of love. This is the love that God has ordained for all, the love that unites us because it is the essence of God. We come by Jesus' invitation to this holy supper so full of mystery. We come to be one with each other, To taste the essence of heaven in a community of faith.

Hymn: King of Kings 266

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Blessing of the Elements:

God, may this bread connect us more closely with you and with our neighbors near and far. Bless this bread, we pray. May this fruit of the vine remind us of the inter-connectedness of people around the world. Bless this cup, we pray. May this simple meal bring us into union with you, your people and your world united in the One Body of Christ.

Communion

Prayer following communion

With thanksgiving, let us celebrate our new life in Christ giving thanks to God our creator and sustainer: Loving and gracious God, thank you for this holy meal. Thank you for Jesus and his all-inclusive love for humanity. Thank you for this day which we worship and serve you. Amen

Hymn: Jesus remember me 206

Blessing: *May your grace send us from worship into your world. May we respond to that grace with gratitude.*

**May our steps lead us to paths of service,
our words to the healing of troubled hearts,
our touch to the embrace of compassion.**
May your grace send us from worship into your world.