

Where Two or Three Are Gathered

October 15 to November 26, 2023

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Overview:

With the Thanksgiving food digested, worship planners turn towards the final Sundays heading to the end of Church year.

Christ the King Sunday is landing the **week after** the GreyCup so it's a good year to embrace what this last day of the church year could mean.

October 15 to November 26 will include Reformation Sunday, All Saints Sunday, and the last day of the church year – Christ the King Sunday.

Other Notes:

1: Look ahead to Christmas as soon as possible. Advent 4 will land on Dec. 24th so your community will need to make decisions around how many services to plan on that day and Christmas day. Tricky season this year.

2: There are some big moments in the church year coming quickly (Sundays in Bold) *Hymn of the Day in Italics*:

Oct. 15th – Sunday - *"Let us go now to the banquet"* (ELW 523)

Oct. 22nd – Sunday - *"Sing praise to God, the highest good"* (ELW 871)

Oct. 29th Reformation Sunday - *"To be your presence"* (ELW 546)

Oct 31st Reformation Day -

Nov. 1st All Saints Day.

Nov. 5th All Saints Sunday - *"Praise to the Lord, all of you"* (ELW 844)

Nov. 12th – Sunday - *"Wake, awake, for night is flying"* (ELW 436)

Nov. 19th – Sunday (with Grey Cup) - *"Lord of light"* (ELW 688)

Nov. 26th – Christ the King Sunday - *"Thine the amen"* (ELW 826)

Liturgical Space – Themes and Ideas

1: Keep that Fall theme going! Did you decorate for Thanksgiving? Keep that going until Reformation Sunday **and possibly beyond depending** on what else you are doing with the space. Perhaps the fall pieces and November additions all disappear for Advent 1 in December. Let the space and contrast speak.

2: Reformation Sunday is coloured RED. Might be time to head over to <https://oldlutheran.com> and order some new banners or take ideas and let your quilters or sewers run with it. The worship space can tell you that something has changed in the season.

This is a good Sunday to do a congregational "Affirmation of Baptism". If individuals want to come forward you can lay on hands and do the whole thing (just like confirmation) on pg. 234

of the ELW. Or you can choose to do the whole congregation together on pg. 237. It's a powerful thing to have people lay on hands and pray the "Stir up" prayers!

3: All Saints Sunday is coloured WHITE. – It's a feast day!

A: If you have been tracking funerals and losses in your community, this is a great time to pray for anyone who lost someone in the last year. Inviting local community members (or rare attenders) to this day can make a lot of sense as the church is good at caring for people in times of death. If you are small enough and time allows, make space in the Prayers of the People to name everyone **who is remembered** on this day.

B: Candles can be lit for each of the deceased and pictures or physical representations can be brought in. I've seen this done during the opening hymn or during a special prayer near the Kyrie.

C: When did we stop feasting on feast days? This is a great day to have a feast with all the people and guests you have invited to come. Plus with the hard work of lamenting and mourning being part of the (hopefully) **hope filled** service it's good to pause and eat together.

D: Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. I was once told that certain churches had their communion rails extend through the wall and out the back of the church to include 'the beloved departed' in communion. When we take communion we take it with everyone of every-time and every-place.

I sometimes imagine communion as bending all space and time around the cup that is lifted up. When I lift the communion cup it is simultaneously the physical cup I'm holding AND also the same cup that Jesus lifted up AND also the same cup that will be at the feast when all of creation is pulled in. Space and time collapse (mysteriously) into a moment that connects past present and future promises. Declaring the truth of this promise is never as important to do when we are mourning death and hoping for resurrection.

IDEA: As a replacement for the regular Kyrie I had big markers and pieces of paper cut into large squares. I played Kyrie (by Mr. Mister <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NDjt4FzFWY>) while we all took markers and wrote the names of those who had died and we wanted to remember. With sticky tack we attached the names all around the sanctuary so that as we worshipped... as we took communion... we physically had a representation of the people who were joining us at communion (all the saints.)

Perhaps there is a better song for your community? Maybe a bulletin board would protect the walls and wood? Perhaps these names can stay up until Christ the King Sunday and people can add to the names over the month.

4: Nov. 19 – The Sunday with the Grey Cup on it...

In Regina the liturgical colour was green and I would always thank all the Riders fans for dressing in the liturgical colour of the day (such avid fans!).

This isn't so much a worship idea as it is a service idea. With so many people taking this Sunday to dedicate to sports ball... perhaps our Lutheran expertise in 'awesome' food could come into play. Everyone has had Doritos... but not everyone has had Mrs. Anderson's 7 layer

dip. Is this a fund raiser? Is this an opportunity to join the wider community in one of their celebrations?

5: Nov. 26th Christ the King Sunday.

Worship Elements

IDEA: New Thanksgiving at the Font from “All Creation Sings” (ACS p.10) can substitute in for confession:

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God’s mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave us water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus’ wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

We praise you for your salvation through water, for the water in this font, and for all water everywhere.

Here local bodies of water may be named.

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. Satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ, our living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

IDEA: NEW Confession and Forgiveness (From Sundays and Seasons . com)

If you don’t want to do the thanksgiving for baptism (or change it up) these new words might help:

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,

we confess that we are not awake for you.

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image in one another.

We are infected by sin

that divides your beloved community.

**Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation.
Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.
Through + Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world.
Amen.

IDEA: KYRIE: Hymn 151 ELW: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RakZF1UDgpY>

If you don't have jazzy instrumentation this one is actually really singable without any instrumentation.

IDEA: The Prayer of the Day is already in the ELW! Get to you know your book and save photo copies if you don't have access to that.

Turn to pg. 50 (small numbers at the front of the book), we are in year A so you can find Oct. 22nd Prayer of the day (and readings for the day) beside the letter 'A' beginning with "Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts..."

***NOTE: Thanksgiving is on pg. 61 (you have to substitute "Day of Thanksgiving" for the regular Sunday).