

## **Revelation 1: 4-8**

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, 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 forever 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.

Our delight is in you O Lord

**WE WILL NOT FORGET YOUR WORD**

The price of our vitality is the sum of all our fears

David Whyte

On this “Christ the King Sunday” the church concludes its year-long proclamation of the Gospel (we began last year with Advent remember?) with a reading from the closing book of the Christian Testament celebrating the complete and utter centrality of Christ as the one around whom and toward whom human history is moving.

God, the I AM, whose magnificence is further developed here as “he who was and is and is to come,” has intervened in earthly history through Christ Jesus to give definitive expression to God’s relentless love and compassion for humankind.

Let’s just ponder a phrase in the text that is spilling over with meaning here.

...freed us from our sins by his blood...

I just want to do some theology with you today around that phrase, and invite you into your own doing of theology with this phrase.

...freed us from our sins by his blood.

The church has interpreted the sacrifice of the cross in many ways. Here is a perspective worth pondering:

Christ Jesus bled and died not to take our place as deserving of God’s wrath, but to love us unto death. By loving us unto death, forgiving us unto death, extending grace to us unto death, we came to see, humanity came to see, in a way we had never seen before, that we are completely and utterly and relentlessly loved and accepted by God.

Our dismissals of God do not matter to God. Our resistances to God do not matter to God. Our rejections of God do not matter to God. Our crucifixions of God do not matter to God. Our egoic claims to be god do not matter to God, our stupid illusions of being in control of our lives do not matter to God. Our arrogant insistence that we do not need God do not matter to God.

Our sins simply do not matter to God as a point of judging or punishing.

Our sins matter to God because they cause us suffering.

In Christ Jesus, loving us unto death, we have seen that our suffering matters enough to God that God chooses to take on the self-inflicted suffering of a sin-plagued humanity and makes a way through it, through death itself, into resurrection, and back to us as the “first born of the dead,” to set us free to love as Christ loved, to love unto death, with no fear of death.

The resurrection obliterates death.

This is very difficult to take in unless we are lovingly and prayerfully engaged with Christ in some form of frequent spiritual practice.

But what John is wanting us to see is that if Christ Jesus has obliterated death, history has been set upon a new course. Those individuals or nations who seek to dominate by threat of death are in fact now impotent. That form of power is illusory.

In Christ Jesus, God has come to pass through death, to return to us through resurrection, to give us a peace that is otherworldly. "My peace I give to you."

People who live in this, and from this, otherworldly peace, are the ones driving history now

People who live in this, and from this, otherworldly peace, are indeed freed from their sins. Not that they do not sin, but that God's grace has their heart, there is NEVER a question of God's love, they are at rest in that otherworldly peace and from that peace, in that peace, they are free

We are free, to lose ourselves in God, lose ourselves for love.

"Grace to you and peace from him who was and is and is to come."

"To Christ be glory and dominion forever and ever."

# SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD-GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

November 25, 2018

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

We believe in God, who is older than eternity

**AND YOUNGER THAN OUR NEXT BREATH**

We believe in Jesus Christ, ascended to heaven

**THAT HE MIGHT BE PRESENT AT ALL TIMES TO ALL PEOPLE**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives good gifts

**EVER LEADING US INTO TRUTH AND FREEDOM**

Lighting of the Candles

“He rescued us from the domain of darkness...” Colossians

**277 Christians We Have Met to Worship**

We Welcome One Another as Christ

**554 You Are My Hiding Place**

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

“He is the image of the invisible God...” Colossians

Children's Circle

All children thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own “Worship and Wonder” time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

Love Creating, Grace Abounding, Peace Abiding

**PREPARE OUR HEARTS TO RECEIVE YOUR WORD, AMEN**

THE LESSON REVELATION 1: 4-8

The Meditation “Free” Rev. Rob Carr

**Ever-Loving God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature, grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, amen**

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

The Offering

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below**

**Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.  
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

**403 In Remembrance of Me**

Welcome to the Table

In Christ, everything in heaven and on earth was created  
**THE WHOLE UNIVERSE HAS BEEN CREATED THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM**  
He exists before everything, and in him all things are held together  
**IN HIM THE COMPLETE BEING OF GOD, BY GOD'S OWN CHOICE, CAME TO DWELL**

The Words of Institution

Put on garments that suit God's chosen people, God's beloved  
**COMPASSION, KINDNESS, HUMILITY, GENTLENESS, PATIENCE**  
Let the message of Christ dwell among you in all its richness  
**IN HIM LIE HIDDEN ALL GOD'S TREASURES OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE**

The Communion Prayer

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth,  
as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin  
against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, amen.**

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.

The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation  
Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option  
Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

**495 Weave**

Our faith is light in darkness  
**THIS LIGHT IS CHRIST, OUR ENDLESS DAY, AMEN**

**TO OUR GUESTS----WELCOME!**

**SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE**

**WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY**

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available before and after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via Facebook and these websites

[www.nocckc.org](http://www.nocckc.org) [www.kcdisciples.org](http://www.kcdisciples.org) [www.disciples.org](http://www.disciples.org)

# OUR LIFE TOGETHER

## THIS WEEK

Monday 6PM Troop 900  
Tuesday 9:45AM Men's Bible Group  
Tuesday 6PM Pack 900  
Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry  
Thursday 6PM Girl Scouts  
Saturday 7:45AM Men's Breakfast  
Saturday 9AM Centering Prayer  
Saturday 10AM Homes Association Meeting

## UPCOMING

Next Sunday Congregational Meeting Following Worship  
Next Sunday NOCC Kids and Youth---Christmas Activities!  
Sunday December 9 5PM Talent Show  
Friday December 14 6-8PM Kids Movie Night---parents night out.  
Sunday December 23 10:15AM  
**NOCC CHOIR PRESENTS CHRISTMAS CANTATA**

Keep these items in mind as you consider the remarkable ministry  
of our friends at CHERITH BROOK.  
Baking Soda, Sugar, Creamer, Dish Soap, Rice, Salt and Pepper, Tissues, Toilet Paper,  
Deodorant, Razors, Toothbrushes, Feminine Products, Ibuprofen and Tylenol,  
Shower Gel, Sleeping Bags.  
Special Need: An Industrial Refrigerator.

### **SOWING A SEED-GROWING OUR VISION 2016-2018**

Our campaign prayer: We want what you want God. Open each heart and mind to Christ, our Light.  
Guide us together by your Holy Spirit, to trust in your will, amen.