



EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 23, 2025 8:00 AND 10:30 A.M.

917 Pond Road, Loudon, TN 37774
865-986-2390

www.episcopalloudon.com
#episcopalloudon



GLORIFYING GOD BY
REFRESHING SOULS | BRIDGING COMMUNITIES | ENGAGING PEOPLE IN SERVICE

Good morning! We're so glad you chose to be here at Resurrection today. Whether you're here for the first time, or are a life-long member, Resurrection is a hopeful, healing, transformation-minded kind of place, a place where everyone is welcome and can grow their relationship with God and with one another.

If you are here for the *first time* (or if you just haven't gotten around to it yet), please fill out a pew card and put it in the offering plate to let us know you were here. To receive our weekly email bulletin, be sure to include your email address. And let us know if you would like to connect with our parish life and ministries; we're happy to help you find your spot!

Our services follow *The Book of Common Prayer*, the red book in your pew rack. If you'd like to use the book to follow the service, instead of this order of service booklet, we begin on page 355. Unless otherwise marked, our hymns are from the blue *Hymnal 1982*. A hymn noted "S-xxx" is part of the service music, found at the front of the hymnal, appearing before the regular congregational hymns begin. For example, S-280 (*The Gloria*) is found before hymn 1.

To learn more about Resurrection, check out www.episcopalloudon.com,
email us at office@episcopalloudon.com, or
find us on Facebook or Instagram.

Fill out a visitor card or email office@episcopalloudon.com to subscribe to our weekly church email, the *Parish Tidings*, for all the latest information from Resurrection.

If you can't make it here in person, join us at 10:30, live on Facebook:
facebook.com/episcopalloudon.

Holy Eucharist, Rite II

The Word of God

Prelude

Entrance Hymn

The king of love my shepherd is

Please stand as able.

Hymnal 646

Opening Acclamation

BCP 355

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for Purity

All Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Gloria *(Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.)*

Hymnal S-280

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

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.**

The Lessons

The First Lesson: Jeremiah 23: 1-6

Lector A reading from the Book of Jeremiah.

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 16 The Song of Zechariah Luke 1: 68-79

BCP 92

Lector We will read the Canticle responsively by half verse.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, *

holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation *

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Lector and People

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.

The Second Lesson: Colossians 1: 11-20

Lector A reading from the Letter to the Colossians.

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers-- all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Lector The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn (*only at 10:30*)

Please stand as able.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise (verses 1 & 2)

Hymnal 423

The Gospel: Luke 23: 33-43

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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 Jesus on the cross; 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.”

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sequence Hymn (*only at 10:30*)

Immortal, invisible, God only wise (verses 3 & 4)

Hymnal 423

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Bridges

We believe in one God,
 the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God,
 eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light,
 true God from true God,
 begotten, not made,
 of one Being with the Father.
 Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven:
 by the power of the Holy Spirit
 he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
 and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
 he suffered death and was buried.
 On the third day he rose again
 in accordance with the Scriptures;
 he ascended into heaven
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
 and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
 With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
 He has spoken through the Prophets.
 We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
 We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look for the resurrection of the dead,
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People, Form VI

BCP 392

*Please assume a posture of prayer, whether standing, sitting, or kneeling as able.
 Please add those intercessions and thanksgivings on your heart, silently or
 aloud, at the appropriate points in the prayers.*

Lector In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Hold a moment of silence.

For all our people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community of Loudon County, Tennessee, the nation, and the world;

For all who work for justice and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Sarah, our Archbishop-designate; Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Brian, our Diocesan Bishop; and for all bishops and other ministers;

For all who serve God in the Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation, praying especially for **the McAfee family, Ruth & Frank, Ginny, Diane & Cal, Jim, Tom, Marshall S., Kathleen, Brenda B., Jackie C., and David H.; and for all your children who suffer the effects of war, oppression, or natural disasters.**

Hold a moment of silence. The People may add their own petitions.

Hear us, Lord.

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Hold a moment of silence. The People may add their own petitions.

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, especially for Jenon, that they may have a place in your heavenly kingdom.

Hold a moment of silence. The People may add their own petitions.

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

Celebrant O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Continuing in a posture of prayer, we will hold a moment of silence for individual, silent confessions before the priest leads us into the words of corporate confession.

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Celebrant and People

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Please stand as able.

Celebrant May the peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us show one another a sign of God's peace.

The Holy Communion

Celebrant Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2a*

Offertory Music

Doxology (*Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.*)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Celebrant
People

For all things come from you, O Lord;
and of your own have we given you.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361

Sursum Corda (Lift Up Your Hearts) *(Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.)*

Celebrant The Lord be with you,

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus *(Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.)*

Hymnal S-124

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Celebrant Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

Celebrant On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Celebrant We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Celebrant Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

AMEN. (*Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.*)

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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 trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread and a period of silence is kept.

Celebrant Alleluia, Christ, our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Fraction Hymn *(Spoken at 8:00. Sung at 10:30.)*

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: Grant us peace.

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God.

We encourage you to come forward to receive Holy Communion as you feel comfortable. Remain seated, until the usher directs you forward to the communion rail. After receiving communion, return to your seat by the side aisle. so that traffic flows one way.

If you would prefer communion be brought to you at your seat, please let an usher know and, as always, we will be happy to do so. If you prefer not to receive communion, please cross your arms over your chest as a sign that you prefer a blessing.

Communion Music

Post-Communion Prayer

BCP 366

Celebrant Let us pray.

All Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Post-Communion Hymn *(only at 10:30)*

O worship the king, all glorious above

Hymnal 388

The Dismissal

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Postlude

**Flowers today are given to the Glory of God
in memory of Jack H. (Trey) Lefler III by Jack and Linda Lefler.**

What is the meaning of Christ the King Sunday?

by Melissa Hayes, Director of Liturgy, All Saints Episcopal Church, Pasadena

When we first started exploring this history of the feast of Christ the King Sunday, I assumed it had been in our lectionary since the publication of the King James Bible (1611) – or at least the composition of Handel’s Messiah (1741). I decided to research its history going to the library and learn a bit more about it. I thought the first source was a joke – or at least a mistake: it claimed the feast day was established in 1925! Other sources confirmed that:

Pope Pius XI instituted the Feast of Christ the King in 1925 to remind Christians that their allegiance was to their spiritual ruler in heaven as opposed to earthly supremacy, which was claimed by Benito Mussolini.

The encyclical *Quas Primas*, symbolically marked that Christ must reign now temporally. In its replacing of the feast on the last Sunday of Pentecost, the later Mass of Paul VI calendar symbolized the new orientation of the Second Vatican Council in that Christ will reign, not now among nations, but at the end of time.

The Anglican Church, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Methodists joined in adding this Feast Day to their lectionary. I couldn’t find the Feast Day in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, but it does appear in the 1979 version (our current version.)

To 21st century ears the language of Christ the King Sunday can sound like heavy-handed, hierarchical hold-over from our patriarch-dominated past – and yet it makes perfect sense when you realize it was a response to the growing fascist movement in Europe.

Our church discussed Jesus standing against the empire and what that leadership looks like. We admitted our human response to someone of great spiritual authenticity is to venerate them – even if titles and hierarchies are not important to them. Our findings led us to conclude that Jesus’ “kingship” does not involve domination or triumphalism — but the radical, all-powerful compassion and love of Jesus seeking justice for all.

Parish Announcements, Prayers & Thanksgivings

There's still time to order your Christmas wreath from Church of the Resurrection!

Each wreath will be decorated with a hand-tied big red velvet bow, three pinecones, and a handcrafted Christmas pottery ornament. We will purchase the wreaths again from sellers in Northeast Tennessee, to assist those who were impacted by Hurricane Helene in 2024.

Our wreaths come in three sizes:

Small (15 inches): \$22

Medium (24 inches): \$32

Large (36 inches): \$50

25-ft. garland: \$30

To purchase, contact one of our sellers:

8 a.m.: Peggy Rogers; 10:30: Janey Coombes, Dianna Stimpson, Bev Baumgardner; Other: Jean Cardwell, Oralee Adams, Kathy Pittman

Episcopal Church Women

Wreath Assembly Day Tuesday, December 2

beginning at 9 a.m. in the Parish Hall

Lunch will be provided!

**We need your help to assemble our wreaths
by volunteering on Wreath Assembly Day at
the Parish Hall on Tuesday, December 2.**

Sign-up sheet is on the table in the Parish Hall.

You can help in many ways, from decorating wreaths, to bringing supplies to the tables, to helping provide a lunch of soup, sandwiches, and cookies. We have enough jobs for everyone, with lots of fellowship included!

***Call Jean Cardwell or Kathy Pittman
if you have any questions.***

Our parish prayer list

Ruth & Frank, Ginny, Diane & Cal;

Jim; Tom; Marshall S; Kathleen;

Brenda B.; Jackie C.; David H.

Continuing prayers for

Jim; Daphne; Rosemary O.; the Hentchel family;

Pat; Claire; Sandy; Rob & Sherry; Cheri; Jane;

Shannon; Jim; Mel; Wayne; Diana N.; Jack; Ashley; Ray-

nella; Ed & Jean; Kim E.; Joe; Beverly; Grace;

Virginia; Betty Anne; Janey; Johnny; and Karen H.

Pray for our vestry leaders

Class of 2025: Lisa A., Donna B., Diane V.K.

Class of 2026: Alice A., Dianna S., Jenny L.

Class of 2027: Bev B., Karen B., Mark H.

Officers: Jenny L., Diane V.K., Sally L.

Upcoming birthdays

Jane Mocilac November 22

Emily Fiebke November 22

Elijah Fiebke November 25

Pat Hinton November 25

Amy Lee November 26

Carolyn Parker November 26

David McAfee November 28

Bonnie Smith November 30

Ruth Hennessy December 4

Dave St. John December 12

Jerry Ploeger December 17

Jenny Lucas December 18

Karen Blakley December 18

Vicky St. John December 23

David Baumgardner December 24

Keytha Graves December 25

Mel Hines December 30

Becky Bridges December 31

Upcoming anniversaries

Pam & David McAfee November 21

Rosemary & Gregg Kitts December 11

Nancy & Will Heathcote December 22

Jeanette & Paul Fiebke December 22

For Your Calendars

THIS WEEK

Nov. 23	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.		
Acolyte	Donna Bye	Mark Smith	Altar Guild	Jenny Lucas &
Euch. Minister	Andrew Wilkinson	Judy Egan		Dianna Stimpson
Lector	Diane Van Koughnett	Bonnie Smith	Flower Guild	Bev Baumgardner
Ushers	Jerry Ploeger	Art Stewart & Jenny Lucas	Accompanist	Alice Anderson
Coffee Hour	Erlys Ploeger	Virginia Perry	Celebrant-Preacher	Rebecca Bridges
Video	n/a	Bob Cantine	Offering Counters	Carolyn Parker&
Chancellor	Carl Bye	Art Stewart		Alice Anderson-

NEXT WEEK

Nov. 30	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.		
Acolyte	Holly Pate	Drew Hawley	Altar Guild	Jenny Lucas &
Euch. Minister	Andrew Wilkinson	Jane Mocilac		Dianna Stimpson
Lector	Mark Hennes	Mark Smith	Flower Guild	Rosemary Kitts
Ushers	Jen Hennes	David Baumgardner	Accompanist	Star Stevens
Coffee Hour	Rosemary Kitts	Ginnie Tolbert	Celebrant-Preacher	Rebecca Bridges
Video	n/a	Bill Schwindt	Offering Counters	Carolyn Parker&
Chancellor	Jerry Ploeger	Betsy Schwindt		Alice Anderson

This week at Resurrection

Monday, November 24

10:30 a.m. Companions group

Tuesday, November 25

1:00 p.m. Education for Ministry

Wednesday, November 26

12:00 p.m. Noonday Eucharist

12:45 p.m. Psalms Bible Study

Sunday, November 30

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist, spoken

10:30 a.m. - Holy Eucharist, choral

Save the Date: Upcoming Parish Events

Tuesday, December 2

9:00 a.m. ECW Wreath Assembly Day

Sunday, December 14

4:00 p.m. Paper Bag Pageant

Tuesday, January 6

4-6 p.m. Three Kings Epiphany Party

Sunday, January 11

Annual Parish Meeting

Office hours

Tuesdays: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Wednesdays: 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Fridays: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To contact our Parish Administrator Amy Lee,
email her at office@episcopalloudon.com.

Announcements deadline

To submit an item to be considered
for inclusion in The Tidings weekly email
and/or the printed bulletin announcements,
please be sure to submit your information
to Rev. Becky (rector@episcopalloudon.com)
by Wednesdays at 9 a.m.

To contact our priest, the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Bridges,
email rector@episcopalloudon.com
or call the church at (865) 986-2390.

Urgent pastoral needs after hours: (865) 242-9240.

TODAY'S ART

***Christ Pantocrator*, from *The Bible of St Louis* (Rich Bible of Toledo; Bible of Toledo), 1226–34, Illuminated manuscript, 422 x 300 mm, Toledo Cathedral; Vol.1, fol. 1v. Web Gallery of Art: Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15498470>**

The Toledo Bible was created for the religious instruction of Louis IX of France. Such Bibles, known as Bibles Moralisées, used pictures accompanied by short descriptions to draw theological/allegorical and moral meanings from select Old and New Testament passages/events.

Theological/allegorical meanings suffuse the work: God the Son, Pantocrator, is the ruler and creator of the universe, but he is crowned by a cruciform nimbus; his blue cloak over his brown tunic symbolizes the Word becoming flesh; his throne and feet on a gold sphere indicate his divinity; the background gold leaf represents the heavens; the angelic figures at each corner, the heavenly host. He is enthroned in the act of creation; his left hand supporting the universe and the compass in his right inscribing the unformed, chaotic deep of Genesis 1:1 (below) with order.

The illumination also captures ancient and medieval teachings about God Pantocrator as both Son and nurturing, birthing Mother. English anchorite and mystic Julian of Norwich (c.1342–c.1430) presents a vivid expression of this tradition: '[O]ur Saviour is our very mother in whom we be endlessly born, and never shall come out of him' (Revelations of Divine Love 14.52).

The Toledo Bible image is similarly lively and dramatic. The orb held between the Son's spread legs depicts the separated waters under the dome of Genesis 1:6–7. But as its position suggests, it is also a womb. This illumination offers a provocative aid for visualizing Colossians 1:16, that, 'in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him'. Creation literally passes 'through him'.

Both Colossians and the Pantocrator of the Toledo Bible express a God simultaneously transcendent and immanent; enthroned in heaven (Colossians 3:1) and incarnate (1:15, 19); a God in and for whom all creation exists; God the Son, ever present and always inscribing and birthing the always new and vital universe after his own youthful image.

In his hands, on, from, and through his lap, 'all things hold together' (1:17) and find their origin and destination in 'the first born of all creation' (1:15).

References

Julian of Norwich. 1999. *Revelations of Divine Love* (New York: Penguin Classics).

Commentary by Harry O. Maier. 2018. 'Pantocrator Mother of Creation,' in *The Visual Commentary on Scripture*, edited by Ben Quash. (London: The Visual Commentary on Scripture Foundation). [Accessed 19.11.2025] <https://thevcs.org/cosmic-christ-and-his-gospel#pantocrator-mother-creation>.
