

# The Lord Is King

*Words by Josiah Conder (1824); Music by Nathan Partain (2003)*

# Old Orchard Church

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 18, 2011 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

## Special Children's Worship

### The Celebration of Jesus Christ: God With Us, God Like Us

God had always been with his people.  
But in the incarnation of the eternal Son  
God is with his people that he might be like them!  
And to what end?  
In the words of one of the ancients:

*In his unbounded love,  
God became what we are,  
That he might make us what he is.*

Blessed be the God of heaven and earth who sent Christ,  
that in due time we might share the Divine Nature,  
and even now, by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
pass from one degree of glory to another!



### Today's Scripture

New Testament Lesson: Luke 2:1-7, Luke 2:8-14

## God With Us, God Like Us

I grasped that over it [the chasm between heaven and earth] lay, as it were, a cable-bridge, frail, swaying, but passable. And this bridge, this reconciliation between the black despair of lying bound and gagged in the tiny dungeon of ego, and soaring upwards into the white radiance of God's universal love -- this bridge was the Incarnation, whose truth expresses that of the desperate need it meets. Because of our physical hunger we know there is bread; because of our spiritual hunger we know there is Christ.

*Malcolm Muggeridge, journalist (20th century)*

The implications of the name **Immanuel** are both comforting and unsettling. Comforting, because He has come to share the danger as well as the drudgery of our everyday lives. He desires to weep with us and to wipe away our tears. And what seems most bizarre, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, longs to share in and to be the source of the laughter and the joy we all too rarely know.

The implications are unsettling. It is one thing to claim that God looks down upon us, from a safe distance, and speaks to us (via long distance, we hope). But to say that He is right here, is to put ourselves and Him in a totally new situation. He is no longer the calm and benevolent observer in the sky, the kindly old caricature with the beard. His image becomes that of Jesus, who wept and laughed, who fasted and feasted, and who, above all, was fully present to those He loved. He was there with them. He is here with us.

*Michael Card, guitarist & songwriter (20th century)*

Jesus became a human being because God the compassionate One could not suffer and lacked a back to be beaten. God needed a back like our backs on which to receive blows and thereby to perform compassion as well as to preach it.

*Meister Eckhart, German monk (14th century)*

In the Incarnation, God the Son takes the body and human soul of Jesus, and, through that, the whole environment of Nature, all the creaturely predicament, into His own being. So that "He came down from Heaven" can almost be transposed into "Heaven drew earth up into it," and locality, limitation, sleep, sweat, footsore weariness, frustration, pain, doubt, and death, are, from before all worlds, known by God from within. The pure light walks the earth; the darkness, received into the heart of Deity, is there swallowed up. Where, except in uncreated light, can the darkness be drowned?

*C.S. Lewis, Cambridge scholar (20th century)*