

Christ Be My Leader

By Timothy Dudley-Smith

See print copy for words.

**I will raise up for them a
prophet like you from
among their brothers;
I will put my words
in his mouth, and
he will tell them everything
I command him.**

(Deuteronomy 18:18)

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.**

Credits

“Christ Be My Leader” © 1961, 1964 Hope Publishing Company. CCLI 188763

“Cover art: “Christ Preaching.” Etching by Rembrandt (1652).

Old Orchard Church
October 28, 2012— 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

Celebrating The Three Offices of Christ: Jesus Our Prophet

And the ordination of Kirk Norris

**Thanks be to Him who speaks to us,
Who does not leave us to pool our ignorance
Nor guess at the meaning of the world.**

**Blessed be the Name of him
who announces from outside history,
that which is true, for the sake of love.**

**Praise to our Lord Jesus Christ,
sent by the Father to fulfill a promise,
to be The Prophet that was to come.**

**He speaks with authority,
revealing mysteries of the high God;
revealing a world renewed and humankind reunited
by the power of his cross.**

**O Christ, our living Prophet, Priest, and King!
Glorious names we call you,
glorious honor we give you!
Alleluia!**



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Deuteronomy 18:15-22

New Testament Lesson: Hebrews 1:1-3

Sermon

“The Gospel’s Ministry:
Making the Church a Demonstration of Divine Wisdom”
Ephesians 3:7-13
Ron Lutjens, pastor, preaching

Three Things at Once

We understand the concept of “office.” Last year, on corruption charges, the governor of Illinois was, as we say, “driven out of office.” The word comes from the Latin *officium*, meaning duty or service.

The idea that Christ’s work of redemption on our behalf can be understood as his filling the three Old Testament *offices* of prophet, priest, and king, goes back to the 4th century A.D. It remained a prominent part of the Greek and Russian Orthodox understanding of Christ’s work, and at the time of the Reformation, was picked up by John Calvin. Ever since then, it has been an important category in the way Reformed Christians understand what Christ came into the world to do. And it’s not just academic.

The New Testament teaches that the Old Testament points to Christ: he is shadowed and prefigured in everything God does with his people from the expelling of Adam and Eve from Eden right on down through Israel’s history. Do you want to know why Jesus came teaching and preaching? Then study what an Old Testament **prophet** does. Do you want to know why Jesus came to die? Then study what an Old Testament **priest** does. Do you want to know why Jesus came proclaiming that in his arrival the Kingdom of God had broken in on the world? Then study what an Old Testament **king** does.

Prophet, priest, and king—these were the three great offices of leadership in the Old Testament. And each pictures some aspect of what Christ, the eternal Son, came to do for us: a prophet speaks the infallible truth of God in a world of counterfeits, lies, half-truths and ignorance; a priest offers atoning sacrifice for guilt in a world that either refuses responsibility for sin or else teaches us to “work it off” ourselves; a king rules justly, restraining evil and establishing and protecting what’s good; he defends his citizens from their enemies in a world too often driven by the lust of conquest, or by greed, manipulation, and the exploitation of the weak.

We need a faithful prophet, because without an authoritative word from Above we are left with mere opinions about what life means. We need a sympathetic priest because without a divine Advocate, our real moral guilt exposes us to the law of the universe: divine retribution. And we need a good king because without the might and power of someone looking after us, our enemies—Sin, Death, and the Devil—would ruin us. But thanks be to God—Christ is all three of these to us: Prophet, Priest, and King!

Today, ponder the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and give thanks that God has not been a silent onlooker to the plight of the world, lost in its confusions:

- Q. 24** How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?
A. Christ executes the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

—Ron Lutjens