

Worship Plan - Church Year A

2022-2023



Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 24) - 10/22/2023

SERIES THEME

GODLY GOVERNMENT

NOTE: This is a standalone weekend. Thus, this serves as a good weekend if a congregation wants to have some sort of special Sunday: stewardship emphasis, mission festival, Fall outreach weekend, etc. The worship planner could set these Propers aside and pick whatever free texts serve the purpose of that weekend. If your church isn't doing that, these texts serve well for this standalone weekend. In politically divided times, they drive home what God says about his providence in establishing government.

THEME OF THE DAY

GODLY GOVERNMENT

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established” (Romans 13:1). Note the absolute language: *no* authority. None. Stated positively, *every* government and *all* government authority figures have power only because God gave it to them. Therefore, as citizens of the United States, we don't support the government because those we voted for were elected or because we approve of the current tax policy or even because freedom of religion is enshrined in the First Amendment. We support our government simply because it was instituted by God. Jesus himself taught that we owe respect and obedience to our government, even when it doesn't align with our political preferences.

Christians sometimes struggle with this. We see that government and rulers can be evil. Certainly, if government asks us to sin, “we must obey God rather than human beings” (Acts 5:29). But the existence of corrupt government and evil rulers does not negate what Scripture says to be true. “There is no authority except that which *God has established.*” Therefore, when we talk about “godly government” we are not saying that the only legitimate governments are those who do what is perfectly godly. We are confessing our belief that the King of kings is in perfect control of all the governments of this world, and that he works in all things—including tyrants and dictators—for the eternal good of his dear children.

FIRST READING

Daniel 1:3-21 – Daniel and his friends faithfully served the government that God had placed over them—even though this was the government that had conquered their city and carried them off into exile.

SECOND READING

***Romans 13:1-7 – St. Paul leaves no loopholes. Everyone is to submit to the governing authorities precisely because they have been established by God.

GOSPEL

Matthew 22:15-22 – Jesus teaches we are to give the government what belongs to the government. But we are not to give to the government what belongs only to God.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Conservative:

The Service (hymn tune canticles)

Ambitious:

Opening Hymn:

772 - O God Most High, Your Saints Below

or

616 - Hallelujah! Sing Praise to Your Creator

Psalm of the Day:

96

Gospel Acclamation Proper Verse:

Alleluia. In Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. Alleluia.

Gospel Acclamation setting:

Additional Settings in Service Builder

Hymn of the Day:

619 Praise the Almighty; My Soul, Adore Him

Third Hymn or Distribution Hymn:

*671 - Your Body, Given for Me, O Savior

Closing Hymn:

774 - God Bless Our Native Land

Optional New Hymns, perhaps requiring advance preparation/cantors:

616 - Hallelujah! Sing Praise to Your Creator

Notes for the conservative service:

616 - not too difficult but perhaps introduce st. 1

Notes for the ambitious service: