

Reign of Christ Sunday
November 21, 2021
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Well, my friends, today is Reign of Christ Sunday, the last Sunday of the church year. Next Sunday Advent begins, and we will begin anew, the walk with Jesus, the walk through the seasons of his life and his teachings.

But first, we get to stop and take a breath before the busy-ness, we get to pause in wonder and reflect upon the Christ whose birth we will spend the next month anticipating.

It may surprise you to know that Reign of Christ Sunday is a relatively new development. It doesn't bear the history of many long-held traditions such as All Saints or Christmas or Easter and it does not possess the deep and traditional biblical backing of these celebrations. Pope Pius XI brought Christ the King Sunday into the church year quite recently in terms of Christian tradition. It was in 1925, which is, coincidentally, the year the United Church came into being. The Pope was attempting to do several things, but mainly he wanted to stem a rising spirit of nationalism and secularism and he wanted to advance the message of God in Christ **over and against** that of the political forces moving in the world at that time – forces personified in people like Mussolini and Hitler.

We can see his reasoning, can't we? It's about ultimate authority; authority and the power to sway public thinking. It's about saying Jesus is still the Messiah; that it is still **he** who will deliver his people.

So today, we pause and ask - who is the Christ that we're about to celebrate? Who is this man - this god - this king – this deliverer whose birth we await?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could go back and ask the people who really knew him, people who walked with him, talked with him, were healed by him?

Wouldn't it be wonderful to ask "Did you know Jesus?" "Will you tell me about Jesus so I might know him better?"

It would be wonderful – so let's do it – let's ask did you know Jesus.