

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 4 May 2025

AM Worship – The Rev. Matthew Judd preaching

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-3

Opening Psalm: Psalm 8A “O LORD, Our Lord, in All the Earth”

Confession of Sin

O great and everlasting God, Who dwells in unapproachable light, Who searches and knows the thoughts and intentions of the heart; We confess that we have not loved You with all our heart, nor with all our soul, nor with all our mind, nor with all our strength; Nor our neighbors as ourselves. We have loved what we ought not to have loved; We have coveted what is not ours; We have not been content with Your provisions for us. We have complained in our hearts about our family, about our friends, about our health, about our occupations, about Your church, and about our trials. We have sought our security in those things which perish, rather than in You, the Everlasting God. Chasten, cleanse, and forgive us, through Jesus Christ, who is able for all time to save us who approach You through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Romans 1:16-17

Hymn of Preparation: Hymn 337 “Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended”

Old Covenant Reading: Isaiah 53:1-12

New Covenant Reading: Mark 15:1-39

Sermon Title: *Who Crucified Christ?*

Hymn of Response: Hymn 351 “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Hymn: Hymn 156 “Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies”

PM Worship

62A My Soul in Silence Waits for God

479 Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting

411 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 62

New Covenant Reading: Luke 12:22-34

Sermon Title: *For God Alone*

Adult Sunday School – The Holy Spirit & the Believer, Part I

Suggested Preparations

Monday (4/28) Read and discuss Mark 15:1–39

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (ESV)

William Lane writes:

By handing Jesus over to the Roman magistrate and successfully prosecuting their complaint, the chief priests and scribes brought to fruition a long-nurtured desire to destroy Him. Now they took the opportunity to congratulate themselves on their success. Though their words were not directly addressed to Jesus, the subject of their mockery was the powerlessness of the one nailed to the cross, and the inscription fastened to it. When they refer to others He had “saved” they undoubtedly think of Jesus’ healing ministry, but Mark intends his readers to understand these words in their full Christian sense. Paradoxically, the scornful words of verse 31b expressed a profound truth. If Jesus was to fulfil His mission on behalf of men He could not save Himself from the suffering appointed by God. When the Jewish leaders mocked Jesus’ messianic claim they substituted for Pilate’s wording “King of the Jews” another expression. “Israel” is the proper designation for the people of God and “the King of Israel” is the correct Palestinian form of the claim of Jesus. There is cruel sarcasm in the challenge “come down now,” which seeks to throw into bold relief Jesus’ helplessness, while the addition “that we may see and believe” clothes their taunt in the garb of piety. The contempt shown for Jesus by those gathered about the cross may have encouraged the two others who were crucified to vent their rage upon Him. In their eyes Jesus was a contemptible caricature of sovereignty, and they reproached Him.

Read or sing Psalm 8A “O LORD, Our Lord, in All the Earth”

Tuesday (4/29) Read and discuss Matthew 26:57–75

Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” And the high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, saying, “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?”

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” After a little while the bystanders came

up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly. (ESV)

Grant Osborne writes:

Jesus will return as the final Judge and conquering King and will have eternal dominion over His creation. The single most important truth of human history is found right here in Jesus Christ. In His earthly humiliation and subjection, He set in motion those divine forces that would bring Him back in glory and power. Weakness would be turned to strength, and humiliation to exultation. The judged would become Judge, and the conquered would conquer. In Revelation 12:11, 13:7 another important truth is added to this: we will participate in His glory with Him. In this world we are beaten down and subjected to ignominy, but that very defeat is our victory. When Satan takes the life of one of the saints, he is helping place another nail in his own coffin! In entering Judas and taking Christ to the cross, Satan participated in his own defeat. That is replicated whenever he martyrs one of God’s children.

Read or sing Hymn 337 “Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended”

Wednesday (4/29) Read and discuss Isaiah 53:1-12

Who has believed what he has heard from us?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him

the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.
By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?
And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors. (ESV)

Willem VanGemenen writes:

The servant suffered not for Himself, but rather to bear “our sorrows,” “our transgressions,” and “our iniquities.” The benefits of the vicarious suffering of the servant include reconciliation to God and forgiveness. He carried the sins and guilt of the people; therefore, He was able to bring the people of God back into fellowship with their heavenly Father. All mankind has gone astray, but through the suffering of the servant there is still the possibility for peace and healing. Jesus Christ gave Himself that He could be our peace and that through Him we could experience healing and restoration of fellowship with the heavenly Father.

The servant Himself did nothing wrong. He did no violence, nor did He speak in a deceptive way. Why, then, did Yahweh lay such suffering upon Him? The reasons for the suffering must be found in the nature of the

judgement of God. The LORD brought Him through torture, judgment, death, and finally burial. In these verses Isaiah describes how the servant was oppressed and afflicted, how He did not receive a just sentence. He was put to death and buried like a criminal. Even though His suffering was unjust, the servant accepted His humiliation quietly, patiently, and obediently. He is compared to a lamb which is led to the slaughter or to a sheep when it is being sheared. Quietly He received the judgment from God because He bore that judgment for others.

The prophet returns to the blessed effect of the suffering of the servant. The servant's death was not in vain. He had done the LORD's will, even when He was crushed. He suffered as a human "guilt offering." The guilt offering was an expiatory offering in addition to the sin offering. The guilty offering anticipated the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has accepted the guilt offering of the suffering servant as the basis for extending the benefits of reconciliation and forgiveness. In life He identified with our toil, as part of the human condition. He suffered as a rebel against God. The LORD rewards Him with "life," "offspring," success, and honor. Through Him many may be justified. The servant suffered on behalf of others. They share in His benefits, if they turn to Him as the means of forgiveness by reconciliation with the heavenly Father.

Read or sing Hymn 351 "How Deep the Father's Love for Us"

Thursday (5/1) Read and discuss Luke 12:22-34

And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (ESV)

David Garland writes:

The quest for economic security prevents one from becoming a disciple who will follow Jesus all the way to the cross. Therefore, Jesus commands His disciples not to become so worried by concerns for daily sustenance or material prosperity that it causes them to be too distracted to function as disciples. Anxiety leads to nervousness, a want of courage, loss of confidence, misgivings, despondency, hankering for security at all costs, and even panic. None of these emotions characterizes a faithful disciple.

Jesus is not discouraging forethought but nervous anxiety. Sowing, reaping, and gathering (traditional male functions) and toiling and spinning (traditional female functions) can be done with anxiety or with faith. Manson writes that Jesus is not simply contrasting the beauty of nature with human artistry but making this point:

The flower has a glory of its own not by any effort of its own, but simply by being what God meant it to be, no more no less. The ambitions and pride of a Solomon may and do run counter to God's will, so that the more he becomes what he desires to be, the less he resembles what God meant him to be. He is clothed indeed with a glory of sorts, but it is a glory that comes short of the divine glory revealed in wildflowers. In the natural world God's will is done because there is no other will competing with His. In the world of self-conscious beings the case is different. Pitting their wills against God's they can fall below the level of the beasts of the field or inanimate things. That is the risk of freedom. On the other hand, they have the capacity of bringing their wills into subjection to God's will: and so rising to a higher glory. ... If the glory of Solomon falls below that of the lilies of the fields, the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is something immeasurably far above anything in the natural world.

Friday (5/2) Read and discuss Psalm 62

For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.
He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

How long will all of you attack a man
to batter him,
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?
They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.
They take pleasure in falsehood.
They bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse. Selah

For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,

for my hope is from him.
He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my salvation and my glory;
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. Selah

Those of low estate are but a breath;
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
Put no trust in extortion;
set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, set not your heart on them.

Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.
For you will render to a man
according to his work. (ESV)

Tim Keller writes:

This is a psalm for those under stress and the first verse is the key to facing it. Literally it says, “Only toward God my soul is silence.” When we are in trouble our soul chatters to us, “We *have* to have this, or we won’t make it. This *must* happen, or all is lost.” The assumption is that God alone will not be enough – some other circumstance or condition or possession is necessary to be happy and secure. David, however, learned to tell his soul, “I need only one thing to survive and thrive – and I have it. I need only God and His all-powerful fatherly love and care – everything else is expendable.” When this realization sinks in, you will “never be shaken.”

In verse 5, David counsels himself with the lesson of verse 1. The battle to shape our hearts with the truths our minds know is never over. And here indeed is the great truth of the Bible, the Gospel – salvation comes from God alone, not from ourselves or any effort we can produce. “To the one who does not work but trusts [rests in] God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness” (Romans 4:5). David talks not just to himself but to “you people” (verse 8). We can best help others with their fears and distress when we have been through our own and found God faithful, our rock and our refuge.

If we trust God alone, we no longer fully trust anything else. We don't trust either "the people" or the elites (verse 9). Neither socialism nor capitalism will bring a better world. We don't trust in any career path – respectable or otherwise – to fulfill us. What is the one thing you can depend on? That God is both strong and loving (verse 11). But how can He be both loving *and* fair, since justice demands punishment? God passed the required sentence of death on our sin and then took that punishment Himself on the cross. We can never question His love or wisdom in our life circumstances when we see the lengths to which He has gone in order to demonstrate both His justice and His love.

Read or sing Hymn 156 "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

Saturday (5/3) Read and discuss Mark 15:1–39

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

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And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."

And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!” So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” (ESV)

Tom Wright comments:

Peacekeeping forces, which have become a regular feature of our world, often have to constrain themselves in the face of severe local provocation. They can easily build up a backlog of resentment and anger against the people who are causing them trouble, who are perhaps killing or wounding some of their comrades. Even where press cameras are on the lookout for trouble, and regulations are quite strict, one hears regular tales of soldiers who frustrated beyond measure by niggling insurgents, seize the opportunity, when they have a prisoner all to themselves, to take revenge with brutal and sadistic torture.

It’s a scene like that which opens Mark’s account of Jesus’ crucifixion. The Roman troops in Jerusalem wouldn’t have been anxious about press reports, still less international courts of justice; they just got on with doing what they did well, which was keeping law and order through sheer brute force. Though some of their behavior to Jesus is simply mockery (kings and senior nobles wore purple in the ancient world), the center of it is deeply violent and offensive (the crown of thorns, the spitting, the beating with what was probably a centurion’s staff). This is what they always wanted to do to a King of the Jews, and they’re not going to spoil the chance now they’ve got it. The result is humiliation and degradation.

This ugly scene is the first of several short snapshots. As with a photograph album, Mark builds up the story of Jesus’ crucifixion through small pictures, one detail after another that together tell the story in clipped sequence, moving swiftly from scene to scene. At no point does he stay for long on a particular theme, except for the main one, which emerges over and over: that Jesus is crucified as the King of the Jews. It is because He is

bearing the fate and destiny of Israel, as its appointed representative, that His death means what it means to Mark. Israel is where the world's violence and wickedness seems to have concentrated itself (if you were writing in AD 66-70 it would be easy to believe that); but the Messiah, the King, has already taken it upon Himself, and so has made a way of rescue, of ransom, for any who will follow Him.

Prayer: Please lift up tomorrow's morning and evening worship services.