

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 29 June 2025

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-3

Opening Hymn: Hymn 224 “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

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: Hebrews 8:10-12

Hymn of Preparation: Psalm 92A “It’s Good to Thank the LORD”

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 92:1-15

New Covenant Reading: Revelation 12:7-12

Sermon Title: *Joy in Our Rock*

Hymn of Response: Psalm 92B “It is Good to Sing Your Praises”

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Hymn: 265 “In Christ Alone”

PM Worship

283 Fairest Lord Jesus

380 Crown Him with Many Crowns

402 Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

Old Covenant Reading: Zechariah 3:1-10

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 10:11-18

Sermon Title: *The New Covenant for Us*

No Sunday School – Extended Time of Fellowship

Suggested Preparations

Monday (6/23) Read and discuss Psalm 92

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.

How great are your works, O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!
The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:
that though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;
but you, O LORD, are on high forever.
For behold, your enemies, O LORD,
for behold, your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.

But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me fresh oil.
My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. (ESV)

Christopher Ash writes:

Psalm 92 invites us to enter into the joy of Jesus Christ. This joy coexists with the poignant sorrow of Psalm 90. It is a gladness of anticipation.

Several factors suggest that before it overflows to the church, Psalm 92 refers especially to the King. The exalted “horn” most often refers to the King in David’s line. The psalmist’s victory is the same as God’s victory (92:9-11). Even the metaphor of the fruitful tree is often associated with kings. Revelation 15:3-4 resonates with Psalm 92:5.

It is not difficult to imagine Jesus praying this psalm in His days on earth. He lived in paradoxical joy among His disciples and rejoiced in the Holy Spirit precisely when He experienced the deep and hidden wisdom of God in rejection and incomprehension (Luke 10:21). For the ‘joy’ set before Him, He “endured the cross.” In the days of His greatest weakness, He was confident of final victory (Matt. 26:64). He invites His faithful servants to enter into His joy.

This background of Christ's joy suggests three ways for Christians to read the psalm. First, we hear it as the gladness of Jesus our King in His prayers on earth.

Second, we celebrate that our hope is grounded on the sure victories of Jesus our King. Just as Psalm 90:17 leads to 1 Corinthians 15:58, So Psalm 92 finds its fulfillment in 1 Corinthians 15 when the risen Jesus destroys every rebel power and hands the kingdom over to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:24).

Third, we enter into His joy as we too anticipate His final victory.

Read or sing Hymn 224 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Tuesday (6/24) Read and discuss Matthew 27:57–66

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard. (ESV)

Knox Chamblin writes:

Joseph [of Arimathea] was an upright, respected, and wealthy member of the Sanhedrin who dissented from the judgment against Jesus and became His disciple. ...

By Jewish law, Jesus' body could not remain on the cross overnight (Deut. 21:22-23), particularly when the next day was a Sabbath. Yet the Romans "let bodies of crucified criminals hang in full view till they rotted away. If they were buried at all, it was only by express permission of the imperial magistrate. Such permission was usually granted to friends and relatives of the deceased who made application, but never in the case of high treason (D.A. Carson)." Pilate's contravention of this law suggests that he believed in Jesus' innocence. ...

Tombs cut out of rock had recesses and shelves for the corpses. The placing of Jesus in the rich man's own grave fulfills Isaiah 53:9 and witnesses to Joseph's devotion: "if Jesus was buried as a criminal, then the Law forbade the owner of the tomb to use it again (David Hill)." The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is probably built on the site of this tomb, a site that lay outside the city wall in Jesus' day. The burial chamber was "sealed with a cut, disk shaped stone that rolled in a slot cut into the rock. The slot was on an incline, making the grave easy to seal but difficult to open (D.A. Carson)."

Read or sing Psalm 92A "It's Good to Thank the LORD"

Wednesday (6/25) Read and discuss Revelation 12:7–12

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" (ESV)

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes writes:

The warfare against the forces of evil is not merely global, it is cosmic. Here the armies in conflict are the angelic host under the leadership of the great archangel Michael on the one side and the great archdemon, the dragon, on the other, and the engagement takes place in heaven, where the dragon has mobilized the great rebellion against God and His authority. The reference is to warfare that has long continued rather than to a particular battle, and the development of central importance here is that the climatic moment has arrived when the dragon and his angels are cast down to the earth. This does not mean that their evil influence had not previously been exercised on earth, for indeed it had, from Eden onwards. But now an event of literally crucial significance has taken place, namely, the death of the incarnate Son on the cross. The dragon's corrupting activity in the earthly sphere prior to this is perfectly clear from the way he is identified here as that ancient serpent, through whom sin was introduced into the world, and as the Devil and Satan, who is the deceiver of the whole world. As such, he is the leader of 'the destroyers of the earth' (11:18). So he has long been active in our midst. But he and his followers now suffer a critical setback and a casting down. And this is but a stage on the way to their eternal downfall, for, as

Christ said, their end is ‘the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’

The expulsion of Satan and his angels from heaven is directly associated with and follows after the completion of the Son’s redemptive mission to earth, briefly indicated in verse 5 above by the catching up of the woman’s male child to God and His throne. The fulfillment of the purpose of the incarnation is at the same time an assault on Satan’s kingdom. Thus, as Christ perceived, the casting out of demons by Himself and His disciples was symptomatic of Satan’s fall from heaven, and His offering of Himself up to death on the cross portended the expulsion of the ruler of this world. The twofold purpose of His incarnation was, first, ‘to destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil,’ and second, ‘to deliver all those who through fear of death were subjected to lifelong bondage’ (Heb. 2:14ff.). And it was on the altar of the cross that the incarnate Son ‘disarmed the principalities and powers’ and triumphantly exposed their fraudulence to the world (Col. 2:14ff). This cosmic conquest was authenticated by His resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the throne on high. The momentous events that were realized through the incarnation were the earthly aspect of the warfare in heaven; indeed, they were the central and decisive thrust of that warfare.

Read or sing Psalm 92B “It is Good to Sing Your Praises”

Thursday (6/26) Read and discuss Zechariah 3

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?” Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.” And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD was standing by.

And the angel of the LORD solemnly assured Joshua, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. In that day, declares the LORD of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree.” (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

In the presence of Yahweh's Messenger – who is the Servant, Sprout and Stone – what does the accuser say? Nothing! He is speechless! He falls to the ground like a popped balloon. What does Joshua say? Nothing! He, too, is speechless! Joshua does not argue his case. He does not deny his polluted garments. Neither does he pretend that they do not exist. Instead, Joshua trusts Yahweh's Messenger. Yahweh's Messenger says something like this to Satan: "How dare you bring charges against Joshua and My people! You are completely out of line here. You have absolutely no authority in this court. Leave immediately. I don't ever want to see you again!" The result? Joshua's filthy clothes are taken off, and Yahweh's Messenger announces his absolution: "I hereby take away your iniquity and clothe you with a festive robe."

The accuser did not give up his fight against Joshua's interceding Messenger in 519 BC. Five hundred years later, he goes to court with Him again. This time the accuser sends Judas to the garden, Pilate to his palace, and Herod to Jerusalem – all so that the crowds will render this verdict: "Crucify! Crucify Him!" The Servant spills blood. The Sprout is pruned, uprooted, and cut down. The rejected Stone is crushed to pieces.

Does this mean that the gospel promises in Zechariah 3 are null and void? Not on your life! In Zech 4:7, Zerubbabel takes a leftover stone from Solomon's temple and uses it to construct a new temple. Ezra 3:12 narrates the same event telling us: "Many [people] shouted a great shout." Grace! Grace!" [Describing] this great thanksgiving for the rebuilt temple.

A rebuilt temple (Jn 2:19-22) makes all the difference in the world. On Easter morning Mary cries out: "Rabboni!" The Emmaus disciples shout: "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road?" Then, a week later, Thomas climatically confesses: "My Lord and my God!" "Grace! Grace!"

The risen, ascended Messenger ever lives to intercede for us at God's right hand and rebuke the accuser! The Servant laid down His life only to take it back up again. The Sprout flourishes again. He is stunningly beautiful. And the Stone the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. Yahweh's Messenger – the Lord Jesus Christ – announces to us: "Behold, I have taken away your iniquity and have clothed you in a clean baptismal garment" (se Gal 3:27).

But the accuser just will not give up. Can you hear him? "It's too late now to restore that relationship, launch that ministry, go for that dream, break that deadly habit, take that risk, embrace that promise." Shhh. Don't say a word! Don't make any excuses! Rather trust that Yahweh's Messenger stands in your court. Then watch Him replace those four words from the pit

of hell – “too late for you” with four words straight from the heart of heaven.
And what would those words be? “Clothed in Christ’s righteousness.”

Friday (6/27) Read and discuss Hebrews 10:11–18

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

“This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, declares the Lord:
I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,”

then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. (ESV)

Amy Peeler writes:

The author concludes this long and intense section with a statement that begins, *But where there is release of these*. Because of Christ’s shed blood, there is forgiveness, release of sins and lawlessness. These are not retained against the people but let go. Where this is the case, within the new covenant that He is bringing, there is no longer an offering for sin. This new covenant means that sins, which were regularly remembered during the time of the first covenant, through the God-ordained practice of regular sacrifices, are now released. They do not have to be remembered, because they are gone. He has made the offering once and for all, and so no sacrifice needs to be offered again. If they succumb to sin, they do not need to make a sacrifice, but appeal to the mercy that comes through the new covenant mediated by Christ. Hence, the divine forgetting of sins will be ever available but has to be accessed by approaching the throne, but following the one who has gone within the veil.

The author of Hebrews is making a radical claim. So radical that it is hard to believe in light of the sin we see evident within and around us. This claim makes the author a companion of Paul, who was misunderstood to be saying that “sin should increase so that grace can abound.” As the following warning section will show (Heb 10:26-31), and as the previous warnings have emphasized (ch. 3 especially), the complete forgiveness of sin because

of the offering of Christ is not a license to engage in sin. Nor is it God turning a blind eye to the painful damage wrought by sin. Quite the opposite, the lack of necessity for any more offerings opens the call to complete sanctification of body and mind that is now possible.

At the same time, the radical forgiveness should not be lost in the admonition toward sanctification. Earlier I had posed the question, “Is it the case that the new covenant brought by the priestly work of Christ does eradicate the consciousness of sin?” The precise and passionate argument of the author of Hebrews leads me to say yes. The arrival of the new covenant truly means that sins in one’s past and in one’s future are already taken care of by Christ. If one sins, forgiveness is freely available because it has already been secured. This should radically impact how one prays to and lives before God. This assurance is what gives access to the throne of God with confidence (as the author asserts in 10:22). This truth should also radically impact how one deals with others. When they sin knowingly or in ignorance, a confessor of Jesus can access the living High Priest’s completed work with respect to sin in order to pray for and interact with others. Christ’s self-offering that removes sins is the foundation on which one can pray both of the heavy lines of the prayer Jesus taught:

Forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Read or sing Hymn 265 “In Christ Alone”

Saturday (6/28) Read and discuss Psalm 92

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.

How great are your works, O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!
The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:
that though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;
but you, O LORD, are on high forever.
For behold, your enemies, O LORD,
for behold, your enemies shall perish;

all evildoers shall be scattered.

But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me fresh oil.
My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. (ESV)

Christopher Ash writes:

We are encouraged in Psalm 92:9-11 to ponder again the victory of God's Messiah, to wonder at His awesome "horn" of strength, to marvel at the beauty of His anointing, and to be quite sure that on the last day, all will see that He has the name that is above every name.

Psalm 92:12-14 is precious to those growing older but can be valued by us all when we grasp the wonder of a work of grace growing without limit within our troubled hearts.

The climax is found in Psalm 92:15. We pray that, day by day, year by year, we will be part of a church that declares in word and deed that God is good.

Augustine speaks of the restful Sabbath of the trusting heart:

This tranquil joy, born of our hope, is our Sabbath. What this psalm has to enjoin upon us, what it has to sing about, is how Christians are to conduct themselves in the Sabbath of their hearts, in that freedom and tranquility and serenity of conscience where no disturbance touches them. The psalm speaks about situations which may often trouble people seriously, and it teaches you how, in spite of all, you are to celebrate the Sabbath in your heart.

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