

## **Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 13 July 2025**

Call to Worship: Psalm 98:1-3

Opening Hymn: 369 Worship Christ, the Risen King!

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 10:16-18

Hymn of Preparation: 356 Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 16

New Covenant Reading: Matthew 28:1-10

Sermon Title: *Our Risen Lord*

Psalm of Response: 16A Preserve Me, O My God

Confession of Faith: Ten Commandments

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Hymn: 367 Up from the Grave He Arose

### **PM Worship**

146 Praise the LORD! My Soul, O Praise Him!

517 I Know Whom I Have Believed

224 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Old Covenant Reading: Proverbs 1:1-7

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 10:26-39

Sermon Title: *The Fear of the LORD*

**No Sunday School** – Extended Time of Fellowship

### **Suggested Preparations**

**Monday (7/7)** Read and discuss Matthew 28:1–10

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he

has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” (ESV)

Jeffrey Gibbs writes:

Angels, as God’s messengers, repeatedly communicated with Joseph who was Mary’s husband, but they only spoke; they did not do anything else. Angels did come and minister to Jesus after His faithfulness in the wilderness; there He had perfectly chosen the Father’s sacrificial path laid out for His Son. Jesus did not do anything else. Jesus did not, however, give in to the temptation to demand that God send His angels to protect Him while He hurled Himself from the temple; this would have been putting God to the test. In a similar way, Jesus submitted to arrest, condemnation, and execution, foregoing the angelic defensive legions that His Father could have sent to protect Him. Other than ministering to Jesus after His temptation in the wilderness, angels do not really *do* anything during Jesus’ ministry – until now. Now, however, the Father’s plan is fully accomplished. Now for the first time an angel of the LORD descends in fearful power, causing the earth to shake and performing what Matthew regards as a crucial task.

That task is to enable the women to see that the new has begun and that the old darkness they expected to see has passed away. Before that can happen, however, two barriers have to be removed. The first barrier is the great stone that Joseph had (with help, no doubt) rolled up to the grave. The grave of this rich man was likely large, with room inside for several more or even many more family members to be entombed. Even if the entrance into the crypt was restricted so that it required a person to stoop down in order to see or to enter, the necessary stone would have been massive. However large this stone was, the heaven-sent angel is more than a match for it. In a gesture that might be an expression of triumph, after rolling away the stone, the angel began to sit on top of it. Now it is possible for the women to look into the tomb to see inside. The first barrier is gone.

The second barrier to be removed is the power of Rome and (indirectly) of the religious leaders who successfully sought Jesus’ death at Pilate’s hand. Some of the chief priests and the Pharisees had besought Pilate for a guard and a sealing of the tomb. This the prefect granted. Did the women know about the barrier? Matthew does not say. Whatever the seal consisted of in physical terms, with the appointed guard, the seal represented the power of Jesus’ enemies who had killed Him and who had wanted to ensure that everyone else would know that He was still dead. The angel removes this second barrier as well. The appearance of God’s messenger was like lightning, and his clothing was like snow. Matthew says that the soldiers

were so overwhelmed by fear that “they became like dead men.” Ironically, on the day of resurrection back to life, unbelievers respond as though they were already dead! The stone is rolled back; the guards are out of the way, as important as corpses. Now the way is cleared for the women to see what they never imagined they would see.

Read or sing Hymn 369 Worship Christ, the Risen King!

**Tuesday (7/8)** Read and discuss Proverbs 3:1–12

My son, do not forget my teaching,  
but let your heart keep my commandments,  
for length of days and years of life  
and peace they will add to you.

Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;  
bind them around your neck;  
write them on the tablet of your heart.  
So you will find favor and good success  
in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths.  
Be not wise in your own eyes;  
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.  
It will be healing to your flesh  
and refreshment to your bones.

Honor the LORD with your wealth  
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;  
then your barns will be filled with plenty,  
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline  
or be weary of his reproof,  
for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,  
as a father the son in whom he delights. (ESV)

We begin with a father urging his son to remember his teaching. As the context makes clear, this means that we are being called to remember the instructing of our heavenly Father. Verse 1:

My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.

Why would we remember and follow anyone's instruction? Verse 2 points to good consequences that are likely to come our way if we remember and keep our Father's commandments. But before we act on the teaching, we need to believe two things about the person giving us this instruction:

1. First, we need to believe **that they know what they are talking about**; and
2. Second, we need to believe **that they care for us**, that is, they have our best interests at heart.

Here is where it gets a bit tricky: Have you ever had a time in your life where someone who cared about you and knew what they were talking about gave you good advice ... **and yet you still didn't do it?** You have a math test tomorrow morning, yet you are fiddling around with some hobby or other distraction. Your mom gently reminds you: "If you are going to do well on that test tomorrow you had better get back to studying." You know she's right and you know that she has your best interests at heart but somehow you manage to keep fritting away the time on other things. What's going on?

You may know that what your mom is telling you really is in your best interests ... but you just don't want to do it ... at least right now. It turns out that **our affections** – what we *want* to do – are a critical part of our decision making. Because the person giving us this advice both cares for us and knows what she is talking about we tend not to say "No" to such advice; instead we continue down our foolish path by saying "Later." That's the word which leads to so many problems. "Later."

This is true of our relationship with God as well. Nobody knows what He is talking about better than the LORD. He knows everything perfectly. Furthermore, the LORD cares so much about you that He sent His Son to die for you. Yet, amazingly, we don't automatically move from these two truths to diligently listening to God and putting every jot and title of His word into practice. Instead we frequently disobey God by saying "*Later*. ... I'll get around to doing what the LORD says *later*." This is one Satan's most effective lies. He tells you: "Don't get all caught up in knowing and loving God in High school, like some sort of fanatic, there will be plenty of time to do that *later*." "College? Well *now* is the time to sow your wild oats while you are away from your parents and before you get tied down with a job and a family. Furthermore, you had better focus your energy on getting good grades. You can focus on seeking the Kingdom of God *later*." "Married life is challenging. You have young children and you're not making enough money. Who knew that things were going to be so stressful? You will be able to focus more on God once you are established in your career and your children are grown up ... this is something that you can do *later*." Do you know when Satan stops encouraging people to put off following God until *later*? For many people this is around the time that they retire. Then Satan says: "You've done your time. Let the young people do it now." Frankly, there are few sadder pictures than the self-deceived elderly who retire not only from work but also from church and from following the LORD. The antidote to all these lies is to follow the LORD wholeheartedly **right now**. ... not later ... right now!

Read or sing Hymn 356 Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

**Wednesday (7/9) Read and discuss Psalm 16**

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.  
I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from you.”

As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,  
in whom is all my delight.

The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply;  
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names on my lips.

The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;  
you hold my lot.  
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.  
I have set the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;  
my flesh also dwells secure.  
For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,  
or let your holy one see corruption.

You make known to me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (ESV)

David needed the LORD’s counsel for his weighty responsibilities – and so do you! But David is saying something a little different than that the LORD graciously gives him the insights he needs to lead the people of God. David is pointing out that he blesses - that is, he praises the LORD for doing so.

The easiest thing in the world for a Christian is to plead with the LORD for insight and then to quickly move on once He gives it to us. But David makes it a discipline to bless the LORD for the all the blessings He bestows upon us. We can see this in the next line: “In the night also, my heart instructs me.” Don’t think of the heart only in terms of emotion. Think of this as *the inner man*. The Old Testament, for example, frequently speaks of thinking or saying in the heart.

But what exactly does this mean: It means that when David is lying on his bed at night wondering about the challenges that lie before him and the very difficult decisions that he has to make – instead of listening to his insecurities and anxieties – he speaks to them from his inner man, from his heart, and tells his anxieties **that God is for him**. That having entrusted himself body and soul to his faithful Savior - David can fear no evil, for the LORD is with him. Beloved, this is very much something that we need to do as well.

We need to practice preaching the gospel to our own hearts and to put our momentary trials against the backdrop of God's everlasting love.

Read or sing Psalm 16A Preserve Me, O My God

**Thursday** (7/10) Read and discuss Proverbs 1:1–7

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

To know wisdom and instruction,  
to understand words of insight,  
to receive instruction in wise dealing,  
in righteousness, justice, and equity;  
to give prudence to the simple,  
knowledge and discretion to the youth—  
Let the wise hear and increase in learning,  
and the one who understands obtain guidance,  
to understand a proverb and a saying,  
the words of the wise and their riddles.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom and instruction. (ESV)

John Goldingay writes:

Awe for Yahweh links with *wisdom and discipline*. People do not understand things that matter unless they start from commitment to God, or rather to Yahweh; far from hindering knowledge, such faith makes knowledge possible. Yahweh is the source of real knowledge; the key to knowledge is a “receptive mind.” Thus *idiots despise wisdom and discipline*. Both the aphorism and this second line have four words, so that vv. 2-7 come to a formal climax with this 4-4 verse. Idiots think they can work things out for themselves, but they will find that their stupidity is not in their interests. Humanity, then, divides into two sorts of people: the wise and the dimwitted. If this seems an oversimplification, the binary division sets a choice and a challenge before readers. While people cannot be faulted for starting off life as young and naïve, it is their own fault if they don't move on from there. Or, rather, they cannot stay there, and they need to make sure they move in the right direction.

**Friday (7/11) Read and discuss Hebrews 10:26–39**

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For,

“Yet a little while,  
and the coming one will come and will not delay;  
but my righteous one shall live by faith,  
and if he shrinks back,  
my soul has no pleasure in him.”

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. (ESV)

Amy Peeler writes:

Canonically, the author’s use of Habakkuk 2:4 provides one of the closest connections with Paul. This verse serves as part of the thesis statement for his letter to the Romans (Rom 1:16-17). Paul has never “shrunk back” but continues his boldness in proclaiming the gospel, knowing that it is the power of God and revelation of God’s righteousness. That revelation proceeds down the path of faith, and, for Paul, Habakkuk voices that process. Life comes through faith. All these authors show the necessity of active trust in God for eternal and abundant life with God.

After this warning full of pathos, the author presents one more comfort. With emphasis he says, *We are not shrinking to destruction*. The author makes clear that God’s displeasure results in elimination of God’s enemies, either through mortal death or worse. He need not linger on those consequences any longer because he and his listeners are the alternative: we are *of faith to the preservation of the soul*. According to his assessment, they are people of faith and therefore will hold on to God and keep their lives safe. The word for “preserve” here is resonant with the word for *doing*

God's will in v. 36. Jesus keeps their soul secure (6:19), so as they trust in Him, they will endure into eternal life, doing that which pleases God (13:16).

Read or sing Hymn 367 Up from the Grave He Arose

**Saturday** (7/12) Read and discuss Matthew 28:1–10

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." (ESV)

"The women do not simply offer homage; this is not mere obeisance. They *worship* Jesus (Jeffrey Gibbs)." Jesus isn't simply their exalted friend. They have suddenly come to realize that Jesus is also their God. Now, I'm not saying that they were ready to compose the Nicene Creed. That would come later. But they had already grasped the heart of the matter and so they worship Him.

It is also interesting that they grasped our Lord's feet. On the one hand, that is probably exactly what you would imagine them doing. On the other hand, it reminds us of something really obvious yet, nevertheless vital: The risen Jesus **had feet that could be grasped**. They weren't encountering a vision or a mere spirit. Jesus had a glorified body that could be touched and clung to.

Jesus, like the angel, tells them to stop being afraid. And, again, like the Angel, our Lord commissions these women to "**go and tell**." But did you notice the change?

The Angel had said: "Go tell His disciples." Jesus says: "Go and tell **My brothers**."

Once again, Jeffrey Gibbs puts it well:

The change to the familial term "brothers" emphasizes even a little more strongly that the meeting in Galilee will manifest reconciliation between Jesus and the eleven who had failed him so completely the night He had been betrayed and on the day [when] he had been executed. ... By naming the fallen men His "brothers," Jesus promises that he will restore them. Restored, they are "brothers" of Jesus, the Son of God, because they, too, have God as their Father.

And so it is with us. We are not restored as Christ's brothers and sisters because we are a special class of disciples. It is of His goodness that we have been restored. His sacrifice for our sins is fully sufficient. It is because He has washed us clean in His own blood that Jesus is not ashamed to call us His sisters and brothers as well.

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