

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 24 August 2025

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 105:1-3

Opening Hymn: 413 Revive Thy Work, O Lord

Confession of Sin

Most merciful God, Who are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast promised forgiveness to all those who confess and forsake their sins; We come before You with a humble sense of our own unworthiness, acknowledging our manifold transgressions of Your righteous laws. But, O gracious Father, Who desires not the death of a sinner, look upon us, we beseech You, in mercy, and forgive us all our transgressions. Make us deeply sensible of the great evil of them; And work in us a hearty contrition; That we may obtain forgiveness at Your hands, Who are ever ready to receive humble and penitent sinners; for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, our only Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

Hymn of Preparation: 411 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns

Old Covenant Reading: Joshua 6:8-25

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 11:23-31

Sermon Title: *Faith and the Exodus*

Psalm of Response: 77 I Cried Aloud to God for Help (1-4)

Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed (p. 852)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Psalm: 77 I Cried Aloud to God for Help (5-7)

PM Worship

404 The Church's One Foundation

239 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

237 When All Your Mercies, O My God

Old Covenant Reading: Hosea 3:1-5

New Covenant Reading: Ephesians 5:25-32

Sermon Title: *Love Again*

No Sunday School – Extended Time of Fellowship

Suggested Preparations

Monday (8/18) Read and discuss Hebrews 11:23–31

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. (ESV)

Tom Schreiner writes:

Whether it was Moses' parents, Moses himself, the battle of Jericho, or Rahab, we see that faith considers God trustworthy in a time of danger. Faith recognizes that God will deliver and rescue His own, just as He rescued Moses from Pharaoh, Israel at the Red Sea, Israel at the battle of Jericho, and Rahab from the leaders in Jericho. Faith takes risks and ventures on God. It doesn't look to society and culture for approval. It trusts in the word of the LORD instead of finding its delight in a life of sin. We again see here the future character of faith. When Moses and Israel and Rahab put their trust in the LORD, they had not yet seen what He would do. Faith came first and deliverance later. That was the situation of the readers as well. They were not part of the inner circle of society. They were verbally abused and discriminated against. Perhaps worse sufferings would follow. They wanted to enjoy the security and comfort of belonging. The author summons them to trust in God, believing He would deliver them and bring them to the heavenly city.

Read or sing Hymn 413 Revive Thy Work, O Lord

Tuesday (8/19) Read and discuss Psalm 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah
that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him! (ESV)

Gerald Wilson writes:

The opening verses of Psalm 67 have close resonances with the classic priestly benediction over Israel given in Numbers 6:24-26. By this blessing, Yahweh “put [His] name on the Israelites” to establish and confirm His special relationship with them. They were to become His people, known by His name. And He was to become their God, who gave them identity and purpose and through whom their character was to be formed and measured.

It is particularly interesting that while the Numbers benediction concludes the formal covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel, Psalm 67 turns immediately to speak of God’s universal purposes for salvation for “all nations” as a prelude to the universal praise of “all peoples” that fills the rest of the psalm. Within the context of the growing universal flavor of Psalms 56-68, Psalm 67 lends voice to the chorus of all creation near and far, Israelite and non-Israelite – “all the ends of the earth” who fear Yahweh.

Read or sing Hymn 411 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns

Wednesday (8/20) Read and discuss Joshua 6:8–25

And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them. The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. But Joshua commanded the people, “You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout.” So he caused the ark of the LORD to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually. And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city. And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.” So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people

shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.” So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. But Rahab the prostitute and her father’s household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. (ESV)

Adolph Harstad writes:

The destruction of the city is total. All living things are killed. Readers of Joshua may grieve or even cringe at the thought, and it is good for the account to result in sober repentance. Jesus wept over unrepentant Jerusalem and the impending destruction of the children within its walls. “As surely as I live, says the Lord Yahweh, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked man, but rather in the wicked man turning from his way so he may live” (Ezek 33:11). There is no hint that Israel took pleasure in the act itself of ending lives at Jericho. Soldiers were acting under God’s orders as the agents of His judgment. As “the Lord of all the earth” (Josh 3:11), He has the perfect right to end the time of available grace for those who have mocked His love and chosen their own non-gods.

We mourn not so much the physical death of Jericho’s citizens as their eternal loss. At the same time, it was for the spiritual wellbeing of Israel that a spiritual menace threatening their own eternal destiny was eliminated. The soldiers of Israel were carrying out their office given by the LORD. Those who would object to the extermination therefore must take up the issue with the LORD and not with Israel.

Now, in the middle of God’s judgment of those who have trampled on His grace, comes an account of rescue and safety.

Notice the contrast as the rescue of Rahab comes into focus in the middle of surrounding judgment and destruction. That contrast is especially vivid in a comparison of 6:21 and 6:23, which have lists of those destroyed and of those rescued, respectively. By referring to her again as “the prostitute” in 6:22, 25, Joshua accents God’s grace toward Rahab. In her past life she was as debased as the rest of Jericho. Now with the two spies as his agents, God has brought her to safety. Through faith in the God of Israel, the former prostitute receives not only physical rescue but eternal deliverance. By

continuing to call her “the prostitute,” the author does not imply that she still acts as one. We speak in the same way when we recall the penitent “thief” on the cross, whose time of thievery was in the past when he spoke the confession of faith for which he is remembered.

Read or sing Psalm 77 I Cried Aloud to God for Help (1-4)

Thursday (8/21) Read and discuss Ephesians 5:25–33

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (ESV)

Thomas Winger points out:

It is amply clear that Paul neither invented the marriage allegory nor borrowed it from secular sources. It is likewise clear that Paul could not have run the allegory as a simple one-way equation in order to encourage certain behaviors in Christian marriages on the basis of Christ and the church as an illustration.

For Paul, the marriage allegory is chiefly a vehicle for the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul is the friend of the Bridegroom (akin to a best man or, ... in modern times the father of the bride), who presents the church to Christ in holy marriage (2 Cor 11:2). Ephesians 5 not only contains a most remarkable restoration of the original institution and purposes of marriage as a blessing to man and wife in this life, but it also transcends the earthly blessings by revealing the mystery of the Gospel hidden in every marriage, if husband and wife would have the eyes of faith to discern it. For, each day as the husband loves his wife in a thoroughly self-sacrificing way, he proclaims Jesus Christ to her and likewise to himself as he puts to death the old man and emerges in the image of Christ. And each day, as she submits to his love, as she entrusts herself to him, as she respects his headship, she learns ever more the nature of faith and sees the contours of Christ’s redeeming sacrifice in the Christlike figure [that] God has placed into her life. In this way marriage is for the Christian couple a very holy thing.

Friday (8/22) Read and discuss Hosea 3

And the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins.” So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a

lethech of barley. And I said to her, “You must dwell as mine for many days. You shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so will I also be to you.” For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days. (ESV)

Derek Kidner writes:

It would have been impressive enough had Hosea found that in spite of everything he still loved his truant wife, and had then perceived that God’s love must be like that too. But in fact it was the other way about. It was God’s love that rekindled Hosea’s, when the LORD said, ‘Go, love your wife again,’ and gave him the pattern to reproduce.

There was no glossing over the unpleasant truth. The *again* in God’s command faced the fact that old wounds would have to be reopened and that what had happened once might happen yet again. Also, the adultery, God reminded him, was still in progress: it had been no isolated lapse but a desertion which added a continuing insult to the injury. The love that was asked of him would be heroic – but that was the point, for it was to be God’s love in miniature.

Perhaps this is why Hosea captures, as no other writer does, the tension within God’s love for His elect - for He refuses to ease the pain of the relationship either by compromise or by quitting. He loves these people despite their blatant unfaithfulness (*they turn to other gods*), which He cannot for a moment condone, and despite their fatuous and brutish scale of values. Four times this opening verse has spoken in terms of love, each pair of its occurrences placing a noble use of the word in grating proximity to a base one – pure devotion next to gross infatuation. As for the second pair, it ends in utter bathos, with God loving Israel to the uttermost, while Israel gives her heart to (of all things!) *raisin cakes*. However one may try to soften the jolt of this, by associating these delicacies with religious feasts or rare occasions, the incongruity of it is still outrageous. The bride, it seems, is only here, or anywhere else, for the cakes and ale.

Screwtape, we may suppose, would have hailed this as an unusually satisfying victory for his department – for a victory it would still have been, even if the bait had to be the world itself (cf. Mark 8:36). But ‘an ever-increasing craving for an ever-diminishing pleasure is the formula. It is more certain; and it’s better style. To get the man’s soul and give him nothing in return – that is what really gladdens our Father’s heart [C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*].’ – ‘our Father’, of course, being Screwtape’s term for the father of lies and liars. Few of us, remembering the trivialities we chase, will feel ready to cast the first stone at Israel.

Read or sing Psalm 77 I Cried Aloud to God for Help (5-7)

Saturday (8/23) Read and discuss Hebrews 11:23–31

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. (ESV)

Amy Peeler writes:

The story moves forward in time to Moses, but the first act of faith is done to him, not *by* him. *By faith Moses, after he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents.* His parents were bold in faith to hide him because he was born under the threat of death (Exod. 1:16). The reason the author provides for their action is that they – as all parents do – saw the child as beautiful, but the word can also indicate their perception of his unusually superior nature. Whether typical or special appreciation, they valued the life of their child over the edict of the pharaoh. The author comments explicitly that they *did not fear the commandment of the king*. Like the midwives in the story before this one (Exod. 1:7-10). As is so often the case, the bravado of oppressive leadership masks the deep fear that lies underneath. This story of Moses's family is not unlike the unsettledness of Herod (Matt. 2:3) and Joseph and Mary's faithful trust in God's steady protection of young Jesus (Matt. 2:13-15). No matter what might be motivating leaders who persecute people, to stand against them takes bravery. Moses's parents embrace a boldness the author will later urge for this community, fearing no person because they trust in God (Heb 13:6). This is a valuable lesson for the audience of Hebrews because they might again need to face authorities without fear (10:32-35; 12:4-5).

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