

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 9 November 2025

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 105:1-3

Opening Hymn: 379 Come, Christians, Join to Sing

Confession of Sin

Almighty and everlasting God, Glorious Creator of all things, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; We have sinned against Your holy Name, by failing to glorify You in our lives as your redeemed children. Our unthankfulness extends to every thought and deed, as well as to our failure to thank you with our lips. We have not lived to the praise of the glory of Your grace. We have not esteemed the reproach of Jesus Christ our Savior to be greater than the riches of this world. We have failed to estimate the infinite cost of the salvation won for us at the cross through the shed blood of Jesus. We have not been faithful to You as You have been faithful to us in all things. Father, forgive us for our ingratitude through the reconciling sacrifice of Jesus Christ our all-sufficient Mediator, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Isaiah 53:4-5

Hymn of Preparation: 447 Christ, of All My Hopes the Ground

Old Covenant Reading: 1 Samuel 15:10-23

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 13:16-19

Sermon Title: *Trust and Obey*

Psalm of Response: 73C In Sweet Communion, Lord, with Thee

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Psalm: 90A Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place

PM Worship

368 Jesus, Lord, Redeemer

360 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

512 Jesus Lives, and So Shall I

Old Covenant Reading: Hosea 13:4-16

New Covenant Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Sermon Title: *Death and Life*

Adult Sunday School – Membership Vow V: Commitment to Christ's Church

Suggested Preparations

Monday (11/3) Read and discuss Hebrews 13:16–19

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. (ESV)

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes writes:

Just as sanctimonious participation in the outward forms of worship is no substitute for a heart that is right with God and a life lived totally to His praise, so also it is no substitute for a compassionate concern for one's fellow men. This is the burden of the memorable utterance of [Micah]: "Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? ... He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" The commandments of God are summed up in the two great requirements, to love God with all of one's being and to love one's fellow man as oneself, and these two belong inseparably together. ... Hence the appeal to them not only to praise God continually but also not to neglect to do good to their fellow men and to share, sacrificially, such things as they have with others who are in need. "Let us not grow weary in well-doing," Paul urges the Christians in Galatia, "for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart. So, then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:9ff). This, too, belongs to our service and sacrifice, which, because it springs from a loving and compassionate heart, is pleasing to God. Indeed, it is part of the true imitation of Christ whose love and compassion for mankind were the motive not only for the good that He did on earth, ministering to the afflicted and binding up the heartbroken, but also for His redeeming sacrifice of Himself in our stead on the cross of Calvary. "Beloved," says John, "if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1 Jn 4:11).

Read or sing Hymn 379 Come, Christians, Join to Sing

Tuesday (11/4) Read and discuss Exodus 19:1-6.

On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (ESV)

It is striking that this entire chapter is given over to preparing to hear from the LORD. This shows both the seriousness with which we are to treat the Living God and also the

seriousness with which we are to treat His Law. In order to grasp the Law it is necessary for us to remember that God had called Israel to be a Kingdom of Priests. They had the extraordinary vocation of being instruments for the reconciliation of the world to its Creator. Israel failed in this vocation but the LORD has given the very same calling to His Church. It is therefore vital that we understand what this vocation entails.

Doug Stuart explains:

Israel's assignment from God involved intermediation. They were not to be a people unto themselves, enjoying their special relationship with God and paying no attention to the rest of the world. Rather, they were to represent him to the rest of the world and attempt to bring the rest of the world to him. In other words, the challenge to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" represented the responsibility inherent in the original promise to Abraham in Gen 12:2-3: "You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you ... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Priests stand between God and humans to help bring the humans closer to God and to help dispense God's truth, justice, favor, discipline, and holiness to humans. Israel was called to such a function. How? The answer is not spelled out in the present context, but it surely was to take place in four ways: (1) Israel would be an example to the people of other nations, who would see its holy beliefs and actions and be impressed enough to want to personally know the same God the Israelites knew. (2) Israel would proclaim the truth of God and invite people from other nations to accept him in faith as shown by confession of belief in him and acceptance of his covenant, as Jethro had already done. (3) Israel would intercede for the rest of the world by offering acceptable offerings to God and thus ameliorate the general distance between God and humankind. (4) Israel would keep the promises of God, preserving his word already spoken and recording his word as it was revealed to them so that once the fullness of time had come, anyone in the whole world could promptly benefit from that great body of divinely revealed truth, that is, the Scriptures.

Read or sing Hymn 447 Christ, of All My Hopes the Ground

Wednesday (11/5) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 15:10–23

The word of the LORD came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the LORD all night. And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning. And it was told Samuel, "Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself and turned and passed on and went down to Gilgal." And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed be you to the LORD. I have performed the commandment of the LORD." And Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?" Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the LORD your God, and the rest we have devoted to destruction." Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you what the LORD said to me this night." And he said to him, "Speak."

And Samuel said, “Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel. And the LORD sent you on a mission and said, ‘Go, devote to destruction the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.’ Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?” And Saul said to Samuel, “I have obeyed the voice of the LORD. I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.” And Samuel said,

“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to listen than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
he has also rejected you from being king.” (ESV)

Rick Phillips writes:

Samuel was bitterly grieved by Saul’s failure to obey the clear command of the LORD. Therefore, his anguished night of prayer was followed by “one of the most spectacular confrontations in the pages of the Bible, when the prophet Samuel met the defiant King Saul (John Woodhouse).” In a masterpiece of providential irony, Saul had been all this time building a monument to his obedience in attacking the Amalekites. The king then returned to Gilgal, along with his spoils, eagerly awaiting his expected praise from the prophet.

... There waits Saul as Samuel strides up the road. The king greets him with well-prepared and smug self-congratulation: “Blessed be you to the LORD. I have performed the commandment of the LORD.” It is almost too much for us to believe that Saul could say this, until we remember how common it is for us to pat ourselves on the back for obeying our own commandments rather than God’s. Samuel retorted with one of greatest one-line comebacks in the Bible: “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?”

What follows is a potent primer on obedience to God. Samuel first points out that obedience to God involves keeping his actual commands. Saul had his own understanding of his mission against the Amalekites, and it was not precisely in line with the actual requirements given through Samuel. If Saul desired to celebrate his performance of God’s commands, then he should have been careful to study those commands, remembering them always, and

judging his own actions according to the standard given in God's word. His failure to do this was clearly evidenced by the braying of sheep and oxen, all of which God had ordered to be slaughtered and thus devoted to Himself.

Read or sing Psalm 73C In Sweet Communion, Lord, with Thee

Thursday (11/6) Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 15:50–58

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”
“O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (ESV)

Richard Hays writes:

The resurrection of the dead is necessary in order to hold creation and redemption together. If there is no resurrection of the dead, God has capriciously abandoned the bodies he has given us. The promise of resurrection of the body, however, makes Christian hope concrete and confirms God's love for the created order. God, the creator of the world, has not abandoned the creation. Furthermore, this teaching is consistent with what we have come to understand about the psychosomatic unity of the human person. Contrary to the ideas that held sway in much of Hellenistic antiquity, we are not ethereal souls imprisoned in bodies. Rather, our identity is bound up inextricably with our bodily existence. If we are to be saved, we must be saved as embodied persons, whatever that may mean. ... Paul writes in Romans 8:23 that we who have the first fruits of the Spirit nonetheless groan along with an unredeemed creation while we await “the redemption of our bodies” – not redemption *from* them, but *of* them. To affirm the resurrection of the dead is to confess that the God who made us will finally make us whole – spirit, soul, and body.

Friday (11/7) Read and discuss Hosea 13:4–16

But I am the LORD your God
from the land of Egypt;
you know no God but me,
and besides me there is no savior.
It was I who knew you in the wilderness,
in the land of drought;
but when they had grazed, they became full,
they were filled, and their heart was lifted up;
therefore they forgot me.
So I am to them like a lion;
like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.
I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs;
I will tear open their breast,
and there I will devour them like a lion,
as a wild beast would rip them open.

He destroys you, O Israel,
for you are against me, against your helper.
Where now is your king, to save you in all your cities?
Where are all your rulers—
those of whom you said,
“Give me a king and princes”?
I gave you a king in my anger,
and I took him away in my wrath.

The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up;
his sin is kept in store.
The pangs of childbirth come for him,
but he is an unwise son,
for at the right time he does not present himself
at the opening of the womb.

I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol;
I shall redeem them from Death.
O Death, where are your plagues?
O Sheol, where is your sting?
Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

Though he may flourish among his brothers,
the east wind, the wind of the LORD, shall come,
rising from the wilderness,
and his fountain shall dry up;
his spring shall be parched;
it shall strip his treasury
of every precious thing.

Samaria shall bear her guilt,
because she has rebelled against her God;
they shall fall by the sword;
their little ones shall be dashed in pieces,
and their pregnant women ripped open. (ESV)

Derek Kidner writes:

The mood in which Israel had demanded a king is quite familiar to us: a compound of reasonable grievances (against misrule by Samuel's sons), ideas of grandeur ('such as the other nations have') and trust in the seen rather than the unseen ('a king ... to go out before us and fight our battles').

Yet God made room for kingship and put it to noble use, as He still does with our bright ideas – or in spite of them. What He could not bless was the arrogance that gave rise to it and the power struggles that exploited it. We have already seen its corruption in Hosea's day, and the utter disillusion that marked its downfall (10:3: 'But even if we had a king, what could he do for us?'). The process by which God in His wrath ... took [these kings] away was of their own choosing: a string of assassinations and coups from within, and the punitive might of Assyria from without, in reprisal for repeated acts of treachery.

Hosea's wealth of imagery, perhaps unequalled among the prophets, is drawn on once again in verses 12 and 13 for a double thrust at Israelite complacency: first by picturing unforgiven sin as a well-kept store of trouble for the future, and then by the analogy of a birth that threatens to go fatally wrong. This second picture combines the tantalizing thought of early promise that has come to nothing with that of a disaster that no-one can now avert. King Hezekiah of Judah would one day use this very metaphor, not in blank despair but in desperate appeal to God and be answered by a miracle (2 Kings 19:3ff). In the northern kingdom there was no leader of that caliber or that faith.

Read or sing Psalm 90A Lord, You Have Been Our Dwelling Place

Saturday (11/8) Read and discuss Hebrews 13:16–19

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. (ESV)

Phillip Edgecumbe Hughes writes:

The request for prayer by the writer of our epistle says much for his confidence in his readers as genuine fellow believers and reassures them of the warmth and humility of his attitude toward them. He can hardly ask them to pray for him if he has decided that they are already in a state of apostasy. It is true that, desiring to act honorably in all things, as a genuine Christian friend and mentor should do, he has spoken very frankly of the perils by which he sees their spiritual well-being to be threatened; and he is sure that he has a clear conscience, that is, that is, that his conduct in relation to them can stand the scrutiny both of man and of God. But the impulse behind the stern admonitory character of much of this letter has not been hostility or an authoritarian desire to inflate his own importance at their expense. That he has spoken the truth in love and compassion is confirmed by this appeal to them to pray for him.

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