

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 11 January 2026

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-3

Opening Psalm: 66A O Shout to God with Joy

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: Zechariah 3:1-5

Psalm of Preparation: 41 Blest Is the One Who Helps the Weak

Old Covenant Reading: Exodus 2:11-15c

New Covenant Reading: Acts 7:9-29

Sermon Title: *Moses, Who Do You Think You Are?*

Psalm of Response: 71 In You, LORD, I Take Refuge (1-4)

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Psalm: 71 In You, LORD, I Take Refuge (5-8)

PM Worship

498 I Will Sing of My Redeemer

119H You, LORD, Are the Portion

402 Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

Old Covenant Reading: Ecclesiastes 7:1-9

New Covenant Reading: 2 Corinthians 1:23-2:4

Sermon Title: *When Loving Hurts*

Adult Sunday School – Abraham Kuyper and Neo-Calvinism, Part I

Suggested Preparations

Monday (1/5) Read and discuss Exodus 2:11–15c

One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, “Why do you strike your companion?” He answered, “Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid, and thought, “Surely the thing is known.” When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. (ESV)

Doug Stuart writes:

The narrative now jumps ahead approximately thirty-six years, skipping completely over Moses' later childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. This sort of leap from infancy/childhood to later adulthood is not only efficient for purposes of getting to the heart of the story but apparently was preferred often in ancient times, when the story of an important person's birth might be recounted if it had special significance but his "biography" in effect began with the first truly prominent actions he undertook. The New Testament Gospels illustrate both options: Mark and John describe Jesus first at age thirty; Matthew and Luke tell about his birth and then jump to his life at age thirty – though Luke adds a brief story as well about him at age twelve, an exception to the usual approach.

[Verses 11-12] explain how Moses had by this time identified with the Israelites over against the Egyptians and how his zeal against the oppression of his people got him into trouble. This was his first attempt at delivering his people – acting alone and in secret and relying on his own strength and wisdom – and though it failed miserably, it certainly shows the strength of Moses' sentiments on behalf of his people. Twice in v. 11 the phrase "his own people" (lit "his brothers"), serves to orient the reader to the fact that Moses saw himself by this point as an Israelite, not an Egyptian. It is possible that the wording of v. 11 intends us to understand that Moses had heard increasingly of the severity of Israelite servitude and finally decided to monitor it for himself, thus for the first time being in a position to become fully enraged at how his "brothers" were being treated. It is equally possible that he had often witnessed his own people at their slave labor but that this time the extent of the cruelty was greater, and a long-smoldering fire of resentment was kindled into a white-hot rage that led him to murder.

Read or sing Psalm 66A O Shout to God with Joy

Tuesday (1/6) Read and discuss Exodus 2:1–10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse

him for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, “Because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.” (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

“When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, ‘Because’ she said, ‘I drew him out of the water’.” The pharaoh’s plans are foiled again. Do you think this is becoming a recurring motif? God uses people who have no power to subvert those who do. First it was Shiprah and Puah, then Miriam and Jochebed. We can add Moses to the list.

The first fifteen chapters of Exodus are about Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and, of course, there’s no deliverance without a deliverer. His name is Moses. Of the 716 references to Moses in the Old Testament, roughly a third of them appear in Exodus. Moses looms large in the book. He functions as a savior, singer, judge, prophet, intercessor, architect, and builder.

Moses is from the tribe of Levi on both sides of his family. This alerts us to one of his main functions in the book. Moses is a priest who has a closeness to Yahweh described as “face-to-face.” Through Moses, God not only gives Israel His Word but also a sacrificial system centered in the tabernacle. God goes so far as to say of Moses, “With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of Yahweh” (Numbers 12:8).

Moses means “draw out of water.” Here’s another important name in the book whose Hebrew name is “And these are the Names.” Moses’ name foreshadows his destiny. Through water, Moses will bring Israel out of Pharaoh’s fearful cave.

Read or sing Psalm 41 Blest Is the One Who Helps the Weak

Wednesday (1/7) Read and discuss Acts 7:9–29

“And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit. And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph’s family became known to Pharaoh. And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all. And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

“But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph. He dealt shrewdly with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they would not be kept alive. At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God’s sight. And he was brought up for three months in his father’s house, and when he was exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

“When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand. And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’ But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons. (ESV)

James Montgomery Boice writes:

When Stephen begins to talk about Moses, ... he deals with the story of Moses at greater length because Moses was the one the Sanhedrin was chiefly concerned about. Moses was the one through whom God had given His law, and these leaders had built their whole lives around keeping the law of Moses.

One of the first things that Stephen says about Moses is that Moses also was rejected by his people. There were other things that Stephen could have said, just as in the case of Abraham. But he emphasizes that when Moses perceived that his heart lay with his people and he wanted to be identified with them rather than with the Egyptians, they rejected him.

We know the story. Moses killed an Egyptian, thinking, no doubt, that his might be something like a rallying cry for revolution. He had received a wonderful education. He was uniquely gifted to lead the people. Now he was taking a stand for righteousness against an injustice. Perhaps Moses knew that the time prophesied for the coming of a deliverer had arrived. The four hundred years that had been foretold for the time of slavery in Egypt were up. Now is the time, he must have thought. I must be the deliver. They will follow me.

But they did not follow him. The people rejected him, and when the word of his action got around, he had to flee. He fled to Midian where he spent the next forty years of his life.

Read or sing Psalm 71 In You, LORD, I Take Refuge (1-4)

Thursday (1/8) Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 1:23–24

But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you. For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all. For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. (ESV)

Tom Wright comments:

Precisely what had happened is once more a matter of informed guesswork. Paul had made a brief visit to Corinth, coming, we assume, by the short sea route rather than the long way over land. He had hoped to be able to sort out some of the problems he had written about in the first letter. But instead of the church welcoming him with delight, and co-operating in putting things straight, there was opposition. Many people resented his intrusion. Some of the teachers who had arrived since he had left mocked his speaking style, his insignificant appearance. The tension between the cultural standards Corinth prided itself on and the strange new world of the Christian gospel were pulling at either end of the relationship between Paul and the church, and they came unstuck. We don't know the details, but we do know that it was very painful for everyone.

Paul returned to Ephesus, we assume, in deep distress, and wrote another letter, with tears rolling down his cheeks as he did so. Some people think that this 'painful' letter is actually now part of what we call '2 Corinthians,' perhaps all or part of what we call chapters 10 to 13. That seems unlikely to me. It's more likely the letter wasn't preserved. We don't know what exactly he said, but we know what he hoped for. He hoped the letter would do the trick and make them see that he had acted out of deep love, not wanting to treat them as his private property, or to patronize them, or to upset them for the sake of it. And we know what it achieved: nothing, or rather worse than nothing. That, presumably, is why it wasn't preserved. Paul, by trying to make things better, had made them worse. ...

Meanwhile, the storm that had been brewing in Ephesus, whatever it was, had begun to break over his head. This was all he needed: trouble on the spot, and rebellion across the sea. ... And then, when he did get a message to them again, it was first to say that he was coming soon, then that he wasn't. And they just thought he was making it even worse.

No, he says: it was to spare you that I decided not to come after all (verse 23). Paul, emerging from the dark tunnel of depression, clinging for dear life to the God who raises the dead, still knows that this God has given him authority, with spiritual power to back it up, to build up the church; and that means, if necessary, confronting evil wherever it occurs. He comes back to this theme at the end of the letter, in chapter 13, but we are aware of it at several points on the way as well. What he says, and the way he says it, speaks volumes about the nature of power within the Christian community.

Friday (1/9) Read and discuss Ecclesiastes 7:1–9

A good name is better than precious ointment,
and the day of death than the day of birth.
It is better to go to the house of mourning
than to go to the house of feasting,
for this is the end of all mankind,
and the living will lay it to heart.
Sorrow is better than laughter,
for by sadness of face the heart is made glad.
The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise
than to hear the song of fools.
For as the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of the fools;
this also is vanity.
Surely oppression drives the wise into madness,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.
Better is the end of a thing than its beginning,
and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
Be not quick in your spirit to become angry,
for anger lodges in the heart of fools. (ESV)

James Bollhagen writes:

Death is where the rubber hits the road; it is the old equalizer. Any supposed wisdom that cannot bear to look honestly at death is just not worth its salt. True wisdom, however, the kind operative in these verses, is equal to the task. Wisdom flowing from the fear of God can handle anything, including death. Through that wisdom, even death has its redeeming qualities. Even death can bring about growth, be better than something else, and do the heart good. Wisdom is fear and trust in God. That wisdom will never let God's people down, for it is a "tree of life" (Prove 3:18).

If an interpreter fails to grasp this, as astute as he may be, he still does not get the book of Ecclesiastes. Faith can freely roll out all the horrors of life in this book. It can look at all the gory details and emerge as more than a

conqueror (Rom 8:37) because of God's promise that the wise shall be raised to eternal life. Let the reader rejoice!

Read or sing Psalm 71 In You, LORD, I Take Refuge (5-8)

Saturday (1/10) Read and discuss Read and discuss Exodus 2:11–15c

One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?" He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. (ESV)

Doug Stuart writes:

[Moses] had tried to act in secret to help one of his people, and he thought he had succeeded. Now that in the process of his further intervention to try to help another of his people he had learned that his deed of the day before was known, the whole course he had set himself on was suddenly leading in the wrong direction. In both cases Moses had acted out of altruism. The Hebrew who in this instance spoke back to him, however, in effect anticipated the later attitude of the leaders of the Hebrews, who would repeatedly look at what Moses was trying to do as damaging to their interests, in spite of the fact that Moses would intend it as deliverance. This is in the nature of leadership: the best attempts to help are sometimes faulty in themselves, yet even when proper and magnanimous, they can provoke the resentment of those who fail to appreciate how they are being led. As would often be the case with Jesus, Moses was here not recognized/accepted readily by his own people. He eagerly wanted to help them; they were suspicious that he represented trouble.

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