

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 5 April 2026

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 105:1-3

Opening Hymn: 349 O Jesus, We Adore Thee

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: Psalm 103:17-18

Sacrament of Baptism: Theodore Luke Harvey

Hymn of Preparation: 341 Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed

Old Covenant Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-22

New Covenant Reading: Luke 24:13-35

Sermon Title: *Empty Tomb, Open Scriptures, and Burning Hearts*

Hymn of Response: 363 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Gloria Patri (Hymn 572)

Closing Hymn: 367 Up from the Grave He Arose

PM Worship

279 O Christ, Our King, Creator, Lord

461 Blessed Are the Sons of God

465 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Old Covenant Reading: Isaiah 43:8-21

New Covenant Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:11-17

Sermon Title: *Behold the New*

Adult Sunday School – Gerhardus Vos

Suggested Preparations

Monday (3/30) Read and discuss Luke 24:13–35

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this

conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. (ESV)

David Garland writes:

The Emmaus disciples can supply the facts up to the crucifixion. Jesus from Nazareth was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and the people. He was betrayed to the chief priests and rulers, condemned to death, and crucified, and unconfirmed rumors have arisen about an empty tomb and a vision of angels.

A prophet might in deed and word inadequately expresses who Jesus is. If John is more than a prophet, Jesus is much more. Now He is the resurrected Lord. These disciples are unable to see that reality because their personal aspirations and expectations have prevented them from seeing past the scandal of the crucifixion. Cleopas unwittingly voices the basic obstacle to the belief in the women’s report that Jesus had been raised: “We were hoping that He was the one who was about to redeem Israel,” but He was “handed ... over to be condemned to death and [they] crucified Him.” Because they could not conceive of a Messiah crucified, dead, and buried, they could not accept that He had been raised by God, nor could they

recognize Him when they met Him on the road. The problem is the scandal of the crucifixion.

The hope of the resurrection was central to the hope of Israel (Acts 23:6-9; 24:15, 21; 26:8), but these disciples did not anticipate Jesus' resurrection because their hopes were more mundane. They wanted more immediate gratification, a miraculous liberation of Israel now, without all the pain and suffering. Recognizing Jesus as the resurrected Christ required recognizing that Jesus had to die according to God's plan. God "brings to realization His salvific plan" through Jesus' suffering and death. The hecklers' taunts ironically dramatized that He saved others through His death, and His teaching here makes clear that He enters into God's glory through death. Entering into glory defines what it means for Jesus to have been raised. His status has changed from one derided and humiliated on the cross to one who is exalted in glory. He has become "the cornerstone" and is "seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Read or sing Hymn 349 O Jesus, We Adore Thee

Tuesday (3/31) Read and discuss Exodus 6:10–30

So the LORD said to Moses, "Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land." But Moses said to the LORD, "Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?" But the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

These are the heads of their fathers' houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the clans of Reuben. The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the clans of Simeon. These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the years of the life of Levi being 137 years. The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their clans. The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the life of Kohath being 133 years. The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their generations. Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years. The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the clans of the Korahites. Eleazar, Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans.

These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: “Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts.” It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron.

On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, the LORD said to Moses, “I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.” But Moses said to the LORD, “Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?”

And the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.” Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh. (ESV)

Rabbi Jonathan Sachs writes:

Evil has two faces. The first – turned to the outside world – is what it does to its victim. The second – turned within – is what it does to its perpetrator. Evil traps the evildoer in its mesh. Slowly but surely he or she loses freedom and becomes not evil’s master but its slave.

Pharaoh is in fact a tragic figure like Lady Macbeth, or like Captain Ahab in Melville’s *Moby Dick*, trapped in an obsession which may have had rational beginnings, right or wrong, but which has taken hold of him, bringing not only him but those around him to their ruin. This is signaled, simply but deftly, early in the following [passage], when Pharaoh’s own advisors say to him: “Let the people go so that they may worship the LORD their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is ruined?” (10:7). But Pharaoh has left rationality behind. He can no longer hear them.

Read or sing Hymn 341 Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed

Wednesday (4/1) Read and discuss Deuteronomy 18:15–22

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among

their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’ And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?’—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him. (ESV)

Adolph Harstad writes:

Moses tells God’s people how they are to respond to this prophet: “To Him you are to listen.” The words are not as much a demand as they are an invitation – a Gospel imperative. Using the same verb for “listen, hear” as in 6:4, Moses is speaking another *Shema* to Israel, this time through prophecy in direct reference to Jesus. “Listen to Him.” “To Him” is in contrast with “to soothsayers and diviners” (18:14). Note the glaring difference between what the people are to do in regard to the prophet, “listen,” and what they are to do in regard to the diviners: “do not learn to do according to the abominations of those nations.”

On the mount of transfiguration, the Father will repeat the command “listen to Him” in reference to His Son, the quintessential Prophet. Why pay so much attention to the words of the prophet Moses when you can listen to *the* Prophet that Moses prophesied? Moses acquiesces to the voice of the greater Prophet. Marks says that when Jesus taught at the synagogue in Capernaum, “they were amazed at His teaching, because He was teaching them as one who has authority and not as the experts in the law.” The large crowd of people in the temple courts did not just listen to Jesus the Prophet when He outshined “the experts in the law.” They “listened to Him *with delight*. That was the desire of Yahweh and Moses when the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15 first appeared.

The NT testifies that the prophesy of Deuteronomy 18:15 is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. See especially Acts 3:17-26. See also Lk 4:24, where Jesus is the prophet who is not accepted in His hometown of Nazareth. The apostle John reveals that some people had not made the connection between the Prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15 and the Messiah/Christ from the line of David (Jn 7:40-42). The Samaritans, on the other hand, had recognized the correspondence. Bruce comments: “It came to be believed that the prophet like Moses would not be raised up until the end of the age. In some circles, especially among the Samaritans, the Messiah was envisaged in terms of this coming prophet.” The words of the woman and the other Samaritans in John 4 are evidence that the Samaritans made the Prophet-Messiah-Savior connection (Jn 4:19, 25, 42). The words of Jn 6:14-15 imply that other

people saw a clear connection between the offices of “the Prophet” and “king.” They want to make a “king” of the man they recognize as the Prophet, even though their view of His kingship was way off the mark.

[Note: The *Shema* is “Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One.”]

Read or sing Hymn 363 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Thursday (4/2) Read and discuss Isaiah 43:8–21

Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes,
 who are deaf, yet have ears!
All the nations gather together,
 and the peoples assemble.
Who among them can declare this,
 and show us the former things?
Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right,
 and let them hear and say, It is true.
“You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD,
 “and my servant whom I have chosen,
that you may know and believe me
 and understand that I am he.
Before me no god was formed,
 nor shall there be any after me.
I, I am the LORD,
 and besides me there is no savior.
I declared and saved and proclaimed,
 when there was no strange god among you;
 and you are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and I am God.
Also henceforth I am he;
 there is none who can deliver from my hand;
 I work, and who can turn it back?”

Thus says the LORD,
 your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
“For your sake I send to Babylon
 and bring them all down as fugitives,
 even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they rejoice.
I am the LORD, your Holy One,
 the Creator of Israel, your King.”

Thus says the LORD,
 who makes a way in the sea,

a path in the mighty waters,
 who brings forth chariot and horse,
 army and warrior;
 they lie down, they cannot rise,
 they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
 “Remember not the former things,
 nor consider the things of old.
 Behold, I am doing a new thing;
 now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
 I will make a way in the wilderness
 and rivers in the desert.
 The wild beasts will honor me,
 the jackals and the ostriches,
 for I give water in the wilderness,
 rivers in the desert,
 to give drink to my chosen people,
 the people whom I formed for myself
 that they might declare my praise. (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

Yahweh will exile Israel because the people bowed down to other gods. But He will not leave them there. He will enlist Cyrus and the Suffering Servant to reassemble them. Yahweh loves them; His people are valuable in His eyes and precious. But Israelites remain blind and deaf, just like the gods they worship. To bring them out of darkness and into new life, Yahweh plans a new exodus. Then His people will witness to Him by singing His praises. Right? Wrong! The exiles are still rebellious and still just like Jacob, self-willed, self-centered, and self-satisfied. How did they get so far away from their God, who is willing to let bygones be bygones? Babylonian idols captivated their hearts. The history of Israel is the story of the nation's ongoing conflict between the God who creates, orders, delivers, and protects by His word, and various idols shaped by human hands.

Friday (4/3) Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 5:11–17

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (ESV)

Tom Wright comments:

The logic of love outweighs all other logic known to the human race. That sense, of a love which changes everything, and gives people the power to face things and do things they wouldn't otherwise have done, is what Paul is talking about in this passage. It becomes clear from the opening lines that he is still addressing the question: why, as an apostle of the Messiah, does he behave in the way that he does? Why does he suffer so much? Why isn't he more like the sort of leaders and teachers that the Corinthians expected and wanted?

He has spoken in chapter 4 of the messianic pattern of dying and living which Jesus established and which he, Paul, as an apostle of King Jesus, must follow. That alone is powerful enough. But he has then gone on to speak, in the earlier part of this chapter, of the promise of a new life, a new body, a new creation, in which all that is done here in this life will find its fulfillment in a new dimension. And he has then spoken of the judgment seat of the Messiah, before which all must stand. However much he knows that there is 'no condemnation' for those who belong to the Messiah (Romans 8:1), there is still the sense of terrible responsibility as he thinks of the coming moment when he will face the judge who knows the secrets of all hearts.

Therefore, he says, we know the fear of the Lord: not a cringing terror before an uncaring despot, but awe and inadequacy before the incarnate Lord of all. This, too, should help to explain why he does what he does; he isn't concerned about what human standards people might impose from the various cultures they live in, since the only standard that matters is the one that Jesus himself will set. Facing that, he says, he is open to God: God knows his sincerity and intentions. And he hopes the Corinthians will realize I too; then they can hold their heads up when they think of him, instead of judging him, and feeling ashamed of him as their apostle, because they are thinking in purely human, purely worldly terms.

Read or sing Hymn 367 Up from the Grave He Arose

Saturday (4/4) Read and discuss Luke 24:13–35

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. (ESV)

David Garland writes:

Luke conveys the basic Christian conviction about Jesus’ death and resurrection in his narrative account that Paul rehearses in a creedal statement: “that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day *according to the Scriptures*.” Luke’s narrative makes clear that these events can be understood and only understood from Scripture. Jesus’ exposition causes the hearts of the Emmaus travelers to burn with dawning understanding. Full recognition occurs in the meal.

Many point out how the story of the Ethiopian eunuch is a mirror image of this account. As Gillman notes: “The Emmaus companions were discussing the recent events about Jesus; the Ethiopian was reading from the prophet

Isaiah. However, neither understood the significance of the matter at hand. In both cases, enlightenment comes from an unexpected stranger who joins the travelers.” The Emmaus disciples knew the events but did not know how to interpret them in light of the Scriptures or how they fulfilled “all that the prophets have spoken” (Luke 24:25). The Ethiopian knew the Scriptures but did not know the events to which the text applied (Acts 8:32-34).

Both accounts clarify that the Scriptures are to be interpreted in light of the good news of Jesus and that what happened to Jesus can be understood only in light of the Scriptures. The Scriptures help interpret the believers’ reality and bring their hopes in line with God’s wider plan. Philip represents disciples who have come to understand the Scriptures and their connections to what happened to Jesus and who now serve as interpreters for others. This development follows a pattern established in the infancy narrative. The strange events that are about to happen or have happened require a heavenly member to interpret them.

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