

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 17 May 2026

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 98:1-3

Opening Psalm: 97A The LORD Our God Is King!

Confession of Sin

Almighty God, Who are rich in mercy to all those who call upon You; Hear us as we humbly come to You confessing our sins; And imploring Your mercy and forgiveness. We have broken Your holy laws by our deeds and by our words; And by the sinful affections of our hearts. We confess before You our disobedience and ingratitude, our pride and willfulness; And all our failures and shortcomings toward You and toward fellow men. Have mercy upon us, Most merciful Father; And of Your great goodness grant that we may hereafter serve and please You in newness of life; Through the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Isaiah 55:7-9

Hymn of Preparation: 280 Wondrous King, All-Glorious

Old Covenant Reading: Exodus 9:1-12

New Covenant Reading: 2 Timothy 3:1-9

Sermon Title: *They Shall Not Stand*

Hymn of Response: 239 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Confession of Faith: Ten Commandments

Gloria Patri (Hymn 572)

Closing Psalm: 102B Thou, O Lord, Art God Alone

PM Worship

415 We Gather Together

85 You Were Pleased to Show Your Favor

385 The Lord Will Come and Not Be Slow

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 85 (Sermon Passage)

New Covenant Reading: Titus 3:1-7

Sermon Title: *Confident Faith*

Adult Sunday School – Fellowship Lunch – No Sunday school

Suggested Preparations

Monday (5/11) Read and discuss Read and discuss Exodus 9:1–12

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, behold, the hand of the LORD will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall

die.””” And the LORD set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.” And the next day the LORD did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died. And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians. But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses. (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

God strikes Egypt’s livestock with death. Now, for the first time, Yahweh brings destructive power to Pharaoh’s front door. His livestock are killed and, as we would expect, Israel’s animals are as healthy as a horse (pun intended).

This is the first time Yahweh’s “hand” appears in the description of the plagues. When paired with God, *hand* in the Old Testament almost always refers to divine power. In the case of the fifth plague, it’s the power to unleash death on livestock.

At this the first plague to directly bring about death, it’s both a frightening preview of the tenth plague as well as the demise of Egypt’s army at the Red Sea. When Yahweh takes aim, He shoots straight, and He kills. “He [Yahweh] let loose on them [the Egyptians] His burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels” (Psalm 78:49 ESV).

Read or sing Psalm 97A The LORD Our God Is King!

Tuesday (5/12) Read and discuss Exodus 8:16–32

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.’” And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats

on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself to Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. Or else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall happen.”’” And the LORD did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies.

Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for the offerings we shall sacrifice to the LORD our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? We must go three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as he tells us.” So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.” Then Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. And the LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained. But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go. (ESV)

Duanne Garrett writes:

In looking at a series of texts that are formally very similar, it is often what is different that demands attention. This is certainly the case with the plagues. Here, the distinctive element is the failure of the magicians to replicate the miracle of Moses and their admission that what was happening was a work of God. The point made, within the flow of the narrative, is that Pharaoh had no excuse. If he earlier could have claimed that Moses’s miracles were fraudulent, he lost that defense when his magicians admitted defeat. To the reader, moreover, this narrative more clearly demonstrates that the exodus is a work of God. The essential theological lesson, therefore, is that one may for a while deny the evidence for the working of God in the world, but eventually it becomes so strong that continued denial is irrational.

Pastor Booth adds: The thrust of Professor Garretts comments is helpful but it is important to remember that to “deny the evidence for the working of God in the world” is *always* irrational and *always* sinful. As the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter 1:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, **because God has shown it to them**. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **For although they knew God**, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Romans 1:18–21 (ESV)

The LORD not only reveals Himself to everyone. That revelation gets through.

Nevertheless, Professor Garrett’s comments cast light up the extreme evil of Pharaoh and how deeply he is blinded by his own sinful desires. Even though his own Egyptian “wise men” declare that “This is the finger of God” and though he can see the dramatic difference between the land of Goshen where the children of Israel live and the rest of Egypt, Pharaoh continues in his rebellion against the LORD.

Read or sing Hymn 280 Wondrous King, All-Glorious

Wednesday (5/13) Read and discuss 2 Timothy 3:1–9

But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men. (ESV)

R. Kent Hughes writes:

What we must especially watch for in our lives is the inversion of love – where we become lovers of self “rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power.” Whenever this happens, the Great

Commandment has been turned on its head. When we become lovers of self rather than of God, the whole withering paragraph slides through our souls.

These truths are crucial in these “last days” because many evangelicals have imperceptibly become lovers of themselves. James Davison Hunter, in his landmark book *Evangelicalism, The Coming Generation*, published in the late 1980s wrote: “The fascination with the self and human subjectivity has then become a well-established cultural feature of Evangelicalism generally in the latter part of the twentieth century, not simply an ephemeral fashion among the younger generation.”

This shift of gravity to self must be resisted with all we have. The Great Commandment will never change: “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ... Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37, 39). Significantly, some thirty years later when the Apostle John penned his book of Revelation, he recorded these words to the same Ephesian church that Timothy had served: “Yet I [the LORD] hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love” (Revelation 2:4).

Love, fresh love for God, must be the true north of our lives.

Read or sing Hymn 239 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Thursday (5/14) Read and discuss Titus 3:1–7

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (ESV)

R. Kent Hughes writes:

God’s credit is evident in the words that speak of the attitudes, actions, and instruments involved in our rescue. Our salvation is not a result of earning God’s favor. Rather, we were “foolish” and “disobedient,” but “when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy.” These words emphasize that our salvation is a consequence of what is in God’s heart, not

what is in our heart. The words “kindness” and “love” describe God’s benign regard for His people. Further our salvation is not a consequence of what we do but of what He alone does. “God our Savior appeared. The sense of rescue by another is even more apparent in the twice repeated phrase, “He saved us.”

Paul’s emphasis on divine causality is apparent not only in the concepts he states but also in his pronouns and personal nouns: “*He* saved *us*, not because of righteous things *we* had done, but because of *His* mercy.” And in the next sentence, “*He* saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the *Holy Spirit*, whom *He* poured out on *us* generously through *Jesus Christ* our *Savior*,” so that, “having been justified by *His* grace, *we* might become heirs.”

Friday (5/15) Read and discuss Psalm 85

LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you covered all their sin. Selah
You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us!
Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?
Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly.
Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.
Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him

and make his footsteps a way. (ESV)

Tim Keller writes:

This psalm is a blueprint for how to respond when your church community declines. Study past seasons of revival and reformation (verse 1). Church history is convicting and encouraging, showing how far we have fallen yet also what God can do. Next must come repentance, acknowledgment that our hard hearts and sin have put a barrier between God and us (verses 4-5). We must also cry out to God in prayer that he “show us” his unfailing love (verse 7). Revivals always involve a fresh “seeing” of the Gospel of grace – grasping it theologically and knowing it experientially. Finally we must wait n Him, listening faithfully to His word (verses 7-9).

Love and truth (the meaning of “faithfulness”) must meet in harmony (v. 10). But how can God in faithfulness punish sin yet also in love embrace sinners? Christ reconciles all things in heaven and earth by making peace through His blood (Colossians 1:20). When Jesus bore our punishment on the cross, love and holiness “kissed” – they were both fulfilled at once. Love without holiness is mere sentiment; righteousness and law without a grasp of grace is Pharisaism. Our natural temperaments incline us to one or the other, but the Gospel keeps truth and love together in our lives. And the more they are unified within us, the more we are brought into the deepest relationship with those who believe the Gospel too.

Read or sing Psalm 102B Thou, O Lord, Art God Alone

Saturday (5/16) Read and discuss Exodus 9:1–12

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, behold, the hand of the LORD will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.”’” And the LORD set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.” And the next day the LORD did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died. And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw

it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians. But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses. (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

Yahweh unleashes boils upon the Egyptians and their remaining living animals. He commands His two spokesmen – Aaron and Moses – to throw handfuls of ashes from a kiln into the air. This is poetic justice. The kiln is where Hebrew slaves baked bricks. God now turns the tables. Egypt's source of financial gain becomes the origin of their deep pain. This is the last plague that Aaron is directly involved in. Going forward it will be one-on-one-Moses verses Pharaoh.

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