Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 15 November 2026

AM Worship
Call to Worship: Psalm 98:1-3
Opening Hymn: 280 Wondrous King, All-Glorious
Confession of Sin
Most holy and merciful Father; We acknowledge and confess before You; Our sinful nature prone to evil and slothful in good; And all our shortcomings and offenses. You alone know how often we have sinned; In wandering from Your ways; In wasting Your gifts; In forgetting Your love. But You, O Lord, have pity upon us; Who are ashamed and sorry for all wherein we have displeased You. Teach us to hate our errors; Cleanse us from our secret faults; And forgive our sins for the sake of Your dear Son. And O most holy and loving Father; Help us we beseech You; To live in Your light and walk in Your ways; According to the commandments of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Assurance of Pardon: Isaiah 53:4-5
Hymn of Preparation: 374 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!
Covenant Reading: 1 Samuel 8:1-22
New Covenant Reading: Matthew 20:20-28
Sermon Title: *Demanding a King*
Psalm of Response: 22B All You That Fear Jehovah's Name
Confession of Faith: Ten Commandments
Gloria Patri (Hymn 572)
Closing Hymn: 229 Holy God We Praise Your Name

PM Worship
529 Lead Me, Lord, Lead Me in Thy Righteousness
119A How Blessed Are Those Upright in Their Way
412 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word
Old Covenant Reading: Micah 6:6-8
New Covenant Reading: 2 Peter 1:5-7
Sermon Title: *Pursue Godliness*

Adult Sunday School: Good News for Anxious Christians

Suggested Preparations

Monday (11/2) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 8

When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him. He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots. And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, "No! But there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and make them a king." Samuel then said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city." (ESV)

Dale Ralph Davis comments:

> "Appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." That was the elders' request/demand. It seemed plausible: Samuel had become old and a transition was certainly coming; and Samuel's sons, like Eli's, were scoundrels, and no one wanted to be stuck with them. The solution: a new form of government. Up with monarchy.
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> Yahweh evaluates the king request in verses 7-8. If we are to hear this text, we must not fudge over Yahweh's analysis. "It is not *you* [= Sameul] they have rejected, but they have rejected *Me* from being king over them." Israel has a longstanding tradition of such behavior: "In line with all their doings from the day I brought them up out of Egypt up to this very day – they

> abandoned Me and served other gods; that's what they are doing to you [Samuel] as well." The king is not merely a substitute for Samuel but for Yahweh. What we have here is simply the old idolatry with a new twist.
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> We must insist that the demand for a king was not wrong in itself. If it was not perfectly permissible it was nevertheless permissible according to Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Moses had indicated that the time might come when Israel would want a king and that would be all right provided they heeded certain strictures. Occasionally scholars claim that the fault in the elders' request was their wanting to be "like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5). [While Deuteronomy 17 allows for a king it also] makes sure Israel will not have a king "like the nations," for he must be a man of Yahweh's choosing, a brother Israelite, not a foreigner, without the customary royal perks …, and subservient to the rule of Yahweh's law. So the fault in 1 Sam. 8 was not int eh fact of the request but in the motive for the request.

Read or sing Hymn 280 Wondrous King, All-Glorious

Tuesday (11/10) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 7:2–17

From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-jearim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your heart to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the LORD only.

Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." So they gathered at Mizpah and drew water and poured it out before the LORD and fasted on that day and said there, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah. Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the people of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines." So Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. And Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel. But the LORD thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and struck them, as far as below Beth-car.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, "Till now the LORD has helped us." So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath, and Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines. There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites.

Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah. And he judged Israel in all these places. Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there, and there also he judged Israel. And he built there an altar to the LORD. (ESV)

Tony Cartledge writes:

> Like similar stories in the book of Judges, this story reflects a persistent pattern of sin, oppression, repentance, and deliverance for the Israelites. We wonder why Israel never learned that it would be best for them to remain in close fellowship with God, rather than riding the rollercoaster of apostasy and renewal. We wonder why we do not do any better. As a boy once asked, "How can we repent and stay repented?"
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> Repentance begins with true contrition. Israel lamented after the LORD" because they recognized their failures and their need for divine assistance. Many persons are not motivated to repent until they are already mourning for some other reason. Perhaps their lifestyle has led to the loss of a job, or a significant relationship, or the respect of a loved one. The important thing, where repentance is concerned, is that our contrition be motivated not only by our troubles (as the Philistines troubled Israel), but by a genuine awareness of personal failure.
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> Repentance involves change, for remorse is empty without some modification of sinful behavior. Our internal desires and our surrounding culture lead us to extremes of materialism and hedonism that are nothing more than idolatry.
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> If we repent, we must do away with out idols. Some behaviors must be put away entirely: adultery, abused, and mind-altering substances are representative of an entire catalog of behaviors that disrupt our relationships with God and others. Other things, such as wealth and recreation, do not need to be forsworn as much as put in their proper place.
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> Contrition and change lead to an about-face in our relationship with God. The Hebrew word for "repent" literally means "to turn around." Repentance is not simply a turning *away* from sinful behaviors, but a turning *towards* God. Samuel reminded the Israelites that true repentance must be with the

> *whole heart*, and he instructed them to *direct their hearts* to the LORD, to serve God only. Ancient Hebrews regarded the heart as the center of volition as well as feeling, and repentance is not only an emotional experience, but an intentional choice.

Read or sing Hymn 374 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!

Wednesday (11/11) Read and discuss Matthew 20:20–28

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (ESV)

Jeffrey Gibbs writes:

> Although they don't understand anything of what Jesus is saying to them, Jesus concedes that James and John will drink His cup. Then, returning to the sitting and reigning language of their original request, the Lord firmly refuses to grant their mother's petition. Indeed, Jesus declares that the places on His right and left are prepared by the Father for others. The Zebedee family (if I may call them that) thinks they are asking for positions of preeminence and high status, flanking the enthroned King. This is the natural human meaning of sitting "one on your right and one on your left in your reign." Jesus, however, speaks to them on the ironic level of what their words *really* mean, and in His words He connects sitting on His right and left in His reign with drinking the cup of divine wrath over sin. When this happens, James and John will not sit on His right and His left. For whom, then, has the Father prepared those places?
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> In my view, Jesus' words are fulfilled ironically at Calvary. The Father has prepared places there for two thieves, the men who will be crucified on Jesus' right and His left while the placard stands over him in ironic proclamation of the truth: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." As I mentioned in passing above, I join others who find in 20:20-23 an example of the "literary reach" of the Passion Narrative, wherein Matthew offers scenes and teachings earlier in his Gospel, fully intending for his

> hears/readers to tsee therein various anticipations of the events entailed in Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection. Jesus has just fully predicted His betrayal, suffering, death by crucifixion, and resurrection. The Zebedee family has approached, asking an unthinking question about positions on Jesus' right and left in His reign, and in answering them, Jesus cryptically proclaims His once again through the OT image of drinking the cup of God's wrath. Jesus' reign – stunningly, hiddenly – will come about when He suffers and dies as the true King of the Jews, the one who is truth is ushering in the reign of God. Though no one involved will realize it except Jesus Himself, the Christ will be reigning from the throne of His cross and bringing the blessings of God's reign for the many, for all who will repent and believe. In His reign, on His right and left, will be two thieves.

Thursday (11/12) Read and discuss Micah 6:6–8

"With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
He has told 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? (ESV)

Jason Soenksen writes:

> Through his walk with Yahweh, man is able not only to carry out justice but also to love mercy. While the questions of Israel in 6:6-7 localize Israel's relationship with Yahweh solely at the altar, the prophet's answer in 6:8 highlights that Yahweh seeks an even more precious offering, though not to the exclusion of what is brought to the altar, namely, their entire life as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2), their sacrifice of praise (Ps 141:2). Rather than seeing sacrifice as a means by which man would have his obligation to God behind him or the means by which he may come before Him, bowing low, the prophet reveals that Yahweh is always before man, and even more, Yahweh ever wants man to walk with Him. The encounter with Yahweh is much more pervasive than only the meeting in the temple. From the next section (6:9-16), as well as from the earlier chapters of Micah, it is clear that the wealthy and Israel's officials failed to see honesty and compassion in their business dealings as something that Yahweh was seeking from them. They were willing to consider extravagant sacrifices at the temple, but they

> were withholding what was more precious to Yahweh, the justice and mercy that they owed to their fellow man. Sacrifices were meant as substitutes, but they cannot substitute for a sanctified life lived in Yahweh's name. the prophet calls the people of Israel to offer the "spiritual" sacrifices described in 6:8.

Read or sing Psalm 22B All You That Fear Jehovah's Name

Friday (11/13) Read and discuss 2 Peter 1:5–7

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (ESV)

Martin Luther writes:

> Here Peter considers the admonition that they should prove their faith by their good works, seeing such great blessings are bestowed upon you through faith. He would say that you truly have all that God is, do this now besides; be diligent and not sluggish; "in your faith supply virtue;" that is, let your faith break out before the people, that it may be zealous to serve, busy, powerful, active, and accomplish much; do not continue idle and unfruitful. You have a good inheritance and a good field, but take heed and let not the thistles and tares grow in it.

Read or sing Hymn 229 Holy God We Praise Your Name

Saturday (11/14) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 8

When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him. He said, “These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots. And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, “No! But there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.” And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, “Obey their voice and make them a king.” Samuel then said to the men of Israel, “Go every man to his city.” (ESV)

Dale Ralph Davis writes:

> Israel’s situation is full of instruction for us; it reveals Israel and us and Yahweh’s way with us. We would be wrong not to pause and ponder.
>
> 1. We have a tendency to assess our problems mechanically rather than spiritually. Our first impulse is to assume there is something wrong in our techniques. The need is for adjustment, not repentance; there is something wrong in the system that needs doctoring. How easy for even energetic evangelicals to look for a new gimmick rather than cry out for a new heart.
> 2. Instead of looking to God for help we are more interested in prescribing what form God’s help must take. Our attention is not on God’s deliverance in our troubles but on specifying the method by which he must bring that deliverance (therefore we trust the method). We are not content with seeking a saving God but desire to direct how and when He will save.
> 3. Yahweh will sometimes give us our request to our own peril. God’s granting our request may not be a sign of His favor but of our obstinacy. Sometimes God’s greatest kindness is in not answering our prayers exactly as we desire.
> 4. In light of the current situation and danger, Israel’s request for a king was perfectly rational; yet Yahweh viewed it as rejecting His

kingship. Our proposals and solutions then can be completely reasonable, clearly logical, obviously plausible – and utterly godless.

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