Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 29 November 2026

AM Worship
Call to Worship: Psalm 105:1-3
Opening Hymn; 552 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
Confession of Sin
O great and everlasting God, Who dwells in unapproachable light, Who searches and knows the thoughts and intentions of the heart; We confess that we have not loved You with all our heart, nor with all our soul, nor with all our mind, nor with all our strength; Nor our neighbors as ourselves. We have loved what we ought not to have loved; We have coveted what is not ours; We have not been content with Your provisions for us. We have complained in our hearts about our family, about our friends, about our health, about our occupations, about Your church, and about our trials. We have sought our security in those things which perish, rather than in You, the Everlasting God. Chasten, cleanse, and forgive us, through Jesus Christ, who is able for all time to save us who approach You through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for us. Amen.
Assurance of Pardon: Psalm 86:5-7
Psalm of Preparation: 69B Thy Lovingkindness, Lord, Is Good and Free
Old Covenant Reading: 1 Samuel 9:26-10:16
New Covenant Reading: Acts 2:29-39
Sermon Title: *Set Apart for the Lord*
Psalm of Response: 92A It's Good to Thank the LORD
Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)
Gloria Patri (Hymn 572)
Closing Hymn: 393 Spirit of God, Dwell Thou within My Heart

PM Worship
156 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
119L Eternal Is Your Word, O LORD
243 How Firm a Foundation
Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 119:89-96
New Covenant Reading: 2 Peter 1:12-21
Sermon Title: *How Firm a Foundation*

Adult Sunday School: Good News for Anxious Christians

Suggested Preparations

Monday (11/23) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 9:26–10:16.

Then at the break of dawn Samuel called to Saul on the roof, "Up, that I may send you on your way." So Saul arose, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to pass on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God.”

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, “Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince over his heritage. When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel’s tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, ‘The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, “What shall I do about my son?”’ Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you. Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.”

When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day. When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. And when all who knew him previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, “What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” And a man of the place answered, “And who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

Saul’s uncle said to him and to his servant, “Where did you go?” And he said, “To seek the donkeys. And when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.” And Saul’s uncle said, “Please tell me what Samuel said to you.” And Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.” But about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything. (ESV)

Robert Chisholm writes:

> The LORD recognizes His people's legitimate need for security and mercifully intervenes to prevent their destruction. Sometimes God's people develop foolish solutions to their legitimate needs. Such is the case when Israel asks for a king like the other nations. But God does not ignore their legitimate need. He determines to deliver them from oppression through a ruler whom He will choose and empower for the task. One sees this same pattern during the wilderness wanderings. Due to weak faith, Israel complains to God about legitimate needs for food and water, and the LORD supplies those needs.
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> As in the case of Gideon, the granting of signs to Saul should not be viewed as normative. On the contrary, it may be an accommodation to Saul's hesitancy and weak faith. This is a special occasion in which the LORD intervenes in a special way to get Saul's attention. Though divine enablement is always necessary for carrying out God's will, verse 6 should not be understood as paradigmatic.

Read or sing Hymn 552 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Tuesday (11/24) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 9:1–25

There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then they passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them.

When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us go back, lest my father cease to care about the donkeys and become anxious about us." But he said to him, "Behold, there is a man of God in this city, and he is a man who is held in honor; all that he says comes true. So now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us the way we should go." Then Saul said to his servant, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" The servant answered Saul again, "Here, I have with me a quarter of a shekel of silver, and I will give it to the man of God to tell us our way." (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, "Come, let us go to the seer," for today's "prophet" was formerly called a seer.) And Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.

As they went up the hill to the city, they met young women coming out to draw water and said to them, “Is the seer here?” They answered, “He is; behold, he is just ahead of you. Hurry. He has come just now to the city, because the people have a sacrifice today on the high place. As soon as you enter the city you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat till he comes, since he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now go up, for you will meet him immediately.” So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.

Now the day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed to Samuel: “Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen my people, because their cry has come to me.” When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, “Here is the man of whom I spoke to you! He it is who shall restrain my people.” Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, “Tell me where is the house of the seer?” Samuel answered Saul, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind. As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not set your mind on them, for they have been found. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father’s house?” Saul answered, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel? And is not my clan the humblest of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?”

Then Samuel took Saul and his young man and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, who were about thirty persons. And Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion I gave you, of which I said to you, ‘Put it aside.’” So the cook took up the leg and what was on it and set them before Saul. And Samuel said, “See, what was kept is set before you. Eat, because it was kept for you until the hour appointed, that you might eat with the guests.”

So Saul ate with Samuel that day. And when they came down from the high place into the city, a bed was spread for Saul on the roof, and he lay down to sleep. (ESV)

Rick Phillips writes:

> The first thing we learn about Saul is his lineage: “There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth.” This is not a distinguished family tree – none of these names hold any distinction in the Bible – although Saul’s father possessed a degree of prominence and wealth. Moreover, Benjamin was the smallest of Israel’s tribes, its namesake being the last of Jacob’s twelve sons. From a political standpoint, Benjamin was

not a bad choice to provide a king, however, since a member of this tribe could mediate between the powerful tribes of Judah to the south and Ephraim to the north.

The name Saul means "asked for" or "dedicated." This corresponds to the elders' request for a king. Saul was, in fact, exactly what Israel had asked for: the kind of person admired according to worldly standards. The world admires someone who looks and acts like a leader, and Saul was "a handsome young man." Indeed, "there was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he." The word translated "handsome" is simply the word good. The point is that Saul made a very good impression. Dale Ralph Davis quips, "People would have voted him Mr. Israel had there been such a contest." Moreover, in a world that values physical stature, Saul was something of a giant: "From his shoulders and upward [Saul] was taller than any of the people." The fact that Saul is the only Israelite identified in the Bible for his great height – physical stature always being a mark of Israel's enemies – amplifies the impression that Saul is precisely the kind of king who would be chosen by "all the nations." …

Finally, we observe that while Saul was in charge, it was actually his servant who led while Saul followed. It was the servant, not Saul, who insisted that they inquire of God's prophet. Later, when he became king, Saul would frequently be influenced by the counsel of others rather than steering a course charted by his own faith and convictions.

Read or sing Psalm 69B Thy Lovingkindness, Lord, Is Good and Free

Wednesday (11/25) Read and discuss Acts 2:29–39

"Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

"'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand, until I make your
enemies your footstool."'

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." (ESV)

Eckhard Schnabel writes:

> Jesus' exaltation establishes Him as messianic king at God's right hand. He is the Messiah whom David prophesied, the expected ruler in the line of David who will reign in the kingdom of God. Jesus' resurrection and exaltation to God's right hand were God's plan to install one of David's descendants on throne from which Israel is ruled, bringing salvation to Israel and the world,. Jesus exercises His messianic authority in the distribution of the Holy Spirit. He has not absconded into heaven. He continues to be present in His gift of the Holy Spirit, whose power transforms lives, empowers for witness, and overcomes death. And He continues to intervene directly in the affairs of the church.
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> The royal status of Jesus is of utmost significance for the Jewish people. Since Jesus is the promised king who restores Israel and brings salvation, the Jewish people must consider the consequences of this truth, acknowledge Jesus' messianic dignity, and find salvation by submitting to His lordship. This is why the apostles preached the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Messiah to Jews in Jerusalem, in Judea, and in synagogues in the cities of other regions of the Mediterranean world. Jewish evangelism is not another attempt of (Gentile) Christians to complete the Nazis' Shoah, as some Jews want to believe. On the contrary, evangelism among the Jewish people is an expression of love – the love of God, who wants to save the Jewish people, and the love of God's people, who want Jews and Gentiles to worship the one true God who revealed Himself in Jesus for the salvation of the world.

Thursday (11/26) Read and discuss Psalm 119:89–96

Forever, O LORD, your word
is firmly fixed in the heavens.
Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you
have established the earth, and it stands fast. By your

appointment they stand this day, for all things are your servants.
If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts,
for by them you have given me life.
I am yours; save me, for I have sought your precepts. The wicked lie in wait to destroy me, but I consider your testimonies.
I have seen a limit to all perfection,
but your commandment is exceedingly broad. (ESV)

Tim Keller writes:

> The psalmist speaks of the eternal Word of the LORD that is "in the heavens," sustaining and directing the world. But the psalmist then seamlessly identifies that eternal Word with the written Word of Scripture. The same mind running the universe expresses itself in the Bible. So there is no limit to the perfect trustworthiness and truth of the Scripture. It is therefore the only solid foundation on which to build a life. Human cultures, philosophies, and trends of "progress" rise up but within a generation or two become obsolete and forgotten. But "through all generations" (verse 9) "your word, LORD, is eternal" (verse 89).

Read or sing 92A It's Good to Thank the LORD

Friday (11/27) Read and discuss 2 Peter 1:12–21

Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from

someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (ESV)

Brandon Crowe writes:

> Peter … refers to the return of Christ as the dawning of the morning star in our hearts (2 Peter 1:19). "The morning star" refers to Jesus, known elsewhere as "the bright morning star."
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> Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy found in Numbers 24:17, the royal star that has come from Jacob and will rule the nations. He is the messianic King who currently reigns and will return to save His people. But if Jesus is going to return visibly and physically, how can He also rise in our hearts? The answer most likely has to do with the relationship of the return of Christ with the prophetic Word that is in view. Not only will the reality of the prophetic Word be demonstrated when Jesus returns, but the return of Christ will bring the full revelation and presence of Christ in His consummated kingdom. As Paul says, when the perfect comes, the partial knowledge we have now will be done away with. We will know fully even as we are known fully. Just as Scripture is a lamp to our feet and alight to our path in the present age, in the future age Jesus Himself will shine on our path (Rev. 21:23).
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> The return of Christ, the bright morning star, will be the final fulfillment of the day of the LORD foretold in the Old Testament. The day of the LORD is the day of salvation for His people, but also the day of judgment for those who oppose Him.

Read or sing Hymn 393 Spirit of God, Dwell Thou within My Heart

Saturday (11/28) Read and discuss 1 Samuel 9:26–10:16

Then at the break of dawn Samuel called to Saul on the roof, "Up, that I may send you on your way." So Saul arose, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to pass on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God."

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince

over his heritage. When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you. Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do."

When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day. When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. And when all who knew him previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, "What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" And a man of the place answered, "And who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, "Where did you go?" And he said, "To seek the donkeys. And when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel." And Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what Samuel said to you." And Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything. (ESV)

Rick Phillips writes:

> Israel's elders had asked for a worldly king, and God sent Saul as his literal answer. Saul was the messiah (i.e., "anointed one") and king for unbelieving Israel. But through the bitter experiences that would follow, many among God's people would cry out for a true King who does God's will and not the will of the world. In time, God would provide them a King and Messiah, and His coming would be in stark contrast to the coming of Saul.
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> The day that God provided His true King to Israel is remembered as Palm Sunday, while Jesus rode into Jerusalem amid the cries of "Hosanna!"

(meaning “save now!”). It is striking that while Saul came to Ramah, Israel’s chief worship center at the time, he came in a way exactly opposite to Jesus’ coming to Jerusalem. Jesus came riding on a donkey, Israel’s royal symbol of one who brings peace. Saul arrived as one who had been unable to find his donkeys! For all his impressive qualifications, Saul simply was not able to be a true king for God’s people. While Saul came to Irael with a fleshly impressiveness that masked his incompetence, Jesus appeared in a humility that cloaked His divine majesty and power.

The more foundational difference between Saul and Jesus was Saul’s disinterest in righteousness before God. This is the distinguishing feature of worldly kings and empires: a concern only for the pragmatic means of earthly success, with little or no thought to what God desires or thinks. All through the reign of Saul, he will stumble over God’s commands, finding his own will more suitable to his perceived needs. In the greatest contrast, Jesus is the King who perfectly obeys God’s Word and is filled with a passion for righteousness. Jesus could honestly say, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work” (John 4:34). Saul had a fleeting empowerment from God’s Spirit. But Jesus, as God’s true Son, was fully and constantly animated by the Spirit of God. “He who sent Me is with Me,” Jesus declare. “He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him” (John 8:29). “the Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,” Jesus preached, “because He has anointed Me to proclaim good new to the poor.”

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