

Call to Worship – Hebrews 7:26-29

Where is the leader of our worship service? That's what these four verses are about. And the answer is that our worship leader is not in this room on earth, which even in this hour we are defiling with our sin. Rather, Jesus leads our worship from heaven. Therefore, our worship is not offered in our sin and weakness; rather, our worship is offered in Jesus Christ's own perfection and strength. Our sufficiency is from God! (cf. 2Cor 3:4-5)

^{STANDING} *Songs – #101, Come, Thou Almighty King
#457, Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

^{STANDING} *Prayer for God's Help to Worship Him*

Serial Reading – Mark 12:28-13:2

This passage features a remarkable scribe who gets the Bible—gets that the Bible teaches a religion and salvation that are more about who God is and what God does, than who we are and what we do. So for the believer, love to God and love for our neighbor is more than any and all of the mere externals. Jesus says that this man isn't far from the kingdom; what has the man left to understand? That, according to Psalm 110, Jesus is God! Jesus goes on to point out that while encouraging widows to give in poverty out of love for God is good, the Pharisees do it as a devouring of the widow, not to build her up spiritually; and, while to devote oneself to prayer out of love for God is good, there are scribes who do it just to put themselves on display. But every external of religion, like the temple, will one day be dismantled so that we can see whether these externals came from a lasting love for God and neighbor.

^{STANDING} *Songs – #660, O God beyond All Praising
#642, Be Thou My Vision*

Weekly Prayer of the Congregation

*Preaching – Genesis 26:24b
God's Grace: Wordy*

^{STANDING} *Song – #94, How Firm a Foundation*

^{STANDING} *Pronouncement of God's Blessing upon His People*

^{STANDING} *Parting Song, #732 Doxology (tune 2)*

Please stay for fellowship after the service. Let us who have been welcomed by Christ welcome others!

After the announcements, the elders of the church gather to ask God, on behalf of the congregation, for His help for the service and His blessing upon it. During this time, it would be appropriate for you to do the same for yourself and your children, teaching them to do the same. The hope of this guide is that (among other things) it will help you think and pray through the service as we prepare together.

Call to Worship—The entire book of Hebrews was originally a sermon about the gathered worship services of Christian congregations; and, the Holy Spirit included it in Scripture as a letter. So every phrase of this book has a direct application to what we do in our gathered Lord's Day services. Last year, we began by taking a series of selections through the book as the Scriptures that called us together to mark the start of the service. Then, we returned to the beginning of the book to take it phrase by phrase. In the current section, God is telling us about how Jesus' priesthood connects our worship services to glory.

Songs, Come, Thou Almighty King and Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing—With these two songs, we sing our prayer to God for what He has just promised in His Word: that our worship is offered in God's own perfection and power, and that as we enter His courts above, we depend upon His grace even for our part on earth below!

Prayer for God's Help to Worship Him—we ask God to accept our worship through Jesus, even as He has promised. And with hearts inflamed with grateful love, we ask that God—also for Jesus' sake—will help us offer worship that is according to God's instructions and therefore fitting and excellent and beautiful in the sight of God.

Bible Reading, Mark 12:28-13:2—although the entire Bible teaches the good news that GOD SAVES SINNERS, we are always reading in those books that specifically focus on what Jesus did and taught (including Acts and Revelation, which describe Christ's completion of His work in the history of the church) for our salvation. Where we left off last week, Jesus had just answered challenges by the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now, a scribe who actually *gets* the Bible has a question for Jesus, and Jesus uses this conversation to begin teaching about the nature of true religion.

Songs, O God beyond All Praising and Be Thou My Vision—These songs combine into a prayer for what we have just heard Jesus teach should be true about us: that God would keep Himself, His love, His salvation always on our minds and hearts—that love and gratitude toward Him would be the motivation for our entire life of worship, service, and obedience.

Weekly Prayer of the Congregation—just as God especially sets apart His Word and sacraments to be used for His work in us, so also He sets apart congregational prayer. In this prayer, especially, we bring to our heavenly Father our congregation's weekly concerns.

Preaching, Genesis 26:24b—we continue to see God's grace at work in the life of Isaac, and to think about how God's grace is at work in our lives because of Jesus, the offspring whom Isaac was promised.

Song, How Firm a Foundation—having rejoiced in God's grace through hearing, we now rejoice in God's grace through singing about that very Word, which strengthens and sustains us by grace for all of life.

Pronouncement of God's Blessing—God sends us out of His called worship gatherings with a final, condensed announcement of His favor upon His people

Call to Worship – Psalm 148:1-6

The chief end of everything is to glorify God. That's the theme of this psalm, and the first six verses call for every creation in the heavens to do just that!

^{STANDING} *Song – #110, Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah*

^{STANDING} *Prayer for God's Help to Worship Him*

Serial Reading – Jeremiah 23:1-8

Every other king in the Bible leaves you hungry for to be cared for, protected, and ruled by King Jesus—especially such kings as we just heard about in chapter 22. As we've been learning from Romans, Jesus is the King in whom we receive Yahweh's own righteousness. Jesus' salvation is the salvation that dwarfs even the Exodus!

^{STANDING} *Songs – #286, Worship Christ, the Risen King!
#441, Jesus Shall Reign*

Lord's Day Evening Prayer

*Preaching – Romans 10:14-17
(Spiritual) Tomb Raider*

^{STANDING} *Songs – #303, Blessed Jesus, at Your Word
#304, I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

^{STANDING} *Pronouncement of God's Blessing upon His People*

^{STANDING} *Parting Song, #392 O Day of Rest and Gladness*

Please stay to fellowship and celebrate the Lord's Day with us at the afterparty!

What a blessing that as we who have the Spirit groan towards glory, our merciful Father has sprinkled throughout our straining forward: not Lord's hours, nor Lord's mornings, but entire and rich and joyful Lord's Days. So let us conclude the day together in worship!

Call to Worship—how are Christians to think and feel in various situations? God has given us an entire book of the Bible to show what it looks like for us sinners—by grace—to think and feel with the mind and heart of Christ. It is a book of songs, largely sung prayers, that provides the molds of grace within which our emotions can be shaped by the heart and mind of Jesus. What a wonderful gift! And so currently, we have our evening calls to worship from this songbook, especially using those texts in which there are commands for God's people to gather for worship.

Song, Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah—the first line of our Psalm is "Praise Yahweh!" 'Hallelujah' is a contraction of the Hebrew phrase that commands just that. The verses of our call to worship work out to the first stanza and a half of this song. Let us sing it with joy and passion!

Prayer for God's Help to Worship Him—confidently because of Christ, we ask God to accept our worship. And with hearts inflamed with grateful love, we ask that God—also for Jesus' sake—will help us offer worship that is according to the Bible and therefore fitting, excellent, and beautiful as defined by God.

Bible Reading, Jeremiah 23:1-8—with the exception of a few comfortable passages, the major prophets may be the least read and understood part of the Bible. But they are rich in the greatness of God's grace. They hold before us the greatness of our sin and danger, so that we will know the greatness of God's grace and mercy! Jeremiah in particular tells us about how we bring our own destruction upon our heads by listening to words that we like, instead of God's true words; by worship of other gods; and, by idolatrous worship of the true God. But he also tells us about a God of grace who insists on saving a people for Himself, which means that He intends to save a people that He actually *makes* righteous *from the inside out*.

Songs, Worship Christ, the Risen King and Jesus Shall Reign—How God's people ached through the ages to know their Forever-King. Let us, upon whom the end of the ages has come, not now take for granted the privilege that is ours on this side of the resurrection. Rise, O church, and lift your voices; Christ has conquered death and Hell! Let us worship our risen King and sing the praises of His forever-kingship!

Lord's Day Evening Prayer—as we come to close the Lord's Day, we thank God together for the blessings of the day, and take one last opportunity to adore Him with united hearts in prayer, before asking Him for this blessing and adoration to penetrate and saturate our weeks, until we come together again—either for another Lord's Day and its gatherings, or for the Great Day of the Lord, and the gathering of the entire number of all the elect for our eternal Sabbath rest.

Preaching, Romans 10:14-17—God puts living faith into dead hearts and loosens Christ-confessing lips. How? Scriptural preaching that is received not as the words of man, but the Word of Christ, who is God!

Songs, Blessed Jesus, at Your Word and I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say—As we've just heard in the sermon, what we do in worship week by week would be hopeless, probably quite insane, if Jesus did not truly proclaim His own Word in the preaching. Let us sing our desire for Him to do so and us to receive it as His Word!

Pronouncement of God's Blessing—God sends us out of His called worship gatherings with a final, condensed announcement of His favor upon His people