

Call to Worship – Hebrews 8:1

How acceptable is our worship in the sight of God? How powerful is our worship in the sight of God? God receives it in a priest who is Himself, seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.

^{STANDING} *Song – #92, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

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

Serial Reading – Mark 13

The disciples have confused the destruction of the temple with the end of the age. Jesus tells them that there is much world history left before the end, but that the destruction of the temple will come soon with great slaughter. Mercifully, He gives them a sign to watch for that they might escape. They need to keep close watch so that they don't miss it. And Christians actually saw it and escaped in 70a.d.! The end, however, when the Son of Man returns and the elect are gathered, is exactly opposite. In His human nature, even He doesn't know the timing of it. But when it does come, you won't have to scratch your head and wonder—the heavens will literally fall apart! And it won't be predictable at all, nor will there be escape, but it will be absolutely sudden. The application of all of this is quite simple, and it's the last two words of the chapter: Stay awake! Jesus has been revealing Himself as the Forever-King in whom is all our salvation, and whom we must serve with all our heart. Staying awake means to always be serving our Master in everything. Serve Him in all your labor, all your rest, all your worship. Always do everything just as you would like for Him to catch you doing. Stay awake!

^{STANDING} *Song – #320, Rejoice, All Ye Believers*

Weekly Prayer of the Congregation

Preaching – Genesis 26:24b

A Great Commandment

^{STANDING} *Song – #647, How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds*

The Lord's Supper

^{STANDING} *Song – #305, Arise, My Soul, Arise*

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

^{STANDING} *Parting Song, #455, And Can It Be That I Should Gain*

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, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God—Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. But we don't trust in our strength, we rest, work and worship in the strength of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Hosts!

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 13—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 finished teaching about the nature of true religion; this week, he responds to the disciples' misunderstanding by warning two different ways about two separate events: the fall of Jerusalem and His own second coming.

Song, Rejoice, All Ye Believers—In this song we sing our joyful expectation of Christ's return, and our hope and desire that He will find us with lamps brightly shining for Him when He does (cf. Matt 25:1-13).

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 Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds—the wonderful character of God is perfectly shown in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Looking to Him, we will fear the Lord without fear! His name casts it out.

The Lord's Supper—just as we've heard the command "fear not," we now come to proclaim together the very best reason we have for not fearing: the body of Christ given for us, His blood poured out for our sins.

Song, Arise, My Soul, Arise—shake off your guilty fears! Even as we have seen at the table, the bleeding sacrifice of Christ appears on our behalf and is all our confidence forever!

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 148:7-10

Last week, vv1-6 called upon all the heavens to praise Yahweh; this week, vv7-10 call upon all the earth to do the same—nothing is left out: the seas, the land, the weather/air, and all the plants and animals in them... praise Yahweh!

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

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

Serial Reading – Jeremiah 23:9-40

Jeremiah's reaction to God's words in v9 were different than any other prophet of his day. The other "prophets" didn't take God's word seriously at all, preaching peace but not repentance, and borrowing phrases from the truth without preaching their true weight... and so the people are perishing. What we need is a v22 type man! No, not just Jeremiah, but Jesus who has been with God from eternity, and who spoke what He heard from the Father: words of life that produce genuine repentance.

^{STANDING} *Song – #496, Kind and Merciful God*

Lord's Day Evening Prayer

Preaching – Romans 10:18-21

Problem Ears, Brains, or Hearts?

^{STANDING} *Song – #138, The Heavens Declare Your Glory, Lord*

^{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. Specifically, we sing the verses that called us to worship in the section from "From the earth O praise..." to "birds that in the heavens fly."

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 23:9-40—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*.

Song, Kind and Merciful God—God has given His own Word, yet we have listened to men who made us comfortable in our sin. But God's Word speaks words of grace for life and repentance! Let us sing, then, confessing our guilt with confidence through Christ in the God of grace!

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 10:18-21—If God uses His Word to save, then is unbelieving Israel's problem a lack of information? v18 answers "No!" Well, then maybe it's a lack of understanding—maybe they just don't get grace? vv19-20 answer "No!" What, then, is the problem? v21 answers: hostile hearts!

Songs, The Heavens Declare Your Glory, Lord—This song takes Psalm 19, which Paul has just quoted, to remind us that God does indeed plan for His gospel to be heard just as widely as the "voice" of creation is heard, and with saving effect. It closes by asking Him to do this even in our own hearts, renewing our souls to believe the 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