

FAMILY WORSHIP GUIDE



April 20, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the All Saints Presbyterian Church Family Worship Guide. This guide contains ten simple family worship sessions. A new guide is published every Monday on our website.

In this introduction, we want to clarify how to use this guide and provide a few best practices.

First, each session is very simple. Open in prayer, read the recommended Scripture passage, then close in prayer. We even provide the prayers. It will probably take you about 15 minutes.

Second, if you are able, try to do this at the same time and place each day. Consistency will help establish this as a habit. For those with children, it will establish an expectation which, in some cases, will make it easier to do this with your little ones.

Third, if you have already established the habit of family worship in your home, you are welcome to use this guide. However, our intention is not to interrupt your already-established practice. Please feel free to continue your routine!

Fourth, we have intentionally designed this guide with ten sessions that are not linked to a particular day of the week. We hope you will use this guide every day, Monday through Saturday, and even Sunday nights. However, we also recognize that you will at times fail in this. When you do, you have not fallen behind! Just pick up with the next session.

Fifth, guilt and shame and pressure will suck the joy out of this beautiful practice. Family worship brings more relationship with God into your family routine. The goal is to do this daily—family worship is a good thing, and more of it is a better thing! But if you aren't doing it at all now, and you get it in three times this week, that is a win! Family worship is part of a joyful pursuit of Christ. Enjoy the pursuit!

Sixth, let this time reflect the personality of your family. If you have little ones, it may be a little chaotic. If your family is fun-loving, then let this time be more playful. Certainly, we aren't encouraging disrespectfulness, but there is no reason to suddenly become stern and expect something of little children that you hardly expect from them at any other time of day. That only sets you up for frustration and failure. A moody teenager is likely to continue to be moody in family worship. Don't let that discourage you. Press on. Smile. Encourage. Pray and read.

Seventh, involve your family members. Have those who can read help with the reading. Ask one of them to read the prayers aloud for the family. Include everyone as you are able.

Eighth, we have resources on our website to support you in this practice. If you want to do more than we have provided, understand better why we do this, or a resource that provides simple devotions you can read along with the assigned text—all of these things are available on the [Family Worship Resources page](#) of our website.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

Ninth, we are not going to change the format of this guide for the first 60 days. Our goal is to help you establish a solid, habitual practice in your home. After 60 days, we will begin to introduce very simple elements, slowly, over time. For example, we will likely include the Children's Catechism or Shorter Catechism—just a question or two each day. These you will simply read. No need to prepare or be an expert. Once you've established the habit of family worship, we want to build on that. However, we remain committed to keeping it simple and relatively brief.

Tenth, there may be times when you or a member of your family has questions about the reading. If you aren't sure how to answer, we recommend you admit that and then encourage your family member to ask the pastor or an elder. Or you ask us on their behalf and bring the answer back. This models humility and also encourages your family members to go to their pastor or elder when they have questions. No one should avoid family worship just because they might not have all the answers.

Eleventh and finally, family members who are old enough to read should have their Bibles open and follow along as the passage is read aloud. This trains our children to see the words of God for themselves as they hear them read. Seeing the words as they are heard strengthens understanding and establishes a strong bond between the reader and the Word.

That's probably enough for now. Family worship will enrich your time together as a family and is used by God to draw you closer to one another and closer to him. You may not feel that warm glow the first time—or even the first ten times—you do it, but over time, God blesses this practice. Please trust your Session and give this discipline a fighting chance!

DAY 1

Opening Prayer: Father in heaven, we praise you for all your perfections. You are infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in your being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. We give thanks for your creation, which, though perfect when you made it, is now subject to futility as we await the redemption of our bodies. Now, Father, as we read your Word, we ask that you would impress it upon our hearts and minds that we would be transformed into the image of Christ, our Lord, to the glory of God the Father. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reading: James 1:1–18

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, we give thanks for your Word and Spirit by and through which you speak to us, your children. In it you teach us, reprove us, correct us, and train us in righteousness that we may be complete, equipped for every good work. We confess that we are sinners in need of the mercy that only you can give. We admit that we have not always counted it all joy when we have met trials of various kinds. Grant us wisdom and forgive us our little faith. Transform our sinful hearts and remake them after your perfect will. Give us every good gift, and grant that we would be thankful. We pray these things in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

DAY 2

Opening Prayer: Our Father, King of heaven and earth and Creator of all things, we praise your name this day, acknowledging that you are sovereign over all things and that you reign in perfect power and glory for the good of your creatures and to the end that you would be glorified. We give thanks for your provision in all things and your watch-care throughout each day. Be present with us by your Spirit as we read your Word. Grant that we would receive with meekness the implanted Word which is able to save our souls. We pray in the name of our great Shepherd, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reading: James 1:19–27

Closing Prayer: Father, we give thanks for the instruction we find in your Word and acknowledge that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. How much better it is to get wisdom rather than gold and to get understanding rather than choice silver! We confess that in our struggle against the flesh, we have sinned against you and one another. We have been angry, and in our anger we have sinned. We have been hearers of the Word only rather than doers of the Word. Father, grant that we would desire what you have commanded and hate what you have forbidden, and all for your love's sake. We pray in the name of the Light of the World, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

DAY 3

Opening Prayer: Father, we lift our voices this day to praise your holy name. You are worthy of our praise and our obedience in all things. We give thanks for your holy Word, by which we are assured of your great salvation and in which we find all of the promises you have made to your people. Grant us understanding and growth in grace today as your Spirit illuminates our hearts in the reading of your Word. We pray these things in the name of the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reading: James 2:1–13

Closing Prayer: Father, you have met us where we are, condescending to us in our weakness and helplessness to speak the words of life to us by your Son in these last days. We thank you from our hearts and submit our whole selves to you. Change our affections that our hearts would be one with yours. We confess that we too often show partiality, desiring the favor of men over obedience to you and love for our neighbor. Forgive us, Father, and renew in us a right spirit. Make us beautiful as a bride even now that we would be ready for our wedding day. We pray these things in the name of our Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

DAY 4

Opening Prayer: We pray to you now, our Father and God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, coming into your presence praising your name for all that you are, the perfect judge of the world and the one who establishes peace in our hearts today and peace in this world on the last day. We thank you that you have loved us and made us your own, adopting us as sons and daughters and therefore heirs together with Christ. Now open our eyes and our ears that we may hear your Word. Grant that it would penetrate to the flesh and cut out our rebellious nature. We pray these things in the name of our great Prophet, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reading: James 2:14–26

Closing Prayer: What a rich blessing your Word is to your people, Father! You are perfect in wisdom, and we are blessed beyond measure. Thank you for speaking to us through the prophets and the apostles that we would know your will. Forgive us for the tendency to be satisfied with being right, rather than your perfect knowledge moving us to good works and love of our neighbor. Grant that our faith would be accompanied by the works that are natural for a child of God. Work faith and repentance in us and those that we love that on the Last Day we would stand together in Christ. We pray all these things in the name of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

DAY 5

Opening Prayer: Father, we praise your holy name this day as we gather to read your Word and, in that Word, find instruction unto wisdom. We proclaim your perfection in all things and acknowledge your lordship in every area of our lives. You are worthy of our time and our attention. We come to you now, pursuing a deeper knowledge of you; the kind which transforms the one who hears. By your Spirit, break through our ears which can be so hard of hearing, and give us understanding. We pray all of these things in the name of our great King, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reading: James 3:1–18

Closing Prayer: Father, your Word is like a priceless treasure found in a field. Grant that we would sell everything in order to acquire it! What is man that you are mindful of him? And yet you have stooped down to speak to us in words that we can understand. What love is this that gives his only Son for our deliverance? We praise you Father and give thanks. How can it be, then, that with this same tongue with which we offer thanks and praise we also speak words that tear down and destroy? Break our hearts and lead us to repentance that we would confess our faults and be reconciled to you and our neighbor. May the world know by our love for one another that we are disciples of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. *Amen.*

DAY 6

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, we are eager to hear from you in your Word. We give you praise for your power and glory and majesty. You are faithful and steadfast toward us. You uphold us and sustain us. We give you thanks for all the ways that you have revealed yourself to us, both in the works of creation and by your Word. We ask that as we read your Word we would have ears that hear clearly, hearts that are ready to receive your Word, and eyes that perceive truth. We pray, Lord, that your Son, Jesus Christ, would fill us richly and the Holy Spirit would lead us into all joy and truth. *Amen.*

Reading: James 4:1–17

Closing Prayer: Lord, you have spoken to us in your Word. You have met us during this time of worship by the reading of the Word and the presence of the Spirit. We pray that you would use what we have read and heard to transform us into the likeness of Jesus. Shape us and mold us by the Word. Forgive us of our sin. Help us to cling to Christ and cast our sin aside. Keep us steadfast in righteousness and far from sinful desire. We pray, Lord, that you would meet us in all our needs. We pray that you would sustain us in the faith, hold us together in hope, and find us enduring until your return. *Amen.*

DAY 7

Opening Prayer: Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name. We proclaim with all creation, “How awesome are your deeds!” We now come to your Word eager to read and see what you have done. We are eager to know you are near—comforting and steadfast. We thank you that there is no place in all the earth we can flee from your presence, for you are there. We thank you that your Word teaches us of your instruction and care for our good. Help us now to rest in the work of your Son, Jesus, for our salvation and the presence of the Spirit in us, who attends the reading of the Word and the worship of his people. Lead us in truth and transform us. *Amen.*

Reading: James 5:1–12

Closing Prayer: Lord, we have heard from you in your Word, and we give thanks that you have led us in truth. We pray that you would make us more sensitive to your commands, more inclined toward obedience, and quick to repent as we see our sin. Our sin finds its answer in your mercy. During these trying times, Lord, it is easy to grumble. We see our earthly comforts waning. We pray, Lord, during these times of trial and suffering, that you would make a us a praying people. We pray that you would help us encourage each other in the faith and that we may remain steadfast until your coming. All the while we say, “Lord Jesus come quickly!” *Amen.*

DAY 8

Opening Prayer: Hear our prayer, O Lord. We come into your presence to hear from your Word. We seek to know your power, your glory, and your Son. You are enthroned over all the earth. You rule and reign with perfect justice, goodness, and faithfulness. Draw us into your presence by the things that we hear now. May your spirit fill us and lead us in understanding. And may Christ Jesus be our joy and salvation. *Amen.*

Reading: James 5:13–20

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you that our reading of your Word beckons us to come and talk with you. We are most blessed in all the earth, who are invited to come and bring our needs and petitions to you, our thanksgiving and confession. The Word teaches us that you care for us as your children. And so, we come boldly into your presence by your invitation, making our pleas known. Would you forgive us of our sin? Would you show mercy for the many ways that we fail to obey? And we thank you that this very reading tells us that if we confess our sins, we may be healed. Heal us this day, God. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. *Amen.*

DAY 9

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, the whole world rejoices at your provision and power. The birds of the air find their food and the sun rises and sets on its course by your hand. The grass is watered as you send the rains. May we know, as your creation does, of your presence. May we be reminded, as we pick up the Word now, that you are speaking to us as your people. May the Word penetrate our hearts and enliven us and draw us into your presence. May your Son, Jesus, be magnified, and may the Spirit guide us in truth. Set before us now a living hope in Jesus name. *Amen.*

Reading: 1 Peter 1:1–12

Closing Prayer: Lord, we have heard of your great mercy in this reading. We have seen the glory of your Son, who has given us a living hope. Christ lives! He has been raised from the dead and is seated with you in glory. We thank you that Christ has secured for us an inheritance that is never fading. Sustain us as we wait to see it not only by faith, but by actual sight. Even now, as we wait to see Jesus in all his glory, we find trials, testing of our faith, and the remains of sin in our flesh. Cause us to be quick to repent, quick to forgive and ask for forgiveness, and quick to encourage each other in the faith. And in all this, help us to believe the gospel and to carry that gospel of hope to others. We pray in the powerful name of Jesus. *Amen.*

DAY 10

Opening Prayer: Maker and Creator of all things, Rock of our salvation, delight of our eyes as the Founder and Perfecter of our faith. With eagerness, we come to you this day to worship. We seek to know you better, hear your voice, and be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ. We pray that you would be our delight as we read your Word. We pray that you would settle our minds, reign in our hearts, and focus our wills on the truth that is proclaimed in our passage today. Reveal to us Christ Jesus and it is in his name that we pray. *Amen.*

Reading: 1 Peter 1:13–25

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father we have heard good news. You have sent your Son, Jesus, as the ransom for sinners. You have given us something more precious than all the treasures of the world—the blood of Christ which washes away all our sins. We thank you for the work of Christ on our behalf to bring us to salvation. Lord, may this mercy make us all the more eager to confess our sin, to lay it at the feet of Jesus, and to flee from sin to Christ. Make us quick to repent, eager to obey, and purify us. Help us to set our hope on Jesus, and keep us from wavering or falling back. Bring us to that end that you have prepared for us in your presence. We love you, Lord, and pray and petition you for all our needs in name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. *Amen.*