

# FAMILY WORSHIP GUIDE



May 30, 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:* We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks, for your name is near. We recount your wondrous deeds. You spoke, and the heavens and earth were created. You judge the nations with equity, putting down one and lifting up another. We praise your holy name and rejoice to be called your people. Now as we read your Word, work in us faith and repentance, that we would be obedient to the Word that we have heard. We pray this all for the sake of your Kingdom and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 2:11-22

*Closing Prayer:* Father in heaven, what a wonderful reminder that your salvation is not just for one nation, but for every tribe and tongue and nation. We rejoice that the finished work of Jesus Christ has made one new man in place of the two, and that we gentiles, though we were far off before Christ, are now brought near. Forgive us of our sins, Father, and build us up into a holy dwelling place for you, built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. We lift up these prayers to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our cornerstone. *Amen.*

# DAY 2

*Opening Prayer:* Heavenly Father, how wonderful are your ways. All that is made comes from you. The whole earth is yours and the fullness thereof. You reign and rule over every aspect of life. We pray that as we approach your Word today you would reign over our hearts and minds. We pray that our lives would be brought into conformity with your will and design. As we draw near to you, would your Spirit enliven our hearts and draw us up into your presence? We pray that your Word would be our delight and treasure. We pray that Jesus would be glorified and magnified in the words that we read. May our eternal hope be established in Christ Jesus. It is in his precious name that we pray. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 3:1-13

*Closing Prayer:* God, as we have studied your Word, we pray that it would have its full effect in our lives. You have brought us into the family of God and have given us a full inheritance of glory in Jesus Christ. We thank you that you have made known to us by the Spirit the mystery of Christ. Your gospel is life. Bring us always to this life. Forgive us of our sins for they are many. Pour out your mercy and grace upon us, and give us assurance and boldness from this Word. We pray that you would meet our needs and see us through trial and temptation. Help us to put off the old man and live as new men created in the likeness of Christ Jesus. We pray this in the matchless name of Christ. *Amen.*

## DAY 3

*Opening Prayer:* We sing aloud to you, O God, our strength! We shout for joy to the God of Jacob! We rejoice that you are not the God of the dead but of the living and that in Jesus Christ we find resurrection and perfect fellowship with you forever. We look forward to the day of the Lord and our eternal perfection. Until that day, O Lord, renew us day by day according to your Word and Spirit. Equip us for the work you have placed in our hands, we pray, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 3:14-21

*Closing Prayer:* Heavenly Father, Paul's prayer for the Ephesians fills us with joy at the anticipation of being filled with such a knowledge of the love of Christ that it that it surpasses all other knowledge. And yet we confess that we have not always lived according to this love. Instead, we have loved this world and the false hope that it holds out in its own promises. Forgive us, Father, and change our hearts that we would desire you above all things, and that our desire would be expressed outwardly in joyful obedience. We make our requests in the powerful name of Jesus Christ who first loved us. *Amen.*

## DAY 4

*Opening Prayer:* O Lord our God, Shepherd of your people, lead us to the good waters and feed us in your pasture. Walk with us through this day and draw us to your presence. You know what we need, and our portion comes from you. May we be like sheep feeding upon the words of life. Fill our day with the contemplation of your might, wisdom, love, and providence. Give us life in the Holy Spirit, joy in our fellowship with Christ, and a measure of faith for all your promises. We pray that thoughts of Christ would invade all aspects of our lives. We come eager to hear your voice from your Word. We come with boldness into your presence in the name of Jesus, your son and our Savior. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 4:1-16

*Closing Prayer:* God there is no greater love given than that of your son, Jesus Christ. He has brought salvation to a rebellious and wicked people. You have called us by your Word, and it is our command to have faith and believe. We believe upon your Son for the forgiveness of sin and salvation. We pray that we would never cease to repent of our sins, to love our neighbors, and to act in gentleness, humility, patience, and peace. Keep us from error and false doctrine. Let truth prevail in our lives. We pray that you would hold us together in the bonds of unity and love. We ask that you would grant our requests, both small and large, and that we would submit to your will for our lives. Search us God, and conform us to the likeness of your Son, Jesus. We pray this in the name of Christ. *Amen.*

## DAY 5

*Opening Prayer:* How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! Our souls long, yes, faint for the courts of the Lord. Our hearts and flesh sing for joy to you, the living God. We are infinitely blessed that we dwell in your house and sing your praise! Now, as we turn our hearts to your Word, may we, by the working of your Spirit, hear with living ears and believe with living hearts the promises we find there and go with strong hands and swift feet to fulfill the exhortations that we find there. Do this for the sake of the Kingdom, for the sake of your name, and for the sake of your people, Father. We cry out in the name of your only Son, Jesus Christ *Amen*.

*Reading:* Ephesians 4:17-32

*Closing Prayer:* Father, Paul reminds us in these verses that we have been forgiven by Christ. And how we rejoice to read those words! We acknowledge that we have not deserved your forgiveness, and we give thanks that you give it to us freely. Now, we confess our sins, acknowledging that we have not always walked in the manner to which we have been called but have walked more like the unbelievers do. Work faith and repentance in us, we pray, that we would put away all malice and envy and slander and every other sin and instead speak the truth, giving no opportunity to the devil. Forgive us, we pray, for the sake of your son, Jesus Christ. *Amen*.

## DAY 6

*Opening Prayer:* God, you have no equal. You are the King of kings and Lord of lords. In your hands are all the corners of the earth. The depths are yours and the heights. Where can we go to flee your presence for you are in all places? We are your people, and you are our God. As we study and read your Word, we pray that it would not be meaningless motions or common words, but that your Spirit would communicate these words to us as our daily bread for life. We pray that we would submit our whole being to them as your transform us into new men, women, and children. Give us the joy of our salvation in Christ Jesus. We pray always in the name of Jesus. *Amen*.

*Reading:* Ephesians 5:1-14

*Closing Prayer:* Our Father in heaven, we give thanks for the provision of your Word. It teaches us of the love you have given to us as your children, and it calls us to walk in life in a manner that is worthy of our calling. You have saved us from our sins which have kept us in darkness. We pray that never again would we desire darkness over the light. Give us a vigor and diligence to put to death the sin in our flesh and to bear fruit in accordance with your Word. We pray that your Word would be a light unto our path and lead us in the way of righteousness. We pray that you would forgive us of our sins. We are prone to wander, Lord. Help us to discern what is pleasing to you. Grant us our requests, God, as your children. Conform us to your will. And we pray that Christ would shine on us. *Amen*.

## DAY 7

*Opening Prayer:* Lord, on your holy mountain stands the city you founded. We know that you love the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things of you are spoken, O city of God. And what joy is ours to know that you have placed us in that heavenly city and placed your name upon us—to know that we are native citizens of this city that you love—this heavenly Jerusalem. Now Father, as we read your Word, fill us with your Spirit that we would hear the exhortation that you give us by your servant, Paul. We pray in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 5:15-21

*Closing Prayer:* Father in heaven, we do rejoice to know that we are your children, but we too often forget that the days are evil and we do not make the best use of the time. Fill our hearts and our mouths with praise and thanksgiving, so that we would always walk carefully, living lives of devotion to you. Forgive us, Father, for our rebellious hearts. You have lifted us up out of the pit and set our feet upon the Rock. Now, mold us and make us after your image in the world so that the lost will know you and sing your praises as well. We make our confession and lift up our petitions in the matchless name of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

## DAY 8

*Opening Prayer:* O God, the source of eternal light, shed forth your unending day upon us as we watch for you, that our lips may praise you, our lives glorify you, and our days be filled with thoughts of you. We give thanks that your Word draws us into these contemplations. We pray that the anticipation of our hearts to hear and meet with you would be satisfied as we read your Word. We pray that your Spirit would attend to us and lead us in the way of truth. We pray that this truth would always lead us to Christ as the source of life. It is by him that we move and live and have our being. And it is in Jesus' name we pray. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 5:22-33

*Closing Prayer:* God you are love. Every action done towards us is an expression of that love. What greater love is there than the sending of your own son for the redemption of your people. We thank you for Christ who has so loved his church that he was willing to lay down his life for her. We pray that this love would invade our earthly relationships. Give us a selfless love that hold others in the highest regard. Make us spotless like your Son. Wash us in the blood of Christ. We pray that as we bring our sin to you daily, in repentance and confession, that we would be sanctified and made whole. Help us to cleave to Christ always as a husband does to his wife. Forgive us of adultery of the heart so that we may be given wholly to Christ in all our ways. We pray that you would grant us our requests and cause us to desire your will. We pray all of this in the superior and matchless name of Christ. *Amen.*

## DAY 9

*Opening Prayer:* We will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever. With our mouths we will make known your faithfulness to all generations! You made a promise to David that one born in his line would sit on the throne forever. You have kept this promise in Jesus Christ, the Son of David and our King. Now, Father, as we read your Word, illuminate our hearts and minds that we may both understand and believe and obey the instruction we find there. We know your Spirit, working through your Word, is powerful to save and transform. Now, in the name of Jesus, we pray that you will do that for your people. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 6:1-9

*Closing Prayer:* Lord God in heaven, we confess that in our flesh we hate any other authority but our own. We rebel against you and against the authority you have placed over us in the world for our good. Forgive us, we pray, for our innate reflex to push back against parents, teachers, employers, and those you have ordained to govern us in our cities and state and country. Father, we plead with you to take this rebellious heart and grant that instead we would have pure hearts, intend upon a joyful obedience to you and a wise obedience to all those you have placed over us. We ask this in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

## DAY 10

*Opening Prayer:* Heavenly Father, you are the source of light. In the beginning, you separated the darkness from light by your voice. Things that were not came into existence by the power of your will and obedience to your voice. We pray that you would exercise that same power as you speak and draw us out of darkness into the light of your Word. We pray that by the presence of your Spirit with your people, the light of your Word would shine forth on all aspects of our lives. Help us to see Christ with unhindered hearts and eyes. Open our ears for the good news we are to hear. Give us obedience and faith. We pray this name of Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

*Reading:* Ephesians 6:10-24

*Closing Prayer:* Stand with us, God, as we stand with you. You are faithful and steadfast. You have never forsaken your people. We pray that as we rise each day to the setting of the sun, that we would put on the whole armor of God. Help us to stand firm in the faith, armed with truth, righteousness, readiness, faith, and salvation. Help us to take up this Word as a sword, firm in prayer, that we might persevere. Forgive us, God, when we do not set your Word before us and wander into sin. Guide us to truth and make us a people of the faith. We pray also that you would meet us in our daily needs. Not just in repentance and faith, but in all requests and petitions. Bring us always to the table of your good promises. Be our daily strength. We pray this by your Spirit, in the name of Jesus. *Amen.*