

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on January 29

Being in relationship with God is more than just a once-a-week event. Just like any relationship, regular communication is needed. I challenge you to create a daily routine to prepare your hearts for God’s word. This is something that can be done in less than 20 minutes per day. It just requires a time and place of quiet (before the day begins or after the day has ended or even on the train coming home from work). The readings are designed to coordinate with the sermon theme of the following week. I invite you to follow each step Monday through Saturday.

I. Invocation (Pray this each day):

Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

II. Psalm 147 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

Monday	Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Tuesday	Mark 1:14-20
Wednesday	Mark 1:29-39
Thursday	Mark 1:40-45
Friday	Mark 2:1-12
Saturday	Mark 2:13-22

IV. Prayers

Monday	For those in need of healing from <i>Yellow Pages</i>
Tuesday	For those serving in military and vets
Wednesday	For our shut-ins and caregivers and families in grief
Thursday	For our leaders in government and church
Friday	For family members and neighbors
Saturday	For yourself

V. Reflection Silent and/or written

VI: Benediction (Spoken each day):

You have been in communion with your Lord. God forth now in the strength and assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ goes with you. Amen.

The general idea and often the words of the benediction are taken from: *A Guide to Prayer* by Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, (The Upper Room: Nashville, 1983).

A New Opportunity: Reading through the Bible in two years.

The following readings are designed to lead the reader through the Bible over the course of two years. Each day there is a reading from the Psalms, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. The readings will be given for Monday through Saturday. Sunday will be a day of rest (and catch up if needed).

Mon.	Psalm 18:16-24	Genesis 29:15-30:24	Matthew 11:1-10
Tues.	Psalm 18:25-29	Genesis 30:25-31:21	Matthew 11:11-24
Wed.	Psalm 18:30-36	Genesis 31:22-55	Matthew 11:25-12:8
Thurs.	Psalm 18:37-45	Genesis 32:1-21	Matthew 12:9-21
Fri.	Psalm 18:46-50	Genesis 32:22-33:20	Matthew 12:22-32
Sat.	Psalm 19:1-6	Genesis 34	Matthew 12:33-45

For an introduction for Week 5 readings, see SOTH’s webpage (shepherdofthehill.com), find the sidebar button entitled “Read Through the Bible Program”. The same introduction is also found on the Shepherd of the Hill Facebook page.

If you need some help understanding the Bible texts you are reading, I suggest buying the Augsburg Fortress *Lutheran Study Bible*. Just Google “Augsburg Fortress Lutheran Study Bible” to buy through the Augsburg Fortress Publishing website.

A good online resource is called “Enter the Bible” (enterthebible.org). It is produced by Luther Seminary. This website can give you information about each book of the Bible. Take some time and explore.

Another good source of information is a Bible study that I did two years ago entitled “See Through the Scriptures.” Each of the lectures were videoed. Go to shepherdofthehill.com, click on the tab “Deepen Your Faith”. Look under the heading “Reading and Understanding the Bible” for “See Through the Scriptures.” Check out Sessions 1-4.

Join us as we deepen our knowledge of God’s word, while getting to know Jesus as his apprentices.