

## ORDER OF SERVICE

### WELCOME

**SONG:** Behold Our God

### CHILDREN'S TALK

### CONFESSION

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
We have sinned against you  
And against our neighbour,  
In thought and word and deed,  
In the evil we have done  
And in the good we have not done,  
Through negligence, through weakness,  
Through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
Who died for us,  
Forgive us all that is past;  
And grant that we may serve you  
In newness of life  
To the glory of your name. Amen.  
Common Worship, © The Archbishops' Council of  
the Church of England, 2000-2006

### NOTICES

(Children go to Sunday School and Crèche)

### BOOK SLOT

**SONG:** Holy, Holy, Holy!

**SONG:** Ancient of Days

**READING:** 1 Samuel 8 (pg. 230)

### SERMON

### PRAYERS

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen

**SONG:** Sovereign Over Us

### BLESSING

## NOTICES

### Connect with us

If you're new at Grace Church, we'd love to connect. Sign up to our Newsletter or WhatsApp Group by scanning the QR code or emailing [info@greenwich.church](mailto:info@greenwich.church)



### Grace Groups

Our mid-week groups return this week for a prayer gathering. Join us at 7:45pm on Wednesday in the King William Building.

### Student & Young Adult Weekend Away: 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> January

Booking is still open for the weekend away! Speak to Samuel for more information on how to sign up.

### Giving

Grace Church is funded wholly by the donations of its members. See [www.greenwich.church/give](http://www.greenwich.church/give) or set up a bank transfer (40-52-40/00027789) or to give tax efficiently contact [treasurer@greenwich.church](mailto:treasurer@greenwich.church).

*Next Sunday: 1 Samuel 17*

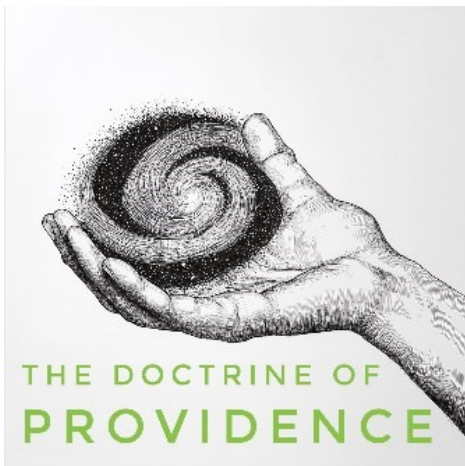


## Welcome!

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025

***“I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is none like me,  
declaring the end from the beginning  
and from ancient times things not yet done,  
saying, ‘My counsel shall stand,  
and I will accomplish all my purpose’***

*Isaiah 46:9b-10 (ESV)*



<sup>1</sup>When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup>The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. <sup>3</sup>Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

<sup>4</sup>Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah <sup>5</sup>and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.” <sup>6</sup>But the thing displeased

Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the LORD. <sup>7</sup>And the LORD said to Samuel, “**Obey the voice** of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. <sup>8</sup>According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. <sup>9</sup>Now then, **obey their voice**; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

<sup>10</sup>So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him. <sup>11</sup>He said, “These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots. <sup>12</sup>And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plough his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. <sup>13</sup>He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. <sup>14</sup>He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. <sup>15</sup>He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. <sup>16</sup>He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work. <sup>17</sup>He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. <sup>18</sup>And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

<sup>19</sup>But the people refused to **obey the voice** of Samuel. And they said, “No! But there shall be a king over us, <sup>20</sup>that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.” <sup>21</sup>And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD. <sup>22</sup>And the LORD said to Samuel, “**Obey their voice** and make them a king.” Samuel then said to the men of Israel, “Go every man to his city.”

## 1. God is in control of all that happens

- Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?  
 A. God's providence is his almighty and ever present power, whereby, as with his hand, he still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand.

[Heidelberg Catechism, 1563]

He controls **the natural world** (Psalm 104; Matthew 10:29), **“random” events** (Proverbs 16:33), **human lives** (1 Samuel 2:6-7; Psalm 139:16; Acts 17:26), **human decisions** (Proverbs 21:1; Exodus 34:24), **evil – though he does not do evil** (Genesis 50:20; Job 1:12; Acts 2:23).

## 2. Does this mean we cannot miss his blessing? We can behave however we like without evil consequences?

“The people refused to **obey the voice** of Samuel” (v19; cf. 1 Samuel 12:19).

## 3. No. God sometimes chooses to give us over to what we choose

“The Lord said to Samuel, “**Obey the voice** of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them” (v6; cf. v22; Romans 1:24, 26, 28).

## 4. At no point has God lost control; his word still reigns

The curious incident of the lost donkeys... (chapters 9-10).

## 5. But God's discipline comes tinged with grace

Saul is a bad king but by no means the worst. He saves them (chapter 11)! And he paves the way for a much, much better king.

## 6. And God refuses to forsake his repentant people

“And Samuel said to the people, “Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself.” (12:20-22)

## Discussion Starter:

How has the doctrine of providence so far a) comforted you b) challenged you?