

## David Narrative Stories from the Revised Common Lectionary, With Notes on What Happens Between the Lections

One of the intentions of the Revised Common Lectionary was to bring the great stories of the Hebrew scriptures more completely into the life and discourse of the church today. For this reason, Ordinary Time readings in the RCL give two choices from the Hebrew scriptures – one alternative from one of the story sequences, and an alternative not in the great story.

This summer -- Year B -- the lectionary invites us to take up the story of King David. David's story is huge, a great saga containing many stories, and the few Sundays given to it in ordinary time can only take up a few of the stories. Here you'll find a listing of this summer's readings from the Hebrew scriptures – both the King David story and the alternative readings. On the following pages we'll give you a synopsis of the King David story as presented in the First and Second Books of Samuel.

This page's listing is taken from The Revised Common Lectionary: A Vanderbilt Divinity Library online resource: <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/>

- June 14**      1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 (Samuel's anointing of David) *or Ezekiel 17:22-24*
- June 21**      1 Sam 17:(1a, 4-11,19-23),32-49 (David and Goliath) *or Job 38:1-11*
- June 28**      2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27 (David's lamentation of the death of Saul and Jonathan) *or Wis. of Sol. 1:13-15, 2:23-24*
- July 5**        2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10 (David becomes king of all of Israel and Jerusalem is made the new capital) *or Ezekiel 2:1-5*
- July 12**      2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19 (David brings the Ark of God to Jerusalem) *or Amos 7:7-15*
- July 19**      2 Samuel 7:1-14a (David offers to build God a house, and God promises to establish David's house forever) *or Jeremiah 23:1-6*
- July 26**      2 Samuel 11:1-15 (David and Bathsheba – David begins the cover-up) *or II Kings 4:42-44*
- August 2**     2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a (David sets up Uriah's death, Nathan confronts David) *or Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15*
- August 9**     2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33 (The death of Absalom) *or I Kings 19:4-8*
- August 16**    1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14 (David's death, Solomon's prayer) *or Proverbs 9:1-6*
- August 23**    I Kings 8:(1, 6, 10-11), 22-30, 41-43 (Solomon claims the promise Yahweh made to David and David's house forever) *or Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18*
- August 30**    Song of Solomon 2:8-13 (Arise, my love, my fair one!) *or Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9*
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These notes were prepared by Pamela Grenfell Smith and Jennie Kiffmeyer to give you a sense of the scope of King David's story. They are not intended to be scholarly or exegetic in character. All errors are certainly our own!

The story begins in 1 Samuel 1 with a barren woman – Hannah – who prays for a child. The child she is given is Samuel, and her song of joy and thankfulness [1 Samuel 2:1-10] tells of how God acts in the world to reorder human social and political structures. Hannah's song is worth singing.

The story of God calling Samuel in the night is in 1 Samuel 3. Growing up, serving Eli in the temple, Samuel develops a passion for reforming the worship of Yahweh. Samuel grows up to become one of the judges – the priestly leaders of the Hebrews' tribal society.

1 Samuel 4 finds Israel at war with the Philistines, who capture the Ark and slaughter 30,000 of the

Israelites are killed. Because the Ark's power is deathly to the Philistines, they return it in 1 Samuel 6 with guilt-offerings – golden tumors, golden mice. At the time of the Ark's return, Samuel calls the Israelites to reform their religious practices and the Israelites have a decisive victory over the Philistines.

1 Samuel 8 – Samuel is old, and the people of Israel don't trust his sons. They say to Samuel, "Give us a king, like other nations." This is the hinge of the social and political transition happening throughout King David's story, the movement from the Israelites' more-or-less democratic, more-or-less egalitarian tribal society into a society with a king, a court, a center of power and privilege. Samuel warns them what a king will do to their culture, but they want the military security they believe a king will give them.

1 Samuel 9, 10, 11 – Samuel finds Saul, anoints him, announces Saul's kingship. Saul's decisive victory of the Ammonites quiets those who resist his kingship.

1 Samuel 12 – Samuel's warnings to the Israelites. Samuel states Yahwe's conditions under which a king will be permitted to govern Israel. Saul is held to be accountable to Samuel - kings are to be accountable to the prophetic tradition.

1 Samuel 13, 14, 15 – Saul's campaigns against the Philistines. The heroism of Saul's son Jonathan. Details of Saul's family. Samuel withdraws his support from Saul. The unspeakable death of King Agag of the Amalekites.

### **June 14 - 1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13**

15:34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul.

15:35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel.

16:1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

16:2 Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'"

16:3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you."

16:4 Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"

16:5 He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

16:6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the LORD."

16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

16:8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."

16:9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."

16:10 Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these."

16:11 Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."

16:12 He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one."

16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Finishing Chapter 16 – Saul is deeply depressed, and David is brought to play music for him. When David plays, the evil spirit departs from Saul.

**June 21 - 1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23), 32-49**

17:1a Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.

Various military details are omitted by RCL.

17:4 And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

17:5 He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze.

17:6 He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders.

17:7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield-bearer went before him.

17:8 He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me.

17:9 If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us."

17:10 And the Philistine said, "Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together."

17:11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

The omitted verses introduce David (again), this time as a shepherd boy sent to bring food to his older brothers who are soldiers in Saul's army.

17:19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

17:20 David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, took the provisions, and went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampment as the army was going forth to the battle line, shouting the war cry.

17:21 Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army.

17:22 David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers.

17:23 As he talked with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines, and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

David asks, what's in it for me? His older brother expresses his opinion of David in vivid terms.

17:32 David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

17:33 Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

17:34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock,

17:35 I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth; and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it.

17:36 Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God."

17:37 David said, "The LORD, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine." So Saul said to David, "Go, and may the LORD be with you!"

17:38 Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail.

17:39 David strapped Saul's sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them." So David removed them.

17:40 Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

17:41 The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him.

17:42 When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance.

17:43 The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

17:44 The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field."

17:45 But David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

17:46 This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,

17:47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand."

17:48 When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

17:49 David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

Finishing Chapter 17, David cuts off Goliath's head and is introduced to Saul (again).

1 Samuel 18 through 1 Samuel 31 – the long struggle between Saul and David. Jonathan and David's love for each other. The repulsive deal over Michal. Ongoing wars with the Philistines. David's victories, Saul's increasing violence and instability. David and Abigail. David takes refuge from Saul by going over to the Philistines. Saul consults the Witch of Endor. The Philistines refuse to permit David to fight with them against Saul – they don't trust him. The Philistines kill Saul and his sons; a decisive Philistine victory over the Israelites.

### **June 28 - 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27**

1:1 After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag.

David is told of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan.

1:17 David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan.

1:18 (He ordered that The Song of the Bow be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jashar.)  
He said:

1:19 Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places! How the mighty have fallen!

1:20 Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon; or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised will exult.

1:21 You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor bounteous fields! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no more.

1:22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, nor the sword of Saul return empty.

1:23 Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

1:24 O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you with crimson, in luxury, who put ornaments of gold

on your apparel.

1:25 How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan lies slain upon your high places.

1:26 I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

1:27 How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

2 Samuel 2,3,4 – Israel accepts David as king, but the commander of Saul’s army makes Saul’s son Ishbaal king over Judah. The war between David and Ishbaal, who is defended by Saul’s followers. Various terrible events happen to members of Ishbaal’s family and government, and for each event David has plausible deniability.

### **July 5 - 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10**

5:1 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, "Look, we are your bone and flesh.

5:2 For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel."

5:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.

5:4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

5:5 At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

David’s army enters Jerusalem through the water shaft – an underground aqueduct?

5:9 David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inward.

5:10 And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

Finishing Chapter 5 – David builds a fine house & has more concubines and children. He “perceives that the LORD has made him king over Israel.” Another decisive victory over the Philistines.

### **July 12 - 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19**

6:1 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

6:2 David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim.

6:3 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart

6:4 with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark.

6:5 David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

The Ark strikes down more people. David waits another 6 months.

6:12b So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing;

6:13 and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.

6:14 David danced before the LORD with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod.

6:15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

6:16 As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

6:17 They brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the LORD.

6:18 When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people

in the name of the LORD of hosts,

6:19 and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

Finishing Chapter 6 -- Michal is repulsed by David's naked dancing before the Ark.

**July 19 - 2 Samuel 7:1-14a**

7:1 Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him,

7:2 the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent."

7:3 Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

7:4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan:

7:5 Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in?

7:6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.

7:7 Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

7:8 Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel;

7:9 and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

7:10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly,

7:11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

7:12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

7:13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

7:14a I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

The next few verses aren't in the lection, but are really important - the story testifies to the end of a covenantal relationship with God, the beginning of unconditional love.

**13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

**14 I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings.**

**15 But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.**

**16 Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.**

Finishing Chapter 7 – David's prayer concerning his kingship.

2 Samuel 8,9,10 – David's victories over the Philistines, the Moabites, the Zobahites, the Arameans the Edomites – these all become vassal states to Israel. David's generals, advisors, priests. David finds a son of Jonathan still living, Mephibosheth, and takes him into his household. Rebellion among the vassal states, Israel is at war again.

**July 26 - 2 Samuel 11:1-15**

11:1 In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

11:2 It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful.

11:3 David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

11:4 So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house.

11:5 The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

11:6 So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David.

11:7 When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going.

11:8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king.

11:9 But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.

11:10 When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?"

11:11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing."

11:12 Then David said to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day,

11:13 David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

11:14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

11:15 In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die."

What a place to stop! RCL skips the next few verses about how Joab sets up Uriah's death.

### **August 2 - 2 Samuel 11:26 - 12:13a**

11:26 When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him.

11:27 When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD,

12:1 and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor.

12:2 The rich man had very many flocks and herds;

12:3 but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him.

12:4 Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him."

12:5 Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die;

12:6 he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

12:7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul;

12:8 I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more.

12:9 Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah

the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

12:10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

12:11 Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun.

12:12 For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."

12:13a David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

Finishing Chapter 12 – This child dies. Bathsheba bears a second child to David, Solomon, who will be king. David's victory over the Rabbahites.

2 Samuel 13,14,15,16,17 -- The rape of David's daughter Tamar by her brother. The destruction of David's sons. David's son Absalom begins to usurp David's authority, declares himself king at Hebron and attacks Jerusalem. David and his loyal followers flee. War between Absalom and David.

Beginning Chapter 18 – David organizes his army for the battle.

### **August 9 - 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33**

18:5 The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom.

18:6 So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim.

18:7 The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men.

18:8 The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

18:9 Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

Continuing Chapter 18 – Joab kills Absalom.

18:15 And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

Continuing Chapter 18 – Joab sends messengers tell David of Absalom's death.

18:31 Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, "Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you."

18:32 The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man."

18:33 The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

2 Samuel 20, 21 – Israel and Judah are in an uproar over the conflict between David and Absalom. Some cities/peoples try to make peace with David but others will not be reconciled. Joab, David's general, is the military leader – David is trying to expiate his guilt. A three-year famine. More wars with the Philistines. Things are crumbling.

Chapters 22, 23 and 24 seem to be out-of-sequence fragments.

2 Samuel 22 – David's great song of victory when he was delivered from Saul.

2 Samuel 23 – David's last words. War stories from the good old days before Uriah's death.

2 Samuel 24 – David takes a census; the plague; a new altar for Yahweh.



1 Kings 1 – David’s old age. Conflict among his sons over who will follow him on the throne. David swears to Bathsheba that Solomon will be the next king. Solomon is anointed king by Nathan and Zadok the priest. His kingship is proclaimed, his enemies tremble, the people rejoice.

1 Kings 1 – David’s last words to Solomon. Solomon negotiates for peace among the fragments of his father’s kingdom.

Our decision for this workshop was to tackle Solomon some other year. However, please note in the readings for the next two Sundays, the story's careful testimony of the sacred dynastic connection between David and Solomon.

The reading for **August 16** testifies to Solomon's encounter with God in a dream - not even David did that!

In the reading for **August 23**, Solomon publicly and liturgically claims the promise made by God to David in the July 19 reading. In 1 Kings 8:30, Solomon specifically claims God's promise of a new relationship of forgiveness and mercy.

### **August 30 - Song of Solomon 2:8-13**

2:8 The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills.

2:9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.

2:10 My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;

2:11 for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

2:12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

2:13 The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

What a curious, and curiously right, place for this reading from the Song of Songs . . . at the end of David’s story, full of guilt, blood, and betrayal – here is this sweet voice of freedom, tenderness, youth.