

WORSHIP HANDOUT

Sunday May 18th

OPENING OF WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*SONG OF WELCOME Open Doors

*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Faithful, Mordecai reveals his trust in God.

**P: Rain continues falling,
thunder threatens.**

L: Falling into despair he dons the sackcloth of grief.

**P: Thunderous evil persists,
death will surely follow.**

L: Esther's life at risk, she chooses the most loving action in "just such a time as this."

P: She chooses love and justice and hope.

L: Let us pray,

**P: Mystical one, touch our hearts as you did with Mordecai and Esther. Bolster our resolve and point the way. Perhaps, we too have come to this crossroad, for "just such a time as this."
Amen.**

L: Let us worship the One who loves
in times like then and times like now.

**P: Tasting grief, tasting joy, with hesitancy and resolve we are
here to worship God.**

OPENING PRAYER

Inspire our hearts, feet, & hands to be your expansive love in the face of hostility and hatred and fear. Help us to retain your essence of compassion and favor for those on the margins. May we embrace your calling of love and justice in “just such a time as this.” Amen.

<https://liturgybits.com/2017/01/20/a-prayer-for-today/>

HYMN My Hope Is Built UMH 368

SONG AS CHILDREN GATHER Wide, Wide as the ocean
CHILDREN'S MOMENT

TIME OF PRAYER

SILENT AND PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER HYMN Open My Eyes, That I May See UMH 454

LESSON I Esther 4:12-14 CEB (liturgist)

¹² When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, ¹³ he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. ¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time,

relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

May God add a Blessing to this reading.

LESSON 2 Esther 5:1-8 CEB

On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. ² When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

³ Then the king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you."

⁴ "If it pleases the king," replied Esther, "let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him."

⁵ "Bring Haman at once," the king said, "so that we may do what Esther asks."

So the king and Haman went to the banquet Esther had prepared. ⁶ As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, "Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted."

⁷ Esther replied, "My petition and my request is this: ⁸ If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king's question."

This is the Word of God for all people.
Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE “For Such a Time as This”

*HYMN You Are the Seed UMH 583

UNISON PRAYER -

**O God,
our guide and help in alien and contentious places:
as Esther prayed faithfully and worked courageously
for the deliverance of your people,
strengthen us to confront the oppressor
and free the oppressed,
so that all people may know
the justice and unity of your realm. Amen.**

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Vanderbilt Divinity Library. <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*UNISON PRAYER

Almighty God,
giver of every good and perfect gift,
teach us to give to you all that we have and all that we are,
that we may praise you not with our words only,

but with our whole lives. Amen.

*BENEDICTION Song of Hope TFWS 2186

POSTLUDE