

Sunday Worship 29th March 2020

Opening Prayer

Faithful one, whose word is life,
come with saving power
to free our praise,
inspire our prayer
and shape our lives
for the kingdom of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song *Blessed Be Your Name* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTpTQ4kBLxA>

Family Spot *People Jesus met: Nicodemus* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIOXCweNwOk>

Family Song *One Way*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHx7NDjMddo&list=RDsHx7NDjMddo&start_radio=1

Readings

Esther 4:5-14 ⁵ Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why. ⁶ So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. ⁷ Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸ He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people. ⁹ Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰ Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, ¹¹ "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king." 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 royal position for such a time as this?"

John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Bible Spot *For such a time as this?* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqSMjgfWir0>

Reflection

1. How does the current crisis of COVID-19 compare to the threat in Esther's day? (v8)
2. What were God's promises, then and now? (v14)
3. How do God's promises help us to act with both humility and courage?

Confession

Heavenly Father,
we praise you for adopting us as your children
and making us heirs of eternal life.
In your mercy you have washed us from our sins
and made us clean in your sight.
Yet we still fail to love you as we should
and serve you as we ought.
Forgive us our sins and renew us by your grace,
that we may continue to grow as members of Christ,
in whom alone is our salvation. Amen.

Psalm 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. ³ He will not let your foot slip-- he who watches over you will not slumber; ⁴ indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. ⁵ The LORD watches over you-- the LORD is your shade at your right hand; ⁶ the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. ⁷ The LORD will keep you from all harm-- he will watch over your life; ⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Prayers with Peter Hilton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGeQnAgX9jY>

Community Spot with Peter Savage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUXLYkDIQI4>

Prayer for the defence and police force

Eternal God, the only source of peace, we pray for all who serve in the defence and police forces of this land. Give them courage and comfort in danger, patience in waiting, and discipline in the just use of force. Help us to seek for all people the freedom to serve you and each other in compassion and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen.

Song *It Is Well With My Soul* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHe_qmo3gX4

Father of all mercies, for your gifts of healing and forgiveness, for grace to love and care for one another, for your hidden blessings, and for all you have in store for us, we give you thanks, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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