

30 March 2022



# ST. SAVIOUR'S

## ANGLICAN CHURCH.

DIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN.

## Lent 4: The Book of Esther

### COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Almighty and holy God, your Son, in obedience to the Spirit, fasted forty days in the desert: give us grace to discipline ourselves that we may press on towards Easter with eager faith and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**PREACHER: Revd. Chesnay Frantz**

**PRESIDER: Revd. Chesnay Frantz**

READING: Esther 10:1-3 *The gift of power*

### HYMNS: SOF

Introit: 79 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Offertory: 593 What a friend we have in Jesus

Recessional: 147 Great is thy faithfulness

### Lent 2022: Week 3

This week marks the end of our journey through the book of Esther, we have reached the final chapters. The joy of being on a journey is that one simply takes different breaks along the way rather than stopping. As Christians our journey of faith is one which leads us to the final destination of eternal life with Christ Jesus. This faith journey, however involves many forced and unforced breaks at various points before coming to a stop. At our point of death but even then, that stop brings with it a new journey.

Our Lenten journey, with Jesus through the desert, will eventually take us to Good Friday, where we will reflect on the death of Jesus, again this brief break in the journey gifts us with an invitation to that glorious Easter morn. We will gather and reflect on an Empty tomb, as we hear those words: 'His not here, he has risen'.

So, as you take breaks on your faith journey, be gentle on yourself, don't give up. Many times it all feels as if it's simply too much, we begin to ask questions like: Why me Lord? If anything, our Lenten journey through the book of Esther has challenged us to reflect on: Why not me? We have been reminded that we have a purpose for a time such as this, may we not let this pass us by.

As we continue our journey, let us hold fast to the words of this Irish blessing: *May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*

God bless.

Fr. Chesnay

30 March 2022

Our journey through the book of Esther, and with the various characters in the story has challenged us to reflect deeply thus far on; the gift of beauty, the gift of courage and the gift of favour. These were gifts which Esther had used to aide her in ensuring the freedom of a Jewish community. This week as we reflect on chapter 9 and 10, guided by the theme of power, one notices how the King, in affirming his power. Is baled to empower both Mordechai and Esther and in so doing leads to the gift of freedom.

One of the challenges we face when reflecting on the gift of power in many circumstances, is the desire for popularity. In these chapters of the book of Esther, we see how the king with all the power he has, still seeks to be popular, we notice when Esther and Mordechai exercise their power, they too gain popularity. This is the tension which arises for our study of the book of Esther: ***the purpose of our actions***.

Rulers and governors are in power many times because of the people. Many times, we choose those whom we like to lead us rather than those who are best equipped to lead us. Leadership for many and in many spheres of life has become a popularity contest. This we saw as we encountered Hamman, Mordechai, King Ahasuerus, Esther and even queen Vashti. When one falls out of favour, or is no longer popular, your gifts and talents almost become insignificant. If anything, these last few chapters of Esther, guided by the gift of power, calls us to reflect on what we desire most; do we want to be popular? Do we want to be powerful? Or do want we want to be good?

Here at St. Saviour's our overachieving theme for 2022 is that of GOODNESS, and to fully live out our goodness, we must hold onto the last line of the book of Esther; "for he sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his descendants". This is what we are invited to wrestle with this week, how is that we can use; beauty, favour, courage and power for the welfare of all of Gods people.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

1. How have you experienced an abuse of power?
2. How would you describe the power of God's love?
3. If we have been created for goodness, what powerful traits should we exhibit?

## **LENT PROGRAM**

### **BOOK OF ESTHER**

**Week 4: 30 March 2022- Chapter 9,10**      **(The gift of Power)**

**Week 5: 6 April 2022- Summary**      **(Our Esther story)**

## **PARISH DIRECTORY**

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