



ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

26th September, 2022

Sunday Sermon: Esther 4

So far in the story presented in this Book, Esther, a Jewess and an orphan, finds herself appointed queen, enjoying a position of potential influence. But that position is under threat because of the machinations of Haman who is intent on destroying the Jewish people. Although God, as such, is not mentioned by name in the book, the story deals with **Providence** and with **destiny**.

It becomes clear for those in the story and for us in our day that **life is shaped by unseen powers**. Behind the actions of men and women, both God and Satan are at work, as seen in Esther's unlikely promotion to be queen and Haman's relentless strategies to destroy the Jews. In this incident Mordecai reminds Esther of the reality of the intense conflict.

In facing up to the reality of that tension we see that **destiny faces difficulty**. If Mordecai thought that Esther's position offered a ray of hope then that was rebuffed by pointing out the virtual impossibility of gaining an audience with the king without his favour.

Esther has a responsibility for in her case – as in ours – **Providence presents choices**. Although the signs are not favourable, nor can she depend on her personal standing, she is reminded that she *"has come into the kingdom for such a time as this."* She has a role she must play, despite its risks. She must make choices governed by higher purposes than just her own safety.

And, in doing so (*if I perish, I perish*) **destiny is found by trusting Providence**.

From Inga

A Christian song has been going through my mind. It starts: *'All throughout my history, Your faithfulness has walked beside me, The winter storms made way for spring, In every season, from where I'm standing, I see the evidence of Your goodness, All over my life'* – song by Josh Baldwin.

I like the honesty of this song – things aren't always as we would like. I came in April with plans to stay for two months, and it is only now 5 months later that I am heading back home to Oaxaca. The delay was caused by the need for medical appointments and tests. I just have one more appointment to arrange before I go back to Mexico on Thursday.

The good news is that the doctors didn't find anything that is likely to cause a problem in the short term, although the haematologist wants to see me in 6 months. Please pray that the issue they found never will be a major problem.

I have enjoyed being able to fellowship and worship with you during these months. It is a great encouragement to both Sue and me that you pray for us and the translation work we are carrying out in Mexico.

Fergus Buchanan

Yesterday marked the retirement of Fergus Buchanan after 34 years as minister of St Paul's church here in Milngavie. During these years he has maintained a faithful gospel ministry, been highly respected both for his

preaching and extensive pastoral care. He has played a major part in the Christian witness in the town. In latter years he has shown great faith and fortitude in coping with very serious health issues. We at Allander send our best wishes; and our prayers go with him and his wife, Gabrielle, and to the believers in St Pauls who face an uncertain future with major reorganisation of churches and parishes being proposed by the Church of Scotland. Well done, good and faithful servant.

Pray for:

Inga, Fergus, others in the Fellowship facing health issues or challenging circumstances or carrying heavy burdens in these days. He is the **good** Shepherd.

FM Rally

Friday sees the start of the Faith Mission Rallies at 7 30 led by Gordon Thomson in his inimitable style with guest speaker Gavin Harrison and accompanied by his wife, Rebecca, as soloist. It will be followed with refreshments, bookstall and a chance for fellowship with other believers from various churches.

Rejuvenate

After the summer break, Rejuvenate for older teenagers starts up on Saturday at

8pm. A number of young folk from other churches also attend and share in the "food, fellowship and fun" in a safe Christian atmosphere.

Faith Mission Prayer Union

After meeting on Zoom for the past two years because of the pandemic the Milngavie and Bearsden Faith Mission Monthly Prayer Union will meet in Margaret Russell's house (53 Roman Rd, Bearsden, G61 2SG) on Monday 3rd October at 7 30 pm.

Ladies Meeting

The first meeting of the new session of the Ladies' Meeting takes place on Thursday, 6th October, at 2 pm with its traditional 'tea and biscuits', chat, sing song and a guest speaker – this time, old friend, Mima Campbell.

Mission of the Month

Platform 67 was the Mission we supported during September. We move on during October to support SAT-7, a mission specialising in broadcasting gospel programmes by satellite across the Middle East into countries otherwise closed to any form of Christian witness.

Finally,

A week ago today I'm sure most of us were glued to our TV sets watching the funeral of our late Queen Elizabeth II. While our focus was on the service itself and the witness to Her Majesty's faith, I couldn't help but admire the discipline and precision of the armed forces as they carried out their duties on the day. I was reminded of a children's chorus sung at the Holiday Club years ago:- *'I'm too young to march with the infantry, shoot with the artillery, ride with the cavalry. I'm too young to zoom o'er the enemy, but I'm in the Lords army. Yes Sir!'* Then my thoughts went to the hymn:-

'Soldiers of Christ, arise, and put your armour on, strong in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son.'

In this age of increasing Godlessness it's more important than ever that we arise and identify with the Saviour putting on the full armour of God and relying on His strength, to witness to His saving work just as Her Majesty did so publicly.

Ian Baird