



Perhaps

“Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.” (Esther 4:14) These words, spoken by Mordecai to Esther, are probably the most familiar in this little Cinderella story tucked into the Old Testament. According to her uncle Mordecai, *perhaps* Esther has an appointment with destiny.

Esther gets chosen to be the Queen by King Ahasuerus in an ancient version of *The Bachelor*. Her beauty charms the king, who selects her from all the lovely contestants in his harem. Her identity as a Jew is kept hidden, but when a plot is hatched to extinguish the Jewish people, Esther (at Mordecai’s urging) steps up and uses her wits and wiles to save her people and vanquish the enemy of the Jewish people.

It’s a straightforward story, but with plenty of suspense and treachery. It’s one of the few biblical books that you could call a ‘page-turner.’

Esther stands out for something else; it is the only book of the Bible that does not include the word “God.” Not only is God not named, God doesn’t even act. God is not pulling the strings or arranging

Prayer: *Let the ‘perhaps’ keep me from arrogant over-confidence, but don’t let it prevent me from courageous living. Amen.*

*If you would like to read a fascinating account of how the appearance and intervention of God diminishes over time in the Bible, I heartily recommend *The Disappearance of God: A Divine Mystery*, by Richard Elliot Friedman. Friedman is a widely respected biblical scholar who writes in a way that any interested layperson can enjoy.

the circumstances according to the narrative. God is not giving wisdom or providing guidance in dreams and visions. God is off-stage.*

Esther, in other words, lives like us. She and Mordecai receive no special insight. No one stands back to see the ‘mighty hand and outstretched arm of God.’ No seas are parted, no pillars of fire lead them in the night. They act on their own. With their own wisdom. With their own moral insight. With their own fear. With their own doubt.

“*Perhaps*,” Mordecai says, “you have come to royal dignity for such a time as this.” But really, as he admits, “Who knows?”

We have no certainty that our contemplated actions are the right ones. We have only our wisdom guided by our moral and spiritual sense. Our decisions may “feel right,” but we are unlikely to have the confidence of one who has heard from a prophet: “thus says the Lord.”

But in our weakness and incomplete knowledge and our uncertainty we must act. We must act *as if* we have come to this place to take our part in such a time as this.



There’s something new at church! Well, actually it’s something old, made good as new again. The repairs to the stained glass windows are complete and the windows are being installed.

This week, the carpet in the Sanctuary and the Parlor is being replaced. Watch for photos in next month’s newsletter!



Sandi Davison; Eugene; Paul Hayes; John & Karen Kaitanowski; Jewell McFarland; Molly; Pat Nagle; Jean Roth; Lisa S.; Scott; Kelly Thien; Helen Wilson; Alex Steinbronner, Aydan Stormer and those deployed to serve



Happy Birthday!

Karen Schneider (10/3), Shirley Haberman (10/4), Linda Velazquez (10/5), Eli Hamm (10/7), Chris Goetz (10/14), Cindy Rich (10/15), Joyce Corlett (10/16), Dolly Errington (10/16), Jay Rich III (10/22), LaDonna Painter (10/28)

Happy Anniversary!

Martin & Amanda Rozewicz (10/8/2021) Doug & Beth Stormer (10/10/1987)
Roger & Joyce Corlette (10/13/1989) Bob & Linda Velazquez (10/18/1986)



Jean Roth turns 90 on November 3rd!

Let's celebrate and honor Jean by showering her with cards! Send to: Elderwood at Hamburg, Room 218, 5775 Maelou Drive, Hamburg, NY 14075.

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, children ages 3-12 are invited to go to Sunday School after Pastor Lynn's message during worship. The teachers will meet them at the back of the sanctuary and escort them to their classes. If you have any questions, please contact Vanessa Rich (716) 648-7683.



Coffee Fellowship

On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month following worship, come enjoy coffee, snacks and good conversation in the Fellowship Hall.

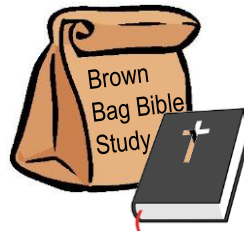
Churches In Action (CIA) is looking for volunteers to sell shopping bags at

Christmas in the Country

November 3- November 6 (3-hr shifts)



Call Russell/Sue Rich at 716-648-5785 or text Sue at 716-912-1495 to volunteer your time at this important fundraiser. (free entrance to event)



Wednesday's Brown Bag BIBLE STUDY

Come to Fellowship Hall at 12noon with your lunch and bible as we visit with each other and learn and grow in the Word with Pastor Lynn.



Our Craft Fair & Basket Raffle was a big success and we got a nice start to also having a successful Quilt Raffle, too. We had a lot of things going on throughout the day. Free admission to the event but we were accepting food donations for the local food bank. Did you see the couple selling greeting cards by vendor room #2? Their sales will be donated to Roswell Park. The Lake Effect Harmony Chorus stopped by to sing several songs for the shoppers and maybe find a future singer for their group. The Girl Scouts (they meet at the church) were having fun selling water and homemade baked goods, They wanted to help St. Matthew's with our fundraiser to cover some expenses related to the vandalism case. They raised \$400.00. The left-over baked goods were taken to the Hamburg Police department.

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We had 19 vendors with a nice variety of crafts. They came from near and far, some just down the road on McKinley Parkway and then Cindy Morgan (Lynn's sister) strolled in from Michigan. We had 82 great baskets and a \$600.00 Karastan area rug for the door prize. Thank you to Chris from David Tiftickjian & Sons.

The Quilters Anonymous group donated a beautiful queen size quilt. The drawing will be November 27, 2022. If you would like to buy a chance to win the quilt, please contact LaDonna Painter (715-7310).

The total made from the vendors fees, the Girl Scouts sales and the basket raffle ticket sales totaled \$3,000.00.

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank everyone who donated a basket, helped put baskets together, making signs and flyers, setting up, clean up, taking photos, and helped with different tasks leading up to and including tasks on Saturday.

Thank you, LaDonna Painter & Fundraising Committee : Marilyn Rich, Nancy & Steve Jankowski, and Gail Burdick.



No Bull

I grew up in a very conservative church, where memorizing Bible verses was a regular part of Sunday School, beginning about the time we could read. You might think that this practice (and the strict rules about everything) would result in good behavior, and it probably did take some rough edges off, but we were still kids.

My cousins belonged to the same church, and the seven of us were as close as siblings growing up. We played, and squabbled, and got in trouble together.

I remember sending my cousin a note during Sunday School (I remember because I got caught sending it). My note was simply a quotation from Psalm 50:9:

I will accept no bull from your house.

I thought I was pretty funny as I sent it to my cousin. The teacher didn't appreciate my irreverent use of the biblical text.

Probably a million 10-year-olds stumbled across that verse and took delight in quoting it to their friends.

The old RSV was likewise filled with references to asses, which also caused plenty of giggles in Sunday School and some unauthorized quotations.

When God declares, "I will accept no bull from your house," it is not spoken because God is fed up with the way people are stretching the truth. God is rejecting ritual sacrifices.

The gist of the Psalm is not that God is throwing out the whole section of Mosaic law that prescribes burnt offerings and animal sacrifice. Rather, God is saying that you can offer sacrifice until there are literally no more cows left to come home and still be far from God. God doesn't need our religious performance. God is not impressed by our gold stars for perfect attendance at church or that this year will be the 23rd time we will have read through the New Testament.

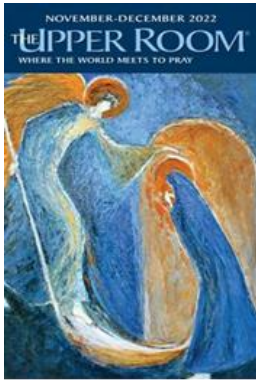
God isn't satisfied with just outwards acts of devotion. God wants our hearts and our hands – our lives offered in love of God and love of neighbor. The rest is just bull.

Prayer: You know I am so full of it. Help me as I seek to offer you all you really want – just me, no bull. Amen.



1. On a dartboard, what number is directly opposite No. 1?
2. The likeness of which president is featured on the rare \$2.00 bill of USA currency?
3. What is Cynophobia the fear of?
4. What was the soft drink Pepsi originally introduced as?
5. Where would you find the "Spanish Steps"?

Did you know sponges hold more cold water rather than hot. Due to the effect of heat on water on the molecular level cold and hot water have different densities. Cold water is more dense.



The **September-October and November-December issues of The Upper Room devotional** can be found in the magazine rack in Narthex and on the small table in the Fellowship Hall.

Help yourself and take one for a friend!



Don't over bathe a St. Bernard. St. Bernards have a lot of fur, but you don't have to worry about frequent visits to the groomer. They have an oily, water-resistant coat, which originally warded off snow and ice when they resided in the mountains. It's best not to over-wash them because soap will strip away necessary oils in their fur.



At age 70, LaDonna's mom (pictured above) went tandem skydiving with her nephew... and loved it!



Sunday Participants in October

Lay Readers

- 10/2 Corey Wilson
- 10/9 Marna Pritchard
- 10/16 Joyce Corlett
- 10/23 Karen Cuddihy
- 10/30 Beth Stormer

Coffee Fellowship (1st & 3rd Sundays)

- October 2: Linda Ferraro, Michelle Kemp
- October 16: LaDonna Painter, Brenda Carver

Ushers in October

- David & Pamela Kaznica, Bill Hamm
- Perry Kaupa, Ken Kruszka, Jay Rich,
- Chrissy Mellerski, Kerry Shearer, Jr.
- Ushers – Sean Dabney, Liam Kaznica

Thank you for your continued generous support of the day-to-day operations and ministries of St. Matthew's.



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1. 19
2. Thomas Jefferson
3. Dogs
4. Brad's Drink
5. Rome, Italy

-Trivia submitted by LaDonna Painter

St. Matthew's United Church of Christ

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