

River Source - Your Guide to Worship

2nd Sunday of Advent—December 9, 2018



Welcome. We are so glad you are here.

*Everything you need to participate in worship is projected on the screen.
If you read music, it is available on the usher stand in the hallway. Ask an usher or help yourself.*

**As the scripture is read to you, circle or underline the words or phrases that you notice most.
What are your #questions to God? About the world?**

Esther 4:1-17 -The Message version of the Bible

When Mordecai learned what had been done, he ripped his clothes to shreds and put on sackcloth and ashes. Then he went out in the streets of the city crying out in loud and bitter cries. He came only as far as the King's Gate, for no one dressed in sackcloth was allowed to enter the King's Gate. As the king's order was posted in every province, there was loud lament among the Jews—fasting, weeping, wailing. And most of them stretched out on sackcloth and ashes.

Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her. The queen was stunned. She sent fresh clothes to Mordecai so he could take off his sackcloth but he wouldn't accept them. Esther called for Hathach, one of the royal eunuchs whom the king had assigned to wait on her, and told him to go to Mordecai and get the full story of what was happening. So Hathach went to Mordecai in the town square in front of the King's Gate. Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him. He also told him the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to deposit in the royal bank to finance the massacre of the Jews. Mordecai also gave him a copy of the bulletin that had been posted in Susa ordering the massacre so he could show it to Esther when he reported back with instructions to go to the king and intercede and plead with him for her people.

Hathach came back and told Esther everything Mordecai had said. Esther talked it over with Hathach and then sent him back to Mordecai with this message: "Everyone who works for the king here, and even the people out in the provinces, knows that there is a single fate for every man or woman who approaches the king without being invited: death. The one exception is if the king extends his gold scepter; then he or she may live. And it's been thirty days now since I've been invited to come to the king."

When Hathach told Mordecai what Esther had said, Mordecai sent her this message: "Don't think that just because you live in the king's house you're the one Jew who will get out of this alive. If you persist in staying silent at a time like this, help and deliverance will arrive for the Jews from someplace else; but you and your family will be wiped out. Who knows? Maybe you were made queen for just such a time as this."

Esther sent back her answer to Mordecai: "Go and get all the Jews living in Susa together. Fast for me. Don't eat or drink for three days, either day or night. I and my maids will fast with you. If you will do this, I'll go to the king, even though it's forbidden. If I die, I die."

Mordecai left and carried out Esther's instructions.

Here's what to expect at River of Hope:

GIFT - Generations In Faith Together. Worship is intentionally intergenerational. "Sunday School" happens within worship. You'll speak ancient words in new ways and sing old hymns that never get old. We practice the story together. We are actively engaged in questions, prayers, and singing together. We learn so much from each other when we worship together. It's a gift, isn't it? Remember, this isn't about excellence or perfection, it's about participation.

Come as you are. Well, you're already here. It doesn't matter what you wear or what kind of shape your spiritual life is in. God meets you and loves you where you are.

Where everybody knows your name? Name tags are awkward, right? We all wear them - not just the visitors. It's an effort to be open and to show this is a safe place to be called by name.

We like kids. No kidding. We think kids are leaders in worship, always teaching us how to live. Parents, please breathe easy. We are with you.

Pray Ground. Stay in worship with your kids. Join them on the pray ground. If it all falls apart, take to the halls. We'll pray for you. ☺

Communion. You are welcome, without exception. If you are hungry and thirsty for unbounded grace, mercy, and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, you are welcome at Christ's table.

Connection Cards. For regulars and visitors to use to communicate and pray. We won't use your info to bother you.

Financial Offering. Giving generously is part of an active faith life. It looks different for each person. River of Hope depends on your giving and is grateful for how and what you share.

- There is a card reader located at the back of the worship space. There are instructions with it. Go ahead and use it.
- Go online to riverofhopehutchinson.org. Click on "give."
- You can support Laundry Love by putting money in the watering can.

On the way out...You'll be handed the River News that includes prayers to pray and scripture to read for the week, along with a calendar and other goings-on in our life together.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

GATHER

Music to Prepare Us
Gathering Songs
Welcome 101
No Longer Strangers Prayer
Practice Saying Hello
Confession
Promise of Forgiveness
Greeting
Prayer of the Day

WORD

Hymn of Praise
Esther 4:1-17 -The Message
version of the Bible
Wade in the Word
Sermon
Prayers of the People (*Put your prayer in the "in box" in the waiting room.*)
Offering + Singing

FEAST

*Setting the Table
Thanksgiving at the Table
The Lord's Prayer
Communion + Singing
Prayer after Communion

SEND

What is Our Purpose?
Blessing
*Sending Song
*Sending Charge
Music to Send You Out to Serve

**Kids are invited to participate throughout worship, but especially in these spots.*



Walk the labyrinth anytime during worship. Please accompany children.