

THE GOSPEL

SPECIAL EDITION

MESSENGER

SPRING 2023 | VOL 98 NO 2

Women's Ministries Edition





Thank you!

From Bishop Scotty Poole

As I reflect on my life and ministry, I am grateful and thankful for the influence and ministry women have poured into my life.

The most influential women in my life have been those of my family. My wife, Redenna, and my mother, Geraldine, without the prayers of these two there is no telling where my life would have taken me. My daughters, (Whitney and Hannah) sisters (Darlene, Sue, Rhonda, Lynn, and Sabrina, aka Bean) and my second mother, Brenda all came into my life at the right time and helped to make me who I am.

There are others too. Mildred Simmons, a Sunday School teacher, never forgot about me. Sandra Arrowood, my pastor's wife, according to Pastor Roland, prayed for me more than she prayed for him. Diane Saxon taught me as a teenager what a Godly man should be. Sister Adams and Aunt Rachel who stayed by my side the evening I was seeking God about announcing being called to preach. These are only a few of the many women that through prayers, ministries, and teachings have helped shape me into the man and minister I am today. I am thankful that these women of God came into my life at the right time to help prepare and shape me for life and ministry.



The Gospel Messenger (USPS 223-340) is published quarterly for \$10 per year by the Congregational Holiness Church, Incorporated, 3888 Fayetteville Highway, Griffin, Georgia 30223. Periodicals postage paid at Griffin, Georgia, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **The Gospel Messenger**, 3888 Fayetteville Highway, Griffin, Georgia, 30223.

All dated material for publication in **The Gospel Messenger** must be in the office of the editor by the following dates: Winter edition: October 20; Spring edition: January 20; Summer edition: April 20; Fall edition: July 20.

Annual Subscription Price:
Individual - \$10 per year
Bundles of 10 - \$90 per year
Bundles of 25 - \$160 per year
Bundles of 50 - \$300 per year

Send subscriptions, change of address to:

International Headquarters of the
Congregational Holiness Church,
Inc.
3888 Fayetteville Hwy.
Griffin, Georgia 30223

Send all correspondence to:

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER
3888 Fayetteville Hwy.
Griffin, Georgia 30223
Email: messenger@chchurch.com
Phone: 800-633-0877
www.chchurch.com

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER
3888 Fayetteville Hwy.
Griffin, Georgia 30223

DIVINE APPOINTMENTS

Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

- Esther 4:13-14

The thing about divine appointments - those God-orchestrated moments - is that often we may not realize that we are in the middle of one. Look at the story of Esther. Mordecai entreats Esther to go speak to the King, which if she goes uninvited and he does not receive her, is punishable by death. In verse 11 Esther saw her limitations and all the reasons why she should not go speak to the King, and she was content to stay within those limitations.

But then something happens. In verses 13-14, when Mordecai questions if perhaps Esther has been brought to her position in the King's palace for this particular time in history to help the Jews escape destruction, I believe that Esther realized she was in the middle of a divine appointment - and that she had a life-changing decision to make. By verse 16, she had made her decision to go to the King, uninvited, which could result in her immediate death. As we know, things ended well for Esther and the Jews in this story.

In thinking about my own divine appointments, one of the most significant started with a drive on my way to my summer job when I was 16. I had dated Scotty for about 6 months in high school and we had broken up. I was devastated and missed him so badly. (Cue the violin music). During our months apart I had rededicated my life to the Lord Jesus, and had fallen in love with Jesus all over again. On that drive to work, I was praying and I remember looking at the beautiful summer sky and praying for Scotty. I remember telling the Lord that if He ever put Scotty back in my life I would do him good and not evil all the days of our life. I had no idea at the time I had entered into the divine

appointment arena.

That very evening, Scotty's sister called and said that Scotty asked her to call to see if I would go out with him and that he would buy her a new pair of tennis shoes if I would. At that moment, I could have hung up, but I didn't. Scotty got on the phone, and as they say, the rest is history. I made a decision that night that changed my life, and many times through the years I have thought back on that prayer - "to do good and not evil all the days of my life". I didn't know I was in the middle of a divine appointment but I am so thankful that I was.

In our lives, we are given these divine appointment opportunities, and what we do with them can affect eternity. Some appointments are mild, like the one I described, but life-changing nevertheless. Some divine appointments are forceful, like Esther's, and the consequences may be swift and negative. I pray that each of you will rise to the occasion when divine appointments come your way, and know that you are called for such a time as this!



Sis. Redenna Poole

Sis. Redenna Poole is the wife of Bishop Scotty Poole. Sis. Poole serves the CHC as the Minister's Spouse Ministry Director.

WHAT'S MY Purpose?

Have you ever wondered what your purpose is? Have you ever felt like you didn't have a purpose? You look around, and everyone has an obvious purpose in life, but you? I think if we were honest, most of us would agree there have been times in our life when we have felt this way. We all know the battle is in our minds. I believe Satan constantly tries to distract us with these thoughts because if he can get into our minds, he will get into our actions. If he can get into our minds, he can paralyze us and make us believe we have no purpose. We have to resist these thoughts and know that God created each one of us with a purpose. The Bible says in Psalms 57:2 "I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill His purpose for me".

We could have been born at any time, but God chose this time for our life to exist. It doesn't matter our background or our past, how unworthy, uneducated, or how unlikely a candidate we are, God can still use us. Sometimes God places us in certain seasons, at certain times, so we can accomplish a certain mission. Sometimes, we can't see it and do not even understand it, but if we are committed to God for His purpose, we are useful for His Kingdom. We can't do our own thing with our agenda. God is looking for someone to be obedient and do His thing. Someone who is completely committed to His will even if it means they will perish.

In the book of Esther, God had a plan for her life. Esther knew that anyone who appeared before the king in his inner court without being invited was doomed to die unless the king held out his gold scepter. However, she also knew there was a mission to be accomplished. If she kept quiet, deliverance for her and her people would not come. They would all die. Mordecai reminded her in Esther 4:14 that perhaps she was made queen for such a time as this. It

was worth breaking the laws to go before the king even if it meant she must die. For us to fully submit our life to the Lord for His purpose, we must die to our flesh, our ways.

God is calling us to be an Esther in the day we are living. You may be raised up to break generational curses in your family. You may be an Esther raised up to speak words of encouragement to others when they feel hopeless and are dying physically or spiritually. Do we go through hard times while we are dying to our flesh trying to do God's will? Absolutely. Is it worth it? You better believe it! Let's be obedient to the Lord and fulfill His purpose for our life, for such a time as this!

God, I pray you will speak truth to every person reading these words and that you would protect our hearts and minds from the lies of Satan that would try to hinder us from doing your will and fulfilling your purpose for our life. You have chosen us to be where we are at this specific time and I pray you will help us make a difference in the lives of others and win lost souls for Your Kingdom. Help us to accomplish what you have called and purposed us to do.



Sis. Kristie Fitzpatrick

Sis. Kristie Fitzpatrick is the wife of Rev. Jonathan, World Missions Director and is the Missions Administrator at General Headquarters.



Women's Ministry - Organized in 1962

The Women's Ministries Department of the Congregational Holiness Church began with the name Willing Workers. The Willing Workers was a vision of Sister Minnie McIntire in the early 1960s. At that time, the ladies would meet, pray, visit the sick and take food when needed. Later, the wife of Rev B.L. Woodruff expanded the Willing Workers' ministry and organized the WMCs, Women's Missionary Council. In 1966, Sister Blanche Lancaster was elected the first WMC President.

Then in 1981, under the leadership of Sister Cordelia Ford, the WMCs became, as we know today, the Women's Ministries Department of the Congregational Holiness Church.

Decades of Women's Ministry Leadership



Mrs. Blanche Lancaster
1966-1973



Mrs. Carolyn Cox
1973-1975



Mrs. Lorene Powell
1975-1977



Mrs. Iona Bateman
1977-1979



Mrs. Cordelia Ford
1979-1999



Mrs. Maggie Pruitt
1999-2017



Mrs. Wanda Murray
2017-Present

CONGREGATIONAL HOLINESS CHURCH GENERAL WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

RENEWAL

conference


April 27-29, 2023

Register Online: www.chchurch.com

International Women's Ministries Board



Secretary Recorder: Sybil Smith | 1st Assistant: Debra Gentry | Executive Director: Wanda Lipscomb Murray | 2nd Assistant/Girls' Ministries Director: Kim Causey | Secretary/Treasurer: Anna York



perhaps
YOU WERE
born for
Such *a* time
as this

ESTHER 4:14

God, Our Hero

Everyone loves the hero or heroine, in the case of Esther. We teach the story of Esther to our children, especially girls, because it's exciting to tell a story about a courageous woman. It's captivating and has all the perfect elements to hold your attention. There's Esther, the protagonist; Haman, the antagonist; Mordecai, the confidant; people who need to be saved; and so on.

As a young person learning about Esther, I quickly memorized Esther 4:14: "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" This scripture would be one I would come back to many times over my life.

I have thought about those words so much that there became pressure to be great like Esther, to matter like her, to do something significant with my life. She stood up to the king and saved an entire nation! In my immaturity, I took this book and made it about myself. How could I be the heroine?

The pressure to find my "such a time as this" moment seems silly, but we tend to imagine ourselves as the characters in what we read at times. We get caught up looking for the big and grand plot in our lives because that's exciting. We expect our life to come to one great moment where we are the hero, we find fulfillment, we complete our great task, and everyone lives happily ever after. That is not real life.

I love how Mordecai brings the whole thing into perspective when he says, "relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place" (Esther 4:14). God used Esther, yes, but had she said no, God's plan would have continued. Esther wasn't the savior; God was.

God was there. When we look at the book of Esther, there aren't explicit mentions of Him, but we know He was there. We are captivated by Esther, her story, and her eventual courage. We think this story's primary purpose is to tell us about her, but we must also see God's sovereign-

ty in it all. He used a courageous woman brave enough to risk her life for others to save His people, but it was His will to save them.

His will. Mordecai said in faith that help would come from somewhere because he believed it was God's will. Is it not freeing to think about God's will knowing we can't mess up anything terrible enough to stop Him from doing what He plans? God is always victorious. God was there for His people during the time of Esther, and He is here now with us.

While Esther is an excellent example of how to be humble, courageous, brave, and more, she is not the heroine alone. God used her to fulfill his plan because she was willing to use her influence for significant change, no matter the risk to herself. We must be willing to do the same thing. To give up our comfort, our influence, and maybe even our life to be used by God in His plan for our world.

So, we do not have to wonder or search for our "such a time as this" moment because it's right now! God is working every day, every hour, every minute, and He loves using His creation in His plan. We don't have to wonder what the plan is either. It's a grand plan of redemption, and thankfully it's already begun.



Sis. Anna Turner

Anna Kate Turner is the wife of Mission USA Administrator Dr. Matthew Turner. Anna and Matthew have three children: Elia Kate, Edyth Ray, and Ephraim Franklin.



A BAD DAY



Sis. Rebecca Willingham

Sis Rebecca is the wife of Rev Brian Willingham, the General Men's Ministries Director.

Have you ever had a bad day? I mean, like nothing is going quite right. You're running late for work, then you spill your coffee all over your shirt? You think, "Dear Lord! I should've just stayed in bed." Maybe your shoes happen to be mismatched. We've all had those days. You can't help but think, "What else could go wrong?"

One of my favorite Bible stories is about Queen Esther. Wow! What an amazing woman she was. Oh, the courage and faith she had in God. I'm not sure too many of us would go through what she faced. The important message is that she was willing.

Often, we feel unqualified to be used by God. Sometimes God uses certain people when others believe they aren't fit for the position. Esther was an orphan, raised by her cousin, Mordecai. She was also a Jew. She was still chosen! When the King appointed officers to gather all the fair, young women so he could choose the next queen, Esther was chosen. The King was pleased with Esther. In the Bible it says she obtained favor with those that looked upon her. Remember, God is always behind the scenes working when we least expect it. He chose Esther for this very moment. The King loved Esther more than any of the others; therefore, she was made Queen.

This story is definitely not a "Happily Ever After" kind of romance. Just because she was chosen to be Queen doesn't mean she didn't have rules to follow. She wasn't even allowed to speak to or see the King without permission.

Mordecai desired to be close to Esther, so he sat at the King's gate. We find out that Haman, promoted by the King, was upset that Mordecai wouldn't bow to him, as it was commanded by the King to do so. He only bowed to God. He told them he was a Jew. Haman plotted against

the Jews and conned the King into declaring that the Jewish people be destroyed. We know how the story goes, but this is where Esther shines the most.

To save the Jews, Esther needed to talk to the King. She trusted God and went before him. She could've died that day had the King not extended his scepter and approved for her to come in. The King didn't even know she was a Jew, but God had it all worked out. He used Esther to save her people and the Jews came out victorious. As a result, Haman was killed.

Sometimes we ask God, "Why me?" Esther probably asked the same question. She never expected to be Queen, but it was ordained. It's no accident who you are and where you're at. We're called to live by faith. It's during the hard times when we're challenged to live by faith. When we're on the mountaintop, we don't need a lot of faith to get us through. It's during those hard times, when we must fully rely on God.

Regardless of the bad day you're having, you're not there by accident. Where you see a dreadful job, God sees a place where you can witness. When you see an unknown future, God sees blessings ahead that you could never imagine. Maybe you see broken dreams or have bitter disappointments. God sees amazing doors to be open in His perfect time. You may feel forgotten, but God sees one of His children. He sees a beautiful masterpiece designed by His hands.

So... when you're having a bad day, with your coffee-stained shirt or mismatched shoes, running late for work, wondering how you've ended up where you're at, and asking God, "Why me?" Remember, God has a special plan for your life. You are His creation - His masterpiece, and YOU were created "for such a time as this".



Comparison. It happens to all of us – men and women alike. If only I could have her flawless complexion. If only I could have his ministry. If only I could have her number of followers on social media. If only I could have his 6-figure salary. Do any of these examples sound familiar? We spend so much wasted time comparing ourselves to others, when all God wants is for us to be the unique individual, He created us to be.

While reading the story of Esther, you KNOW there had to be comparisons made among the potential queens! The Bible doesn't tell us how many young women were gathered at the palace in Shushan to go before the King, but it does say "many." (Esther 2:8) Whether 10, 20, 100, or 500, I can only imagine the insecurities that must have wreaked havoc for 12 long months in their hearts & minds! Even Esther had her own insecurities. Not only was she an orphan - but she was also a Jew...and Mordecai charged her to tell no one! (Esther 2:10)

The Bible says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalms 139:14). Each of us has unique features, abilities, and talents that make us special. We are unable to fulfill the entirety of who God wants us to be if we are constantly trying to be someone else. God has a divine purpose for every individual, and we are limiting that plan when we compare our story to others.

Have you ever considered what would have happened to the Jews had Esther not been in the right place at the right time??? Also, consider Mordecai – what would have happened if he compared himself to all the others who bowed before Haman? What if he had caved to Haman's threats? In the conclusion of the story, we know that the Jews victoriously defeated their enemies. The Bible says that the Jews rested from their enemies and their sorrow was turned to joy and their morning was turned into a GOOD DAY! (Ester 9:22)

While you and I may never be in a position of authority like Esther was, undoubtedly, there are people in our lives who need our help. There are people who need our love. There are people who need a friend. And just like Esther, we can be courageous because there may be people who need us to speak up for them. Maybe you can even help someone financially. You certainly can be a prayer warrior for someone!

In our modern-day world, social media, magazine covers, and billboards are absolutely smothering of what the world defines as beautiful and successful. And if we're not careful, we will allow Satan to speak those lies into our hearts. You will never measure up. You're worthless. Your life doesn't matter!

The Bible says that comparing ourselves to one another isn't wise. (2 Corinthians 10:12) Comparison will steal our joy, our identity, and it could even cost us being in the right place at the right time! God has a plan for each of us. Get your eyes off everyone else - no one else can fulfill YOUR divine purpose! Whether you realize it or not, you are a role model to someone, maybe it's your child, a friend, or someone you may not even know. Just as Esther's story still makes an impact on us today, your story matters too! Your purpose will always coincide with someone's need, just like Esther's. Count on it!

"...and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther 4:14



Sis. Laura Messer
Laura is the wife of National Royal
Rangers Commander, Micah Messer.

Our Time is Now

We're all familiar with the Biblical story of how God chose and placed a young Jewish woman in a king's palace at the perfect time to save a nation of people. Now, just as Esther was born for such a time as that particular time, we too are born 'For Such a Time as This.' God is calling us and expecting us to be as brave as Esther. I'm sure she was scared when she stood before the king, but she knew the God she served would be with her as she endeavored to put her life on the line for the Jews.

Oh, but Esther did not do this alone. It took a lot of Jewish people to fast and encourage her strength, and just as Esther needed encouragement from Mordecai and the Jewish people, we need encouragement from our people. It is important that we stand in the gap for those who are battling spiritual situations as Esther was battling. Certainly, she struggled with fear and other emotions as she wrestled with the decision of whether to go into the King.

When she asked Mordecai and the Jewish people to fast for three days and nights, she was then willing to go into the King, and said, "if I perish, I perish." She was willing to give her life for the people.

I wonder; are we willing to give up our life for the Gospel of Jesus Christ? It is important that we stand for our faith in God as we see the time approaching. In Thessalonians 4:18, Paul said for us to comfort each other with the Words that are written and God-ordained.

*It is important
that we stand in the
gap for those who are
battling spiritual situations
as Esther
was battling.*

So let us be brave and go and win souls for the Kingdom.



Rev Wanda Murray
Rev Wanda Serves as the International
Women's Ministry Director for the CHC.



For such a time is this. When these words are written or spoken, most people's minds automatically go to the story in Esther 4:13-14 where Mordecai sends a message to Esther, "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

I want you to ponder a thought I believe the Lord is saying to us today, and that thought is perhaps you are in the place you are for such a time as this, and not to stay silent. There are lost souls, people without hope, and people waiting on you to help them find a relationship with Jesus and give them that hope they desperately need. That place may be your place of employment, as an employer, or you may be a stay-at-home mom, a pastor, a pastor's spouse, a small group leader, a worship leader, or a children's church teacher. Wherever God has placed you, you have been put there for a specific purpose: to make Jesus known. That place may also be in a restaurant, a grocery store, a local coffee shop, the mall, or the park while your children are playing. Everywhere you go, there are hurting people. Take time to look into the faces of those around you, start a conversation, leave a note for the waitress simply saying Jesus loves you, or whisper a prayer for someone. You never know what a kind word or a smile can do for someone.

It is exciting to think that God allowed me to be alive at this time in human history. Things in this world may seem hopeless, and the enemy is winning, but as a child of God, I know nothing is hopeless for Him, and He is always victorious! I am sure you all believe and know, as I do, that we could see the return of Jesus in our lifetime. This thought, my friends, should motivate us even more to share the love of Christ and to spread the message of salvation. God has equipped us just like He did Esther to bring deliverance to the lost souls in our communities.

As the Girls Ministry Director for the CHC, I pray that at the upcoming conference, our girls will leave knowing who they are in Christ and they are all beautiful, unique souls created for a purpose. I pray they know that God has a wonderful plan for their lives, a plan that is beyond anything they could ever imagine. As they return, and walk into their homes, churches, and schools, I want them to realize God has placed them there for such a time as this, and they can be mighty warriors for Him. As you read this, I pray each of you knows this too. We have all been placed on this earth for such a time as this. Ladies, I look forward to seeing you all at our conference this spring.



Sis Kim Causey
The Causey family: Seth, Shelby, Kim,
and William. Kim serves the CHC as the
National Girl's Ministry Director



Building a Life Out of Lessons of Love

Growing up in rural Walker County, Alabama, and even more remotely, Pumpkin Center had many challenges. We moved a lot from one bar to another that my alcoholic mother tended, usually living in the back rooms I was well accustomed to many forms of neglect and abuse. If you can imagine the worse environment for a kid to grow up in, then you need no further details. I needed saving. I needed a Savior.

My redeemer, my solace, my saving grace came in the form of my grandmother on my mother's side, Mamaw. She would show up just in time with a box of food, saving me from molded bread and yellow-label syrup. She always came to bring relief, but she brought so much more than that. You see, she was a born-again, blood-bought sold-out Christian. She lived it, and she talked it. Everything she did in life was centered around and in Christ. Oh, how she prayed. She prayed for my mother and for all of us so hard.

In the summer, Mamaw would be allowed to come and get me, and my summer was the best memories I have of my childhood. Her daily walk with the Lord started early. She would begin with a hot breakfast prepared for my papaw and me and she never sat down. She had such a servant's heart. We would be off to carry food to a sick church member or friend and then to the hospital to visit the sick and pray. We were always going to visit people. I went to so many funerals, and if the church doors were open, we

were there. One Sunday morning, she woke me up to get ready for church, and I said I wanted to stay home. It was as if I had asked her to cut off her arm. She not so politely encouraged me to get up and said, "We do not miss church". Mamaw took me to piano lessons and encouraged me to play music for the Lord. Again, everything she did centered around serving her Master.

Looking back, I see how God used my Mamaw to shape who I am today. Like her, I love the Lord, and my deepest desire is to serve Him through service to others. Being a pastor's wife has its own set of challenges, but I find myself more focused and more grounded when I am simply doing the work like I was taught. Mamaw showed me Matthew 25 every summer. Feed, clothe, visit. She died in 1992. She passed away in her faith, not having received the things promised. Hebrews (11:3 a). I want to share with you that my mother was saved and delivered from alcohol. She played piano for her church until her passing. And me, well, I tried to build a life out of these lessons of love.

For such a time as this, Rev. Vanessa Salter



Rev. Vanessa Salter

Rev. Vanessa Salter serves as the District Secretary for the South Alabama District. She is married to Pastor Woody Salter.

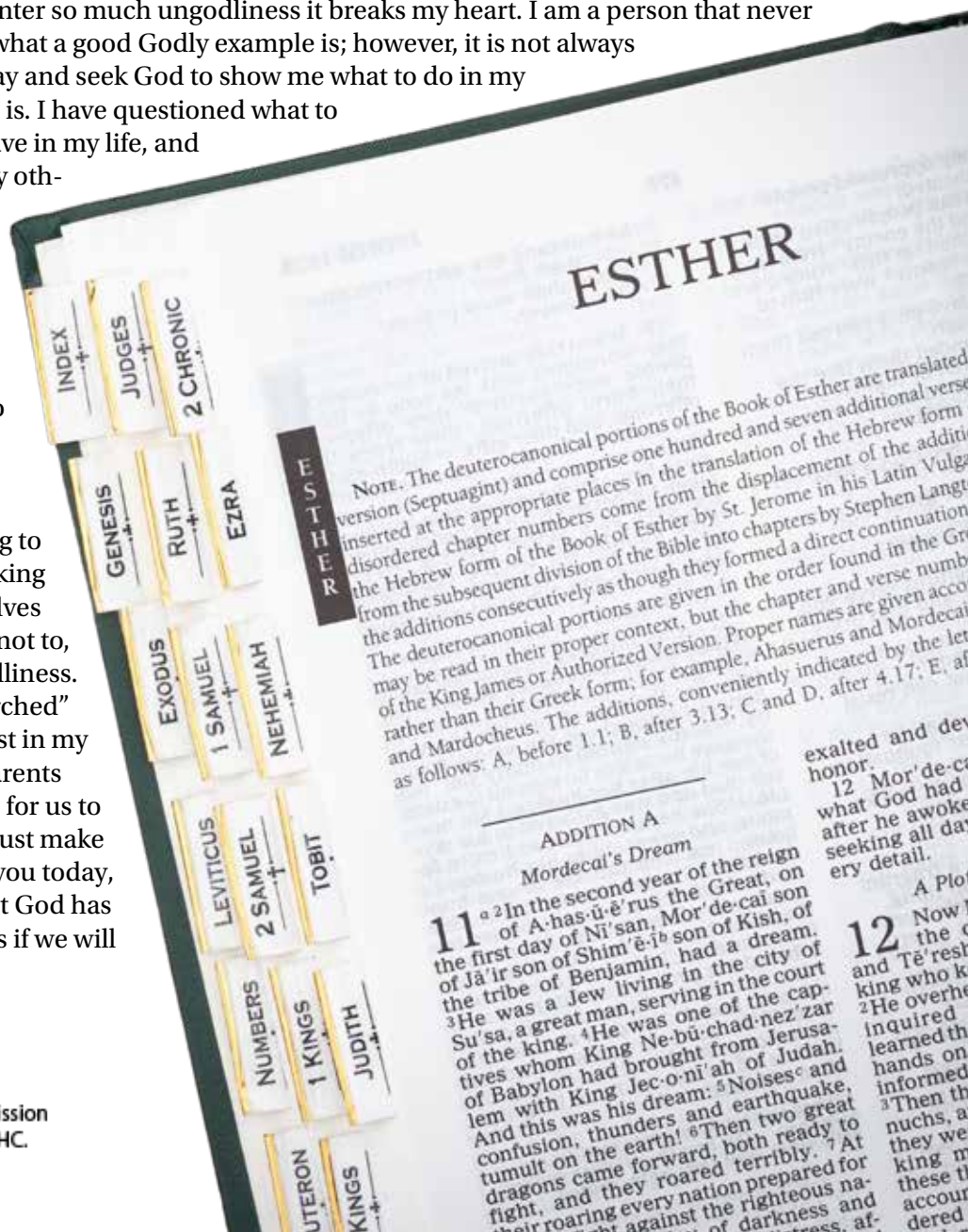
Esther

When I think about the Theme “For Such A Time As This,” I think of how I need him more today than yesterday. As a sophomore in high school, I encounter so much ungodliness it breaks my heart. I am a person that never meets a stranger and tries to show people what a good Godly example is; however, it is not always easy. With that being said, I have had to pray and seek God to show me what to do in my life. I have also questioned what my calling is. I have questioned what to do with my life after high school, who to have in my life, and who to not have in my life, along with many other things that normal teenagers question. I find myself sometimes often struggling to remember who I am in Christ and just unable to stay focused. I’m sure I am not the only young person who has felt like this. I have to get into the word of God and pray for answers. If I do not take the time to seek, I will NOT find it.

“For Such A Time As This,” that we get to a place where we can hear what God is saying to us. We must be constantly and actively seeking God to help us be the best version of ourselves that we can possibly achieve. If we choose not to, we are becoming part of this world's ungodliness. So, even when I feel like I’m the only “churched” person in school, I will show that God is first in my life and that I am different in a good. My parents and grandparents have always had a motto for us to go by, “We are not better than anyone; we just make better choices than some.” So I encourage you today, “For Such A Time As This,” to seek out what God has in store for you. God has a plan; it’s up to us if we will allow it to work in our lives.



Grace Davis
Grace serves as the 2023 Jr. Mission
USA administrator for the CHC.



THE GOSPEL MESSENGER
(USPS 223-340)
3888 Fayetteville Hwy.
Griffin, Georgia 30223

Periodicals Postage
PAID
At Griffin, Georgia
& Additional
Mailing Offices



APRIL 2023 FIRST FRUITS OFFERING

PLEASE CONSIDER TAKING UP
A SPECIAL OFFERING THIS
APRIL FOR MISSION USA



CONTINUING
education
intensive



Bishop Stephen Phillips

Senior Pastor of Christian
Heritage CHC
Graniteville, SC

May 16, 2023
7 PM EST - Via Zoom

CONTINUING
education
CONFERENCE



Dr. Tim Hill

August 18-19, 2023

General Overseer
Church of God, Cleveland, TN

In-Person • Christian Heritage CHC
Graniteville, SC.