

Daily Morning Message
St Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247
Allen M Fluent, Pastor
Friday September 24, 2021

Lectionary Readings *Psalm 124*
 *Esther 2:1-23**
 Matthew 5:13-20

**The readings from Esther continue into next week. Today's episode may seem strange, since it is essentially an ancient "beauty pageant" intended to find a new queen for King Ahasuerus, who had just removed Queen Vashti who had insulted him by not allowing him to display her to his guests at a banquet. One of the contestants in the line-up was a Jewish girl named Esther, and she was chosen by the king. Although her role was demeaning, Esther was able to use her position to save the Jewish people. The best-known verse from the story may be the primary lesson about the opportunity to do something good that unexpectedly arises from unfortunate circumstances, when her mentor Mordecai tells her, "Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this."*

Today's Scripture Verse: *Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)*

What it means: This is one of Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount, where he urges his disciples to retain their integrity ("salt") and openly profess the truth of their faith ("light").

Reflection: God, we live in a world where people hesitate to share religious beliefs and to offer opinions about issues of justice. Jesus did not tell us to claim that we are more righteous than others or to berate those who disagree, but he did encourage us to affirm our faith openly and to share the truth that we feel within us. May we be salty Christians who are unafraid to share Christ's light.

