

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

August 21-27, 2017

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Exodus 1:8—2:10 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=367477142>).

Other readings are: Psalm 124; Romans 12:1–8; Matthew 16:13–20

The theme is: Defiance.

If you were a child when you first heard the story of Moses' birth, you may remember it as a story of a sweet baby floating happily along the river's edge in a cozy basket. If, however, we allow ourselves to hear the story anew, we find that it is a story about oppression, slavery, ethnic cleansing, civil disobedience, risk, faith, and the courageous actions of women. Egypt is under new leadership, a leader who has no connection with Joseph. This new Pharaoh feels threatened by the Hebrews, who are gaining in number; so, he tries to put them in their place through terrorism and genocide. He forces them into slavery and kills their infant sons. In the midst of this horrific violence, we see two brave midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, defying Pharaoh in order to save a newborn boy. We see a mother who in faith gives her son up twice in order to save him. We see a sister risk everything to watch over her brother. We see a daughter take a stand against her powerful father. The Bible isn't known as a book about powerful women, but here we see plenty of them from different ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds. At great personal risk, they each take action. Each one does whatever she can do, given her station in life. Their defiance does not come from a selfish desire for power but rather from compassion and a desire for justice. As a result, Moses lives and God's promise of salvation lives as well. The Hebrew people will be liberated and a nation will become the people of God.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

What situations might lead you to acts of civil disobedience?

What can you learn from Shiphrah, Puah, and the women of this story?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of August 20:

Recall a time when you were forgiven. What did that mean to you and what did that forgiveness make possible?

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