

Media and Graphics Notes

Word of Witness Video?	There will be no Word of Witness video, however there will be pictures for new staff introductions before Joys and Concerns.
Sermon Starter Video?	Yes
Sermon Notes?	There will be three video illustrations and one scripture passage as part of the sermon today.
Other Notes	

Key Questions, Metadata and Outline

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about what happens when you give and how we can be part of God's plans.

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because it connects God's plans for our congregation, community and world with our hands and the impact that our financial gifts can make.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the fourth sermon in the Discipleship #1 series. It follows a Sunday with a guest preacher.

What are the next action steps?

Thank you for giving.

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God has great plans for you.
 Your hands can be part of God's plans for the world.



Metadata

1. Topic(s)
 1. Give
 2. Transformation of the World
2. Sermon Books of the Bible
 1. Esther
 2. Mark

16th Sunday after Pentecost
Discipleship #1 - Strike it Rich!
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1KMS8ss>

September 13, 2015
Esther 4:12-17
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,949
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1ioAVfu>

3. Tags

1. sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, ElDorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnual Conference, giving, tithe, generosity

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Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

Esther 4:12-17, CEB

When they told Mordecai Esther's words, he had them respond to Esther: "Don't think for one minute that, unlike all the other Jews, you'll come out of this alive simply because you are in the palace. In fact, if you don't speak up at this very important time, relief and rescue will appear for the Jews from another place, but you and your family will die. But who knows? Maybe it was for a moment like this that you came to be part of the royal family."

Esther sent back this word to Mordecai: "Go, gather all the Jews who are in Susa and tell them to give up eating to help me be brave. They aren't to eat or drink anything for three whole days, and I myself will do the same, along with my female servants. Then, even though it's against the law, I will go to the king; and if I am to die, then die I will." So Mordecai left where he was and did exactly what Esther had ordered him.

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

*** Start Sermon Timer ***

Series Review

Today, we continue our series, Discipleship #1: Oil Fields and Faith. From discovery of oil at Stapleton #1 in 1915 through the 1950's oil permeated every aspect of life in Butler County and continues to be an integral part of our life today.

During this series, we are collaborating with the Kansas Oil Museum to bring you some of these stories. Each week, we are focusing on a different aspect of our oil history and making a connection to our discipleship pathway and the spiritual practices to worship, grow, give, serve and share.

Last week, Warren Martin shared about opportunities to serve and today we focus on give and how we can use our financial resources to be about God's work in Butler County and beyond.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today. Today, I hope that you will hear:

- Something new or find new questions

- Perspective on your life or something in your life that gives additional meaning to the message today.
- Guidance about how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

I invite you to write down some of the things that you hear in the sermon today and take your bulletin home as a tool to grow in your faith outside of worship. You can reflect on what you heard today, pray for people of our congregation and read scripture to prepare for worship next week.

Opening

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Story

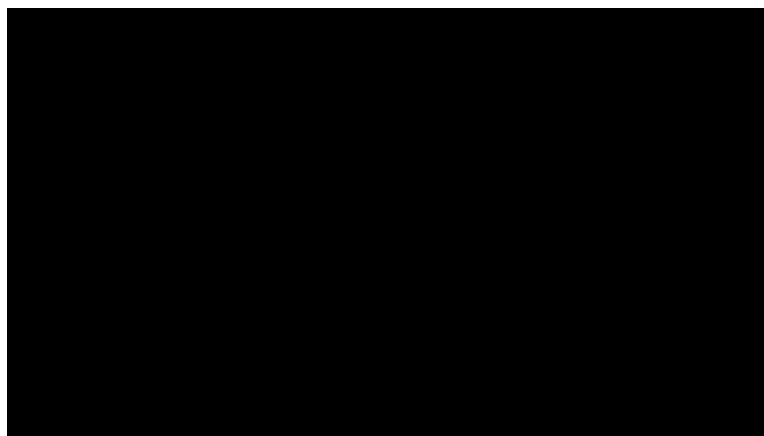
[Text here]

Transition

Today we take a closer look at the way that financial resources can be used to make an impact in the lives of others which goes far beyond any one individual. Warren Martin, Executive Director of the Kansas Oil Museum, shares with us on video today.

Let's take a look...

Video Illustration - Introduction



Transition

The story of Esther from scriptures tells how one person had an impact on the lives of many others. Let me remind you of the story of Esther from the Old Testament...

Story of Esther

"According to the Hebrew Bible, Esther was a Jewish queen of the Persian king Ahasuerus."¹

- The story begins with a huge party - 180 days.
- King Ahasuerus wants to show off his wife's beauty before his guests.
- Queen Vashti refuses.
- The king is advised that this behavior will cause trouble in the kingdom.
- King Ahasuerus removes Vashti as queen.
- The king needs a new queen, so he calls a beauty pageant.
- Esther, a Jew, is chosen as the new queen.
- Esther has been living with her cousin Mordecai.
- Mordecai becomes Chief Minister.
- Mordecai and Esther thwart an assassination attempt on the king.
- Haman, the grand vizier, commands Mordecai to bow to him. Human refuses.
- Haman convinces the kings to order an extermination of all Jews in the empire.

This is where we find the scripture for today.

Listen to these words again from Esther 4:12-14:

"When they told Mordecai Esther's words, he had them respond to Esther: 'Don't think for one minute that, unlike all the other Jews, you'll come out of this alive simply because you are in the palace. In fact, if you don't speak up at this very important time, relief and rescue will appear for the Jews from another place, but you and your family will die. But who knows? Maybe it was for a moment like this that you came to be part of the royal family.'"

- This is her time.
- Esther could be killed for approaching the king.
- Esther invites the King and Haman to a banquet.
- Haman is so excited that orders a gallows be constructed to kill Mordecai.
- The king realizes he has not rewarded Mordecai for the thwarted assassination.
- Mordecai is honored instead of Haman.
- At a second banquet, Esther reveals her identity as a Jew.

¹ Wikipedia contributors, "Esther," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Esther&oldid=680664371> (accessed September 12, 2015).

² Esther 4:12-14

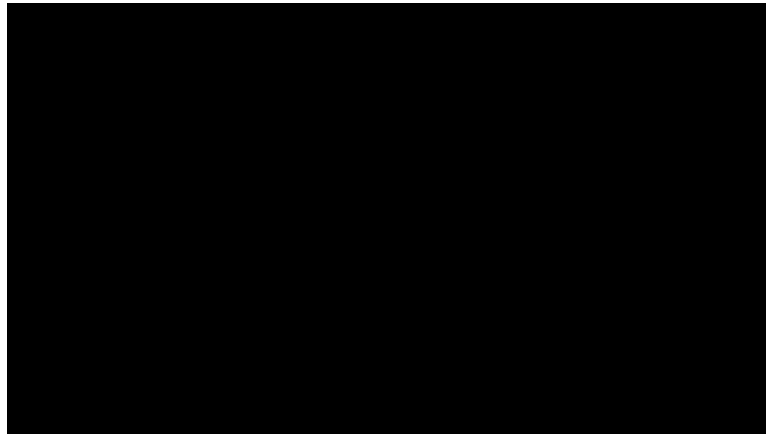
- Esther accuses Haman of the plan to destroy her and her people.
- The king orders Haman hung on the gallows he made for Mordecai.
- Mordecai becomes prime minister and the Jewish people are saved.

Esther is in the right place at the right time and is able to shape the story of the Jewish people.

Transition

Let's take a look at story from our history about how being in the right place at the right time shaped the story of south central Kansas.

Video Illustration - El Dorado and Aviation



Cessna, Moellendick, Beech and Stearman
You probably know two of these names, maybe three, but probably not four.
With the right timing, Moellendick financially supported the aviation industry,
brought two of these men together and shaped the history of our region.

Transition

What do you support financially?
How far does the impact reach?

God's Plans, Our Hands

God's Plans

We have had an incredible start to the fall.
In 2015, we have had more baptisms and more people getting connected for the first time to the church than in any of the last three years.
One month from today, we will begin our stewardship campaign and invite you to make an annual giving commitment to support God's work through this church.

Next year, we are planning for a capital campaign to raise funds to ensure that this building will continue to be an effective tool to accomplish our mission as a church. God has great plans for our community and congregation.

Our Hands

An annual giving commitment this fall and capital campaign commitment in the spring are two opportunities for your financial support to have a significant and lasting impact in the lives of people in Butler County and beyond. Every dollar you give to the church goes to support our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our hands are part of God's work.

Maybe it was for a moment like this that you are part of this congregation.

God's plans, our hands.

Transition

I want to remind you about the way we talk about giving and what happens when you give.

Understand Giving

Proportional Giving

One of the models for giving we find in Mark 12:41-44:

Jesus sat across from the collection box for the temple treasury and observed how the crowd gave their money. Many rich people were throwing in lots of money.

One poor widow came forward and put in two small copper coins worth a penny.

Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I assure you that this poor widow has put in more than everyone who's been putting money in the treasury. All of them are giving out of their spare change. But she from her hopeless poverty has given everything she had, even what she needed to live on."³

This story from scripture is a clear reminder of one of the aspects of being a biblical giver - giving proportionally. This woman puts in two small copper coins, worth very little financial. The amount that she gives is far less than some of the others that were giving to be part of God's work at the temple that day. However, her gift is different.

Her gift is small financially, but it is huge in proportion to her income.

The bible teaches us that the standard that God has for giving is the tithe, or 10%.

Transition

I want to share with you what happened for the women who gave those two small copper coins and what happens when you give, because many of you already give. You are already supporting the church with your finances.

³ Mark 12:41-44, CEB.

When you give, you gain perspective

The first is that happens when you give, you gain perspective.

Spending money can be fun – new clothes, new restaurants, a new car. Nothing wrong with those things. But deep down, they don't really satisfy. But when we give or serve with our money, we somehow know we're doing something more important. We gain a perspective on our life that the latest iPhone can't bring.

Matthew 6:21 says,

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Our Money → Our Values

Our money and our heart are connected. Where we send our money says something about what we truly value, and when we give, it's a statement on what's truly important.

This isn't a groundbreaking truth to you, and you already know it, because you spend money. I spend money. If you were to login into my bank account and see where I spent money, you could figure out that caring for John and Anne is important to me, Sonic Happy hour is important to me, traveling to be with family is important to me and the church is important to me.

You can tell what's important to me not by hearing me talk about what's important, but by observing how I spend money. Because money is a heart issue more than a checking account issue.

So when you give, you're making an intentional statement that something matters. This thing over here, that person over there, God's mission through this church...it matters. It deserves my attention, focus and support.

When you give, you partner with God.

Second, when you give you partner with God. You can be part of accomplishing God's purposes in the world. God's love is for all people and God invites us to live as a part of God's kingdom and be God's hands and feet in the world. And when you give, that's what you're doing. You join with God in God's mission in the world.

You give because the Gospel needs to be heard.

You give as a part of a worldwide movement, joining with churches in North America, South America, China, the Ukraine, England and Africa.

There is something bigger going on around us. More than the here and now. And when you give, you're a part of what God is doing everywhere.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God has great plans for you.
Your hands can be part of God's plans for the world.

Call to Action

Most weeks, I will have an invitation or a call of action for you, but today I am not going to ask you to do anything. Instead of challenging you to do something, I trust that you've been thinking about this for the last few minutes. So I don't want to end with a challenge to give, I just want to say thanks.

For those of you who have ever given anything to this church, thank you.

For those of you who brought denim and plastic jugs to support Children's Ministry, thank you.

For those of you who have given clothes or food to those in need, thank you.

For those of you who help support our youth mission trips, thank you.

For those of you who give your time to serve others in need, thank you.

Invitation

Thank you for making God smile.

Thank you for partnering with God.

Thank you for letting your hands be part of God's plans.

Let's pray.

Closing Prayer

[Text here]

Amen.