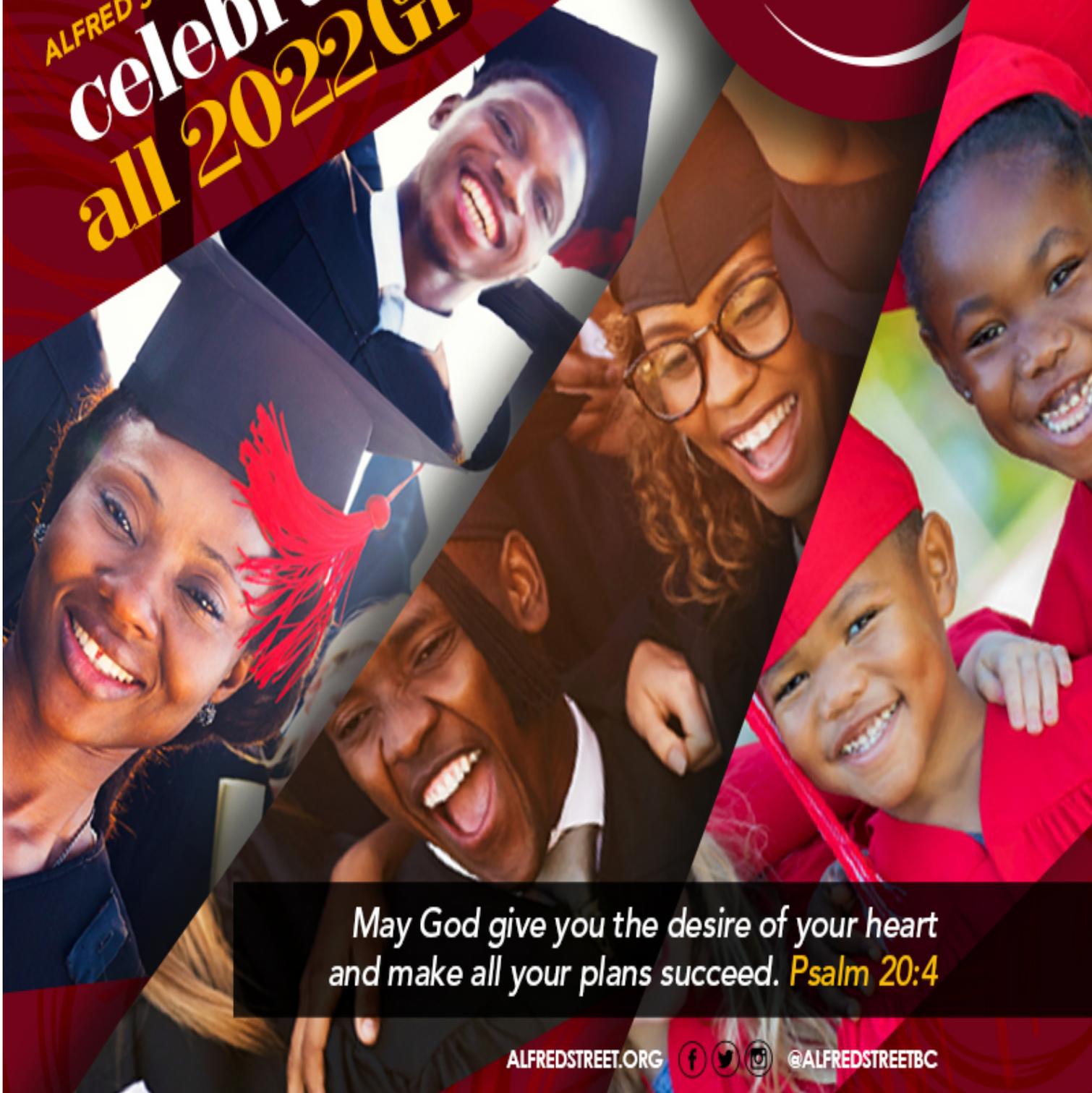


ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

celebrates all 2022 Grads!



Alfred
Street
BAPTIST CHURCH
SINCE 1803
Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley



May God give you the desire of your heart
and make all your plans succeed. **Psalm 20:4**



Date: June 11/12, 2022

Preacher: **Higher Ground Graduating Seniors**
Eric Jackson, Brendan Haynes, Olivia Woodham, Caleb Hill,
Gabrielle Hart, Bryce Haynes

Sermon Title: Navigating the Nile

Scripture: Scripture: Exodus 2:1-10 NIV

Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said. Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

SERMON SUMMARY:

The sermon is presented in three episodes by Higher Ground graduating high school seniors.

- Episode 1: "Navigating the Nile. Knowing When to Let Go".
Eric Jackson and Brendan Haynes,
- Episode 2: "Moses, Go With the Flow".
Olivia Woodham and Caleb Hill
- Episode 3, "Through the Reeds".
Gabrielle Hart and Bryce Haynes.

EPISODE 1: NAVIGATING THE NILE

In life, we can give our all to work, family, church, relationships, children, and more. And yet, sometimes, no one notices our efforts or our dedication. Even when we want to speak up, we may wonder how that will impact the circumstances. Eric Jackson allows us a bird's eye view of the woman who dedicates her all to Moses, his Mom.

With all that we know about Moses, we know little of his mother, Jochebed. We do know her name means the "weightiness of God". In the sermon, Eric shares his thoughts on what her name means *to him*. Focusing on an interpretation that leads to "God is good", Eric teaches about Jochabed and her hard decisions. We learn of her bravery and her strength.

Using Jochabed's life as an example, Eric reminds us that no matter what decisions we need to make, God is there, in the midst of it all. Psalms 139 assures us of this, also. Eric ends by asking us if we, like Jochabed, can ***let go*** for the sake of those we love.

EPISODE 2: MOSES

The 2nd episode delves into the life of Moses and the unfathomable miracles God performs in the life of Moses. In particular, when Moses seemed destined to die, God spares him through his mother's determination, a basket, and the flow of the Nile.

We each experience "waters" in our own lives that could drown us. And maybe, some of us feel as if we should have drowned. But, God sees our value, knows we are worth saving, and comes alongside us to bring us through life's challenges, taking us from the ordinary to the extraordinary.

Using his life trials to bring his message to life, Caleb compares our lives to the basket of baby Moses and to God's ever-present care.

EPISODE 3: THROUGH THE REEDS

In episode 3, Bryce guides us in understanding that we may not always recognize the people who sacrifice for us and the depth of their sacrifice. But God uses the most amazing people to help us through the challenging places in our lives. In Moses' life, Pharaoh's daughter steps in and does something amazing to bless and protect God's own. God can and will turn things around. God can and will use the most unlikely people to make good things happen. God is always watching over us.

KEY POINTS:

1. We must know how to let go even when it hurts
2. We must learn when and how to go with the flow?
3. God always has someone to protect and guide you through the "reeds" of life.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU QUESTIONS:

1. Please share a time when you had to let go of something you loved or were holding fast to. How did you handle that situation?
 - a. How did it empower you?
 - b. What did you learn from this situation?
2. Can you recall when God placed someone in your life, specifically, to aid you in your time of need?
3. Youth Weekend can send us down memory lane to our own teen years. What's something you remember from your own high school years?

INTO THE BIBLE QUESTIONS:

1. The sermon scripture, **Exodus 2:1-10 NIV**, shows how God will show up and bring you out of unlikely situations.
 - a. As you read the scripture, what jumped out at you? What was significant to you?
 - b. How does God show up in your life and how has God brought you out of unlikely situations?
2. In episode 1, the teens talk about how Moses' Mom (Exodus 2:2) uses the word ***towb***, which means *good*, to describe Moses. This is the same word God uses in the creation story.
 - a. What does "good" mean to you as you reflect on your life?

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. When problems arise do you seek to handle them on your own, or do you allow God to guide you as you transition from one position to another?
 - a. How do you yield to God's guidance? Please share an experience if possible.

2. In episode 3, we learn about people who step into our lives as support. Who are the *Batyahs* in your life that have supported you?

3. In this series, we get a moment to witness the different characters in the Moses story. Which character do you identify with most? What about that character resonates with you?

4. Wisdom from our teens is a gift from God. What did you receive from the graduating senior's sermon that you want to retain? How was this wisdom impacted because it came from the mind and mouth of a young person?

“CAN I PUSH IT?” QUESTIONS:

1. Have you disobeyed God's protection knowingly? What did you learn from that circumstance?

2. In the sermon on Pharaoh's daughter, the teens talked about the important role of a therapist and how therapy helped them to heal. Why do you think there is still resistance, particularly in the Black community, to the idea of therapy and mental health support?
 - a. How can we change this?

3. The backdrop of Moses' birth story is Pharaoh's threat to kill all of the Hebrew boys. If you fast forward to today, what societal threats do you see endangering our children?
 - a. How can we protect them from those dangers?

ACTIVITY:

1. In your devotional time with God this week, reflect on how good God is and how your God has made a way in your life. Each day, pick at least one moment of gratitude and thank God for that moment.

SPIRIT WORK:

1. Take a moment to care for your mental and spiritual health this week. Calendar a “mental health moment,” and protect your time to take care of your needs, whether taking a walk, meditating in prayer, setting up a therapy appointment, or simply resting.

Additional Questions for Married Couples:

1. Episode 1 discusses hard decisions. As a couple, how do you discuss making difficult decisions?

2. In episode 2, we learn about Moses and the way our “river” experiences can prove to us what God can do. As you reflect on your relationship, what do you think are the moments that shaped your relationship for the better?

Additional Questions for Young Adults:

1. Have you ever had an unexpected detour that profoundly changed your life? How did you handle it?

2. Moses, as an infant, gets put into a basket alone on the river. For young adults, this might feel very familiar as you navigate “adulthood” on your own. What challenges have you faced navigating adulthood, and what have you learned along the way?

Additional Questions for Parents:

1. Jochebed tries earnestly to hide and protect Moses.
 - a. What are you most concerned about shielding your children from at this stage of their lives?
 - b. How do you shield them?
 - c. When should you not shield them?

2. Jochebed has to face an excruciatingly difficult situation: to keep Moses with her or place him in a basket? What have been some of your most challenging parenting decisions?

Additional Questions for Women:

1. We often find ourselves in relationships (familial, platonic, or romantic) that are not healthy but difficult to let go. What steps have you taken to remove yourself from a difficult relationship?

2. In Moses' story, so many women collaborate to raise him and keep him safe (e.g., Jochabed, the Hebrew midwives, Miriam, and Pharaoh's daughter). There are often stereotypes about women not being able to work together. Where have you seen beautiful collaboration and friendship among women in your life, and how has that sustained you?

Additional Questions for Men:

1. In episode 2, the teens talk about isolation throughout the pandemic, and how it felt to be unable to socialize with their friends, play sports, or engage in other activities. How have your male friendships shifted during the pandemic?
 - a. What did you learn, and now what will you do differently?

2. Think about your male friendships. In what ways have those friendships supported you in hard times?

3. In Exodus 2:2, as soon as he is born, Jochebed describes Moses as “good”, using the same word God uses to describe creation in the Genesis account. Who are the women in your life who have affirmed you? How has that made a difference?

Additional Questions for Returning Citizens:

1. In episode 2, the teens talk about how it must have been for Moses to have to be enclosed in a basket.
 - a. How have you dealt with isolation or the fear of missing out in your own life?
 - b. How do you relate to Moses’ experience in the basket?

2. In Exodus 2:2, as soon as he is born, Jochebed describes Moses as “good”, using the same word God uses to describe creation in the Genesis account. Who are the women in your life who have affirmed you? How has that made a difference?