**Hillside UMC Sermon Prep Sheet**

***Susan Carey***

**Date: Sunday, November 12, 2017**

**Sermon Title: Marching Orders**

**Scripture: Acts 5:17-42 *(New International Version)***

**17**Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. **18**They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. **19**But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. **20**“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life.”

**21**At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin—the full assembly of the elders of Israel—and sent to the jail for the apostles. **22**But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, **23**“We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside.” **24**On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were at a loss, wondering what this might lead to.

**25**Then someone came and said, “Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people.” **26**At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.

**27**The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. **28**“We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”

**29**Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings! **30**The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. **31**God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. **32**We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

**33**When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. **34**But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. **35**Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. **36**Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. **37**After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered.**38**Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail.**39**But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

**40**His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

**41**The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. **42**Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

.**Call to Worship: (8:30 only)**

Leader: Though there are rulers, presidents, kings, queens,

God is the Lord of all life.

**People: In God we live and move and have our being.**  
Leader: God requires our faithfulness and our service.   
**People: We reach out to others with the same kind of love**

**with which God has touched our lives.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the Lord who is always with us.   
**All: Let us praise God who walks daily by our side.  Amen.**

**Basic Theme: *Today we honor our veterans, brave men and women who choose to sacrifice their personal good for the good of our country. They trust in their superior command and follow orders without question. Are we, too, so readily obedient to the One who calls our marching orders?***

**Sermon Snapshot (Key Points): Acts 2 tells the story of the early church and the apostles who took seriously Jesus’ Great Commission to “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Despite the threat and reality of persecution, the apostles refused to deny God and tapped into the power of the Holy Spirit to perform healing miracles and spread the gospel. As a result, thousands came to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Two-thousand years later, our marching orders are the same, but few of us act in obedience. How do we find the courage of the 1st century church leaders?**

**So What? Whose marching orders are you following today – the call of God or the call of your own wants and desires? How do we discover what God wants from us; how do we discern our marching orders? What does obedience to God look like today? Where do we find the courage to be obedient to God’s call on our lives?**