

**At such a time as this  
Devotions for a congregational meeting**

**Synopsis**

This devotional time helps participants at a congregational meeting put into perspective the value of the time they will soon spend together.

**Bible reflection  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

The significance of a moment can sometimes be lost if we forget to notice and name what's important. The writer of this collection of Old Testament wisdom reminds readers that as we progress through our lives—including meetings such as this—we can rejoice in God's providence in all circumstances, God's blessing of human activity and God's gift of measured and memorable moments.

**Sharing activity**

1. Welcome members and guests to this meeting. This devotion will help those attending the meeting to value the words, decisions and other actions that will take place. The devotion helps answer this question: "What good and godly time will characterize this meeting?"
2. As background for the following reading, play meditative music on a musical instrument or through a sound system. After the music has begun, slowly read phrases and sentences of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 in order, pausing for the following interjections of another reader.
3. Another reader intersperses with the Ecclesiastes text significant passages—decisions, summaries of discussion, reports—from the minutes or records of previous congregational meetings. The end result: a kind of choral reading, with each portion of the Bible passage commenting on a portion of the remembered history of the congregation's annual meeting, and vice versa.
4. Note that God blesses other "times such as this." From your own experience as a congregational leader, add your own prayerful thoughts that begin with the starter phrases, "A time to . . . . and a time to . . ." For example, "A time to act quickly and a

time to refrain from action.” Or “a time to repent and a time to forgive.” The music continues for a few moments after the last part of the reading.

### **Prayer**

Lord of all time, give us the grace to see that you can bless all moments, all places, all peoples. Send your Holy Spirit at such a time as this, when we need wisdom and courage to do your will. We praise your name and thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen