

**August 9, 2020**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**Preludes**

Andante  
Have Mercy, Lord, My Sin Forgive

David L. Crouse  
J. S. Bach

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

L: If we have indeed been raised with Christ,

**P: Then let us seek the things that are above.**

L: If, in our lives, we are seeking to follow the way of Jesus,

**P: Then let his glory be revealed.**

**Gathering Song #175 –**

**“Seek Ye First”**

Lafferty

(verse one)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,  
and all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

(verse two)

As, and it shall be given unto you; seek and you shall find;  
knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

(verse three)

You shall not live by bread alone, but by every word  
that proceeds from the mouth of God. Allelu, alleluia!

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**Call to Confession**

**Unison Prayer of Confession**

**Faithful and loving God, we confess that we do not always live in faith and love. You provide enough for all to share, but we store up treasures for ourselves. You ask us to follow Jesus in the ways of peace and justice, but we wander in distractedly. You offer us the good gift of salvation, but we spent our time in vain pursuits. Forgive us, God of grace. Teach to seek first the way of your kingdom and to let go of earthly desires so that we might have abundant life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Time of Silent Reflection**

**Assurance of Pardon**

**Special Music**

Alleluia, the Majesty and Glory of Your Name  
Performed by: John Kautzman

Mark Hayes

**Scripture Reading – Esther 1:1-22**

This is what happened back when Ahasuerus lived, the very Ahasuerus who ruled from India to Cush—one hundred twenty-seven provinces in all. <sup>2</sup> At that time, Ahasuerus ruled the kingdom from his royal throne in the fortified part of Susa. <sup>3</sup> In the third year of his rule he hosted a feast for all his officials and courtiers. The leaders of Persia and Media attended, along with his provincial officials and officers. <sup>4</sup> He showed off the awesome riches of his kingdom and beautiful treasures as mirrors of how very great he was. The event lasted a long time—six whole months, to be exact! <sup>5</sup> After that the king held a seven-day feast for everyone in the fortified part of Susa. Whether they were important people in the town or not, they all met in the walled

garden of the royal palace. <sup>6</sup> White linen curtains and purple hangings were held up by shining white and red-purple ropes tied to silver rings and marble posts. Gold and silver couches sat on a mosaic floor made of gleaming purple crystal, marble, and mother-of-pearl. <sup>7</sup> They served the drinks in cups made of gold, and each cup was different. The king made sure there was plenty of royal wine. <sup>8</sup> The rule about the drinks was “No limits!” The king had ordered everyone serving wine in the palace to offer as much as each guest wanted. <sup>9</sup> At the same time, Queen Vashti held a feast for women in King Ahasuerus’ palace.

<sup>10</sup> On the seventh day, when wine had put the king in high spirits, he gave an order to Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who served King Ahasuerus personally. <sup>11</sup> They were to bring Queen Vashti before him wearing the royal crown. She was gorgeous, and he wanted to show off her beauty both to the general public and to his important guests. <sup>12</sup> But Queen Vashti refused to come as the king had ordered through the eunuchs. The king was furious, his anger boiling inside. <sup>13</sup> Now, when a need arose, the king would often talk with certain very smart people about the best way to handle it. They were people who knew both the kingdom’s written laws and what judges had decided about cases in the past. <sup>14</sup> The ones he talked with most often were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan. They were seven very important people in Persia and Media who, as the kingdom’s highest leaders, were in the king’s inner circle. So the king said to them, <sup>15</sup> “According to the law, what should I do with Queen Vashti since she didn’t do what King Ahasuerus ordered her through the eunuchs?”

<sup>16</sup> Then Memucan spoke up in front of the king and the officials. “Queen Vashti,” he said, “has done something wrong not just to the king himself. She has also done wrong to all the officials and the peoples in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. <sup>17</sup> This is the reason: News of what the queen did will reach all women, making them look down on their husbands. They will say, ‘King Ahasuerus ordered servants to bring Queen Vashti before him, but she refused to come.’ <sup>18</sup> This very day, the important women of Persia and Media who hear about the queen will tell the royal officials the same thing. There will be no end of put-downs and arguments. <sup>19</sup> Now, if the king wishes, let him send out a royal order and have it written into the laws of Persia and Media, laws no one can ever change. It should say that Vashti will never again come before King Ahasuerus. It should also say that the king will give her royal place to someone better than she. <sup>20</sup> When the order becomes public through the whole empire, vast as it is, all women will treat their husbands properly. The rule should touch everyone, whether from an important family or not.” <sup>21</sup> The king liked the plan, as did the other men, and he did just what Memucan said. <sup>22</sup> He sent written orders to all the king’s provinces. Each province received it written in its own alphabet and each people received it in its own language. It said that each husband should rule over his own house.

## **Sermon – “An Act of Protest”**

### **Prayers of the People**

#### **The Lord’s Prayer**

#### **Call to Offering**

#### **Offertory**

Beatitudo

Gerald Peterson

#### **Prayer of Dedication**

#### **Benediction**

#### **Postlude**

Thanksgiving Praise

Lani Smith