

**PROVIDENCE FORGE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 16, 2020**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 124

Leader: Blessed be the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth!

People: Praise be to God, the Giver of many gifts.

Leader: Our help is in God's name, the One who calls us here

People: We come with songs of praise, with prayers too deep for words.

Leader: Blessed be the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth!

All: Blessed be the Lord!

PRAYER OF PRAISE Psalm 124

Lord God, Maker of heaven and earth, we gather together in Your name. We come to offer You our worship and thanksgiving, our praise and our prayers. Come among us, living Lord. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, transform our hearts and minds so that we may recognize Your presence, hear Your voice, know Your will, and walk in Your way. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

SONG of PRAISE

**1 Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;
Praise Him in glad adoration!**

**2 Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires ever have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?**

**3 Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him.
Let the Amen sound from His people again,
Gladly for aye we adore Him.**

SCRIPTURE

Esther 1:1-5, 10-13, 19-22

1:1-5 ¹This is what happened during the time of Xerxes, the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush: ²At that time King Xerxes reigned from his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, ³and in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present. ⁴For a full 180 days he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty. ⁵When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting seven days, in the enclosed garden of the king's palace, for all the people from the least to the greatest who were in the citadel of Susa. **1:10-13** ¹⁰On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him—Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Karkas—¹¹to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. ¹²But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger. ¹³Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of law and justice, he spoke with the wise men who understood the times. **1:19-22** ¹⁹"Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes. Also let the king give her royal position to someone else who is better than she. ²⁰Then when the king's edict is proclaimed throughout all his vast realm, all the women will respect their husbands, from the least to the greatest." ²¹The king and his nobles were pleased with this advice, so the king did as Memukan proposed. ²²He sent dispatches to all parts of the kingdom, to each province in its own script and to each people in their own language, proclaiming that every man should be ruler over his own household, using his native tongue.

ANTHEM

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Cindy Kissel-Ito

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

FOR CHILDREN John 4:24 (Easy to Read Version)

God is spirit. So the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Richard Einerson

Eternal God, we are so aware of our ties to the biblical world as we have today entered the world of Esther. We regret that so little has changed in our public life since then. We still identify intrigue in high places and unholy alliances. There is still the problem of evil in the guise of good; and deceit used for selfish ends.

We ask your aid as we go about building our lives, our nation, and our world in this twenty first century. Help us that we may not be disillusioned because of the deceit of peoples' hearts. Remind us to not lose faith in people because of the faithlessness of the few. Encourage us to continue to see this as your wonderful world so we might not be dispirited. Inspire us to keep a faithful, expectant spirit which looks for hope in all things.

Esther's example prompts us to make times of thanksgiving and gladness for your goodness to us. Be with us, O God, who turns sorrow into gladness, weakness into strength, defeat into triumph. Give us triumphant spirits. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

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<https://app.easytithe.com/App/Giving/pfpc>

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SONG OF RESPONSE

**To God be the glory, great things he has done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that we may go in.**

Refrain:

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father thro' Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he has done!**

**Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer and higher and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.**

Refrain:

BENEDICTION Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

People: Peace be with you!