

This happened in the days of Ahasuerus, the same Ahasuerus who ruled over one hundred twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia. In those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his officials and ministers. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were present, while he displayed the great wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and pomp of his majesty for many days, one hundred eighty days in all.

When these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in the citadel of Susa, both great and small, a banquet lasting for seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and marble pillars. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored stones. Drinks were give served in golden goblets, goblets of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. Drinking was by flagons, without restraint; for the king had given orders to all the officials of his palace to do as each one desired. Furthermore, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for the women in the palace of King Ahasuerus.

On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who attended him, to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing the royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the officials her beauty; for she was fair to behold. But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. At this the king was enraged, and his anger burned within him.

Then the king consulted the sages who knew the laws (for this was the king's procedure toward all who were versed in law and custom, and those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven officials of Persia and Media, who had access to the king, and sat first in the kingdom): "According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?" Then Memucan said in the presence of the king and the officials, "Not only has Queen Vashti done wrong to the king, but also to all the officials and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. For this deed of the queen will be made known to all women, causing them to look with contempt on their husbands, since they will say, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, and she did not come.' This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's behavior will rebel against the king's officials, and there will be no end of contempt and wrath! If it pleases the king, let a royal order go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be altered, that Vashti is never again to come before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. So when the decree made by the king is proclaimed throughout all his kingdom, vast as it is, all women will give honor to their husbands, high and low alike."

This advice pleased the king and the officials, and the king did as Memucan proposed; he sent letters to all the royal provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, declaring that every man should be master in his own house.

After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus had abated, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for the king. And let the king appoint commissioners in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the beautiful young virgins to the harem in the citadel of Susa under custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; let their cosmetic treatments be given them. And let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This pleased the king, and he did so.

Now there was a Jew in the citadel of Susa whose name was Mordecai son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, a Benjaminite. Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with King Jeconiah of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried away. Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is Esther, his cousin, for she had neither father nor mother; the girl was fair and beautiful, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter. So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many young women were gathered in the citadel of Susa in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's

palace and put in custody of Hegal, who had charge of the women. The girl pleased him and won his favor, and he quickly provided her with her cosmetic treatments and her portion of food, and with seven chosen maids from the king's palace, and advanced her and her maids to the best place in the harem. Esther did not reveal her people or kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to tell. Every day Mordecai would walk around in front of the court of the harem, to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

The turn came for each girl to go in to King Ahasuerus, after being twelve months under the regulations for the women, since this was the regular period of their cosmetic treatment, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and cosmetics for women. When the girl went in to the king she was given whatever she asked for to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. In the evening she went in; then in the morning she came back to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines; she did not go in to the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter, to go in to the king, she asked for nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who had charge of the women, advised. Now Esther was admired by all who saw her. When Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign, the king loved Esther more than all the other women; of all the virgins she won his favor and devotion, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

## **Peace United Church of Christ**

**July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

### **Summer Schedule: One Service at 9:30**

We are taking it easy this summer and moving to one service at 9:30am. We will worship outdoors under the tent, weather permitting, on **July 14<sup>th</sup> and August 18<sup>th</sup>**. Livestream will be available on all Sundays except the three outdoor worship services. Coffee hour will be held in the Fellowship Hall, and you can always bring your cup of coffee outside if you'd like to socialize under the tent.

### **Looking for Mason Jars**

We are looking for mason jars to can vegetables from our Peace Garden and for our Church Bake Sale. If you have any you do not need anymore, please contact Bri at [office@peaceucc.org](mailto:office@peaceucc.org).

### **Peace Church Garden**

We are so excited that it is summertime! With summertime here it is time to start watering the garden. If you are able to help water and weed the garden contact the office at [office@peaceucc.org](mailto:office@peaceucc.org) to sign up.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Ave Construction**

City road construction on North 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue East will take place in mid-July. There will still be access to our upper parking lot and flaggers will be directing traffic along the street. If you want to try to avoid construction traffic, our lower parking may be easier to access. We'll keep you posted on timing as we hear more!

## **Weekly Calendar**

### **Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>**

**6:30pm Property Team Meeting** in the Staff Lounge and Zoom

### **Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>**

**8:30am CHUM Breakfast Making** in the Kitchen

**1:00pm History Team Meeting** in the History Room

**5:00pm Finance Committee Meeting** in the Staff Lounge and Zoom

**6:00pm Bible Study** in the Fireside Room and Zoom

### **Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00am Men's Breakfast** at Perkins on London Rd

**5:30pm Worship and Arts** in the Fireside Room

### **Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>**

**8:30am New Member Welcome**

**9:30am Outside Worship Service** with **Baptism** of **Christopher Wark** and **New Members Joining**.

**10:30am Coffee Hour** in the Fellowship Hall

**10:45am Congregational Covenant Discussion** under the tent