

# Xtra! 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020

We cannot gather together in St John's, but we can gather spiritually as we worship today. So first, refresh yourselves with something to eat and drink and then set your space as we sing:

## **Gathering Song:** *Come into His Presence* *Singing Alleluia*

*During which the table is set (white cloth) and candle is lit.*

## **Greeting**

Peace be with you

**And also with you**

## **Kyrie Confession**

*Introduce confession. Then:*

Father God, we are sorry for the times when we have thought things that do not please you. [*pause*]

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

We are sorry for the times when we have said things that do not please you. [*pause*]

Christ have mercy **Christ have Mercy**

We are sorry for the times when we have done things that do not please you. [*pause*]

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

## **Absolution**

May the God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Gloria: Peruvian Gloria**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ep4TLwVM9mQ>

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest**

To him be glory for ever

**To him be glory for ever**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

Glory to God, glory to God, Son of the Father

**Glory to God, glory to God, Son of the Father**

To him be glory for ever

**To him be glory for ever**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit**

To him be glory for ever

**To him be glory for ever**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

Alleluia amen. **Alleluia amen**

## **Activity** *Beetle Drive to create a beautiful face*

1 = head and neck

2 = eyes

3 = nose and ears

4 = mouth

5 = hair

6 = jewellery

Take turns to throw the dice. The first person to get a number 1 draws head and neck or the person.

Whoever then throws a 2 adds the eyes.... No-one is to throw the dice whilst someone is drawing. The face must be completed in the right order.

Perhaps you could take a picture of the face you have created, send it to Rev A, and we could put them together to see what beautiful faces we have come up with!

Today's story is about someone who was very beautiful and whose beauty put her in a special position.

## **Reading:** *The story of Esther*

It's a story from when the Jews were in exile. Esther was a Jewish orphan adopted by Mordecai. When she became Xerxes' queen, he didn't know she was a Jew – she kept quiet about her nationality. When the King's advisor tried to get rid of all the Jews, Esther had to hold her nerve to carry out a plan. She had to

have courage to speak out to save her people – in those days no-one could speak to the king (not even the queen) unless he spoke to her first.

Her story never mentions God, but it is clear that he is watching over all that happens at every stage of the story.

Here is an interactive telling of the story.

Everytime you hear/read certain words, there will be an action to go with them:

**Esther** – flutter your eyelashes

**Xerxes** – put your hands on hips – you're in charge

**Vashti/Zeresh** – say 'Tut!' You're not impressed.

**Haman** – look down your nose snobbishly

**Mordecai** – stroke your chin wisely

Here we go...

**Xerxes** was a king, a fairly brutal lout. He said, "My dear wife **Vashti** has turned a little bit nasty, So I think I'll throw her out!

So poor old **Vashti** got the boot. King **Xerxes** was not nice.

Then **Xerxes** said, "I'll have a new wife instead. But I wont' make the same mistake twice".

**Xerxes** ruled 100 kingdoms from India to Sudan.

They searched the world for the perfect girl  
For this very imperfect man.

Now **Mordecai**, he was a Jew and **Esther** was his niece,

He worked for the king and soon got wind  
Of his search for wedded bliss.

**Mordecai** said, "Listen my young **Esther**, I'd like to propose a motion:

I've foreseen, that you're gonna be queen.

Now that's quite a promotion."

**Esther** was quite young, but she also was quite bright.

She went to **Xerxes** with bows and curtsies  
And he fell in love at first sight.

Now, **Haman** was Prime Minister, he wasn't half a snob.

He said, "My wife **Zeresh**, I no longer cherish  
Half as much as my job."

He also wasn't very keen on **Mordecai** the Jew,  
Because when he went by, old **Mordecai**  
Didn't bow the way the others would do.

"Right", he said. "I will not have it. **Mordecai's** bad news.

I'll trick the king into killing him  
Along with all the Jews."

So **Xerxes** signed an order sealing **Mordecai's** fate.

**Haman** had a grin, but **Zeresh** put in,  
"It ain't over yet, just wait".

When **Mordecai** heard the news he ran to **Esther's** pad,

He fell on his knees and said, **Esther**, please, King **Xerxes** has gone quite mad”.

**Mordecai** explained and poor old **Esther** said:  
“**Haman's** nasty, bring back **Vashti** –  
Let her be queen instead.”

“I can't change anything”, she said, “but I'll do the best I can”.

She fasted and prayed for three whole days  
And then she had a plan.

She gave the king a party: **Haman** and **Zeresh**  
were there too.

As they got under way, **Esther** started to say,  
King **Xerxes**, **Haman's** tricked you”.

**Xerxes** was so surprised he backed out through the door.

**Haman** grabbed **Esther**, tripped her up and  
pressed her  
Flat upon the floor.

**Xerxes** walked back in just them, a snarl upon his lips.

**Zeresh** tutted, **Xerxes** was gutted.  
He said, “**Haman's** had his chips.”

So **Haman** got the chop, his evil plans forsaken.  
The Jews all blessed her, goo old **Esther**

She had saved their bacon!

*Taken from Telling Even More Tales: Dave and Lynn Hopwood.*

## **Wondering questions**

- I wonder if Esther enjoyed being queen;
- I wonder what it was like being the only person who believed in God in the palace;
- I wonder what was the hardest moment for Esther;
- I wonder if God has put you where you are for a reason.

## **Song: *Be Bold, Be Strong***

Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you.  
X2

I am not afraid **No! No! No!**

I am not dismayed **No! No!**

Because I'm walking in faith and victory

Come on and walk in faith and victory

Because the Lord, your God is with you.

*Track attached*

## **Prayer**

**Heavenly Father,**

**Thank you that you came down low from highest heaven to be with us; that you know the heights and depths of our lives and are there with us in all we do and experience.**

**Help us to know your presence when we are low.**

**Help us to celebrate with you when we are high.**

**In Jesus' name we pray.**

**Amen**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven,**

**Hallowed be your name.**

**Your Kingdom come, your will be done,**

**On earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins,**

**As we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation;**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## **Blessing**

**May the lightness of God go with you.  
May the brightness of God go with you.  
May he shine on all you do.  
May God bless you.**

## **Messy Grace**

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
The love of God,  
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
Be with us all, now and for ever more.  
Amen**

## **Resources:**

Refreshments  
White cloth, candle, matches  
Dice, paper, pencils