



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY July 28 & BEYOND”

“Seeking and Asking Is Always the First Step”



Seek ye first the kingdom of
God, and His righteousness /

And all these things shall be
added unto you /

Allelu, Alleluia.

So goes the first verse of a “scripture chorus” written in 1971, written by Karen Lafferty. I think I heard it first around 1975, and started playing it on my guitar immediately. Simple, classic, worship-flexible, lyrics straight from the Bible. It got included in the Episcopal Hymnal 1982, which just goes to show someone’s good taste in classic music of any genre being made available for our worship.

Karen Lafferty, both composer and text author of “Seek Ye First,” was born in Alamogordo, New Mexico in 1948. She earned a Bachelor of Music Education at Eastern New Mexico University in 1970 and also had additional private study. In 1971, Lafferty decided to change her career path; she became worship leader and concert artist at Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. In 2006, Eileen Johnson interviewed her after she had returned back to New Mexico after 20 years in Amsterdam with YWAM (Youth with a Mission) training Christian musicians how to be on mission with their music.

I’m going to share some of Karen’s story with you because there is an important witness about the matter of prayer. Of course, the song – straight from the scripture reading that will be heard this Sunday at All Saints’ Church, to which you are invited to attend at either 8am or 10:30 am - speaks to the matter of prayer which Jesus has been taking a good deal of time to inform his disciples about. The second verse of the song, which was added later, includes the iconic tri-phrase, Ask, Seek, Knock. There’s an important part of Karen’s story which helps us to see a bit that

when Jesus was teaching his apostles and disciples about prayer and its power and purpose, he was absolutely serious about making the application! Scripture teaching from Jesus – or any part of the bible – about prayer is intended to inform our own prayers, or even get us praying in the first place. But always with this important message: God hears, and God answers.

Here is that interview portion. See if you can pick up on the part I was referencing:

“The next part of her story sounds a bit like a fairy-tale: Feeling a call to live what she believed, Karen Lafferty left her job as a [secular] entertainer to devote her life to full-time Christian service. In 1971, while in the midst of struggles to pay her monthly bills, she attended a Bible study that coincidentally was based on Matthew 6:33, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . .” She went home, picked up her guitar, and set the words to music. First published by Maranatha! Music (which was a ground-breaking mission venture by Calvary Chapel to provide “contemporary Christian music”) and recorded on its Praise album (1972), “Seek Ye First” launched Lafferty into fulltime music ministry.”

She made the move back to New Mexico and Santa Fe in 1995 in order to care for her ailing parents. She moved the HQ for her Musicians For Missions International (MFMI) to Santa Fe, and has continued to teach and perform. The royalties from those early massively popular songs continue to provide a considerable portion of the support for her missionary work and leadership training.

What was that portion I wanted you to find? Her struggle with her bills was in the context of her struggle alone. Jesus teaches us to not fear but to put our trust in God. The scripture from Sunday’s Gospel says that clearly: Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Alleluia!

One of the most important aspects of Jesus’ teaching on prayer, taken all together, is that even though Jesus does teach us a formulary, and an order of prayer, as he taught his disciples the Lord’s Prayer (that’s all part of Sunday’s readings!) he also made this very clear, that the first thing is not establishing a format but to come to the Lord. Between Him and You, real, tangible answers to your dilemmas and concerns, not to mention your praises and thanksgivings, will be given! Allelu, Alleluia!

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 18:20-33 Psalm 138 Colossians 2:6-15, Luke 11:1-13

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

8:30a Low Mass (Church)
10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)
AA Meeting
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY AA Meetings
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY Societies of Mary Day of Devotion
11:00am Rosary (St. Mary's Chapel)
11:30am Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)
Noon Potluck Lunch (Parish Hall)

SUNDAY The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
8:00am Low Mass
10:30am Solemn Mass
AA Meeting
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)