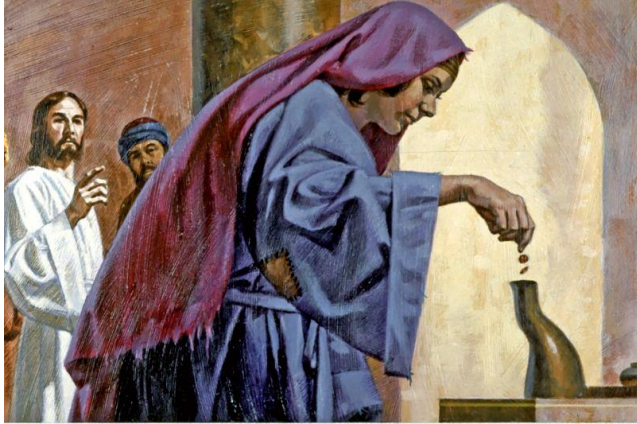


SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2024
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST
MARK 12:38-44

"ABUNDANCE AND POVERTY"



ST. JOHN

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Organist - Sharon Banjavcic

Liturgy - Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

Ushers -

(NCH) New Century Hymnal - CCLI LICENSE #11164431

*Please stand if comfortably able.

Respond with words in bold print

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

THE BELL IS RUNG:

PRELUDE: "God, We Praise You (Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing)" Lani Smith

PENNIES FOR MISSION: Neighbors in Need

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

(Inspired by Psalm 146)

One: From generation to generation, the Holy One has loved justice and righteousness, lifted the broken and bowed, and opened possibilities for the dejected.

Many: Help, hope, and happiness are of the Holy One, who reigns forever. Trust the Holy One!

One: When the power brokers, corrupt systems, and tools of violence have failed us, the Holy One has remained faithful to abiding love and abundant liberation.

Many: Help, hope, and happiness are of the Holy One, who reigns forever. Follow the Holy One!

One: Praise the Holy One with song and dance, in spirit and in truth, for God's glory and for life abundantly!

Many: Help, hope, and happiness are of the Holy One, who reigns forever. Praise the Holy One!

***INVOCATION:**

Living God, we offer you praise in your presence. We give you thanks for life in this community. Some come seeking. Others come assured. Some have questions. Others simply want company. Whatever our reasons for gathering, may they all lead us to an encounter with you,

your grace, and your way. Infuse us with your power, forged in love, so that we might be encouraged and respond as agents of your kingdom on earth. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN: 396 “Where Charity and Love Prevail”**

***UNISON PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:**

God of mercy and possibilities, forgive us for clinging to the measures of success and security in our world rather than trusting in the abundance of your creation. Help us to recognize the kingdom coming and our role as participants in your realm. Liberate us from the bonds of consumerism, scarcity, and self-centeredness, and make us vessels of your love come alive in the world. Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE:**

Beloved, you are inheritors of the kingdom of God. You receive riches beyond compare. The Holy One journeys with you and enables you to grow in grace, peace, and contentment.

***GLORIA: Glory to the Creator, and the Christ and the Spirit so near. As it was from the start so it shall be forever, One God always here. (repeat twice)
(end) One God always here. One God always here.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

From the Message

3¹⁻² One day her mother-in-law Naomi said to Ruth, “My dear daughter, isn’t it about time I arranged a good home for you so you can have a happy life? And isn’t Boaz our

close relative, the one with whose young women you’ve been working? Maybe it’s time to make our move. Tonight is the night of Boaz’s barley harvest at the threshing floor.

³⁻⁴ “Take a bath. Put on some perfume. Get all dressed up and go to the threshing floor. But don’t let him know you’re there until the party is well under way and he’s had plenty of food and drink. When you see him slipping off to sleep, watch where he lies down and then go there. Lie at his feet to let him know that you are available to him for marriage. Then wait and see what he says. He’ll tell you what to do.”

⁵ Ruth said, “If you say so, I’ll do it, just as you’ve told me.”

¹³ Boaz married Ruth. She became his wife. Boaz slept with her. By God’s gracious gift she conceived and had a son.

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ The town women said to Naomi, “Blessed be God! He didn’t leave you without family to carry on your life. May this baby grow up to be famous in Israel! He’ll make you young again! He’ll take care of you in old age. And this daughter-in-law who has brought him into the world and loves you so much, why, she’s worth more to you than seven sons!”

¹⁶ Naomi took the baby and held him in her arms, cuddling him, cooing over him, waiting on him hand and foot.

¹⁷ The neighborhood women started calling him “Naomi’s baby boy!” But his real name was Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 127 Page 708

SECOND TESTAMENT: Hebrews 9:24-28

²⁴ Christ didn’t enter the holy place (which is a copy of the true holy place) made by human hands, but into heaven itself, so that he now appears in God’s presence for us. ²⁵ He didn’t enter to offer himself over and over again, like the high priest enters the earthly holy place every year with blood that isn’t his. ²⁶ If that were so, then Jesus would have to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. Instead, he has now appeared once at the end of the ages to get rid of sin by sacrificing himself. ²⁷ People are destined to die once and then face judgment. ²⁸ In the same way, Christ was also offered once to take on himself the sins of many people. He will appear a second time, not to take away sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

***GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 12:38-44**

³⁸ As he was teaching, he said, “Watch out for the legal experts. They like to walk around in long robes. They want to be greeted with honor in the markets. ³⁹ They long for places of honor in the synagogues and at banquets. ⁴⁰ They are the ones who cheat widows out of their homes, and to show off they say long prayers. They will be judged most harshly.”

A poor widow’s contribution

⁴¹ Jesus sat across from the collection box for the temple treasury and observed how the crowd gave their money. Many rich people were throwing in lots of money. ⁴² One poor widow came forward and put in two small copper coins worth a penny. ⁴³ Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I assure you that this poor widow has put in more than everyone who’s been putting money in the treasury. ⁴⁴ All of them are giving out of their spare change. But she from her hopeless poverty has given everything she had, even what she needed to live on.”

These are the ancient words revealed to us anew.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE:

This is the final scene in the Temple Courtyards and takes us to a dense and difficult riddle which Jesus himself puts to his hearers and which they cannot answer, and to a small but striking incident by the Temple treasury.

The riddle has to do with the question about David’s Lord and David’s son. The question of messiahship in general, and Jesus’ messiahship in particular, has been swirling around Mark’s gospel most of the time, and particularly since chapter 8. Now Jesus himself addresses it head on.

Who exactly will the Messiah be? What can we say about him? You may recall the question, “Who did he think he was!” and the implied answer was “The Messiah, the one who has authority over the Temple.

However, Jesus appears to challenge the normal Jewish assumption, based on long scriptural tradition including Psalm 2, Psalm 89, and particularly 2 Samuel 7, that the great coming king would be born from the family of David. It's impossible, though, to think that either Jesus or Mark was denying that the Messiah would be a descendent of David. The whole early church was clear that he was indeed from that family, which we can read in Romans 1:3, Matthew 1:17; Luke 2:27 – 32. What we find, instead, is a challenge to the idea that the Messiah will be *simply* a king from David's line. He will be David's Lord *as well as* David's son. So, there is more to being the Messiah than the people thought.

This chapter ends with a brief warning against the pomp and pretension of some of the legal experts. They give themselves airs, and have a great reputation for piety, but are only interested in lining their pockets. The world has not changed, it seems.

Not only lawyers, but also politicians and other leaders in the civic world, are again and again discovered to be putting on a show to gain favor while underneath they are after money. What a contrast: when David's Lord became David's son, he did not use this as a means of gaining popularity or wealth, but gave up his life instead.

Giving up one's life, indeed, is the theme of the final short scene, where Jesus contrasts the rich people who can afford to give plenty to the Temple treasury, and make sure others see that they're doing it, with the poor

widow who has given, literally, 'her whole life,' the two copper coins which were all she had to live on that day.

Her sacrifice, though small, was total. Once again, when we read this story in the light of Jesus' riddle about David's Lord, and David's son we discover a strange affinity. One might have thought she was "MERELY" putting two copper coins, but in fact she was putting in everything she had. One might have thought the Messiah was "merely" David's son – a human king among other human kings. But in fact, in the Messiah, Israel's God has given himself totally, given all that he had and was. Amen.

**SPECIAL MUSIC: "Take My Life and Let It Be"
Video Flute (Stacie)/Piano (Sharon) Duet**

PASTORAL PRAYER: Gracious God, whose favor rests on those who are poor as much as on those who possess many things and whose attention is drawn to our simple petitions more than to long, eloquent prayers that seek to impress, we ask in these moments to lay aside our anxiety that we might hear and respond to your word and be empowered to live by it.

We are privileged to contribute out of our abundance that the Christian message might be proclaimed among us and to our children. We are challenged to give all that we have – our time, our talents, our work and our leisure as

witness to the love of God. The extent to which we invest ourselves is a measure of our commitment.

Bring comfort to all those who are unwell, lonely, addicted, or in need of other basic things like food, water, shelter, and safety.

Be with us as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE: Amen, Amen, A-a men.

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY:

In the Creator, there is no lack of any good thing. When we consider our resources as part of God's abundance, we nurture generosity within us. Let us give to support the mutual needs of our faith community, the expansion of ministry, and the benefit of the world that God so loves.

OFFERTORY: "Give Thanks" Henry Smith

***DOXOLOGY: Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

***UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION: God of generosity and giver of gifts, receive our offerings as a reflection of our gratitude and trust in your sovereignty. Like the widow and Elijah, may the jars that sustain us never empty and never fail. May we witness the miracle of your provision through our generosity and for your glory. Amen.**

***CLOSING HYMN: 257 "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!"**

***BENEDICTION:**

When the needs of the world compel you,
May the blessings of God assure you,
May the abundance of God inspire you, and
May the goodness of God embolden you
To resist the systems of scarcity and
To embrace a life of generosity, compassion, and
mutuality In the presence of Creator's abundance. Amen.

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE:**

"Let There Be Peace On Earth"

THE BELL IS RUNG:

POSTLUDE: "Count Your Blessings" Excell and Oatman

PRAYER LIST: Becky Ballard, Mary Lou Baum, Urban Baum, Ronald Bopp, Ray Bopp, Jackie Canterbury, Glenn Case, Marilyn Paul, Syd Safriet, Yvonne Weber