



"Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury."

- Mark 12:43 NRSV



The Widow's Offering: this was more than a story about faithful giving. This widow "put in everything she had."
This act of giving acts unselfishly. - Jesus Mafa

Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG

“OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD”

RICH MULLINS

Our God is an awesome God,
God reigns from heaven above with wisdom power and love,
Our God is an awesome God.
He reigns!
She reigns!
They reign!
Our God is an awesome God.

GREETING

PRESIDER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

STUDENT MINISTER

We do not seek opulent robes to show what we believe.

We do not hide in mighty structures of truth.

We come to God with all that we have, little that it may be.

We come to God in rags and rubble.

We come to God with every piece of us on display only for the divine.

Let us humbly worship God with all of our being.

*OPENING HYMN

“ONLY WHAT YOU DO FOR CHRIST WILL LAST”

AAHH 548 (v. 1&2)

*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

The baptismal font reminds us of God’s promise of cleansing and forgiveness. In that confidence, let us lift our voices in a prayer of confession.

Almighty God; we enter your presence confessing the things we try to conceal from you and the things we try to conceal from others. We confess the heartbreak, worry, and sorrow we have caused, that makes it difficult for others to forgive us, the times we have made it easy for others to do wrong, the harm we have done that makes it hard for us to forgive ourselves. Lord have mercy and forgive us through Christ. Amen.

Lord have mercy and forgive us through Christ. Amen.

Let us bring before God the prayers of our hearts in a moment of silence.

God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

We believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

STUDENT MINISTER

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a non-contact way that's comfortable to you and your neighbor.

We seek the calm movement of a crashing wave. We seek the gentle clang of a couple coins. We seek peace in this space and beyond.

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Service of the Word

POEM

DO IT ANYWAY

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

This poem captures the illogical lens the world would see the widow in the scripture giving everything she had to the temple, yet she gave anyway and it was between her and God.

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.
You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God;
It was never between you and them anyway.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STUDENT MINISTER

Guide us, O God, by your Word, and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace; through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark, chapter 12, verses 38 through 44.

As he taught, he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

Hear what God is saying to the people. **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON**DR. ANNE THAYER****PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY****STUDENT MINISTER**

Loving, creator God, Hold us, keep us.
Hold us, keep us.

We pray together,
grateful for each other,
grateful for your presence here,
yet grieving those who are absent.

We remember the Saints who graced our lives, and we become the caretakers of their memory and the carriers of their stories.

We remember the Saints of our Christian history, and we move forward with impressions of their witness visible in our own expressions of faith. We learn from them, even as we lean into our own testimonies.

O God, loss can devastate. It can bring us to our knees. It can shake our faith and change our complexion. It can linger even after we think we've cried our last tears. It can, and surely, it has.

Hold us. And keep us. You are at the bedside, You are waiting for what feels like a lifetime, You are sitting in the pew, You are in the receiving line, You stay with us in the darkness, without judgment or impatience. You help us to our feet when we are ready.

Be the breath, the spirit that rekindles the smallest of embers,
that we might be courageous enough to hope and hope again. Amen.

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

“TAKE MY GIFTS” vs. 1,2

NCH 562

***THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

God is with us!

We are not alone!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We praise you for Jesus Christ. It is Jesus, God incarnate, the Risen Christ, who joins us together as a community of broken but hopeful believers: loving what he loved, living what he taught, and striving to be his faithful servants in our time and place. In this meal we remember Jesus, his promises, and the price he paid for who he was, what he said, and what he did.

On the night before Jesus died, he took a loaf of bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, “Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.” After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying, “This is the new covenant, remember me.” In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died

Christ will arise

Christ will come to us again

Holy Mystery, God the Spirit, we call on you to transform these familiar things, as you continually transform the world around us.

The body of Christ,
the bread of life.
The lifeblood of Christ,
the cup of blessing.
The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God!

Bless now the memory of departed ones
whose names are written in this book of remembrance.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Ghost.
Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

We have a few COVID related options for those who wish to partake. If you wish to receive from the ministers, take an empty eco-friendly cup from the stack on the aisle table and approach the minister, who will place a piece of bread in your open hand. (Or take a cup that already has a piece of gluten-free bread in it, or take one of the sealed celebration cups with the wafer on top and juice beneath; hold them out to the minister for a blessing.) A minister will pour grape juice into your cup. Eat, drink, and dispose of the cup in the waste baskets at the side aisles as you return to your seat.

If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are invited to a different kind of divine encounter through an ecumenical prayer of blessing. If this is your preference, we invite you to meet the preacher at the baptismal font.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at this table where Christ is the host.

For anyone for whom kneeling is part of your tradition, there are folding kneelers behind most chairs.

COMMUNION SONG

“GIVE ME A CLEAN HEART!”

NCH 188

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

PRESIDER

Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life. We are fed by your love; we are strengthened by your life. We are sent forth into this world to live into the visions God has laid on our hearts. We are now commissioned to: feed as we have been fed, forgive as we have been forgiven, love as we have been loved. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

*CLOSING SONG

“TAKE MY GIFTS” vs. 3

NCH 562

*BENEDICTION

SENDING & POSTLUDE

God values our lack.
God appreciates our meager offering.
All we have has great worth in the hands of the divine.
All we are is enough.
Let's go use it all. Amen

Book of Remembrance

There is a book of remembrance on the table at the entrance to the chapel. Feel free to write the names of any loved ones you have lost in the past year. The book is brought up to the altar and blessed along with the communion elements all through the month of November."

You are welcome to keep your bulletin, but if you do not wish to keep it please place it on the table at the entrance to the chapel as you leave.

Cover Art: Jesus Mafa. *The Widow's Mite*, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, Tenn. <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revise-common-lectionary/ordinary-32-2/commentary-on-mark-1238-44-4>. Accessed June 30, 2021

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***The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.**

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM

Mwat Aseleh, Nolan Benner, Chynaah Maryoung-Cooke, Equilla Curry, Liz Fulmer, Patty Hall,
Cam Richesson, Stephanie Oelrich, Rev. Scott Sicciano, Beth Taylor, Rev. Kellie Turner,
Rev. Dr. Catherine E. Williams, Advisor

THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.

To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.

To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.