

**Racine UMC & Sumner Center UMC**

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

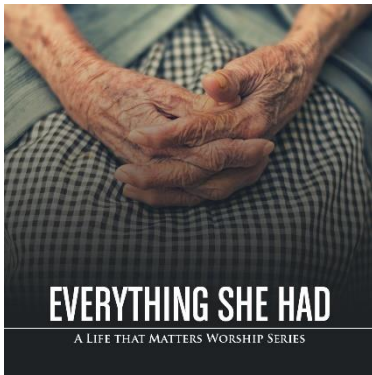
May we together experience the presence of God

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**We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord**

**Prelude**

**Welcome**



**“A Life That Matters”**

**Worship Series**

**Week 1**

Friends, we are beginning a 3-week series, entitled “A Life That Matters” which will take us to the conclusion of our Christian year. This season is Christ in the church, and we celebrate the call to be the sign of Christ’s presence in the world. What better way to sum up this season than by considering a life that matters?

So, what does this understanding of the life of discipleship look like? What are some of the markers that help us grow into a life that matters, as individuals and as a community of faith and transformation?

Today we will look at the first attribute of a life that matters and we will examine generosity.

There is something here about the life we are called to live as followers of Jesus, as disciples. And that is that we are to hold our own life lightly. Yes, our stuff too, our livelihood as well. We are to hold all our stuff lightly. But even our own lives. They aren’t our possessions to hoard, but to give away, to give as a blessing, to give as an act of gratitude, to give in service. We are called, invited, set free from the bondage to our stuff and ourselves, to live free and unencumbered by our own lives and able to embrace the constant hope of eternity.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

*Rev. Dr. Derek C. Weber, Director of Preaching Ministries, Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church, June 2021.*

Come and worship the one who wants your all.

**We come to worship the one who offers all.**

Come and worship with all your heart and soul and mind and strength.

**We come and offer all that we have and all that we are in worship and in service.**

Come and be blessed and you pour yourself out in worship.

**We will worship wholeheartedly and with joy.**

## OPENING PRAYER

*Tony Peterson, Africana Worship Book for Year B, Valerie Bridgeman Davis and Safiyah Fosua, eds., (Discipleship Resources, 2007), 183.*

**Lord, sometimes we feel like we have nothing to give. Sometimes we feel like this world just takes. It drains us dry. We sometimes feel like we just don't have enough to go on. Not enough money, not enough energy, not enough hope.**

**But we know better. We might not have a lot of free time. But we have you, and you give.**

**Lord, you give us so much. You give us shelter and daily bread. You give us families and friends. You give us hope, love, and faith. You give us yourself. You meet us where we are. It might be in prison. It might be in the boardroom. It might be in the ditch. It might be in courtroom. It might be in a judge's chamber. It might be on the streets. It might be in our homes. It might be in a homeless shelter. It might be in a cathedral. It might be a storefront. You meet us and you give. So, what we have, we give to you. Like the widow who gave all she had, and we give to you in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## **Praise Hymn #399 "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated"**

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1. Take my life, and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands, and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.

2. Take my voice, and let me sing  
always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.  
Take my silver and my gold;  
not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

3. Take my will, and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.  
Take my love, my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure-store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

# **We Hear God's Word**

## **Gospel Reading..... Mark 12:38-44**

Mark 12:38-44

New Revised Standard Version

### Jesus Denounces the Scribes

38 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, 39 and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! 40 They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

### The Widow's Offering

41 He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. 42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. 43 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. 44 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."

Word of God, for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

## **Children's Moments**

### **Faith Hymn #408 The Gift of Love**

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1 Though I may speak with bravest fire,  
and have the gift to all inspire,  
and have not love, my words are vain,  
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

2 Though I may give all I possess,  
and striving so my love profess,  
but not be given by love within,  
the profit soon turns strangely thin.

3 Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,  
our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed;  
by this we worship, and are freed.

**\*Meditation\***

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Divine Provider, we confess that we sometimes doubt your provision for us. When we start scraping the bottom of the barrel, we cut back our sharing with others who have already run out and are hungry or in need. Forgive selfishness and independence that prevents interdependence and working together to solve distribution problems in the use of the resources of your good earth, through your compassionate Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## DECLARATION OF PARDON

Pastor: Friends, hear the good news! Christ has entered into heaven.

**People: Christ now appears in the presence of God on our behalf.**

Pastor: Friends, believe the good news!

**People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR THE SEASON AFTER PENTECOST

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The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,

and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. At his ascension you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

### **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.

### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

Almighty and merciful God, our souls thirst for you both day and night. You are the author of our salvation, and you give us everything we need for fruitful living. Now we come into this house of thanksgiving to offer praise to your holy Name and to sing our songs of thanksgiving.

By the grace of baptism, you have adopted us as your children. You have made us heirs to eternal life and incorporated us into your family which we call the Church. But we become a forgetful people and do not honor you. We take great delight in showing off our works of mercy to gain the approval of others and forget that our privilege is to do works in your Name and for your glory alone. Forgive our selfish ways and make our works live.

We know the good news of how Christ offered himself to bear the sins of the world, and you have entrusted us with the mission to spread the word throughout the world. Send us out in the power of your Holy Spirit to accomplish our task with joy to the end that all may come to worship you.

We lift up before you those whose bread is comprised of tears because of their suffering. We know of people who feel their souls cast down for want of peace in their hearts and

minds. Some are poured out from the hard work of dying. Speak your gracious word of comfort and grant them release.

Answer us, O merciful God, for our prayers are joined with the One who stands before you in heaven, Jesus Christ our Lord – Our Father ...

**\*Departing Hymn #557 “Blest Be the Tie that Binds”**

*Author: John Fawcett (1782)*

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1 Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.

2 Before our Father’s throne  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares.

3 We share each other’s woes,  
Our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear.

4 When we asunder part,  
It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.

**BENEDICTION**

Remember that abundance in accounts does not equal spiritual prosperity. Remember those who experience poverty in their purses still can possess the power of generosity. We do not measure God’s abundance by comparing our materials to those of our neighbors. While we are counting and comparing our change, God is found measuring our motives. God’s goodness and generosity tip the scales of humanity—as you go from the place, may your actions do likewise. Amen.