

Sebastopol United Methodist Church
Sunday, November 15, 2020 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost

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Order of Worship, including Scripture

Seasonal Theme:

The teaching and ministry of Jesus the Christ.

Theme for the day:

We are stewards of our gifts and talents which God has given to us.

Call to worship:

*(please read the **BOLD** text, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: God calls us to use our gifts for the building of god's kingdom.

People: **But we are afraid.**

Pastor: Christ urges us to find our courage and not look back.

People: **But our gifts seem so small.**

Pastor: The Spirit offers us everything we need.

People: **But what if we fail?**

Pastor: Trust the gifts you have been given.

Unison: **We will celebrate our gifts as we worship God this day. Amen.**

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

God of all seasons, leads us to the season of light and warmth, a season of joy and of sober judgment, in faith and hope towards salvation. May your words be proclaimed to fill us with joy and hope during this unprecedented time. In Jesus's lighted way we pray. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Matthew 25:14-30** **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

[texts of Scripture follow the service, beginning on page 2]

Message: **HONORING YOUR GIFT!**

Pastoral Prayer

With thanksgiving for God's gifts to us, let us offer ourselves and the fruits of our labor for God's work in the world. Thank you for continuing to send your offerings and pledges by mail.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

Gracious God, the giver of all gifts, you bestow us with talents that are far more precious than jewels. Open our eyes to possibilities you hold for our world. Transform the gifts we offer this day into light and love for the world. Transform our talents into blessings for a world in need. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction:

Go forth, shining with God's light. Stay firm, radiant with Christ's love. Stay connected, clothed in faith, and be ablaze with God's Spirit.

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Scripture Readings – November 15, 2020

first reading -- **MATTHEW 25:14-30**

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put

you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

second reading – **1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11**

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for

wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.