

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

November 5-11, 2018

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Mark 12:38–44 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=406356862>).

Other readings are: Ruth 3:1–5; 4:13–17; Psalm 127; Hebrews 9:24–28.

The theme is: The Way of Giving and Receiving.

Things are not always as they appear. Take, for example, the gifts that are described in this week's passage. Well-respected, well-dressed people offer large sums of money to the treasury in the synagogue. A poor widow offers two small coins to the same treasury. Which gift is the greatest? According to Jesus, it is the smaller gift offered by the widow that is indeed the greatest. The wealthy give large offerings "out of their abundance" (verse 44). To the contrary, the destitute widow, a beggar according to the Greek word used here, gives the only two coins she has. Surely, she could have kept one! Hers was a small offering, indeed. It would take four to eight of these coins to equal one penny! But it was, according to a literal Greek translation, "her whole life" (verse 44). The contrast between the scribes and the widow is clear, but what is not as clear is whether Jesus was holding the widow up as an example of giving, or if he is telling the story as an indictment against the tragic injustice of a destitute woman giving the little she had to the very ones who should have been providing for her care, the very ones who were saying their prayers even as they were taking homes away from such widows. At every turn, the most vulnerable members of society are exploited, even in a place that should be devoted to the faithful worship of the God of justice, mercy, and peace!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

What is the church's responsibility toward those with little power and privilege in society?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of November 4:

If loving God, neighbor, and self are all equally important and interdependent, which is hardest for you?

Prospect Presbyterian Church, Maplewood, NJ, www.prospectchurch.org

Rita Boyer, rita@prospectchurch.org