

EHM Sunday

October 18, 2026

Prelude

***Processional Hymn: A new commandment**

No. 225

**1. “A new commandment I give unto you,
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this shall all know you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another;
By this shall all know you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another.”**

**2. “Je vous commande, me frères, mes soeurs:
Aimez-vous les uns les autres comme moi, j’ai aimé.
Aimez-vous les uns les autres comme moi, j’ai aimé.
Et tous verront que vous êtes mes disciples
si vous aimez les uns les autres,
et tous verront que vous êtes mes disciples
si vous aimez les uns les autres.”**

Welcome, Announcements & Worship Theme

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather for worship as people who are seeking what makes for a good life.

While the world around us focusses on things like money and the life money can buy, we also seek for those things that make a good life money can’t buy.

But how, then, does this alternative focus for a good life shape our relationship to money?

How may we become rich in a whole other way than the material one?

Come to us and speak into our hearts as we worship you this hour, O God!

***Hymn: O for a world where everyone**

No. 730

- 1. O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,
where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.**
- 2. O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.**
- 3. We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice
that opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.**
- 4. The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn; outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.**
- 5. O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.**

Prayer of Approach, Confession & 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**The Peace of Christ be with you all;
And also with you.**

Intergenerational Children's Time

(Children are invited to join in programming following Children's Time)

Choir: Thanksgiving Carol Eleanor Farjeon "Fields of corn give up your ears"

1. Fields of corn, give up your ears, Now your ears are heavy, Wheat and oats and barley spears, All your harvest-levy. Where your sheaves of plenty lean, Men once more the grain shall glean Of the Ever-Living, God the Lord will bless the field, Bringing in its autumn yield Gladly to Thanksgiving.

2. Vines, send in your bunch of grapes, Now the bunch is clustered, Be your gold and purple shapes Round the altar mustered. Where the hanging bunches shine Men once more shall taste the wine Of the EverLiving, God the Lord will bless the root, Bringing in its autumn fruit Gladly to Thanksgiving.

3. Garden, give your brightest flowers, Hedge, your wildest bring in, Turn the churches into bowers Little birds shall sing in. Where the children sing their glee Men once more the Flower shall see Of the EverLiving, God the Lord will bless the throng, Lifting up its autumn song Gladly to Thanksgiving.

Scripture Reading: Luke 18: 18-30, 19: 1-10 (p. 81 & 82)

Sharon Fischer

INTRO: Our scripture readings this morning come from the gospel according to Luke. Both readings are about rich men who encounter Jesus and seek something they don't have. What is it? Our first reading is chapter 18, verses 18-30. Listen:

¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother.' " ²¹ He replied, "I have kept all these since my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money^[a] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." ²³ But when he heard this, he became sad, for he was very rich.

²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ He replied, “What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.”

²⁸ Then Peter said, “Look, we have left our homes and followed you.” ²⁹ And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ who will not get back very much more in this age and in the age to come eternal life.” Amen.

INTRO: Our second reading is chapter 19, verses 1-10. Listen:

“Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. ² A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³ He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. ⁵ When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” ⁶ So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. ⁷ All who saw it began to grumble and said, “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.”

⁸ Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.” ⁹ Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.” Amen.

We are listening, O God;
Speak to us!

Sermon: HOW RICH ARE YOU?

Dr. Harris

1. Sing to the Lord of harvest, Sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts and voices Your alleluia's raise:
By him the rolling seasons In fruitful order move,
Sing to the Lord of harvest A song of happy love.

2. By him the clouds drop fatness, The deserts bloom and spring,
The hills leap up in gladness, The valleys laugh and sing:
He filleth with his fulness All things with large increase,
He crowns the year with goodness, With plenty and with peace.

3. Heap on his sacred altar The gifts his goodness gave,
The golden sheaves of harvest, The souls he died to save:
Your hearts lay down before him When at his feet ye fall,
And with your lives adore him, Who gave his life for all.

Prayers of Thanksgiving & Pastoral Concern

***Hymn: Give me oil in my lamp**

No. 665

**1. Give me oil in my lamp; keep me burning;
give me oil in my lamp, I pray.
Give me oil in my lamp; keep me burning;
keep me burning till the break of day.**

Refrain:

**Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
sing hosanna to the Servant King;
sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
sing hosanna, let us sing!**

**2. Give me joy in my heart; keep me praising;
give me joy in my heart, I pray.
Give me joy in my heart; keep me praising;
keep me praising till the break of day.**

(Refrain)

3. Give me peace in my heart; keep me loving;
give me peace in my heart, I pray.
Give me peace in my heart; keep me loving;
keep me loving till the break of day.

(Refrain)

4. Give me love in my heart; keep me serving;
give me love in my heart, I pray.
Give me love in my heart; keep me serving;
keep me serving till the break of day.

(Refrain)

Benediction

***Threefold Amen**

Postlude

**Remain seated if you are more comfortable*

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We invite you to join us for refreshments and fellowship in our adjacent hall after the service.

All are welcome!

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OUR PURPOSE AS A CHURCH:

To become the hands, feet, voice and heart of Christ for each other and in the world.

For more about who we are and what we do,
visit us at: armourheights.org



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Coming Events

Sunday, October 18

Pentecost 22 Sunday
EHM Walk, 2:15pm (see poster for details)

Monday, October 19

Dance Fitness with Jennifer Hicks, 10:00 am

Wednesday, October 21

Bible Study: "Who is Jesus? Who are you?", 7:30 pm In Person & Online

Sunday, October 25

Pentecost 23 Sunday

Monday, October 26

Dance Fitness with Jennifer Hicks, 10:00 am

Tuesday, October 27

Book Club, "The Exvangelicals: Loving, Living, and Leaving the White Evangelical Church" by Sarah McCammon (see poster for details)

Wednesday, October 28

Bible Study: "Who is Jesus? Who are you?", 7:30 pm In Person & Online

Sunday, November 1

75th Anniversary Sunday Worship & Lunch. Special Guest: The Moderator of General Assembly: The Rev. Lara Scholey

Wednesday, November 4

Bible Study: "Who is Jesus? Who are you?", 7:30 pm In Person & Online

Sunday, November 8

Remembrance Sunday /
Intergenerational Band Rehearsal 12 noon

Wednesday, November 11

Bible Study: "Who is Jesus? Who are you?", 7:30 pm In Person & Online

Friday, November 13

Special 75th Anniversary Choir Concert, with pre-concert reception. (More details forthcoming)

Sunday, November 15

Pentecost 25 Sunday /
Intergenerational Band Rehearsal 12 noon

Monday, November 16

Dance Fitness with Jennifer Hicks, 10:00 am

Wednesday, November 18

Bible Study: "Who is Jesus? Who are you?", 7:30pm in person and online

Friday, November 20

PA Day Camp: 9am - 3pm (Speak to Won for details)

HOW RICH ARE YOU?

Luke 18: 18-30; Luke 19: 1-10

How rich are you? Whether through social media or other media, we are bombarded daily by images and stories of how the materially rich and famous live. While many of us don't care to be billionaires or even millionaires, we would like to have the financial means to live a decent life with the ability to live well, eat well and travel when we like. But what is the measure of that? How much do we really need to live well? And more importantly, are we being manipulated to focus on the wrong measure of what it means to live well and thereby depriving ourselves of a much better measure and pathway to genuine abundance? Is the real measure of wealth all about money? Or is there a much better path to wealth than money?

Well, contrary to what we take in daily through our media sources, here are some stories of people who were materially rich, but chose to divest their wealth in order to become rich in a whole other way...

Jon Pedley was once living the high life, a UK millionaire indulging in lavish parties and all the luxuries that come with wealth. However, a near-fatal car accident in 2002 changed everything for him. After miraculously surviving, Pedley experienced a profound transformation, driven by spirituality and a newfound sense of purpose. Inspired by the charitable efforts of a friend in Uganda, he sold his \$10.5 million farmhouse and businesses and moved to a modest mud hut in Uganda. There, he dedicated his life to starting a charity for local orphans. His selflessness extended beyond Uganda, as he also brought troubled British youth to help the local children and find redemption themselves.

In 2009, Brian Burnie, a British businessman, made a life-changing decision after watching his wife struggle with breast cancer. He sold his \$26 million dollar estate and his luxurious hotel to fund his own charity, which transports cancer

patients to hospitals for free. Burnie's charity, inspired by his personal experience with his wife's illness, aims to alleviate the suffering of cancer patients. In 2012, he sold his second home, valued at nearly \$10 million, to continue funding his growing charity.

George Carroll, a successful oil tycoon from Texas, was born into a wealthy family but never forgot the values of hard work and humility. After building a vast fortune from his oil investments, Carroll decided to give away his wealth during his lifetime, preferring to live a modest life. Carroll contributed significantly to his community, funding local churches and universities, and even founded the local YMCA. He is believed to have given away his entire fortune before passing away in a small room within the YMCA that he had helped establish.

Percy Ross, the son of a junk dealer from Minnesota, had an unusual path to wealth. He made his fortune by buying a plastic bag company and turning it around. But instead of keeping his wealth, Ross chose a different route. Starting in 1977, he began giving away money, donating bicycles to children, and helping those in need. His column, "Thanks A Million," published in over 800 newspapers for 16 years, became a massive success. Ross went on to give away more than 30 Million dollars during his lifetime. Despite his unconventional approach to philanthropy, Ross felt immense happiness from sharing his wealth.

Chuck Feeney, an Irish American billionaire, made his fortune through duty-free shops. However, unlike many wealthy individuals, Feeney spent most of his life giving away his wealth discreetly. Over the span of 30 years, he secretly donated \$6.2 billion to charities, focusing on causes such as education, human rights, and healthcare. Feeney's ambition was to die penniless, and he encouraged other billionaires to give away their wealth while still alive, rather than hoarding it. His philanthropic philosophy significantly inspired other renowned philanthropists like Bill Gates and Warren Buffet. Feeney's humble

and selfless approach to giving challenges conventional ideas about wealth and philanthropy.

Wow! These are some remarkable stories, and there are many more like it. They're not typical ones we hear often in the news. But it does tell us that people, whether super rich or just ordinary folk like most of us here, do awaken to finding purpose, joy and riches in ways other than making money and finding happiness in spending it on ourselves.

But here's the thing. What is it exactly that can awaken us and nourish us in a different direction when it comes to money and its use?

Here's where our scripture readings this morning can help us. Both readings involve interactions Jesus has with persons who are rich materially. But that's where the similarities end. One man has a popular reputation as a good man and a ruler among the people. The other man has a popular reputation as a bad man because his wealth is accumulated through the blatant exploitation of people. But the shocking result in these stories is that the man who is seen as good and a role model of success leaves Jesus dejected, sad, and weighed down, whereas the man who is seen as bad and one to be hated leaves Jesus excited, happy and freed. What's the difference?

Well, the gospel of Luke puts these two stories close together because it shows how two people who are similar in one way - namely their wealth, are very different in other ways. There are the ways people on the outside see them, and there are the ways that have to do with the heart and with genuine transformation. What's the difference?

Let's look at each story in turn. In our first story we have a man who is identified as a ruler among the people. We're also told he's rich. How did he become rich? We don't know. But clearly, he and the people, don't see his wealth as acquired by illegitimate or exploitative means. He is admired, respected and presumably envied. Who wouldn't want to be this man.

But this man who seems to have it all - power, status and wealth, is not happy. Why? Well why is anyone not happy? What is it inside that unsettles any of us or makes us question the value and purpose of our lives? What makes for joy and abundance within any of us or lack thereof? Clearly whatever the world around this man thinks makes a good life, this man is no longer feeling so good. And having presumably sought all kinds of answers, he comes to Jesus hoping Jesus could give him whatever he's looking for.

And so, having complimented Jesus as "good teacher", he ask him this: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Now "eternal life" doesn't mean simply life after death. This is a poor understanding. No. Eternal life means abundance of life, so abundant that your life's meaning and purpose are greater than this life alone. Eternal life is life that is good and rich beyond what this world can give you.

Well, Jesus begins by reciting for him the expected answer that their shared religion gives of what it means to be good, abundant and happy - follow the commandments of God. And Jesus especially notes the commandments that have to do with love of neighbour. Well, the man hears this and is still unsatisfied. "I know these commandments Jesus. And I've followed them carefully all my life. I've only done good things and refrained from harm when it comes to my neighbour."

But clearly, this is not enough. And it's not Jesus who judges that it is not enough. It's the man himself. Somehow for all he has tried to do to be a good man, it's not enough to fulfill him at the heart level. He's missing something. He needs something more, something better, something different. He is ready and seeking not just a good life, but eternal life.

And so, Jesus tells him this. Do you really want to go all the way and become truly free and full? Do you want to be rich, powerful and good in a whole other way where your heart can sing? Then here's the one thing still lacking my friend: "Sell all you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." Wow!

Jesus is clearly not looking for money. He is looking for open hearts ready to take the plunge in faith, trusting that incredibly good things can come when we unburden ourselves from what the world prizes as abundance, security and freedom. Now please understand. Jesus is not telling the man to become poor. Many in Jesus' company of followers provided for the group out of their abundance which included material abundance. Rather, it's about what we do and how we live with the money we have, not simply how much of it we keep.

Well, how attached is this man to his money for all the good he does and all the good he seeks? Far too attached it seems. For when he hears the answer Jesus gives him, we're told, he becomes sad. Why? Because he was very rich.

And here, Jesus adds something more as a teaching moment to his disciples. Why? Because his disciples like the rest of us all look to the rich, the famous, the successful and the outwardly good, and envy what they have. Jesus tells them flatly that the more you have the harder it is to get into the kingdom of abundance which is heaven beginning on earth. Why? Because your focus on what constitutes wealth, and where you put your heart and effort is all wrong. What you can get back from divesting yourself materially and embracing greater simplicity by sharing and giving will be far greater than anything you can store up for yourself materially.

And to really explain this in a practical way, we get to the very next story a few verses later. In this story, the rich man is named: Zacchaeus. Why is he named? Maybe he became a well-known follower of Jesus by the time Luke was composing his gospel account. But where does Zacchaeus come from? Like the man already encountered, he too is wealthy. Except, his wealth is seen as wickedly gained. Why? Zacchaeus is a tax collector. This means he not only collects taxes for Rome so that Rome can pay it's army to keep the people subjugated. That's bad enough. But tax collectors also make their own money by taking a percentage of tax on top of what they collect for Rome. They have the freedom and the power to enforce such extraction and people suffer the impoverishment and desperation of having whatever they have taken by someone of their own people who has sold themselves to their gentile oppressors just to make money.

And Zaccaheus, we're told is a chief tax collector. He manages an army of tax collectors and takes a cut from them as well. Of course this not only makes him well off but rich. The only reason he remains alive so hated as he is, is that he is protected by armed guards.

OK, so why is Jesus so interested in highlighting Zacchaeus? Because Zacchaeus is transformed at the heart level. He is ready for change. He is ready to die to an old way of life in order to rise up to a whole new way of living abundance and wealth. Jesus doesn't tell Zacchaeus what to do. All he does is show Zacchaeus love, acceptance and acknowledgment that he is a child of God no matter what he has done till this point in his life.

And Zacchaeus is so blown away by such an encounter, he responds not just by saying 'thank you Jesus!', but by declaring that he will give away half of everything he owns and give back 4 times what he has defrauded of people. "Wow! That's a lot of money Zacchaeus! Are you sure you can afford that?" It doesn't matter. Zachaeus is jumping up and down in joy because he has discovered a measure of wealth and abundance he could never have imagined or enjoyed before. And so, Jesus' response: "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a child of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and save the lost."

How lost are you? How lost am I?... Jesus says this not for Zacchaeus' sake. He says it for all the people gathered around and for us too. Why? Because they were grumbling at Jesus' actions. How could Jesus go into this filthy man's house and enjoy fellowship with him without immediately distancing himself from him, condemning him and shaming him for his wickedness? But just like the disciples and just like the people and just like many of us, we've been bought and exploited by a world that measures wealth and abundance in materialistic ways. We assume that material wealth itself is good and it's only bad people who exploit and make money in illegal ways as our laws define such. But Jesus is even more interested in how we may be changed by love to give, and discover a freedom and abundance that is not about material wealth at all. It all begins with an honest examination of our heart outwards.

Where is our heart? What do we truly want? What do we imagine will give us eternal life? How much joy and abundance have we experienced in our giving and sharing of love from our heart? This is the path to abundance. Zacchaeus of all people found it. A good man who had it all according to our world, did not. How have you found your abundance? Or are you still seeking an abundance that is truly eternal?

Amen.