

Message for Sunday, November 2, 2025

All Saints Day

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Announcements

Giving Options-Electronic, offering time, special offering is now The Pastor's Emergency Assistance Fund; Decorate the church for Christmas, Wednesday, December 3, at 9AM.

United Methodist Men's Toy Drive coming soon. Thanksgiving Potluck sign up to volunteer, bring a side dish and come to fellowship.

Fellowship of Love

Song

Call to Worship

L: When evil is afoot...

P: God alone can save us.

L: When nations rise against nation...

P: God alone can set things right.

L: When the innocent are devoured...

P: God alone can heal our wounds.

L: When our spirits are troubled...

P: God alone can lead us home.

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Unison Prayer

Spirit of Truth, feed our hearts from the fullness of your word.

We long to embrace the poor, who will inherit your kingdom.

We yearn to forsake the lure of earthly riches, lest we forestall your consolation.

**Turn our failings into a fierce resolve to bear witness to the depth of your truth
and the fullness of your grace. Amen.**

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an
opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

Offering/Song

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through it.

² A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.

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³ He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not,
because he was short in stature.

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⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way.

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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."

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⁶ So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.

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⁷ All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner."

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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."

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⁹ Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham.

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¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

L: The word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

Meditation: In or Out

It's difficult with scripture to look at it and say what I'm about to say. This story is a classic. What I mean by this is that this story is one that most of us are intimately familiar with. We grew up singing songs about it. If we were of the age of watching bible stories in cartoon or vegetable format we saw this story acted out. The story of [Zacchaeus](#) being a “wee little man” too short to see Jesus, so he climbed up a tree to get noticed. Jesus sees him and invites himself over to his house, where despite complaints Zacchaeus promises to give away his wealth, above and beyond what is required by Jewish law for restitution.

Much like last week's story about the Pharisee and the tax collector repenting, this passage has been interpreted in one particular way so often that we often miss the point. First, again this week I read some good Presbyterian commentaries, and I felt they were dumb again. What I mean by

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this, and I did see it in other places, is that they want to paint this story at least partially about Jesus' fore knowledge. You see Jesus called Zacchaeus by name and they never knew each other! Well, how do you know that? You see Jesus certainly was making a name for himself as a preacher and worker of miracles, and Zacchaeus well, he's the chief tax collector. While that position means he was ostracized from his Jewish community it does mean he was a powerful and influential person in Jerusalem. So why assume that Jesus didn't know about him? That this has to be some type of divine fore knowledge. Zacchaeus was known for being short and quite possibly that meant a person with dwarfism. So how many tax collectors with dwarfism could there possibly be running around Jerusalem?

Another key issue here in interpretation that I think we need to pay attention to. This passage is often interpreted as Zacchaeus having a salvation experience with Jesus at his home for dinner but that may not be the best interpretation. You see the wording used in this passage, particularly in verse 8, 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." The word is interpreted as "will"

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can easily be interpreted as “am.” In other words, **Zacchaeus** already is giving his wealth away, he is already in the process of making restitutions.

What this suggests is that this passage isn't about **Zacchaeus** becoming a believer in Christ, but in the fact that Christ recognizes what is already at work in his life. This interpretation makes more sense to me for a number of reasons. One is the theme of Luke; Luke is always pushing for the inclusion of those who our religious practices would seek to exclude. In the passages proceeding this, we have how “we” religious people get repentance wrong (the passage from last week). We get an example of where the rich young ruler, and a person doing the right thing, walks away sad because he misses the point. But here we have a rich person who gets it and does the right thing! I read it from another author this way, “Jesus isn't anti-wealth, he is anti-greed, anti-unfair business practices, and anti-taking advantage of the poor.” A prime example of this is **Zacchaeus**. The person who is giving away their wealth and still considered extremely wealthy, but is doing it not in an effort to buy his way into the kingdom of God but out of genuine concern for others.

I know I've moved this much-loved passage out of the realm of personal response and salvation for Zacheeus. I am not saying it doesn't speak to that, I

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am saying it is not the only thing this passage is trying to say. This passage is telling us that there is space in the kingdom of God for all sorts of people, yes even people with money. The expectation for all of us are to be generous people who will include rather than exclude others. Amen.

All Saints Day Recognition

Mary Cattolico

Judy Jones Dalton

Art Estes

Joyce Johnson

Darryl Ray McCown

Cara Rose McCown Weaver

Mary McDonald

Tudy McFarlane

Carol Nord

Ken Pierce

Penny Ann Spillman

Willie Schick

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Ray Strom

Ruth Swenson

Fran Whetten

Rebecca Ann Star Young

Karen Zimmerman

Communion/The Great Thanksgiving

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Communion Liturgy

UMH pp. 13-16

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

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L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

P: 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.

L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us

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from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

L: 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."

L: 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."

L: 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.

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P: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

L: 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.

L: 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.

P: Amen.

Communion/ Music

Benediction

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Song

Goodbye