

**Second Congregational Church in Newcastle,  
United Church of Christ, Newcastle, Maine**

**Our Money Story Series: Release  
Twentieth Sunday of Pentecost  
October 10, 2021, 10:00 AM**



### **INVITATION**

Welcome to Hybrid/In-Person Worship with Second Congregational Church! Whether you are joining us as we return to our sanctuary, have chosen to connect by Facebook Live or YouTube, or are using different devices at various places or are even watching a recording on a different day, we enter this sacred time together. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. We are devoted to hospitality, generosity and care of all our neighbors and each other!

**Joining us from away by device:** Please join us at 10AM via Facebook Live at [www.facebook.com/secondcongo](http://www.facebook.com/secondcongo). Currently the chat/comment functions will not be monitored during the live service, so we invite you to submit your prayer requests prior to Sunday mornings by email at [pastor@secondcongo.org](mailto:pastor@secondcongo.org). Before the time of the service, you may want to prepare a simple worship space. Perhaps you can light a candle, have a Bible with you, set your table with a cross, pillar candle, a plant or flower or other symbols of faith that bring you comfort. Include the photograph of someone you wish to bring into the circle of faith. Whatever it is, follow your heart.

***Thank you for your preparation.***

*Let us now be present to the Spirit, which brings us together and loves us wherever we are!*

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### **PRELUDE**

"Prelude in E Major"

Frank Bridge

### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CENTERING MOMENT**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: Through Moses, God said,

**All: "Let my people go." (Ex.9:1)**

One: In scripture, the law declares:

**All: "In the seventh year, you must cancel all debts." (Deut.15:1)**

One: With grace, Jesus said:

**All: "Give one coat away." (Luke 3:11)**

One: With honesty, Jesus taught:

**All:** “Sell what you have, give that money to the poor.” (Matt. 19:21)

**One:** Faith has always involved letting go, releasing, setting free, Dropping our nets, giving to others, and following.

**All:** **So in this hour of worship, may we release that which binds us. May we worship with open, untamed, and porous hearts, so that we can walk freely with God.**

**One:** Let it be so.

**All:** **Amen.**

**\*HYMN**

“Our God, Our Help In Ages Past”

St. Anne

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1789, alt.  
MUSIC: attr. William Croft, 1708

ST. ANNE  
CM

1. Our God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,  
2. Un - der the shad - ow of thy throne, thy saints have dwelt se - cure;  
3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or earth re - ceived her frame,  
4. A thou - sand a - ges in thy sight are like an eve - ning gone;

our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home!  
suf - fi - cient is thine arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
from ev - er - last - ing thou art God, to end - less years the same.  
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5. Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
bears mortals all away;  
they fly, forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the opening day.

6. Our God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
be thou our guard while life shall last,  
and our eternal home.

**\*PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION:**

Gracious God, we release our hearts to You. First, we remove the pressure, for release requires the freedom to be moved. Then we allow our hearts to return to their original resting position— In sync with You, with the rhythm of the seasons, and this whole wild creation. Then, we pray that You will find our hearts available— not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually. So like the mockingbird releases her song, we release our hearts to You. Move in them. Stir us awake. Speak to us now. We are waiting. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READING:**

Deuteronomy 15:1-11  
Matthew 19:16-22

Lynn Kimball, reader

**REFLECTION**

“Our Money Story: Release”

Pastor Char Corbett

This summer, I approached the Deacons and asked them to consider a \$150 purchase for the copyright permissions for the 4-week sermon series we are currently diving into, “Our Money Story.” Much like how our music ministry must purchase licenses for the usage rights and reprinting of hymns, the deacons and I are often required to purchase agreements or access fees for the rights to use worship material prepared by others. To avoid the cost, I often write the material we use or glean publicly shared liturgy and ideas from worship books and online sources that I subscribe to annually. This time however, I wanted fall liturgy that would be new, fresh, engaging and yes, even challenging for all of us. Having used the new Sanctified Art resource during Lent which was met with wonderful feedback from all of you, I’d hoped the same this time around for our stewardship season. I’m thankful the Deacons saw the value in my request.

The other reason I was thankful the Deacons agreed to invest in this specific liturgical resource is because biblical commentary around money is always in short supply.

And here’s my case in point: When I began the sermon prep for today’s New Testament lesson on the Rich Young Man in Matthew 19, several of my contemporary go-to bible study and commentary sources completely skip this chapter altogether! Seriously! Not one word to offer the preacher! And no wonder: Chapter 19 covers several hard-core topics: Divorce, regard for the children and selling all of one’s possessions and giving the money to the poor. Messy, messy stuff. So not even the theological experts and known biblical commentators want to tackle this parable about money!

And this is certain: Jesus, our most direct spiritual advisor, isn’t perceived by anybody as a very good financial advisor. His money advice makes most everybody grieve and leave.

The story of the rich young man, found in three of the gospels, is pretty simple and as it’s told in Matthew, we find the story in its simplest form: six short-n-sweet verses: To keep the good life, follow the One who is good, keep the commandments, love your neighbor and, if you wish to be perfect, then sell all you have and give the profits to the poor. Why? Because your treasure, the joy of eternal life, is heavenly, not here. Not in your stuff. Just sell it and give it to those who need the money most – the poor. “Then,” Jesus says, “come, follow me.”

Story summary: Just let it all go, Dude. Free yourself of all things and become perfect in the One Thing!

Whoa! That’s some story with a major plot twist! No wonder the faithful young man grieved. It wasn’t the narration the rich young man expected or hoped for. He wanted affirmation that he was good, was living a good and faithful life and could continue to do what he was doing as a good and faithful person. Yet he went away grieving.

Jesus never said that how the man of faith was living was wrong. He only pointed out, after the young man pressed Jesus with three questions of how to live faithfully, that the young man could take his practice of faith even deeper. He could make it perfect. And yet, the young man doubted. How could he possibly wish to be perfect spiritually, to let all the possessions and thereby all the status, and comfort and stability and access and resources that he had go?

And if he did let it all go, what price would he pay to live life so perfectly? So spiritually. So...free?

I know it's not the story any of us want to hear. Not only do I know this pastorally, but I also know this from a deep, personal level.

When Jim and I are making our financial plans, it's Kevin our financial planner whom we call and most want to hear our financial story from, good or bad. Of course I pray about our decisions. But it's Kevin who gives us a set of financial instructions to follow to minimize our risks, meet our obligations, plan for our future and live a good life that can even be considered generous. A very trustworthy person (and also a practicing UCC church member – bonus!), Kevin often narrates the current financial economy quite well and prepares us for a mysterious future of possibility with warnings and potential conflicts, mysterious trends, recollections of past history, serious possession analysis and interest intrigue with all the predictions of gains and losses.

Kevin ends each hour-long session with “follow me”, too. But gosh, at least what he has to tell us makes sense! It isn't perfect by any stretch of the imagination, and maybe we periodically leave the meeting grieving, depending on the state of the stock market or our feelings of uncertainty, but at least what Kevin tells us adds up! We trust Kevin a lot!

Trust. That's the key right there, isn't it?

Jesus says so, too.

“If you wish to be perfect, go, sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”

It's a choice. Letting go is a trust exercise that we have the choice to make in all aspects of our lives. If we wish to be perfect, if we wish to go deeper, if we wish to let go and enter into life, the life with the only One who is good, we have to choose to do so. It's simple. And yet it's not. And this letting go story, well, it's bigger than just the money story. Oh, so much bigger. Selling the possessions, giving the money to the poor. That's just what follows after committing to the commandments. There's way more to it if you wish to go there with Jesus, to keep going, to then follow. Letting go of the tangible things we cling to is just the beginning.

“Then, follow me,” Jesus says.

Giving away the possessions and giving the money to the poor – that's the easy part. That's the beginning of Jesus' story board for following the only One that is good.

Have you ever heard of Carl Richards? He's a financial planner, most popularly known for giving financial and life advice by writing short posts and drawing simple sketches on napkins. I first came across him as the “Sketch Guy,” in the New York Times financial advice column. His success comes from his ability to convey complicated ideas through just a few words and graphics that readers can grasp quickly and easily. While his column focuses on finances, many of the suggestions in it — like investing in friendships, spending time in nature, overcoming fear and building better habits — can be applied to any area of life.

Sketch Guy tells the bigger story simply. It captures our attention. We can literally pocket the message and carry it with us, pull it out and look at it when we need a reminder. It's rather ingenious in its simplicity.

So I wonder: How would each of us draw this biblical financial story of the rich young man on a napkin? How can we convey Jesus' message of trusting God and all that God values

in our day to day living? How would we draw the simple invitation that Jesus offers us to release all that we value in our earthly ways, so we can more freely follow the will of God?

Let us pray: *Generous and abundant God, In your scriptures, you show us stories of tables turned, of power upended, of loaves and fish feeding thousands. In your story, those cast out are invited in, those without wealth are lifted up, those shunned are featured for their faith. In your kingdom, the last shall be first, the orphan and widow will be protected, and the harvest will be shared by all. In your dreams, everyone is cared for, everyone is fed, everyone belongs. Give us the courage and the wisdom to not just love your story, to not just proclaim your story, but to write it upon our hearts and embody it with our very lives. Amen.*

## ANTHEM

“Take My Life and Let it Be”

arr. Kurt Kaiser

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**We believe that on the first day, God released love and creativity over a void; and that void became mountains and rivers, sunsets and starry nights. We believe God released God’s people from the grips of slavery, liberating us day in and day out. We believe God laid down with death and was released from its grip, knowing suffering and freeing us from this fragile life. And we believe God invites us— day in and day out— to release our fears, let go of assumptions, tear down walls, throw open the doors, and walk closer to love. It is in this belief that we let go and name our prayers, releasing them to God’s most merciful care... (Pastor Char will continue with the prayer joys and concerns that have been shared throughout the week and before the worship service here).**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER** *(Second Church follows the version of the Lord’s Prayer that is offered below. However, you are invited to say this prayer aloud in whichever tradition that brings you comfort).*

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**INVITATION TO GIVING** *We are currently not passing the plate during worship. Instead, you are invited to leave an offering before or after the worship service in the plates set on the rear tables. We also encourage you to consider visiting our website [www.secondcongo.org/](http://www.secondcongo.org/) for secure on-line donation options.*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

**Holy God,**

**It is not always easy to give what we have.**

**We count pennies.**

**We weigh the pros and cons.**

**We calculate what we have given before,**

**And we remind ourselves what we are giving to now.**

**We all have our money stories.**

**And yet,**

**Even though it can take work for us to practice release,**

**We trust that you can take these gifts—**

**However freely or reluctantly given—**

And use them to build a more beautiful world.  
 For that is who you are.  
 You are forever building upward:  
 Creation out of chaos,  
 Disciples out of people,  
 and new life out of cautious gifts.  
 We believe; help our unbelief.  
 In Christ's name we pray.  
 Amen.

**\* DOXOLOGY**

Praise God for whom all blessings flow,  
 Praise God all creatures here below;  
 Praise God for all that love has done;  
 Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE – COVID STYLE**

*(Say a word of peace in your mind. When you are ready, tap your temples, draw the words into your palms and then hold out your hands, spreading your fingers and releasing your thoughts of peace as an offering to the world.)*

**\*HYMN**

“Many and Great O God, Are Your Works”

Lacquiparle

Many and Great, O God

1. Man - y and great, O God, are thy works, Mak - er of earth and  
 2. Grant un - to us com - mu - nion with Thee, Thou star a - bid - ing  
 sky. Thy hands have set the heav - ens with stars;  
 one; come un - to us and dwell with us;  
 Thy fin - gers spread the moun - tains and plains. Lo, at thy  
 with thee are found the gifts of life. Bless us with  
 word the wa - ters were formed; deep seas o - bey thy voice.  
 life that has no end, e - ter - nal life with thee.

WORDS: Joseph R. Renville, c. 1846; para. Philip Frazier, 1929, alt  
 MUSIC: Native American melody (Dakota) adapt. Joseph R. Renville, 1842.

LACQUIPARLE  
 96.99.96



**BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE**

"Postlude on St. Anne"

William Best

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*Today's Worship has been prepared, sent out, offered and led by:*

- ▶ **Lynn Kimball**, Scripture Reader
- ▶ **Bill Bausch**, Communications & Technology Support; Snippets Meister
- ▶ **Rev. Char Corbett**, Pastor
- ▶ **Jim Corbett**, Videographer and Technical Support
- ▶ **Jane Wilmot**, Minister of Music
- ▶ Deacon on Duty, **Kristin Brown**
- ▶ Greeters, **Gary and Brenda Woodcock**
- ▶ Elevator Greeter, **Gary Woodcock**

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**Have a question about Second Church or today's service? A concern or a joy to share? A prayer request? We're here to listen and respond! Contact our Pastor, Deacons or Pastoral Relations Committee:**

- ▶ **Lonnie Andersen**, Deacon/Spirit Team Chairperson: [lonnieba@gmail.com](mailto:lonnieba@gmail.com)
- ▶ **Bill Bausch**, Pastoral Relations Committee: [wbausch@gmail.com](mailto:wbausch@gmail.com)
- ▶ **Kristin Brown**, Deacon: [kristinbrown222@gmail.com](mailto:kristinbrown222@gmail.com)
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- ▶ **Rev. Ann Roundy**, Pastoral Relations Committee: [revaroundy@gmail.com](mailto:revaroundy@gmail.com)

**Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 11:00-1:30pm**

**Phone: 207-563-3379**

**Masking is required when entering the building.**

**Office Appointments: Please kindly call ahead.**

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Office Email: [office@secondcongo.org](mailto:office@secondcongo.org)

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Visit our website: <https://secondcongo.org>  
Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/secondcongo](https://www.facebook.com/secondcongo)

### **A Money Poem: Nickels**

My grandfather pressed a nickel into my hand –  
One of those small silver circles  
That countries are built on  
And people live and die for.  
I cupped my eight-year-old palm around it  
As if that gift could become a part of me.  
And once I had blessed it,  
And once I had tossed it,  
And once wishes had been made on heads and tails,  
It was time to let it go.

I laid that cool silver circle  
That countries are built on  
And people live and die for  
On the railroad tracks.  
And after the train passed,  
I marveled at how something so small  
Could endure so much  
And still be here at all.  
But I guess you could say the same of me.

*Poem by Sara Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | Sanctifiedart.org*