

**A Liturgy for Stewardship Sunday**  
**November 6, 2016**  
**Christian Smith**

**Call to Worship**

Leader: All that we are is a gift from God.

**People: The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,**

Leader: All that we have is a gift from God.

**People: The world, and those who live in it;**

Leader: There are no words to describe the wonders of God's creation.

**People: For God has founded it on the seas,**

Leader: Rejoice as we join together in praise for God's great gifts.

**People: God established it on the rivers.**

**Call to Confession**

Sinners we are and sinners we will always be, except for the grace of Jesus the Christ. We are told in 1 Corinthians 4:2 that a steward must be found trustworthy. Acknowledging that in our sin we have neglected and rejected gifts that have been provided by God, let us confess our sins together.

**Prayer of Confession (responsively)**

God of grace, you have called us to give ourselves completely to you. Yet, we often hold back part for worldly pursuits.

**Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

You have given us the gift of time. You give us time to serve, time to learn, time to grow, time to share. We spend our time serving self.

**Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

You provide us with opportunity to serve in numerous ways using the talents and abilities we have been given. We tend to hide our gifts.

**Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

You have provided even the least among us with more financial resources than most of the world. We resist sharing because of fear for the future.

**Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

You have provided us with a beautiful creation to enjoy. We take it for granted and abuse this incredible earth.

**Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

While God knows our sin, God also hears our cries. In our sin, God still reaches out to forgive and restore us. Having confessed our sins, rejoice in forgiveness through Christ and live in God's love.

**Prayer for Illumination**

God, one of the great gifts that you have shared with us is your word. Open our hearts and minds as the scriptures are read and the message is proclaimed. Help us to hear with anticipation what you have to say and give us a sense of urgency to share it with others. Amen.

### **Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon**

- **Genesis 1:26-30**

God has given us everything that we need to live a full life. We have been entrusted with the care of God's creation and the gifts that God has provided.

- **Psalms 24**

The King of glory made us and cares for us. Blessings can be received if we trust in God and if we care for the gifts that God has provided.

- **Matthew 25:31-46**

This is one of the most used stewardship passages because it is also one of the most powerful. While we care for those in need we also care for Christ. Those who follow Christ will have the desire to care for the poor, abused, and disenfranchised.

- **1 Timothy 6:6-19**

God has provided us with all that we need to be happy. Instead of seeking more "things," we are urged to pursue the things of God, including being generous and willing to share in order to find a full life.

### **Prayers of the People**

God of hope, there are many in our midst and in our community who are hurting. There are those in our midst and in our community who are suffering from physical ailments. There are those who are suffering from loss of loved ones. There are those who are suffering from mental, spiritual, and emotional distress. There are those who are having marital issues or family problems or loneliness. There are those who are suffering from financial difficulties or job problems. There are those who are suffering in so many other ways.

The world seems to offer little hope. The world often offers us more pain and heartache. Meanwhile, you offer hope. You offer us joy. You have provided us with a multitude of resources. Give us the guidance to use those resources in order to share your hope with those in need. Help us to give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, welcome to the stranger, clothes to the naked, and care to the sick and imprisoned so that through the gifts you have provided we may bring your joy to the world. Amen.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

Luke 12:48 reminds us "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." Let us be faithful stewards of the time, talent, and money that God has provided.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Loving God, you have given us life and freedom. Everything we have and everything that we are is a gift from you. You call us to be stewards of this gift. As caretakers of all that you have provided, we give back now. We dedicate these gifts to you. Bless these tithes and offerings. Help us to always use your gifts wisely. Lead us as we share them generously with others. Help our faithful stewardship to show Christ to others. We pray these things in the name of our Messiah, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

**Charge and Benediction**

May the Lord bless you and keep you as you go from this place to share the gifts that you have been given with a world in need. Amen.