

Securing the Future

Financial Justice for Ministers

“Securing the Future: Financial Justice for Ministers” Worship Materials

Designed around the lectionary for Feb. 6, 2022, (Isaiah 6 and Luke 5) but for use at any time.

Call to Worship

One: Beloved, come let us worship the one who calls us to live in the Way.

All: We join the faithful throughout the ages in joyful praise!

One: The Way is love, the Way is justice;

All: The Way is grace, the Way is peace;

One: The Way is hope, the Way is beauty;

All: The Way leads us to life and life abundant.

One: For generations, our leaders have shown us this Way.

All: Thanks be to God for those who have answered the call!

Prayer of Confession

One: Let us join our hearts and voices in prayer:

All: God of Love & Compassion, you have called out from among us Fishers of People.

One: Across the ages they have responded, “Here I am, Yahweh! Send me!”

All: Our pastors have served you and us with deep faith and abiding love.

One: They have often left everything and followed you.

**All: Too often we have left them in debt, constricting their ability to serve fully.
Or our churches have paid unjust wages, deepening financial hardship.**

One: Then we conspired to not talk about it and not to change our ways.

**All: Forgive us, Holy One, for those times when we or the churches of our tradition
restricted our leaders from fully answering your call because they were
weighed down with money concerns. Forgive our unwillingness to talk about a
just and fair wage. Move us today to forgive the debts of our leaders to whom
we are indebted, that they may serve you and us more freely with their whole
hearts. May it be so. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

As far as the East is from the West, so far will I remove your iniquity from you, says our God. Know that you are forgiven and filled with the grace of Christ. And know that the Holy Spirit will empower our turning ever more toward the Way of Love, now and forevermore. Amen.

Invitation to Offering

Today we honor and celebrate the pastors who have served us throughout our lives and the life of this church with a special offering for “Securing the Future: Financial Justice for Ministers.” We remember with gratitude how they shaped our faith and our community. We “pass it forward” as with these gifts pastoral debt is relieved, our UCC clergy develop greater financial literacy, and our churches learn healthier and more just practices with stewardship and money. Please give generously to this church-wide offering.

Prayer of Dedication

Take these gifts, O God, and multiply them like the fish and loaves on the hillside. May they empower our current and future pastors to ever more confidently answer your call, proclaiming “Here I am, send me!” Bless also this community that gives so generously, recognizing the we are all bound to one another. In this offering, may you be glorified and your church be strengthened in all ways. In the name of the One who calls us, Amen.

Ritual of Gratitude

During the Invitation to Offering or during the Offering itself, you may wish to invite people to share words of gratitude for pastors past and present. This could be done with a simple invitation to share verbally. It could also include the lighting of candles as people come forward, accompanied by spoken word or not. Or perhaps you invite people to write a brief word of thanks for pastors on a provided slip of paper (or online) and then read some or all of those before the Prayer of Dedication.

Hymn Suggestions from the New Century Hymnal

- 181 *You Are Salt for the Earth, O People*
- 360 *Thuma Mina (Send Me, Lord)*
- 448 *Take My Life, Let It Be*
- 495 *Called As Partners in Christ’s Service*
- 563 *We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky*