

Looking In: Second Session

Quote from *It's a Wonderful Life*: "You've been given a great gift, George: a chance to see what the world would be like without you. ... Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives, and when he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?" — The angel Clarence Odbody

We live an "incarnational" faith—the belief that (like Jesus) our faith is not just an idea, but it gets lived out in our actions in the world. Now that we have taken an honest look at our past, our wounds, and our tendencies around money, it becomes easier to look at our relationship with money in the present moment. This week we integrate money and meaning by articulating our values, our talents, and our intentions for living a spiritual and meaningful life. If we can articulate this, we can create a "courageous vision" for our presence and impact in the world. This is the bedrock for how we "spend" our assets— time, energy, and money—so that we approach the life we have left with attentiveness and an intention to making it a truly "wonderful" life.

- Sit for a moment with this idea: You suddenly find out you have five to ten years to live. You won't be debilitated; you will simply die suddenly within that time frame. Think about it for a while. What would you change about your life? What would stay the same? What choices would you make? In what new direction would you turn? What are the money implications of your decisions? Would your answers change if you had only one year left? How about one day?
- If you had to say what is "enough" wealth, what would you say? What do you believe would happen if you didn't have "enough"?
- What would it feel like if you did have "enough"? Would this be a "wonderful life" for you?
- Make a list of your talents and gifts, those you were born with and those you have cultivated. Next make a list of who and what you believe you value. Compare the lists. Do your gifts serve what you value?
- Do these practices help clarify a "courageous vision" for going forward on your spiritual path? Try articulating that vision based on your gifts, values, and dreams for the future through artwork rather than an intellectual description—a drawing, poem, collage or other type of artwork.

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, Looking inward, we recognize our own hesitation to see and believe what we can accomplish together. Give us the courage to bring the vision of your hospitality and justice to life now and for the future. In the name of the one who called all to the true treasure of life with God, Jesus the Christ. Amen.