

ITEM C.200
FOR INFORMATION

CELEBRATE THE GIFTS OF WOMEN SUNDAY

On Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday, March 6, 2016, we honor women who contribute their gifts to the church and community, lifting up issues of women's rights and focusing on the role of women in our communities and world. Though Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday is March 6, 2016, congregations or women's groups may use this resource on any date that you choose to celebrate the gifts of women. In 2016, Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday honors and remembers women whose faith leads us like a torch.

This year's reflection entitled, "A Worship to Inherit," was written by Sera Chung, Associate for Gender and Racial Justice, with liturgy written by the Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter, Director of Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries.

In Mark 14:3–9, we hear of a woman who breaks open a jar of costly perfume to anoint Jesus. Some people with Jesus criticize her, deeming her gift wasteful. Jesus vindicates her, praising her faithfulness, saying "wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her" (14:9). This story resonates with many women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), particularly those who practice and live out a bold paradigm of worship. This unnamed woman's act is a model we are fortunate to inherit.

At first glance, "inherit" may seem like an odd verb to describe the act of this nameless woman. During the time that Mark's gospel was written, women were excluded from positions of authority within society. Nevertheless, this socially, politically and culturally disinherited individual approaches and engages Jesus. Her interaction with and understanding of Jesus are invaluable.

She breaks open a jar of pure nard (a very costly perfume) and pours it on Jesus' head. She anoints Jesus—a sacred tradition reserved for men and religious authorities. The unnamed woman boldly inherits the act of anointing. By carrying out this symbolic act of worship, she risks condemnation from those who witness her action. But Jesus silences her critics and praises her, saying she will be remembered forever in connection with the proclamation of the Gospel.

The Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday materials include the following:

- A reflection on the theme
- A worship service with a call to worship, a prayer of confession, prayers, Scripture readings, suggested hymns and litany of thanksgiving
- Bulletin cover

These materials are available for download:

- Resource [2016 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Resource](#)
- Bulletin Cover [2016 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Bulletin Cover](#)
- Resource in Spanish [Domingo de Celebración de los Dones de la Mujer 2016 En Español](#)