

Title: Playing Big with All You've Been Given

Scripture: **Matthew 25:14-30**

Jesus said, "It is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

Commentary from Facilitator Maggie Gough:

In the past two weeks there has been much commentary in the news about the work of Black women to register voters. Stacey Abrams was a key leader. She came to mind as I reflected on this week's Gospel reading. Interestingly, I found that she is deeply guided by her faith, having two parents who were ordained in the Methodist tradition.

In the News:

Stacey Abrams' zeal for voting began with preacher parents

Stacey Abrams, the former Georgia House minority leader who lost a razor-thin race for governor in 2018, voted on Thursday (Oct. 15), driving her ballot to a local drop box.

Jeanine Abrams McLean, a former biologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who now helps her sister run the census advocacy group Fair Count, also took advantage of

Georgia's early voting, wearing her "Come to Your Census" T-shirt to her polling place in Tucker.

In an interview with Religion News Service, Stacey Abrams called it a coincidence that the siblings had cast their votes on the same day. The family's pastor, the Rev. Ralph Thompson, said voting is ingrained in the Abramses. "The family is just a tight-knit cadre of people who understand that it is incumbent upon them to vote and to make a difference," he said.

Continue reading Stacey Abrams' zeal for voting began with preacher parents by Adelle M. Banks in AP News <https://apnews.com/article/9bef13d7118801d8adc9055a33ac1a76>

Stacey Abrams and Other Georgia Organizers Are Part of a Long—But Often Overlooked—Tradition of Black Women Working for the Vote

When the count of Georgia votes for former Vice President Joe Biden overtook those for incumbent President Donald Trump on Friday, Nov. 6, the congratulations that began rolling in weren't directed at Biden's camp alone. They also went to Stacey Abrams, the former Minority Leader of the Georgia House of Representatives who, after a failed race as a Democratic gubernatorial candidate in 2018, began a massive voter registration effort in a state that's been voting for Republican presidential candidates for nearly three decades.

In this year's election, 1.2 million African Americans in Georgia voted, up from 500,000 in the 2016 election, according to the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus. As the state has grown more diverse over the last decade, Black turnout helped make the state's historically-close election trend toward Biden. Some credit for that leap has gone to the organizers in Georgia who helped register more than 800,000 new voters since Abrams lost the governor's race; of those registered to vote after Nov. 2018, about half are people of color and 45% are under 30—both demographics that tend to lean Democrat.

Continue reading: Stacey Abrams and Other Georgia Organizers Are Part of a Long—But Often Overlooked—Tradition of Black Women Working for the Vote by Olivia B. Waxman in Time <https://time.com/5909556/stacey-abrams-history-black-women-voting/>