

Series: *Sabbath: Holy Rest*

Brainstorming Summary

Monday, August 24, 2020 at 1:00 pm In the LHUMC lounge

Members present: Pastor Mary, Karen Post, Vicki Zuker, Diane Thompson, Larry Jorgenson, Betty Kinney, Karen Booth, Barb Gripton

2020 theme: 20/20 Vision – Seeking God’s Vision for Ourselves, Our Church, Our Community, and Our World

20/20 Vision theme connection We can’t see straight if we don’t make Sabbath a priority. The fourth commandment, honoring the Sabbath, is pivotal. We cannot love God or neighbor well if we go, go, go. What does true Sabbath look like?

Sabbath is a “church word” that we don’t pay much attention to. It may seem archaic and outdated, but Sabbath is a call to rest – to follow our Creator God’s example of creating and then stopping from creating in order to find renewal and rejuvenation so that we can return to creating. In our daily lives, especially in the Western world, productivity and accomplishments are the goal. As we’re living through this time of Covid-19 and living with the changes in our lives, what have we noticed about our rhythm of work and rest? We take pride in being “busy” – so much so that we can forget the need to stop, rest, and remember that we are meant to take and make intentional time to rest in God’s presence. It is holy time that serves as a powerful connection to our Creator. It is holy time that helps us to love God and love others.

Resources:

- [Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives](#) by Wayne Muller, 1999
- [Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now](#) by [Walter Brueggemann](#)
- “What’s the Point?” http://www.rethinkchurch.org/articles/questions/whats-the-point?utm_source=compass&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=seekers&utm_content=the%20point06/20/2019&mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTXpGaE1UZGhZV015WIRVNSIsInQiOiOilxeU5cLzh2c0RMSDhaM1NMTFFHeVZwemp0ekpKOFdwTjhFY21TZ2VcL2cyOGtpRU1MUGZwNzFZYVhEaWNla0J3UXJ4cFN5U1ISbUg5aFBwKzZ3MIJWTHlodWJzOUE5OVR4TU1xMVU0a09zZUVwTIZVQTJNN3YzY2MrWUupsYjVlamlqIn0%3D
- **Media:** “Put Down Your Phone Before It Ruins Your Life.” Length: 3:30. **Comments:** 1) We like it. Phones can’t replace face-to-face relationships. 2) Pastor Mary will have Ana take a look to see what she thinks. **On a related note:** Taking away a kid’s phone tends to be a very effective punishment. **Plan:** Use it on September 13. https://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=0MC92FNU&utm_source=GodTube%20Must-See%20Video&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=02/13/2018
- <https://www.pbs.org/video/religion-and-ethics-newsweekly-maryann-mckibben-dana-extended-interview/> **Comments:** 1) Lynne learned a lot about the Jewish Sabbath from this interview. 2) Karen Booth’s takeaways: Sabbath is often characterized as a “date” with God and/or a particular “atmosphere.”
- Rachel Held Evans: “The main thing the Sabbath teaches me is that the world doesn't need

me like I think it needs me.” <https://rachelheldevans.com/sabbath-birds>

- Tech Sabbath:
<https://my.amplifymedia.com/amplify/video/unitedmethodistpublishinghouse/29239-connected-faith/37270-digital-disciple/116234-tech-sabbath>
- <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/blog/going-deeper-as-we-go-wider-3-key-lessons-for-church-planting-teams-from-dana-trents-for-sabbaths-sake>
- <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/blog/going-deeper-as-we-go-wider-8-steps-toward-keeping-sabbath>
- <https://www.jessicabrodie.com/shiningthelight/sabbath-keeping-in-todays-crazy-world>
- “Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God” is a Lenten series by Marcia McFee Meetings. Events. Classes. Workouts. Appointments. Chores. There never seems to be enough time in the day to fit in all the things we need or want to do. We live in a world where the pursuit of endless productivity has become our culture’s highest priority. Taking time out of our overfull schedules for rest and relaxation has become something we see as a luxury instead of a natural and necessary part of the work-life cycle. What is the cost to our psyches, our relationships with loved ones, and our very spiritual journey with the Divine when we stay so “busy” all the time?
...why we keep ourselves busy and what our lives might look like if we were more intentional about taking a slower pace and an unhurried approach to the world around us. The theme draws on the need for self-care in order to continue our work of caring for others. It addresses the growing intensity and frenetic pace of life.
...practices of making room, clearing out, slowing down, and prioritizing for the sake of holistic lives. “This holistic life involves living with the rhythms that allow us to thrive, finding a balance between work, play, rest and reflection. Jesus calls his followers to more than just unbridled consumption or production. Rather, the Scriptures see our lives and bodies as gifts that should be nurtured.”

Ideas for the series:

- Invitation to Rabbi Alan Alpert to share about Jewish Sabbath
- Images of restful places
- Advice given to Pastor Mary at a spiritual retreat: No one is really truly able to multi-task.
- Solitude is isolation with a purpose.
- **STAR WORDS:** DELIGHT (Kate Robbins), REST, RENEWAL (Jill McMahon)

Music ideas:

- Come and Find the Quiet Center (FWS 2128)
- Come and Rest (from Gifts of the Dark Wood Lenten series)
- Be Thou My Vision (UMH 451)

Sanctuary visuals: Keep it simple and peaceful. Nature (tall grasses). Natural colors (blues, greens, and earth tones, avoiding shades associated with politics). Sounds of nature (waves, raindrops, whales, insects). Water fountain (Betty, Karen P). Stacked stones or Zen garden. Prayer beads. Bed, pillows, straw beach mats, yoga mats).

Projected images: Lake. Nature.

Scripture ideas:

Theme: Genesis 2: 1-3

^{2:1} Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Call to Worship psalms:

- Psalm 23 (He restores my soul...)
- Psalm 46 (Be still and know that I am God)
- Psalm 90 (Count our days and make them count)

Other Scriptures:

Isaiah 58: 13-14

“If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath
and from doing as you please on my holy day,
if you call the Sabbath a delight
and the Lord’s holy day honorable,
and if you honor it by not going your own way
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,
¹⁴ then you will find your joy in the Lord,
and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land
and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.”
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Mark 2: 23-28

“Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath”

²³ One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?”

²⁵ He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶ In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.”

²⁷ Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

[https://gbod-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy/kintera-files/worship-music-downloads/Campbell_Nickolas - Even on the Sabbath Day I AM THINE.pdf](https://gbod-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy/kintera-files/worship-music-downloads/Campbell_Nickolas_-_Even_on_the_Sabbath_Day_I_AM_THINE.pdf)

General discussion points: 1) Consider the last six months. What does rest and work look like now? Has that changed during this time? 2) Approximately 20 years the church started to recognize the importance/role of the Sabbath more than in prior years. 3) Pastor Mary: When the bishop had a called session on self-care in ministry and the Sabbath, there were a whole lot of pastors who said, “I don’t have time for that!” 4) What does Sabbath look like when you are on call 24/7? 5) Being “busy” is often a source of pride. How can we turn from busyness to mindfulness and self-care? How can we let go of the guilt associated with taking

time off? 6) Genesis: six days of work, one day of Sabbath. 7) Fasting from technology: What do we have to gain? What does it mean to be unreachable? Does that mean something different for different generations? 8) What is the difference between rest and sleep? 9) In her work Vicki sees low self-esteem tied to accomplishments. 10) Pastor Mary's dad, who was a farmer, never really had time off without being very intentional. That meant getting someone else to do essential work (animals). Related note from Karen Post: In Indiana that translated to no working the fields on Sunday. You still had to take care of animals. 11) When Diane was coaching sports there was nothing on Sunday. That is no longer true. Her son often has practices and/or games on Sunday. 12) Jesus' idea of Sabbath was much different than that of the Pharisees (and us). On a related note, when Pastor Mary was at Ravenna UMC, she received an anonymous note disparaging the chicken dinner fundraised that was held on Sunday, a source of untold benefit to the community. Jesus did things to benefit others, like healing, on the Sabbath.

September 13, 2020: "Take a Rest"

15th Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM

Lectionary: March 7, 2021

Scripture: Exodus 20: 1-17 (NIV) - Ten Commandments – emphasis on v. 8-11

And God spoke all these words:

² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ "You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ "You shall not murder.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

¹⁶ "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Synopsis: The Sabbath command is a pivotal part of the rules that God calls us to live by. It helps us to love God and love neighbor well.

Felt need: To allow ourselves permission to rest as a directive from God and a spiritual discipline

Visuals: Lectionary - tablets with Ten Commandments. Teeter totter to demonstrate balance/pivot point. Low battery (from the phone video).

Media: We still would like to use the "Put Down Your Phone before It Ruins Your Life video found on page 1.

- "Steelehouse 10 Commandments #4." Length: 0:52. Cost: Free with subscription. 21st century people grapple with the timeless laws of God's universe known as the Ten Commandments. This is the fourth commandment. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/8848/steelehouse-10-commandments-4>. **Comments:** Weird character. Not much of a message.
- "1 Outta 7." Length: 2:22. Cost: \$20.00. Have you ever wondered why God created the Sabbath? What if He did it simply because He wanted to spend time with us? Is it a date? Is it a burden? Is it still important? This short, light hearted, and touching video sheds a little light on the original intent of the seventh day. <https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/10250/1-outta-7> **Comments:** For some reason we like this now and haven't in other contexts. Use it, but slow it down 10-20%.
- "Little Brother Tells Little Sister How It Is." Length: 0:13. "You need a nap." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59NWIOvPqZE> **Comments:** Cute illustration.
- "Restore Rest." Length: 1:43. Cost: We own it. Many of us don't make relaxation a priority, and when we do have time for it, we often don't know how to relax. Does our relentless work say something about a lack of trust in God? <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/31573/restore-rest>
- "Work Rest Worship." Length: 1:39. Cost: \$19.98. In our day and time, many find themselves overwhelmed by the rat race. As our busy schedules pull us from one direction to the next, we ask the question, "Am I supposed to feel so tired and burnt-out all the time?" Well, the book of Genesis reminds us that God made all of creation in six days, then on the seventh day He rested. God didn't need the rest, but we certainly need to learn from His example. The Lord commands us to take one day each week and set it aside for both rest and worship. <https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/54121/work-rest-worship>

Related info: 1) Pastor Mary's story from childhood: "I can't be pleasant any longer!" 2) Marva Dawn reflects on "busyness" in the church <https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/14955/missing-the-joy>. 3) We should not be resentful of working. Work is good and can be a source of joy. 4) No longer sure how this is related: Turn off the TV. Take a break from politics. 5) Sunday isn't a Sabbath for pastors. Sunday weddings and funerals exacerbate the problem. 6) No one else is in charge of how we use our time. 7) Worship is part of our Sabbath commitment. 8) Sabbath doesn't have to be take a whole day at a time. 9) We can and should seek times of solitude. Solitude is not the same as loneliness. 10) Doing something mindless that brings rest is no escapism.

Activity:

Music: Holy, Holy, Holy (UMH 64)

General discussion points: 1)

September 20, 2020: "At Jesus' Feet"

16th Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM

Lectionary July 21, 2019

Scripture: Luke 10: 38-42 (MSG)

³⁸⁻⁴⁰ As they continued their travel, Jesus entered a village. A woman by the name of Martha welcomed him and made him feel quite at home. She had a sister, Mary, who sat before the Master, hanging on every word he said. But Martha was pulled away by all she had to do in the kitchen. Later, she stepped in, interrupting them. "Master, don't you care that my sister has abandoned the kitchen to me? Tell her to lend me a hand."

⁴¹⁻⁴² The Master said, "Martha, dear Martha, you're fussing far too much and getting yourself worked up over nothing. One thing only is essential, and Mary has chosen it—it's the main course, and won't be taken from her."

Synopsis: We can easily find ourselves distracted by tasks to be done (and there's always more to be done!). Jesus calls us to be present in his presence, listen to him, and be blessed.

Felt need: To remember that time spent with Jesus (in prayer and study privately and in community) is essential to our spiritual health

Visuals: Lectionary – pots/pans, dust cloth, mop, dishes, Jesus/two women

Media: Neither video fits with the direction we are taking.

- "Distraction." Length: 2:48. Cost: Free with subscription. Sometimes life can be so beautiful, so in tune with God's spirit, then one small, unexpected fear or worry can throw the whole thing off. Use this reflective mini-movie to begin a discussion or reflection time about remaining connected with God when things try to steal our peace.
<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/31363/distraction>
- "Encounters: Mary and Martha." Length: 2:11. Cost: We own it. Last used 7/21/2013. Only one thing is needed. Is it what we think it is? This is a crafty retelling of Mary and Martha's story adapted from Mark Moore's book "Encounters with Christ".
<https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/19343/encounters--mary-and-martha>

Related info:

Activity:

Music: Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus (UMH 349), Take Time to be Holy (UMH 395)

Discussion points: 1) Jesus doesn't scold Martha. He just calls her to rest and be present with him. 2) Betty noted how some children (and adults) are quite good at find something else to do when there is work to be done, like going to the bathroom instead of drying dishes. 3) When we have an invitation to be in Jesus' presence, what happens if we don't take it? What is the most important thing? 4) The stories in the Gospel of Luke often have a surprise ending. 5) In Eastern European cultures it is understood that the host/hostess will sit down and enjoy the meal with guests. For some of us it is very difficult to relax and enjoy post dinner conversations with dirty dishes and clutter on the counter, especially if you've served something that leaves lingering odors. 6) Some say this story empowers women to learn at

Jesus feet just like men. We might think of Mary as being a rebel. 7) This passage is preceded by the story of the Good Samaritan and followed by Jesus teaching his disciples how to pray. That parallels the fourth commandment's position as the pivot point between loving God and loving neighbor. 8) Did Mary and Martha know Jesus was coming? Is it possible that Martha was trying to impress Jesus with her cooking or housekeeping? 9) Note that Martha doesn't talk to Mary about helping? How much dialogue is missing? 10) Do you think Mary and Martha were about the same age or that one is definitely older than the other? Artists' renditions vary widely on this point.

September 27, 2020: "Rest for the Weary" 17th Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM
Lectionary July 5, 2020

Scripture: Matthew 11: 28-30 (NIV/MSG)

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

²⁸⁻³⁰ "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Synopsis: Jesus speaks to worn-out and tired people with a promise of real rest. We cannot carry our burdens alone, and we don't have to. He helps us and sustains us with love and grace.

Felt need: To trust in Jesus to receive us just as we are and offer us a place to rest in God's love

Visuals:

Media:

- "A Prayer of Rest and Renewal." Length: 2:04. Cost: \$16.99. We are living in a time unlike any we've lived through before; it seems the world is spinning out of control. This video reminds us that God is still the same, and He is hope and rest and strength for all of us. <https://skitguys.com/videos/a-prayer-of-rest-and-renewal> **Comments:** This is also good. It is fairly new.
- "Take Heart." Length: 0:58. Cost: \$15.00. In this life we are forced to live with pain, suffering, and uncertainty. This piece will help your congregation turn to the only One who can offer rest for our weary souls. <https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/13493/take-heart>
- "A Time to Rest." Length: 1:45. Cost: \$16.99. Work and Rest have always been part of God's plan. Watch this video for a quick biblical overview of how we can honor God with a strong work ethic and by resting well. <https://skitguys.com/videos/a-time-to-rest>
- "Psalm 23." Length: 2:01. Cost: \$19.00. "I'm not out here on my own. The Lord is my shepherd." Based on the much-loved Psalm, this worship mini movie encourages us to rest in the watchful care of our loving God. <https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/52495/psalm-23> **Comments:** Like the wording, imagery and music. Could be used as

a Call to Worship. Related notes: When Larry received training from the chaplaincy on praying with people in the hospital, he was told to avoid using Psalm 23 as many people associate this Psalm with death. Betty has said in her "I'm Dead. Now What?" book that she doesn't want it used at her funeral.

Related info:

Activity:

Music: Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy (UMH 340) – Can Michael sing this as a solo?; What a Friend We Have in Jesus (UMH 526), Untitled Hymn (Come to Jesus) by Chris Rice; #2202 "Come Away with Me"; #2215 "Cares Chorus"

Discussion points: 1) Don't carry your burdens alone. Turn them over to God. 2) What is real rest? a) Larry: We will have our ultimate rest with Jesus in heaven. Betty: Doing things you don't ordinarily do the rest of the week. b) Karen Post: Having a (special) relaxing, leisurely meal, especially with friends or family. Her family tradition was to meet at her grandparents' house every Sunday. The meal wasn't planned ahead. Whoever was there cooked (and shopped) as needed. c) Vicki: Meditative prayer. d) Larry: Yoga (at least it is for some people, just not him) or golf (depending on how you play).