

Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God

The Right Tempo

Lent 1

March 10, 2019

Taking a Breather

As we gather together, we will use the first part of the service to slow down, to settle our souls so that we might reconnect with an “unhurried God.”

Prelude

Largo

Wesley

Slow It Down - Maddie, Nancy, and Lilly

[A clock soundtrack starts ticking and 3 people stand up and shout to each other from their seats around the sanctuary...]

Voice 1: (to voice #2) Yoo hoo!!!! How are you?

Voice 2: (very dramatic) I'm soooooo busy!

Voice 3: You can say that again!

Voice 2: I'm soooooo busy!

Voice 3: I didn't really mean that literally. Just that I KNOW what you mean! I keep meeting myself comin' and goin'!

Voice 1: Whew, indeed! When will the rat race end?

[The clock-ticking recedes as the instrumentation (BEACH SPRING) comes in and continues under the next words...]

Pastor Liz: We live in a clock-ticking, fast-faced world. Being “busy” has become a measure of worth in our society. We get big points for productivity, collecting accomplishments, having and being “more.” But our very souls are paying a high price. What does it cost our communities, our relationships, and our personal well-being to be so busy? Lent traditions of “giving something up” developed over the centuries. But instead of thinking of “giving up” as punishment in some way, we are going to see it as making

more room for God and moving in the direction of “self-care” so that we might have more spiritual and energetic reserves. In order to make more room, we are going to focus on de-cluttering and lightening up our lives. This week, we focus on finding the rhythms of life that feed us... finding just the “right tempo.”

Gathering Song 2128
Center

Come and Find the Quiet

*Come and find the quiet center in the crowded lives we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.*

Catching our Breath -

I invite you to a deep breath...

[take a moment to breathe in and out slowly]

If you have a watch on, I invite you to take it off for this hour of worship.

If you have a phone, I invite you to turn it off or put it away now.

If that makes you very anxious, that's OK.

Let these simple acts (or maybe not-so-simple acts)

be a sign of the commitment to give ourselves a break,

to give ourselves just an hour to catch our breath,

to give ourselves time to give God attention.

Prayer for Clearing Out (responsive)-

Let us pray a “prayer for clearing out...”

Spacious God, we come today hoping for tools to sweep away the stress.

Let us make room for you.

Nudge us in this time of worship to seek the things that really matter.

Let us find room for you.

Help us to claim our own selves as a holy sanctuary where you dwell.

Let us be room for you.

In the name of Jesus, who invites us to wholeness.

Amen.

+Hymn 683

Lord of All Hopefulness

Welcome and The Peace - Liz

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Taking Note

The second part of our service invites us to “take note” of what God is saying to us this day, through scripture, music, and sermon.

Opening the Word with Young Disciples

Take time to be holy, speak oft with the Lord;

abide in him always, and feed on his Word.

Make friends of God’s children, help those who are weak,

forgetting in nothing, his blessing to seek.

Gospel Reading- Steven

Matthew 11: 28-30

Come to me all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Shepherd of My Soul

Dengler

Chancel Choir

Sermon Note: Jesus never promised that the yoke would literally be "easy." This is a mistranslation. In this context of yoking oxen, the translation means "well fitting." As we begin our "Busy" series, we discover that each of us has a tempo that fits well, that energizes us. What tempo gives you life and energy? What tempo of life feels toxic to you? What is the cost?

Time Out in the Prayer Chair

Pastor: If you raised children, or are raising children, or even if you haven't or aren't, you've heard of a "time out." We give a time out when a break is needed. Perhaps we need to think about the consequences of an action or we just need to break the intensity. Perhaps we are spiraling emotionally and need some perspective. Perhaps we just need to get quiet so we can change the course of action. In this series, we are giving ourselves a "time out" and we are sending ourselves to the Prayer Chair.

This will be a time for letting go of the things we do not need that are weighing us down, sometimes known as "confession, assurance, and petition." These three ways of reconnecting with God are ancient and just make so much sense.

In confession, we let go of regret about the past—unburdening our hearts. Then we remember the promise and assurance that God will never abandon us, no matter what, even when sometimes we are the ones who have been distant.

And in petitions, we let go of worry about the things we cannot control and worry about the future—giving it all to the loving God who holds us close and rocks us gently.

My hope is that you will also designate a prayer chair at home and find time each day to give yourself a "time-out in your Prayer Chair" to let go, remember God's presence, and ask God to hold all those you hold dear.

So let's just start with some silence... and it's OK not to try to find words to fill that silence in your head. And it's OK if thoughts won't quiet down. Just find a stillness, perhaps calling your attention to your feet on the floor or your hands in your lap and your breath in and out. There is nothing expected of you now. There is nowhere to go, nowhere to be. This stillness, this being, is enough.

Song 2128

Come and Find the Quiet Center

*Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, touches base,
making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.*

For the times when we have run ourselves and others ragged... forgive us.
For the times when we have asked of ourselves too much or too little...
forgive us.

Help us find the right tempos for the right times, O God.

Help us be gentle in our learning and growing—with ourselves and with others.

Help us step back when the toxic and overbearing pace of life that we believe we must adhere to in order to live up to some external ideal threatens to tear down our connections to life, love and to you.

In this moment we hear your promise:

"My yoke is easy,
my burden is light."

You do not ask us to destroy ourselves in order to please you.

We are your children, created by you, with whom you are pleased... Just.
Because.

We bring our petitions to you this day, O God. Here are the people and things we are worried about and yet know that we cannot control:

[continue on with your pastoral prayer...

finishing with the Lord's Prayer if that is your custom. See the music

document for suggestions about finishing with a sung Lord's Prayer.]

Lord's Prayer

Taking It Out

The final movement of our service is a time of committing to take a bit of this serenity and peace out into a busy world. We are reminded to "keep the main thing the main thing."

Offering

Invitation

In plenty and in want, all that we have is a gift from God.
In faith and gratitude,
we return now a portion
of what we have so abundantly received,
as grateful heirs of the promises of God.

Offertory

Word of God Incarnate
Saint Saens

+Doxology

*For time to savor God's good gifts
For space to breathe and hearts to lift
For ways to reach out and to give
We offer thanks and vow to live!*

+Dedication

Gracious God,
we dedicate to you not only these gifts,
but also ourselves, in deep gratitude-
for your call on our lives,
your guidance in the baptismal journey
and for blessing us
that we may be a blessing to others.
Accept what we bring for your own good purposes.
In Christ we pray. Amen.

+Closing Song 700

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

+Blessing

May the tempo of your journey
be "just right."

May you seize the day,
but also savor the moment.

May your life be the one you live
and not just watch passing by.

And may you be re-acquainted each day
with an unhurried God
who is calling you to dive deeply into love.

+Song 2128

Come and Find the Quiet Center

In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare.

Postlude

A Time For Joy
Simone