

Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God

Give It a Rest

Lent 6
April 14, 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

Hail Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer
Livingston

Slow It Down

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

Voice 1: Did you hear? Jesus is in town!

Voice 2: What?! How did I not get that memo?

Voice 3: I hear there's gonna be a parade.

Voice 2: [scrolling through the phone calendar] Yeah, not sure that's gonna work this morning. Where is it?

Voice 1: All the way out by the city gate.

Voice 3: Oh, my... hmm... it's just so hard to get everything in these days but I know it will be quite the event.

Voice 2: Well, he'll probably be back through here soon... maybe next time!

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

Children's Choir

Hosanna to the Son of David!
Michael Bedford

Litany

In the name of Jesus, who got on a donkey

and rode into Jerusalem to proclaim justice for the outcast;

In the name of Jesus,

who looked upon the people waving branches and laying their cloaks

before him and vowed to love them no matter the consequences;

In the name of Jesus,

who invites us to join the parade and celebrate life!

Let the people say, "Hosanna!"

Hosanna!

Blessed is one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

Let the people say, "Amen."

Amen.

+Hymn 197

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Welcome and the Peace

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.

Reader:

"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

One sabbath [Jesus] was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

Anthem

Prepare the Way!
Besig
Chancel Choir

Sermon
Kanerva

Liz Rolf

Sermon Note: *The commandment to keep the sabbath is one that might not seem as important as the one about not murdering. But what, and who, suffers in our society when we value economic security over well-being? As we give witness yet again to the story of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, proclaiming justice for the oppressed, we must also proclaim justice and peace... and rest... for the weary of this world. What systems of our time ("old wineskins") need to "give it a rest" or be "put to rest" that are*

harming and oppressing “the least” among us? At the end of this series, what “Sabbath” practices have we experienced that made a difference in our quality of life, the quality of the planet, the quality of our time with, and love for, one another? Might we claim them as our “new wineskins” for not just Lent?

Time Out in the Prayer Chair

As we send ourselves to a “time out” in the Prayer Chair for the last time this season, my prayer for you is that if you had a Prayer Chair at home, that every time you look at that chair, you will be drawn to it again, if only for the time it takes to take a deep breath. If you have not been able to keep up that practice, it’s OK... don’t feel guilty every time you see the chair, feel the permission it is giving you to slow down, to remember that you are enough and that it waits for you whenever you are ready to give God some time. God is always compassion, not pressure, and that is why accepting the invitation to step out of the busy-ness and dwell with God is always available to you, no matter what. As we ponder Jesus’ last days, we know that especially when he was most troubled and frightened, he went to the garden and went to God in prayer.

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
Center

Come and Find the Quiet

*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 not being aware of how our actions affect others... forgive us.
For the times when we just don't care... forgive us.
Help us be mindful of your call to change the things we can to improve life for all.
Help us move toward a world where your love reigns.
In this Holy Week, move us to greater compassion for those who grieve, for those who are suffering.

In this moment we hear your promise:
"Sabbath rest was made for you.
You don't have to earn it. It is yours, forever."

You do not ask us to be tireless, but to "give it a rest" so that we can renew ourselves for the work of renewing others. We are your children, and we know the lengths you go to love us completely. Thank you, thank you,

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:

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

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

The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. Let us return to God the offerings of our life and the gifts of the earth.

Offertory

The Palms

Hegarty

+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

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, our possessions. Use us, and when we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

+Closing Song 215

What Wondrous Love Is This?

+Blessing

This week, slow it down even more if you can.
For it is the week that we remember what happens
when Love demands attention.
There is no better moment than now
to take stock of what's important
and vow to uphold it.

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

+Congregational Benediction 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

March Triumphant Into Jerusalem

Thygerson

Pastor: As we come to the last Sunday of our Busy series, it is also the first day of Holy Week, the remembrance of that fateful culmination of Jesus' ministry. So threatened were the authorities by his teaching that the last should be first, and that allegiance of the people should lie with the Lord God of Israel, not self-proclaimed God of Caesar, that he was a marked man when he approached Jerusalem that day. He had been turning things upside down even in his own tradition, teaching new interpretations of Hebrew law and practices. He had shifted the thinking about what was truly important. People, not profit. Healing, not rule-keeping. Connecting, not appearances. To the status quo, he says, "give it a rest.... give them a rest." Today we ask ourselves "who is suffering because we've clung so tightly to the profitable bottom line?" What status quo of our day needs to "give it a rest?"