

# Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God

## Living Light

Lent 4

March 31, 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  
*Kindness*

*Imbue Me With Thy Loving*

Simone

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: Oh, my, goodness! Look what I found on sale!!!

Voice 2: Oh I know. I need another one of those like I need a hole in the head  
BUT it was such a good deal!

Voice 3: Did you see the new version of that thing that just came out?

Voice 1: Wow. I'm so behind on the latest!

Voice 3: I signed up for auto-delivery so I don't miss out.

Voice 2: I'm so bored with what I've got. I really need to freshen the wardrobe!

All Voices together in a sing-song voice: Shopping trip!

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

*Pastor:* Perhaps you can't relate. But as a society, Americans on average are now living in three times more home space than in the 1950's. And no matter how much more space we live in, we tend to fill it up. In fact, we now have a

2.2 billion square foot personal storage industry. Cheap labor, 24/7 access to online ordering and an attitude that the resources will never run out have contributed to an insensitivity to the amount of stuff we have and the rate of speed we turn over the stuff we have. And besides the literal clutter we accumulate, our lives are weighed down with “shoulds” and expectations that hold us captive to the frantic pace we live and mounting debt we accumulate. Let us come and find a less crowded way to live...

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...”

God of Open Spaces, we are choked, clogged and cluttered.

**Let us make room for You.**

Draw us into this time of worship to assess our real needs.

**Let us find room for You.**

Help us clear out our hearts to find room for holy desires.

**Let us be room for You.**

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

**Amen.**

+Hymn 701

*Lord, Prepare Me*

Welcome and the Peace

The peace of our Lord Jesus 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

Luke 12: 29-34

Reader: "And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and God knows that you need them. Instead, strive for God's kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Anthem

*The Cross Was His Own*

Glaser  
Chancel Choir

Sermon  
Kanerva

Liz Rolf

Sermon Note: *Many of us live with the tyranny of measuring-up that keeps us weighed down. Lightening the load of expectations and "shoulds" is one way to lighten up as well as to literally lighten the clutter that crowds out our serenity. How do we create space to flourish in the ways God intends? How can we "minimalize" our possessions so that they do not possess us?*

#### 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.

2128 (VERSE 2)

*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 striving for material things just to fill a void... forgive us.  
For the times when our unburdening burdens the earth... forgive us.  
Help us lay down the “shoulds” that dominate our lives, O God.  
Help us let go of any unhealthy drive to succeed  
and seek the journey of true fulfillment.  
Help us to seek your kin-dom by focusing on  
that which sustains love and justice, for this is the real treasure of this  
world.

In this moment we hear your promise:  
“I, God, know your every need.  
You can let go of so much worry about the future.”

You do not ask us to suffer without the things we need,  
just to be mindful to live simply so that others may simply live.  
We are your children, siblings to one another.

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

Offering

Invitation

Offertory

*I Am Thine, O Lord*

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

## 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."

+Closing Song 346

*For the Healing of the Nations*

+Blessing

May you clear out the clutter  
in discover the "more" of less.

May you release the striving  
in favor of the relishing.

May you find true treasure  
and share it with wild abandon.

And may you be re-acquainted each day

with an unhurried God  
who is calling you to dive deeply into love.

+2128

Verse 3

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

*Sortie Eroica*

Saxton