



LENT

Devotional



COLLEGE HILL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
not your ordinary church

Lenten Devotional written by Rev. Jill Sander-Chali

REST

Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday

Scripture

"We were seen as both fake and real,⁹ as unknown and well known, as dying—and look, we are alive! We were seen as punished but not killed,¹⁰ as going through pain but always happy, as poor but making many rich, and as having nothing but owning everything." -2 Corinthians 6:8b-10 (CEB)

Practice

Use your thumb to rub the palm of your hands. Look at the color of your skin, the wrinkles, the dry spots, and the lines on your palm. Give thanks that you are alive! Savor the precious gift of each day.

Thursday, February 19

In 2 Corinthians 6:8b-10, Paul writes about hope even in hardship. He concludes by proclaiming the paradox of life that at times we may be seen as both fake and real; we may go through pain and yet be happy, we may have nothing and still own everything.

Reflect

How does this scripture connect with your life? Has there been a time when you were seen as fake, even though you were being authentically yourself? When have you felt pain and happiness at the same time? To you, what does it mean to own everything, even if you have nothing?

Friday, February 20

Scripture

²⁰ So we are ambassadors who represent Christ. God is negotiating with you through us. We beg you as Christ's representatives, "Be reconciled to God!"
-2 Corinthians 5:20 (CEB)

Practice

Wrap your arms around yourself. Sway side to side. Imagine God is gathering you up into a big bear hug, bandaging every wound you carry in your heart and telling you how much you are loved.

Saturday, February 21

In 2 Corinthians 5:20, Paul is urging those who call themselves Christians (which literally means “little Christs”) to come home to themselves and to God—to be restored into good relations.

Reflect

Why do you think that reconciliation matters to God? How does a lack of reconciliation harm our witness for Christ and our relationship with God?

Sunday, February 22

Prayer-adapted from Pamela C. Hawkins

O God, who makes all things new, new stars, new dust, new life; take our hearts, every hardened edge and measured beat, and create something new in us. We need your newness, God, the rough parts of us made smooth; the stagnant, stirred; the stuck, freed; the unkind, forgiven. And then, by the power of your Spirit, we need to be turned toward Love again. Amen.



Physical and Mental Rest



physical rest...when you lay your body down

“Studies reveal one-third of the population feels worn out because of our overbooked lives. A staggering 97 percent of us state we feel tired most of the time, and my medical colleagues state that over 10 percent of those visiting their offices are there for the purpose of investigating unexplainable fatigue. As a result, the sales of supplements such as energy drinks, protein bars, and ginseng have shot up more than 5 percent in the past two years as we battle exhaustion. The answer isn’t in a quick fix, but in routinely giving your body the types of active rests it thrives on.” -Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 42)

mental rest...quiet cerebral background noise

“The mind is magnificent, but it has its own agenda. Rather than willingly focusing on positive affirming thoughts, the mind prefers to settle upon negative ones that intensify stress, worry, anger, and frustration. It will attempt to occupy your attention with useless information, depleting your time and energy. Mental rest involves relinquishing the constant stream of thoughts entering your mind quickly and obtaining a sense of cerebral stillness.” -Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 48)

Monday, February 23

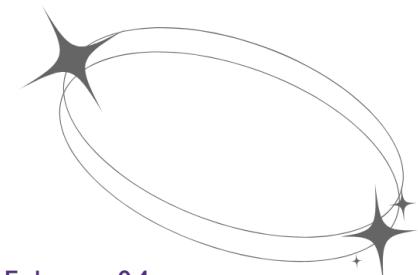
Scripture

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy. -Exodus 20:8 (CEB)

Practice

Still your body by sitting or laying down. Breathe deeply. Slowly tighten or flex each body part and then relax each body part:

- Your toes
- Your knees
- Your elbows
- Your shoulders
- Your eyes



Tuesday, February 24

Summary

Exodus 20:8 reminds us that one of the ten commandments is to rest; to keep the Sabbath and set it apart from all the other days.

Reflection

Why do you think rest makes a day holy and set apart from the other days?

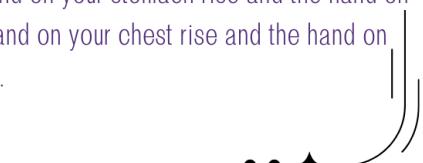
Wednesday, February 25

Scripture

²² One day Jesus and his disciples boarded a boat. He said to them, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the lake.” So they set sail. ²³ While they were sailing, he fell asleep. -Luke 8:22-23a (CEB)

Practice

Close your eyes. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Breathe in and out slowly. When you breathe in, feel the hand on your stomach rise and the hand on your chest fall. When you breathe out, feel the hand on your chest rise and the hand on your stomach fall. Take at least 10 slow breaths.



Thursday, February 26



Summary

Luke 8:22-23 gives us an example of Jesus finding physical rest in the middle of chaos and business. He literally falls asleep on a boat, in the middle of a storm. Surely, there was work to be done. Surely, the disciples had opinions about whether Jesus was helping enough. Surely, there were things Jesus "should" have been paying attention to. But, instead, he rests.

Reflection

When do you resist resting the most? Why do you resist? How does Jesus' example inspire you to practice physical rest when you need it?

Friday, February 27

Scripture

¹³ No household servant can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be loyal to the one and have contempt for the other. You cannot serve God and wealth." -Luke 16:13 (CEB)

Practice

Take a mental vacation from bills, from worries, from work, from stress. Think of one thing that makes you laugh. Maybe a joke. Maybe a silly cat video. Maybe a positive memory. Set a timer and spend one whole minute remembering, laughing, and smiling.

Saturday, February 28

Summary

Luke 16:13 draws our attention to the way that a divided mind weakens our mental health and makes us weary. When the things that clutter our mental head space take over, they distract us from taking good care of ourselves, they shift our attention away from those we love the most, and they get in the way of our relationship with God.

Reflection

What are the "masters" that take over your mental head space and consume your thinking? Why do they make you tired? When you notice these masters taking control of your mental state, how can you shift your loyalty back to the things that matter to you?

Sunday, March 1

Prayer -Written by Meta Herrick Carlson

It is only human to become what you do, to believe you are necessary for good order and momentum.

So in the beginning God set humankind apart on a planet that moves without your control, that revolves despite your wild desire to be at the very center of things.

God promised provision on the seventh day, so that you could practice resistance to your zealous rhythms with rest, so that you could stop for a season and trust:

I am so small. And also, I matter so much.

It is here in the absence of doing you will remember the terrible and wonderful news—that God is still here, making things new, even and often without your help.

May this Sabbath time return your identity from production to relationship in which you hear the call to some things, not all the things, and relish your place as a creature of God.



Spiritual Rest

spiritual rest...enter your personal sanctuary

"Brokenness is a journey everyone must take. To be born is to be broken. We cannot enter the earth without the breaking of water. The same water that sustains us for nine months becomes the very thing we must break through. Life is filled with pregnant moments. Periods of deep darkness through which we must break through. Periods of brokenness from which we seek to be whole. The body experiences physical brokenness in the form of physical trauma, disease, and injury. The mind/soul experiences brokenness in the forms of emotional trauma, stress, personal loss, and a feeling of disconnectedness from the self or others. The spirit experiences brokenness in the form of spiritual trauma, anger toward God, a lack of belief in God, and feeling a disconnectedness from God. When any of these experience brokenness, it affects the other areas. Spiritual rest is where the broken places mend...Your faith and relationship with God affect your ability to feel well rested." -Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 69)

Monday, March 2

Scripture

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you've hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have shown them to babies.

-Matthew 11:25 (CEB)

Practice

Put your hands over your eyes and then open them and say "Peekaboo!" Repeat this until you feel very silly. Say peekaboo just like you would if you had a baby right in front of you. Laugh and wonder what the Lord of heaven and earth shows to babies and those young at heart whenever we think we are too wise or learned or serious for such frivolous things.

Tuesday, March 3

Summary

Matthew 11:25 invites us into a playful approach to spiritual growth, lest we take ourselves too seriously. Babies might refer to a very young child or to someone who is spiritually young in the faith and therefore more open to God's surprising actions in the world.

Reflection

What do babies and new Christians have in common? How does a sense of playfulness help strengthen your relationship with God?

Wednesday, March 4

Scripture

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. -Matthew 11:28 (CEB)

Practice

Use a variation of praying in color to reflect on this verse.

Read it aloud 5 times. Write down the verse using colorful pens or markers.

Draw pictures to convey each word or phrase. Underline phrases that jump out to you.

Add doodles around words that feel powerful to you.

When it feels like you are done, put your pens or markers down.

Take a deep breath and gaze at the verse. This is a form of prayer.

Thursday, March 5

Summary

Matthew 11:28 centers us on Jesus' invitation to draw close when we are carrying heavy loads, when our burdens feel like too much, and when we struggle. Jesus promises that when we draw close to God in those moments or seasons, that we will be given rest.

Reflection

What do you have to turn away from to draw close to God in times of struggle and stress? How does rest refresh your soul?

Friday, March 6

Scripture

³⁰ My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light. -Matthew 11:30 (CEB)

Practice

Lay or sit in a position that is comfortable for your body. Close your eyes. Imagine that your body is as light as a feather. You are floating, being lifted off of the chair or ground, slowly rising into the air, soaring upward until you float in the clouds with the birds. Imagine the warmth of the sun on your skin. Feel a gentle breeze brush against your cheek. You are light.

Saturday, March 7

Summary

Matthew 11:30 invites us to share in Jesus' yoke. The metaphor of yoke may be unfamiliar to us. A yoke is a wooden beam or harness that connects two animals. It is used for agricultural purposes, and it distributes the weight of the load the animals carry between the two. Jesus lightens our load because his way of being in the world is not focused on relentless production or commodity. When we bear Jesus' yoke, our burden is light because we live in a different rhythm.

Reflection

How does sharing the weight you carry with another person lighten your load? What do you think life in Jesus' rhythm looks like?

Sunday, March 8

Poem

Heavy by Mary Oliver

That time I thought I could not
go any closer to grief without dying

I went closer, and I did not die.
Surely God had his hand in this,
as well as friends.
Still, I was bent, and my laughter,
as the poet said,
was nowhere to be found.

Then said my friend Daniel, (brave even among lions)
"It's not the weight you carry but how you carry it-
books, bricks, grief- it's all in the way
you embrace it, balance it, carry it

when you cannot, and would not, put it down."
So I went practicing. Have you noticed?

Have you heard the laughter
that comes, now and again, out of my startled mouth?

How I linger to admire, admire, admire
the things of this world that are kind, and maybe

also troubled - roses in the wind,
the sea geese on the steep waves,
a love to which there is no reply?



Sunday, March 8 - Continued



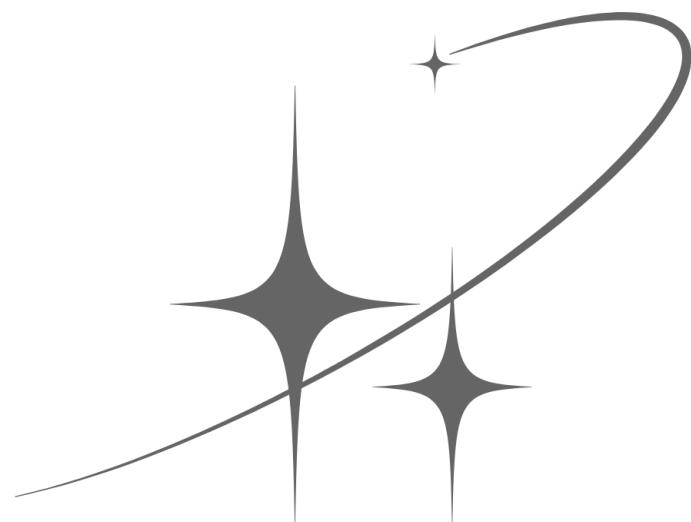
Social and Emotional Rest

social rest...find solace in another

"Social rest may sound like a cry for solitude but it is actually the opposite. Social rest is about making spaces for those relationships that revive you. When you are with a friend you feel comfortable being around who makes you feel as if you could tell them anything, you're experiencing social rest. These social rest relationships make you feel valued and take your concerns seriously. Social rest is how we practice the give and take of authentically vulnerable relationships." --Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 79-80)

emotional rest...acknowledge your current truth

"You experience emotional rest when you no longer feel the need to perform or meet external expectations. It is the cessation of emotional striving. We each have an internal capacity to manage emotions. We pour out of this space as we offer sympathy to a friend who just lost her husband, console a tearful toddler in our arms, or encourage our coworker on a job well done. Each interaction is giving a bit of ourselves. When our emotional withdrawals exceed our emotional capacity, we will experience emotional fatigue. Emotional rest is a deposit back into our emotional account." -Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 58)



Monday, March 9

Scripture

²⁸ About eight days after Jesus said these things, he took Peter, John, and James, and went up on a mountain to pray. -Luke 9:28 (CEB)

Practice

Get out a piece of paper and divide it in half. Label one-side "Life-giving" and the other side "Life-draining." On the life-giving side, write down the names of people who multiply your energy when you spend time with them. On the life-draining side, write down the names of people who seem to suck energy out of you when you are with them. Notice how often you spend time with the people whose names you have written down and whether they give or take energy from you.

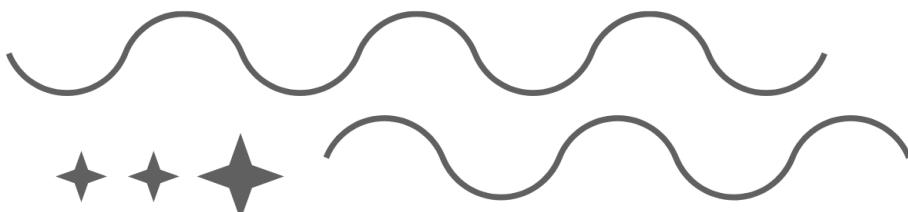
Tuesday, March 10

Summary

Just a week before our reading from Luke 9:28, Jesus has challenged the disciples to take up their cross daily and to make sure they do not gain the whole world just to lose their souls. It is significant that Jesus follows this teaching by withdrawing with his three closest friends. These friends are people who Jesus can be authentic with; they are also friends who keep him accountable to his God-given mission, ensuring he doesn't focus on the wrong thing.

Reflection

Who are the people in your life who see and know the real, true you? Who are the people who pull you back to the center of yourself when you start to get off-track? Spend more time with those people in the days to come.



Wednesday, March 11

Scripture

²⁸ When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was filled with anger. -Luke 4:28 (CEB)

Practice

Think about one recent day in your life. Relive each hour of each day and write down at least one feeling for each hour. When you are done, take a deep breath and thank God for the many emotions we get to experience.

Here are some examples, in case it's hard for you to identify emotions: resentment, irritation, frustration, anger, apprehension, overwhelmed, threatened, fear, sad, lonely, hurt, pity, pain, hopeful, elated, happy, excited, joy, enthusiasm, desire, passion, affection, tenderness, compassion, warmth, love, embarrassment, humble, exposed, shame, regretful, contrite, remorseful, guilt.

Thursday, March 12

Summary

The people are very mad at Jesus in Luke 4:28. In fact, they are so angry that the next verse says they lead him into a dangerous position so they can try to drive him off a cliff. In *The Artist's Way*, Julia Cameron describes anger in a unique way. She says it's not a negative emotion to be repressed, but rather a "loyal friend" that acts as a map. It points to where your personal boundaries have been violated—either by others or by yourself (such as not speaking up or neglecting your own needs)

Reflection

When have you ignored your anger or tried to stuff it down? How long did it take for your anger to explode into an action like the one the people are taking—to get revenge, to hurt someone the way you've been hurt, to "prove it" to them. Next time you feel angry, how can you listen to your anger and let it be your map to figure out where your personal boundaries have been violated so that you can take care of yourself rather than explode onto others?



Friday, March 13

Scripture

³⁰ But he [Jesus] passed through the crowd and went on his way. -Luke 4:30 (CEB)

Practice

Look at the list of hourly feelings you wrote down a few days ago. Sometimes we feel our own feelings and sometimes we feel other people's feelings. When our boundaries are too thin, we end up being tossed back and forth riding the wave of other people's emotions. Circle the feelings on your list that you think really belong to you. Underline the feelings on your list that you think you picked up from someone else or that you are carrying on behalf of someone else.

Now, use your hands to pretend to scoop up the feelings you have circled, the ones that belong to you. Cup your hands so you don't lose any of them and then place your hands over your heart in gratitude for the gift of emotion.

Now, use your hands to pretend to scoop up the feelings you have underlined, the ones that don't belong to you. Cup your right hand and use it to hold all those feelings that are someone else's. Use your fingers on your left hand to pick up those feelings and then extend your left arm and open your fingers to give them back to the people they belong to. Do this until it feels like your right hand is empty and you've given back all of the feelings that aren't yours.

Saturday, March 14

Summary

In Luke 4:30, Jesus chooses not to take on the feelings of those around him. The people around him are angry and threatening his life. It would be easy for him to become angry or scared or paralyzed. It would be easy for him to give them back the same energy they are giving him. Instead, he passes through the crowd and goes on his way. They can't touch him—physically or emotionally.

Reflection

Ducks have special ability to repel water from their feathers. They can be paddling in a lake while it's pouring down rain and not get soaked. The water just rolls right off their backs. How would your life improve if you were like a duck and you were able to maintain the boundary of caring for others without carrying other people's feelings?

Sunday, March 15

Poem

Still I Rise

By Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you? Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns, With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high, Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops, Weakened by my soulful cries?

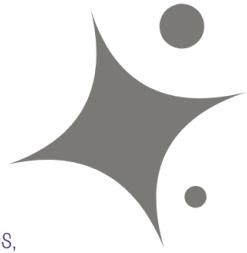
Does my haughtiness offend you? Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words, You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness, But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you? Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.



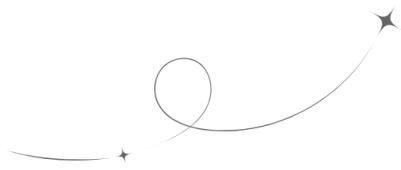
Sunday, March 15 - Continued



Sensory Rest

sensory rest...remove external distraction

"Every day your nervous system is under constant stimulation. Background music plays in offices, in elevators, and while your phone call is placed on hold. Television, computers, iPads and smartphones add their artificial glow to your environment. The popcorn burning in the break room mingles with the latest perfume and fragrance hand lotion to overwhelm your nasal passages. Our bodies crave a reprieve. Periodic times of selective sensory deprivation deliberately remove external distractions and stimuli from your senses in order to reenergize them." -Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 88)



Monday, March 16

Scripture

¹⁵ News of him spread even more and huge crowds gathered to listen and to be healed from their illnesses. -Luke 5:15 (CEB)

Practice

Close your eyes and imagine you are in the crowd gathered to hear Jesus. Elbows bump up against yours. Someone steps on your toe. You can smell the sweat of the bodies around you. The murmur of people talking hums in your ears, even though you can't distinguish full sentences, just a word here and there. You do catch a few of Jesus' words "kingdom of God" ... "healing" ... "love." Why have you come to listen?

Tuesday, March 17

Summary

In Luke 5:15, the crowds around Jesus keep growing. The news of his healing work is spreading, simply by word of mouth and everyone wants to come listen to his teachings.

Reflection

Sometimes our daily lives start to feel as full as a crowd of growing people. We are jostled from one news story to another, co-workers, family members, neighbors, children, and friends need something from us, and noises blast from every speaker we encounter in public spaces. Sometimes this is healing—to be with people, to be seen, to be heard. When do you love being in crowded spaces? Is it ever good for your soul?

Wednesday, March 18

Scripture

¹⁶ But Jesus would withdraw to deserted places for prayer. -Luke 5:16 (CEB)

Practice

Go into a room by yourself. Close the door. Turn off the lights. Put on noise cancelling headphones or play a white noise track. Stare at the ceiling for 2 minutes. Pray.

Thursday, March 19

Summary

In Luke 5:16, Jesus eventually leaves the crowd and goes away to be by himself. He often does this in scripture: withdraws to a deserted place for prayer. It might be a mountain top or the other side of the lake or a room where he shuts the door, but spaces where his senses can rest are important to Jesus.

Reflection

Our modern world can put us on sensory overload. Daniel J. Levitin writes, "Today, each of us individually generates more information than ever before in human history. Our world is now awash in an unprecedented volume of data. The trouble is, our brains haven't evolved to be able to process it all." When you feel overwhelmed in the crowd, give yourself permission not to be okay and not to power through. How can you pull back from the metaphorical "crowd" that is overwhelming you?

Friday, March 20

Scripture

Taste and see how good the Lord is! The one who takes refuge in him is truly happy! -Psalm 34:8 (CEB)

Practice

Scoop up one spoonful or forkful of a favorite food. Smell it. Look at the texture. Examine the colors. Let your mouth water. Take one bite. Taste the flavors. Chew slowly and intentionally. Savor the food. Swallow. Smile. Thank God for good food that you love!



Saturday, March 21

Summary

Psalm 34:8 brings our senses into central focus when the psalmist proclaims to taste and see how good the Lord is. Metaphors of eating show up multiple times in scripture: Adam and Eve eat a delectable fruit in the garden, the Lord who is our shepherd sets a table in the presence of our enemies, and Jesus is imagined as the bread of life.

Reflection

Which of your senses are the ones that ground you? On the other hand, which of your senses tend to get overwhelmed quickly in your daily life? Taste? Smell? Touch? Sight? Hearing? Or something else?

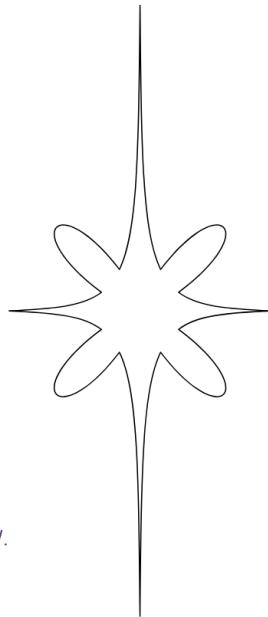
Sunday, March 22

Poem

Senses

By Shel Silverstein

A mouth was talking to a
Nose and an Eye.
A passing listening Ear
Said, "Pardon me, but you spoke so loud,
I couldn't help but overhear."
But the Mouth just closed and the Nose turned up
And the Eye just looked away,
And the Ear with nothing more to hear went sadly on its way.



Creative Rest



creative rest...soak in beauty and light

"A misconception of creative rest is that it is rest solely for creative people or that it is rest that will result in a work of creativity like art, poetry, or music. Creative rest is not about putting a demand on our creative ability; that's not rest, that's work. It is the opposite. It's allowing white space in your life and giving room for your creativity to show up. Creative rest lets you focus on your basic need for wonder. You can enjoy fulfilling that basic need in ways that don't put any pressure on your being creative. Yes, creativity may bloom from the seeds planted, but creativity is not the objective, only rest." -Dr. Sandra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 97)

Monday, March 23

Scripture

²⁵ "Therefore, I say to you, don't worry about your life, what you'll eat or what you'll drink, or about your body, what you'll wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothes? -Matthew 6:25 (CEB)

Practice

Breathe. Put your hand on your heart. Breathe.

Tuesday, March 24

Summary

In Matthew 6:25, Jesus is teaching about letting go of worry, releasing the grind of daily living, and embracing the abundance of now. He reminds us that life is meant to be more than worry, toil, and obsession over getting what we need.

Reflection

Think of a time when you became consumed with the stuff of life: with being busy, with relentless creativity, with work, with cleaning, with the needs of others. What do you think Jesus means when he says that life is more than food and the body more than clothes?

Wednesday, March 25

Scripture

²⁶ Look at the birds in the sky. They don't sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. -Matthew 6:26 (CEB)

Practice

Go outside or look out a window. Watch until you see a bird. Pay attention to what it's doing. Flying? Pecking? Perching? Walking? Snuggling? Feeding? Take a moment to marvel at the beauty and uniqueness of the bird.



Thursday, March 26

Summary

In Matthew 6:26, Jesus turns our attention to nature, to the beauty of creation and the beauty of creatures. Science tells us that looking at nature reduces anxiety in our brains and puts us in a calmer, more reflective state. Before science knew this, Jesus knew this.

Reflection

How often do you spend all your waking hours inside? Can you increase your time outdoors? Go outside for a few minutes on your lunch break. Drink your coffee on your porch. Take a quick walk in the evening. Make a plan to go outside every day this week and give it a try.

Friday, March 27

Scripture

²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? Notice how the lilies in the field grow. They don't wear themselves out with work, and they don't spin cloth. -Matthew 6:28 (CEB)

Practice

Search for a 2 minute nature video on your phone or computer. Watch it.

Saturday, March 28

Summary

In Matthew 6:28, Jesus draws our attention to the lilies. Lilies represent devotion, rebirth, and the soul's rejuvenation. That's the reason why lilies are often used on Easter to connect with Christ's resurrection and our own emergence from the Lenten season as people renewed in our faith who are full of hope, new life, and joy.

Reflection

What is your hope for renewal? How is your soul being rejuvenated? How can time in God's beautiful creation move you toward Easter?



Sunday, March 29 Palm Sunday



Prayer to the Four Directions as taught to Matthew Fox by Sister Jose Hobday, a Seneca woman and a Franciscan sister

Matthew writes: "Here is the Prayer of the Four Directions as she taught it to me. One does not read this, nor pray it in identical words each time one prays. One prays from the heart, not from the eyes."

Rise and face the North. Oh, spirits and angels of the North, where fierce storms come from. Come to us and give us strength and courage. Teach us to be strong like the buffalo who turns and faces the fierce winds and storms head on. Come, spirits and angels of the North.

Face the East. Oh, spirits and angels of the East where the sun rises every day. Bring light into our hearts and minds so we may also resurrect every morning, acknowledging new life and creativity and renewed hope every day. Come, spirits and angels of the East.

Face the South. Oh, spirits and angels of the South where the sun shines the hottest. Bring warmth into our hearts and friendships and all our relations. Come, spirits and angels of the South.

Face the West. Oh, spirits and angels of the West, where the sun sets every night. Teach us to be at home in the dark and in the silence of the night, and teach us to let go and to trust as we sink into the unknown and await the sun rising tomorrow. Come, spirits and angels of the West.

Look Up to Father Sky. Come, spirits and angels from above. Teach us to fly high with the eagle and so, seek wisdom and perspective in life. Come, spirits and angels from above.

Look Down. Come, spirits and angels from below. Where all plants find their roots in Mother Earth. Teach us to remain grounded and thankful for the Earth, our Mother, and to treat her with respect. Come, spirits and angels from below.

Cross hands on the Heart. Come, spirits and angels from all six directions, into our hearts. Gather in our hearts and make them full with blood that is red, full of energy and flowing with love, gratitude and generosity. Ah Ho. Amen.

Monday, March 30 - Holy Monday

Scripture

⁹The crowds in front of him [Jesus] and behind him shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" -Matthew 21:9 (CEB)

Practice

Raise your hands in the air. Shout "Hosanna!" Do this until you feel powerful and triumphant. Do this until you feel alive!

Tuesday, March 31 - Holy Tuesday

Summary

In Matthew 21:9, the crowds surround Jesus and they recognize him for who he truly is. They shout Hosanna, which means "Save us!" It is both a word of praise and a plea for a new way of life.

Reflection

What would it mean in your life if you rested fully? Would you live in a more abundant way? Would you recognize Jesus' presence more easily? Would you be less restricted by fear? How would this save you?

Wednesday, April 1 - Holy Wednesday

Scripture

⁴²Jesus said, "Father, if it's your will, take this cup of suffering away from me. However, not my will but your will must be done." -Luke 22:42 (CEB)

Practice

Open your hands in front of you. Imagine placing into your hands things that you feel uncertain about. Paying your bills. Retirement savings. The test you've studied for. A big performance. Close your hands into fists in a gesture of holding on to that thing, in hopes that you can control it. Now, slowly open your hands as you lift them upward toward the heavens. As you do so, imagine the things you feel uncertain about floating up to God who holds each one with love.



Thursday, April 2 - Maundy Thursday

Summary

Luke 22:42 gives us a stark image of Jesus withdrawing to a garden to pray on the night before he is killed. He is wrestling with what the future might hold for him. Ultimately, he accepts that he doesn't have control over what happens next.

Reflection

How does quality rest give you assurance when life feels uncertain? How does quality rest help you give up control and surrender to God? How does quality rest give you the energy to live authentically?

Friday, April 3 - Good Friday

Scripture

²⁷A huge crowd of people followed Jesus, including women, who were mourning and wailing for him. -Luke 23:27 (CEB)

Practice

Think of something sad and cry. Just let the tears fall out. It might be a gentle cry. Or it might be the kind of sobbing that makes your shoulders shake. Mourn. Wail. Weep.

Saturday, April 4 - Holy Saturday

Summary

In Luke 23:27, the crowd is following Jesus as he makes his way to the place where he will be crucified. The powers of the day have made this via dolorosa (painful journey) into a show meant to mock him. Instead, the crowd is moved to tears as they see his suffering.

Reflection

When we rest, we have the ability to live whole-heartedly and lament the pain in the world. Rest also gives us the ability to refuse to be consumed by despair and instead, use the energy of lament to do something that bends the arc of the world toward justice. How will you weep over the injustice and suffering in the world, in your neighbor's life, and in your own life? And then, how will you use the energy of lament to do something to bring hope and healing?

Sunday, April 5 Easter Sunday



"It's time to give it a rest. It's time to stop with the excuses and the reasons we have to maintain the status quo. It's time to lay aside the notion of endless work being the end to the means. It's time to stop trying to fulfill every promise by our blood, sweat, and tears. It's time to go back to the beginning when rest was required, when rest was sacred. When quietness was not a weakness and trust was not something to fear. Where we saw them for what they truly are, needed ingredients in a life worth living. Return to rest, quietness, and trust as a deer returns to a stream. Return to the source of your strength, and in doing so, you will be saved. Rest is salvation. It pulls you back from the edge and replenishes the emptiness of daily pouring out into your days. Rest is a taste of heaven." -Dr. Sandra Dalton-Smith, MD (Sacred Rest p. 109-110)

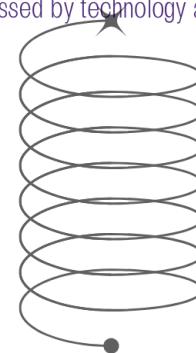
Scripture

⁸ With great fear and excitement, they [Mary Magdalene and the other Mary] hurried away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ But Jesus met them and greeted them. They came and grabbed his feet and worshipped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid. Go and tell my brothers that I am going into Galilee. They will see me there." -Matthew 28:8-10 (CEB)

Prayer - m jade kaiser, enfleshed

Don't be fooled by the way we tell the story. Resurrection is rarely a swift occurrence. Just look to forest floors or the pages of history and find the pace of sacred things. Trust the hidden work of god quietly moving beneath the fractured and fissured surface: tending and holding. pruning and clarifying. undoing and recreating. If all is still quiet, take heart and remain.

There is so much courage in hope that resists timelines compressed by technology and profit. There is so much power in refusing to rush or be rushed in righteous labors of reorienting and repair. May divine unfoldings be granted all the space they need. May the testimony of freshly budding things strengthen and inspire us. May the wisdom of generations be our teachers, our anchors, our comfort.



Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 29, 2026

9am in the Sanctuary - Join us for the Chancel Choir Cantata, Jubilation Ringers and children waving palms.

10:15am in the Fellowship Hall - Join us for special music by the Art and Soul Singers, Changing Faces Band and children waving palms.

11:30am - Fellowship Hall - Pot Luck lunch, game and craft stations for all ages.

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JRC

Maundy Thursday

Potluck and Worship

Thursday, April 02, 2026

5:30pm - Potluck Dinner

6:30pm - Worship Service in Fellowship Hall

Bring a dish to share and join us for a potluck and worship.

We will gather around tables and share in communion, remembering Jesus gathering with the disciples in the upper room.



GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 03, 2026
6:30PM



Service in the
Sanctuary

EASTER SUNDAY

LIVING WITH HOPE AND RESURRECTION
APRIL 5, 2026

8AM - SUNRISE SERVICE IN THE TRINITY GARDEN LED BY CHUM YOUTH

8:30AM - BREAKFAST IN THE PARLOR

9:00AM - WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY

10:15AM - WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

