

Meandering

Supplies: None

Rush, rush, rush. In John 14:27, Jesus says, *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. The peace that I give you isn’t the kind of peace the world offers. Don’t be troubled; don’t be afraid”* (paraphrased from NRSV).

Yet most of us are troubled. Think of a pond or a river after a hard rain—the water has been troubled, and the silt has risen so that the water is no longer clear. So it is with our souls. We get stirred up and troubled. We’re always in a hurry. We’re late because we think our schedule is so important that we have to cram in one more “vital” phone call or e-mail before we leave for that appointment. And then we end up rushed, fried, and frazzled.

No wonder we miss the beauty of the world around us. No wonder we don’t feel centered and grounded. No wonder we lose sight of the path.

These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

Now is all we’re given. We only have today’s roses. Yesterday is past, and tomorrow hasn’t come. Meanwhile, the gift is offered to us today—God’s peace, right here, right now, no matter what else is happening. If we intend to enjoy the journey, we need to slow down, breathe, center ourselves, and take in the scenery along the way.

Did you ever think that meandering could be a spiritual practice? Take an extra thirty minutes and explore a back road you’ve never been on before. Slow down. Turn off the radio and open the window. Feel the wind on your skin. Breathe. Sing. Look at the sky, the trees, the sun and shadow (or the rain and clouds). Pull off on the shoulder and watch a hawk hanging in the air. Let the silt in your soul settle a little.

Learning to go slowly is a beautiful thing. It lets us get in touch with our true selves and with God—lets us get away from frantic demands of a harried world. Thirty minutes? It’s not much time, but the spiritual payoff can be priceless, both for you and for those around you.

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

