

Resting

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Date: 15 August 2021

Preacher: Pastor Jennifer Stamm

[0 : 0 0] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[2 : 3 0] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[5 : 3 0] Thank you.

Let us pray together. God who calls us to rest, your heart is our heart, your rhythm is our rhythm. Open us to the place of rest and celebration in the rhythm of our lives.

Draw us into delight.

So I invite you to stand as we sing, draw me close. Draw me close to you. I lay it, you know, I lay it, you know, I lay it, you know, I lay it all down again.

I lay it all down again. Thank you.

[8 : 2 0] You're all I want, you're all I want. You're all I want, you're all I want, you're all I want. You're all I want, you're all I want, you're all I want. You're all I want. You're all I want Help me know you are me Draw me close to you And never let me go Lay it all down again To hear you say that I'm gonna end You are my desire And no one else will do

Cause nothing else could take your case To feel the warmth of your embrace Help me find the way Bring me back to you You're all but one You're all I've ever needed You're all but one Help me know you are near Help me know you are near

You may be seated Good morning church Good morning That was okay Good morning church Good morning I asked if Well to those of you who don't know me I'm Steve Sosnowski I'm one of your trustees And I'm also the proud parent Of one of the youth leaders here Caitlin My wife and I are very proud of I asked if I could do a thankful moment To wrap up our vacation Bible school event We'll call it that Many challenges this year as you know

This whole pandemic has been difficult For everybody And as hard on the youth as anyone And this church put together One of the best events I've ever seen And what was probably the most noteworthy to me Is that half of what we normally have for attendance Was what we had to deal with And we stretched it out over two weeks And nobody would ever know it Because they put in probably triple the effort To make this something special for these children And to give them maybe the only experience With God's love that they would have in the year These kids are not always from our congregation Sometimes this is all they have And this is all they get experience with So we have our youth basically putting this program on That work just tirelessly to put these programs together

And to transform this church into what they did It was really inspiring I'm 51 years old and I've done a lot of things And when I'm coming in and out Dropping my child off, picking my child up Seeing the transformation And the love and the effort that these kids put into this It's truly inspiring And to all the parents involved as well We're doing the right thing We're going the right direction We always talk about Not just being here in this space And being good Christians But we talk about putting it out there to the world And that's what our kids did They put it out there They had good attitudes They had good spirit They had joy on their faces And that's what they gave these kids I hear all the time about kids Who don't have good church experiences And they're already turned off Before they even get a chance in life And I feel like we gave these kids a chance to say

[13 : 37] It's not boring It doesn't have to be boring It can be hard work But it can also be joyful And it can also be God-based And in addition to that I mean our youth leaders are also learning too They're learning to work together They're learning to deal with different emotions And everything else And while they're going through all this effort So they're learning And not only that But they had these programs And they're giving it to the next generation Paying it forward Our program leaders And Gidget Meeland This is her last vacation Bible school As she's going to be moving on Very sad to see her go And we thank her for all that she's done For this over the years And last but not least To Mr. and Ms. Adrian Who are going to become Mr. and Mrs. Adrian I'm also warm to the core of my being with that

Your tireless efforts and passion for these programs Is felt throughout These two seem to have a tank that's never empty They encourage these kids They encourage the leaders They lead by example And they put it out there every day And never say no They just don't know how to say no And don't know when to stop And I've watched them grow up in this church I've been here a long time And they should be commended as well For what they're doing For not only this church But for our youth Because they are our future And the start that they're getting in life With these programs Is just It's more than I can even put into words So thank you Is there anything you can say Another week Another week

Good morning again everyone As you have just heard It is a joy when you can live your faith We come from a congregation that is living faith in so many ways Another way we live our faith is of course how we give And this week our giving goes to our back to school drive We will be giving our money to buy school supplies So that we can pack backpacks And make sure there are youth who are in different environments Will be able to get what they need to thrive in school So let the spirit move in you Let's continue the inspiring work that we've seen put forward by our young people this week And continue to be a blessing in God's name Be still my soul

The Lord is on thy side Bear patiently The cross of grateful pain Leave to thy God To order and provide In every change He faithful Will remain Be still my soul Thy best Thy heavenly friend Through thorny ways Leads to a joyful end Be still my soul Be still my soul Thy God Doth undertake To guide the future

As he has the past The future As he has the past I hope Thy confidence Let nothing shake All our mystery All our mystery Shall be bright At last Be still my soul Be still my soul The waves and wings to hold His voice His voice His voice Your room While he dwelt below You In you In you I found my hope In you I chose

[19 : 16] You never let me go I placed my life Within your hands alone Be still my soul Be still my soul The hours leads me long When we shall be Forever with the Lord When disappointment Grief and fear are gone Sorrow forgot Love's purest joys restored

Be still my soul When change and tears are past All safe and blessed We shall meet again In you I blessed In you I found my hope In you I chose You never let me go I placed my life Within your hands alone Be still my soul Be still my soul In you I blessed

In you I found my hope In you I chose You never let me go You never let me go I placed my life Within your hands alone Be still my soul Be still my soul Be still my soul Be still my soul Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[23 : 21] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Gracious and eternal God, you show us that words are not enough, that our intentions are not enough, that our love must be made real in how we live and how we act.

We model you who continues to pour out so much so generously and kindly into our lives. Please accept our gift back to you as it goes to the honor and the glory of your name.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen. Amen. Let's take our seats. Amen. Amen. Amen.

So we come to our conversation with God this morning and we have much that we bring. Our joys, because we know there is so much that is good, so much that is blessing, so much that is exciting in the world.

We bring our cares so much that weighs on us, so much that makes us think, so much that gets us somewhat anxious. And of course, we bring the concerns we see before us, those we know who are hurting, those we know who are in need of healing.

[24 : 33] Whatever you bring this morning, know that we are one before God and we go to God in prayer together. Let's open our hearts and pray. Amen. Loving and eternal God, we thank you for the gift that is this morning.

We thank you for the gift that is simply you being you. You show us so much light and joy. You continue to offer us new opportunities, fresh opportunities with each and every day.

We come grateful knowing that you are at work, walking with us, clearing the path and protecting us, providing for us and offering yourself along the way.

As we come this morning, Lord, we cannot put into words the ways in which we give thanks for all you have done. We have heard tale this morning of the ways in which children in our area have been blessed through this ministry.

We know your spirit is at work in this place. We also give you thanks for new doors that are opening for those we love, whether it's to retirement or to new ways of being at work.

[25 : 53] We give you thanks. And Lord, as we come today, we are mindful of so much that is happening around our world, which is bigger than us.

We come because we know that you are a God who is at work, a God who is engaged, not far away in some fairytale land, but with us, caring for each and every soul that you have created, caring for each and every one of your children, whether they are here or whether they are half a world away.

And Lord God, we are mindful of those who are suffering under violence and oppression in other worlds. We are mindful of those who are dealing with hunger and homelessness.

We are mindful of those who are hurting in so many ways, whether it's broken relationships, whether it's abusive situations, whether it's those who are confused and need their steps guided.

Lord, help us to indeed be the body of Christ the ways you call us. In all the ways you call our individual souls. However, you would have us serve.

[27 : 03] However, you would have us join you in the work. Let your voice be clear. Help clear away the things that hold us back that we might take our place. Lord God, we are thankful.

Thankful that you choose to use us. So for those who need your healing touch, let us be vehicles of comfort that we might be a blessing to you.

For those who are hurting and grieving, let us offer ourselves that word of comfort that would hold you up and talk about the promise that you alone can give.

For those who are in need in any way, let us feed the hungry the way we see in our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ who fed so many. And Lord God, in any way you would have us move, in any way you would have us be at work, a kind, gentle gesture, a caring and sincere word, a simple act of generosity, put us to doing, put us to serving, use us however you would choose to use us, that we would be a blessing to you.

This we ask in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen. Good morning.

[28 : 41] Today's reading is from the book of Exodus, chapter 20, verses 8 through 11. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.

On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.

For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

This is the word of our Lord. Amen. Thank you. Will you pray with me, please?

Lord, we thank you for the gift of your word. And as we think on these things, open our hearts and our minds to hear you. Help us to see what's good.

[29 : 56] Strengthen our hearts to be courageous. Grow within us and enable our spirits to be responsive. And inspire us with the beauty of your love.

Amen. So, this is my first Sunday here and I thought I would put you all to work for a little bit. So, how many of you can name all ten of the commandments?

So, what's the first commandment? You shall have no other gods before me. And the second? You shall not make for yourself a carved image.

The third? Take the name of the Lord in vain. The fourth? No. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

The fifth is honor your father and your mother. The sixth one? You shall not murder. The seventh? You shall not commit adultery.

[30 : 58] The eighth? You shall not steal. The ninth? You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. And finally, the tenth? You shall not covet your neighbor's house, your neighbor's wife, or anything else that belongs to you.

So, if you didn't know all these, that's okay. I was, while I was studying this, they said that congregations normally know about four or five. Clergy usually only know about seven or eight.

So, it's okay. Yes, not always in order. So, the first five commandments are how we act on our love for God.

The second five are how we act on love for our neighbor. And combined, they explore how God, how we respond to God's love for us. So, I think most of us don't have a problem with at least nine out of the ten.

So, which commandment do you all have the hardest time with? So, far in our series, we have talked about dreaming, soul-searching, risking, listening, and being one part of the body.

[32 : 12] Which are all vital parts of our creative process when God is calling us to something new. So, this week, I got resting.

And when Kathy and Scott and I met, and she said, do you the last week? I was like, yeah, sure, no problem. And then I looked. And I said, Kathy knows me, but not that well as she's trying to tell me something.

Because I don't rest well. So, when God revealed the commandments to the Israelites at Mount Sinai, they were commanded to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

This was done not only as a remembrance of God's rest during the creation week, but also extended to the concern for one's servants, family, and their livestock, so that they could be refreshed from work.

So, as I said, this is the hardest commandment for me to follow. And I, like some of you, often brag about not taking any time off from work.

[33 : 13] I've worked for two years, and I haven't taken any time off. But why do we do this? I know I often feel guilty for resting, that I'm not working hard enough.

My grandmother was born in Augusta, Georgia, in 1920, an era of change and growth in our country, which led to the Great Depression.

She was never still. She was always busy. She was crocheting, sewing, quilting, cooking, baking, or much later in life, she folded the church bulletins.

Even right before she passed away, her hands never stopped. The first time she retired, she was retired for about a week and took a job working at Dell Kempers, and she couldn't stand to sit still.

And she worked for Dell Kempers and service merchandise and brand names until they closed. And at that time, Thomas, my oldest, was born. And so my grandmother decided she was going to take care of him.

[34 : 21] Working may have been easy because Thomas never stopped. And when Thomas went to school, she watched Maddie and Eva. And I can remember her saying that idle hands are the devil's workshop.

In other words, stay busy so the devil will always find you busy and you won't get into trouble. And she ingrained that discipline in both my mother and I. So growing up, weekends were always for working and cleaning.

And then if we had time on Sundays, we would take a drive, often accompanied by a picnic, to some unknown destination. My dad still carries out driving long distances, often to get half an hour away from the house.

And the grandchildren affectionately refer to these as Papa Long Cuts. And sometimes they groan when they're being taken on one. They're such in a hurry to get to that destination.

So I ask you today, what are we missing? In our days of running around and trying to get ahead, what experiences have we been missing? Why are we so tired all the time?

[35 : 32] Is this how God wants us to live? We're missing out. Crazy calendars packed with things to do. Meals eaten in the car. Being stressed. Not sleeping well.

And weekends that are often more busy than during the week. We live in a world that constantly competes for our time. We have to work to keep up with bills, groceries.

Things that we feel we need. Or is it that we just want? We often feel that if we're not constantly working, we won't make enough to survive. Or to support our lifestyle or our business.

Or our houses will fall apart if we're not working constantly. Our children are often overscheduled with school and homework and sports and dance and all the million other things that they do.

So over the past year and a half because of the pandemic, we have been forced to slow things down. And for a while, businesses were closed. And we were forced to stop and take time.

[36 : 33] We spent more time together. Some people played games and talked. We found ways to be more creative in how we interacted with each other. And we developed new avenues to teach, learn, and be with each other.

We took time to rest and be in nature. People reconnected and took some time to just be. But some of us are becoming tired of that rest.

Tired of being resilient. Always bouncing back. Or being the strong ones. The support for everyone. We've lost some of our empathy. So back in Jesus' time, the rabbis added all of these rules and regulations regarding the Sabbath.

That made the Sabbath a burden rather than a blessing. They determined how far you could walk on the Sabbath. And that you could not wear false teeth because that was a burden.

So people tried to find creative ways to get around the rules. So if you wanted to travel what was more than a Sabbath day from your house, they started the day before.

[37 : 44] And they walked as far as they could. And they found a tree. And they put some food over it, underneath it. And they went home. And the next day, they walked. They called the tree their new home.

And they ate the food. And they continued on their way. Which sometimes created, they had to create seven or eight homes in order to pass. It was never God's intention for the Sabbath to be a burden.

But a delight. It was meant to be a blessing. God set that example for us. He created the earth and the heavens. And on the seventh day, he rested.

We often talk about leading by example when God is the best example. And he specifically told us to rest. That fourth commandment is so special.

Because it's the only one that explains that God himself keeps the Sabbath. There's no explanation following any other commandment that we are following God's example.

[38 : 49] We're not told that God refrains from committing murder or stealing. The Sabbath commandment is unique. Simply, God kept the Sabbath. So should we.

It's part of the natural rhythms of our world. God. Like day and night and the seasons. It's time for us to take time out to reflect.

Take time with God. For one whole day, you are commanded to do nothing but pray and play. God wants us to enjoy life.

We weren't created to work constantly. And I believe God enjoys having fun. And so should we. God's not a stern God, but a joyful God who wants to spend time for us.

He likes us to laugh and have fun. Look at some of the things he created in our world. You know he had to have a sense of humor. Our God is an awesome God and he wants us to find that rest.

[39 : 55] Even Jesus took time to rest and relax and pray. He stopped and shared meals with friends and family. So celebrating the Sabbath gives us physical rest.

And when we do scripture, I like to look at different versions of the Bible. And the version in Exodus in the message says, Tell the Israelites above all, keep my Sabbath.

The sign between me and you, generation after generation. To keep the knowledge alive that I am God who makes you holy. Keep the Sabbath. It's holy to you.

Whoever profanes it will most certainly be put to death. Whoever works on it will be excommunicated from the people. There are six days for work, but the seventh day is Sabbath.

Sabbath, pure rest, holy to God. Anyone who works on the Sabbath will most certainly be put to death. So in six days God made the heavens and the earth.

[41 : 01] And on the seventh day he stopped and took a long breath and rested. God wants us to keep the Sabbath because it's a sign so that we know and remember that it's the Lord who sanctifies us.

It's our way to further that relationship with him. For six days you shall labor and on the seventh day you should rest. Do absolutely no work.

Not you, your son, your daughter, your servants, your animals, or the people visiting you. Our bodies are not made to work 24-7. And we need that time to rest.

Rest our bodies and rest our minds. Our loving God gave us a time to rest and not worry for a time. That rest improves us not only mentally, but it's good for our bodies.

It helps improve our immune system. It reduces stress. It reduces that risk of developing diabetes and so much more. Our God loves us so much that not only are we told to rest, but in that rest we find restorative peace.

[42 : 15] Resting gives our bodies that time to heal. It helps lower our blood pressure. Helps us improve our moods. Our brains can work better.

And we're able to concentrate and have less stress. In our current world, we're so fixated on what's next and keeping up with our neighbors that we don't take that time.

We don't take in God or the wonderment of his creation. In an article from Scientific American, it states that one in every six Americans take some sort of psychiatric medication, whether it's for anxiety, depression, or some other cause.

If we were to stop and follow the Sabbath for just one day, have that peace, that rest, I wonder if those numbers would change. The original intent behind that Sabbath was keeping it was a time for being and not doing.

A time to disconnect from your work, your family, your neighbors. A time to renew and refresh. Sabbath keeping is an act of humility. We can discover that the world keeps turning without our input.

[43 : 32] And I know some of us have a hard time with that. The world will survive if we rest for one day a week. It operates just fine. And we're to carry on that thought through the next week, freed from our own self-importance.

For those 24 hours, you are commanded to do two things. Pray and play. You are to rest, reflect, give thanks to God, and have fun.

It's so strange that we have such a problem with this commandment when it's one of the most easiest to follow. Have you ever noticed that the commandments aren't weighed?

There's no difference. They all have the same weight. One doesn't hold more of a priority than another. But each of those commandments protects us from misery, protects us from tearing ourselves apart.

When you think that committing murder is so much different and so much worse than keeping the Sabbath, think about who we're hurting when we don't keep the Sabbath.

[44 : 39] Not only are we hurting ourselves, but we're hurting our most vulnerable populations and damaging the earth we live in by constantly moving and constantly doing. Each week that we fail to set aside a day for just praying and playing, we're saying to God, what we're doing is so much more important than what you're doing.

The commandment boils down to God's love and blessing for each one of us. By not allowing ourselves to rest, we're telling God, we don't care for your blessings.

We don't want them. What we want is more important. Not celebrating the Sabbath makes us unable to follow all of our other steps in our creative process.

Our dreaming, our soul searching, risking, listening, and being part of one body. We're burned out with even the smallest dreams seem impossible.

We can't hear what God is saying to us. And the dreams that our Father has for us seem so far away. We feel like we're sinking, and sometimes we just can't keep up.

[45 : 51] Loving and honoring the Sabbath helps us dream bigger, hear God's call, and see his plans for us, and have that energy to take risks. It allows us to see through the loud noise and really listen.

So the process is circular. Just because we're at the end of those six steps doesn't mean you can skip even one. As children of God, formed in God's image, we are called to grow and change what's possible.

Once you reach the sixth step of the Sabbath and rest, catch your breath, and you can begin again and start dreaming. Lord Jesus, some days can be very difficult, and we need the touch of your loving hand to help us and guide us through our troubles.

Other days are easier for us, and you empower us to rise to greater heights and do greater things for you. Whatever happens today, may we retain our focus on you and on your love for us and compassion for all.

May everything we do this day bring glory to your kingdom. Amen. Amen. There's one thing that God knows about you and about me is how much we struggle to do these things like resting.

[47 : 34] So we are given this opportunity to come to this table every time we come. We are weak.

We make mistakes. We don't always follow what God knows is good for us, and so again and again we come here to admit our brokenness and also to receive the gift of forgiveness.

We come because Jesus taught us about this radical, radical, hospitable, creative Jesus who we follow, and we follow his example, and we welcome every person, all the people, everyone comes to this table who would like to.

We follow his example for fellowship, for connection, for inspiration, for new and everlasting life in Christ, and so we say to one another, the Lord be with you.

And also with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. He is right to hear our hearts and spirit.

[48 : 43] God set in motion the grandest creativity project of all. Light where there was no light, waters and land, creatures on foot and wing, beauty and laughter, and God called it good.

Out of that goodness, we came, you and I and all people, and we are each blessed with the gifts that God the Creator gave us.

We are invited to begin our lives of creating, making, building, planting, engineering, leading, crafting, fashioning, however it is that God has gifted us.

But the truth is, sometimes we get sidetracked. Why? Because we're human beings. And we sometimes forget where it is that God is leading and guiding us in our true calling.

Sometimes we break things instead of building them up. But God, our God, creator, keeps repairing our lives, calling us again and again into the joy of relationship with Him.

[49 : 54] And so we proclaim our praise with the saints of all time and place, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Oh God, your creativity knows no bounds.

And in the fullness of time, you came to us, fashioned in our own flesh and blood. In sending Jesus, you created human and holy connection and showed us what love looks like in public, preaching good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, and freedom for those who are oppressed.

Jesus promised to continue His work through a new covenant of creativity, sending His Spirit to remain and move in and through us.

And so, He took the bread, He gave thanks to God who had given it, and He broke it. And He said, Take and eat my body given for you, that you may have new life.

[51 : 11] This is my covenant with you. He took the cup, and He gave it to His disciples and said, Drink from all of this, remembering my blood is shed for you.

Forgiveness of sins, poured out for many and for all. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

And so, we will proclaim the mystery of faith. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us in this moment, Lord, so that we might know Your presence and power in our lives through this bread and this cup.

Make us one, so that we can be used to create Your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Let this bread and fruit of the vine fill us with Your Spirit for the work and play of loving creation and each other fully.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, we pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[52 : 34] Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We invite those who are going to be serving to join us. And then we will invite all of you to come as you feel so led.

[53 : 38] There are prepackaged sets on both the regular and the gluten-free. We invite you to hold your hands to receive either the bread or one of these packaged communion sets so that we can give you the greatest gift that there ever was.

Thank you.

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