

Stillness

Traditional Worship • July 1

- Prayer Concerns: Vira Cogswell, Jane Drebus, Ed Lacy
- Today's Sanctuary flowers provided by the Flower Committee to the glory of God
- Today's choral selections are provided by the Temple Choir under the direction of Joan Nevill. Organist: Barbara Waite. Anthem accompanists Susan Travis & Barbara & Jim Zelle, percussion.
- Ushers (1): Kathy Zelle, captain; Chuck Taylor, Warren Heinsohn, Jack Buttrum, Ed Ancona, Thornton Patberg (balcony), Margo Borre (balcony)
- Ushers (8): Greg & Linda Stilwell, captains; Chuck Taylor, Jacque Hardin, Nelson & Joyce Rivers
- Greeters (1): Patricia Helm, Nancy Hughes
- Greeters (8): Marty Van Stone, Wanda Erwin, Carla Bolin, Janet Kissel

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Virginia Adye, piano

WELCOME

PRELUDE

"O God, Our Help In Ages Past" arr. by P. Manz

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In the midst of the storm, God is with us.

People: **What shall we fear?**

Leader: In darkness and terror, God is with us.

People: **Whom shall we fear?**

Leader: In loneliness and shame, God is with us.

People: **We need not fear ourselves.**

Leader: God's love for us is immeasurable.

People: **Let us find peace in the love of God.**

CHORAL INTROIT

"Eternal Father, Strong to Save"

*CHIMES & SERVICES OF LIGHT

*FIRST HYMN #698

"God of Ages"

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Please turn to those around you and pass the peace of Christ.

4TH OF JULY VIDEO

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray as one.

PASTORAL PRAYER/ LORD'S PRAYER

All: Help us this day to be still and know that You are God. Help us tomorrow to be still and know that you are God. Help us each day to be still and know that You are God. And now, O God, hear us as we pray, each in our own hearts and our own ways...

GIVING OFFERING

"Deck Thyself, My Soul, With Gladness" arr. by D. Cherwien

*DOXOLOGY *the congregation stands as the Ushers return the offering to the Altar.*

#95 in Hymnal

ANTHEM

"Battle Hymn of the Republic" arr. by Ringwald

KDZ MOMENT

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 6:30-32

Feeding the Five Thousand

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE UMH #162

"Alleluia, Alleluia"

MESSAGE *by Pastor Andy Payton*

"Mind"

Well good morning Methodist Temple. Are you still with me today? Are you still with me? I trust you all had a restful evening. At our house, we did not. Our neighbors started promptly at 8 p.m. blowing up things in the sky. I looked over at my wife finally around nine thirty and I said honey don't worry they'll run out of money eventually. It has been a good weekend. Our niece, my niece, Emily, has been with us for the last three days. Emily is seven years old and she is absolutely full of energy. I thought our kids were energized. Emily is stuck on go. I'm just going to say how it is: she is stuck on go. At one point we ask Emily, "Emily do you ever take a nap?" She's like No. No I never took a nap. In fact I rode all the way to Florida once and I never took a nap. I'm like Oh God bless your parents.

She went with us to vacation Bible school on Thursday evening. This kid's a hoot. Now you have to understand she is also a pastor's kid. My brother is a pastor and Emily's his daughter, and we took her to a vacation bible school on Thursday night and it was at the point in the presentation where they were talking about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. You know that point in vacation Bible school- we do every time. Emily leans over to my wife Leslie and says I've already heard this story. I thought to myself, no wonder being a pastor and a preacher is the hardest profession in the world when 7 year olds already think they have the story all figured out. Now on the flip side of that I think it's a positive thing too though. She's 7 and she knows the story. She's 7 and she knows the story of God's unrelenting, unending love given to us in the person Jesus Christ. She's heard it so much that she already knows the story. Can I ask you a question? Do your kids or grandkids know that story? Do you know that story of God's unrelenting, unending love given in Christ Jesus? If anything on this weekend in which we think about freedom, I pray I hope that we use our freedom to tell that story.

Today we're beginning a new journey together, a new chapter if you will in our sermon series. Our subject today is kind of a new story- something I've never really preached on: stillness. And as we get started, let us begin with a moment of prayer. Would you be still with me? Oh god I do ask that you would help us this day to be present to you even as you are here present with us. I pray that you take the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts and that you would work in such a way that they would be made acceptable in your sight. I ask this through Christ who is both our rock and redeemer. Amen.

If you've heard me preach much in the last few years, you know that one of my favorite authors is a guy by the name of Henry Nowin. Henry Nowin was of course a Catholic priest, but he also was a kind of renowned psychologist. He went off and studied a lot about psychology which made his writing a little bit unique. It kind of put a modern spin on a lot of the Christianity that he taught. One of the things he did was he taught at Notre Dame, he taught at Harvard, and he taught at Yale. But the thing that I love about Henry Nowin the most is that he walked away from academic work and academic life. He said that most of the academic world was after knowledge but not spiritual truth, and so he kind of walked away from that. And he ended up working in a community for disabled folks both mentally and physically disabled folks. It was there that really started to take on a kind of a pastoral type of bent if you will. And it was during this time that he, in my opinion, wrote some of his best work. And one of my favorite things he wrote during this period was a little book called "In Jesus Name". The subtitle was "Ideas about Christian Leadership". And in that book he kind of lays out three lies that we have a tendency to live our lives by and that's what I want to get at today.

There are three lies he says that we like to live our lives by. The first lie is we are what we do. The second lie is we are what we have. And the third lie he said is we are what people say about us or we are what other people think. We are what we do, we are what we have, and we are what other people think about us. I want to talk about the first one of those specifically today- this lie that we are what we do. Truth be told we live in a busy world don't we? Quite busy. In fact if you ask people how they're doing these days, in years past they may say something like I'm doing really well, but today there's a real tendency for people to respond to that question by saying I'm busy. Now the story behind this story is that we live in a culture today that is what I would like to call a knowledge-based economy. I think that's what keeps us busy. We live in a knowledge based economy. Now to put that kind of in context. A hundred years ago we lived in an economy in a world that was all about labor, physical labor. A hundred years ago the two main professions were farming and manufacturing. That's what people did, and so the status symbol was leisure. This is 100 years ago. One hundred years ago everyone farmed or they worked in a factory or they were in manufacturing. And so the status symbol became leisure.

Today technology has shifted; the economy has shifted. And rather than kind of a labor intensive economy, today we have a knowledge-based economy. And so the status symbol today is busyness. And the reason why it's busyness is because if you know the right things then the assumption is you will be sought after. People will come after you to get the knowledge that you possess and have. And so rather than a status symbol being leisure, our status symbol today is busyness. And so if you're really, really busy then you must be really, really important and people must be seeking after you. And this busyness, it bleeds into our leisure time. I mean how many of us when we're supposedly to be relaxing have this thing out checking our e-mails or text messages, reading our Facebook notifications. It just never stops. We have bought into the lie, friends, that we are what we do. And rather than becoming human beings, we have become human doings defined by the things that we do.

And so how do we short circuit this tendency that we have? How do we short circuit this doing-ness that we have fallen into? And I think in our scripture lesson today we find kind of a hint for it. The story goes that the apostles come back to Jesus and what do they do? They tell Jesus all the things that had taught and all the things that they had done, right? That's if you look at the story in your bulletin. The story is really simple. They come back to Jesus and they say Jesus this is everything we've taught, this is everything that we did. And what is Jesus's response to them? Does he say tell me about what you taught? Tell me about what you did? No. Instead Jesus says, "Come Away With Me and let us have some rest". In a sense you can say what Jesus invites the disciples to do is enter into a time of- in Hebrew they call it- Sabbath. And in Jesus's mind I think Sabbath was about kind of the regenerating and the recharging of our lives.

I mean in his day Sabbath was a kind of this holy day set apart where people would go to worship, but in Jesus's mind it's very clear that it's for him Sabbath was all about resting and recharging of life. There was a story told in Mark Chapter 3 where there's a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. Jesus enters the synagogue on the Sabbath; there's a man with a withered hand, and he heals the man with the withered hand. All the religious elite people go oh my gosh you're not supposed to do that on the Sabbath, and Jesus response to them is well is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath? To save my life or to kill? The point here is that for Jesus, Sabbath-ing if you will- was about the recharging of one's life. If you go back to our text this morning it seems like Jesus was inviting disciples to do just that- to not get caught up in all that they did but to remember to recharge their lives.

Today I think I would call it maybe what Jesus was inviting the disciples to do was enter into a time of stillness. And the word stillness I learned this past week comes from an old German word which means to stand, to be fixed. To stand still. I asked our staff this past week how do you become clarity, and I've got quite a few different answers. One person said that they find stillness and going to a rose garden and just sitting and being. Another person -this is a person with the young family- said that in the morning whenever she gets ready she'll lock the door to the bathroom and just sit and pretend like she's taken a long shower. It's there that she is just still. When she comes out of the restroom after getting ready, her family says 'man that's the longest shower you ever took.' It took like an hour but she found stillness there. Some of us find stillness by going on walks. Some of us find stillness by just simply sitting still.

One of the things that stillness does do for us though is that stillness allows us to come back home to ourselves, to go back home to our bodies if you will. It's fascinating to me how much we don't listen to ourselves. We don't listen to our bodies. When we're still, when we stand, we become fixed and one of the things you might notice is you have this thing called a body. There's things going on within it that you weren't hearing and you weren't listening to. One of the things you might notice is stillness is, you might be carrying some frustration with you. w\Where do you carry it? Some people carry in their necks. Some people carry it on their foreheads. Some other people might carry it in their stomachs, but we carry frustration with this nonetheless. And one of the things that I've noticed about my own life when it comes to carrying the frustration of the world with me is that the frustration of the world comes into my life at least because there's something going on within my life that I cannot control. I'm frustrated because there's something going on that I cannot control. And in stillness, when we sit still long enough to notice the frustration going on with us and we start to feel it, we might begin to notice- there's something going on that I'm mad about, that I cannot control. And it's in these moments that what we need to pray for is serenity. God grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

In stillness we come home to ourselves. In stillness we allow ourselves to kind of calm down. All our mental hyper activity can become mental clarity. And all our emotional reactivity can become emotional responsiveness. And my gosh we do need this today. We don't have thoughts and feelings these days. Our thoughts and feelings have us, don't they? Let me say that again. We don't have thoughts and feelings these days; our thoughts and feelings have us. As our cultures become busier and busier and busier, we've been on the treadmill of our emotions and our thoughts, so they just carry us to all kinds of different places. And they have us doing things that we know we should not do. Last week I said to you one of the two things that I hate to do the most is argue over religion and politics because the more I argue over religion and politics, I've noticed that I've become less and less the person I want to be. Stillness can undercut this tendency. Stillness can allow our emotional reactivity to become emotional responsiveness and our mental hyperactivity to become mental clarity. Above all else and probably most important, when we enter into a place of stillness and we start to realize that God is able to act apart from us. In other words, in stillness we remember that we're not God. So we need to stop living our lives as if we were God, as if the entire world depended upon us. In those times of quiet, we learn that God is able to take care of things apart from us.

I think of a story of a pastor I met years ago. His name was Alvin Wilson. Alvin was a retired United Methodist minister and I was his pastor in Tell City. I was so excited when he came to tell city because I would figure here's this retired pastor I'm going to get to learn all these things from him. And so when he finally came to worship a couple of weeks I scheduled an appointment with him. And I remember sitting down with Alvin finally for a visit and I said Alvin teach me what I need to know. And he laughed at me and he said oh Andy here's what you need to know. Be patient. Don't force things. And give God time to work. Be patient. Don't force things. Give God time to work. That is not what a young pastor wants to hear. Young pastor to work to hear take the world by its tail and then get the church going and all these other things. But be patient don't force things that give God time to work seems to be probably some of the best advice I've ever been given. The way I've been given to interpret that is this: don't force that life as you wish it was, but instead respond to life as it is. Let me say that again. Don't respond to life as you wish it was, but instead respond to it as it is. Because friends hear me when I say this, God is working in life here and now.

And so my challenge to you this week is this. I take this from Pastor Shawn who said that when he was in Little League and he was a pitcher, his coach taught him to do three things: First stop. Second breathe. Third go again. Now here's one reason why his coach told him this. He was supposed to do this between every pitch, and the reason why he had to do this between every pitch is because if he didn't, they found out they hit the batter pretty bad with the pitch when he threw it. I think we are in danger of doing this a lot in a lot of other ways these days because we don't stop breathing and then go again; we just go again and again and again. I guess I was going to change it around it would be this.

It would be stop, wait, and then go again. Find some stillness this week. Stop. Wait. Wait until your heart becomes still. Then go again. Amen.

*LAST HYMN UMH #696

"America the Beautiful"

*CHIMES & SERVICE OF LIGHT

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"God Bless Our Native Land" arr. by W. Held