

MUMC At-Home Worship: January 17, 2021

As it turns out, we are in a season even more in need of rest than I originally imagined. We work to prepare these at-home guides early enough to reach you before Sunday which means that last week's was written well before this most recent political news cycle. While the challenges of the moment don't change the scriptures which have remained the same now for thousands of years, it can certainly impact the questions we ask and the messages we listen for. I trust that a message of rest is certainly still valuable in these times (the anxiety and uncertainty of the news can exhaust us!) and can prepare us to continue doing the ever-important work of loving one another and speaking for justice and mercy. I am holding you in prayer this week! -Pastor Dillon

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

Holy God, calm our spirits and still our hearts for this time of worship. May we feel your welcome embrace and carry the peace of your presence with us everywhere we go. Amen.

Hymn: *He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought*, United Methodist Hymnal #128 [watch/listen here](#)

Old Testament Reading: Matthew 12:1-8

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. When the Pharisees saw Jesus' disciples picking grain on the Sabbath, they come to Jesus to tell him that his disciples are breaking the practice mandated by scripture to rest on the seventh day of the week. Do you imagine the Pharisees' intentions are honest or an attempt to entrap Jesus? What difference does it make to how you experience this scripture? Can you see yourself in the Pharisees?
2. Jesus responds with a story about David breaking the scripturally mandated law by eating bread in the temple, staving off hunger. Jesus' meaning seems to be that he is greater than the law because God is not the law; rather than focusing solely on the laws, we are to understand the character of God who seeks the best for us. Have you ever experienced a rule meant to help be applied in a way that created harm? How might an understanding that God's rules are meant for our wellbeing be helpful in applying scripture to our lives?
3. In his response, Jesus quotes the Old Testament and says, "I want mercy and not sacrifice." What do you imagine this might mean in this context? How might we seek mercy rather than sacrifice in our daily living?

Hymn: *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*, United Methodist Hymnal #480 [watch/listen here](#)

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *Thee Is a Balm in Gilead*, United Methodist Hymnal #375 [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer: Loving God, you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until we find rest in you. Welcome us to the practice of rest this week. Amen. (*Blow out the candle*)

He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought
United Methodist Hymnal #128

1. He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain:
He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.
2. Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me. Refrain
3. Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
nor ever murmur nor repine;
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me. Refrain
4. And when my task on earth is done,
when, by thy grace, the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me. Refrain

"He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought" words are by Joseph H. Gilmore, 1862; music is by William B. Bradbury, 1864, and are in the public domain.

Matthew 12:1-8 (CEB)

At that time Jesus went through the wheat fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry so they were picking heads of wheat and eating them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are breaking the Sabbath law."

But he said to them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and those with him were hungry? He went into God's house and broke the law by eating the bread of the presence, which only the priests were allowed to eat. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple treat the Sabbath as any other day and are still innocent? But I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. If you had known what this means, *I want mercy and not sacrifice*, you wouldn't have condemned the innocent. The Human One is Lord of the Sabbath."

Scripture quotations noted CEB are taken from the Common English Bible, copyright 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go
United Methodist Hymnal #480

1. Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.
2. O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.
3. O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.
4. O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust, life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.

"O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" words are by Charles Wesley, 1740, music is by Joseph Parry, 1879, and both are in the public domain.

There Is a Balm in Gilead
United Methodist Hymnal #375

Refrain:

There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole;
there is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.

1. Sometimes I feel discouraged
and think my work's in vain.
But then the Holy Spirit
revives my soul again. Refrain
2. Don't ever feel discouraged,
for Jesus is your friend,
and if you look for knowledge
he'll ne'er refuse to lend.
3. If you can't preach like Peter,
if you can't pray like Paul,
just tell the love of Jesus
and say he died for all. Refrain

"There Is a Balm in Gilead" words are an Afro-American spiritual, music is an Afro-American spiritual, adapt. And arr. By William Farley Smith, 1986, © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House.