

Grace & Peace!

To continue our Lenten journey this week, please read the following excerpt (pg 95-97) from the Study Guide of *Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now*, by Walter Bruggeman, and carry out the following simple (and helpful) activity.

- "What are some ways you can keep the Sabbath so that Sabbath-keeping is less anxiety-driven? Make a list of the activities in which you and your family normally engage on a Sunday. Include activities at your church, including worship services, meetings, educational programs, and youth group activities. Also list other routine activities, such as grocery shopping, cleaning, yard work, soccer games, or other athletic activities in which your children are involved, and list media activities such as viewing sports events or other programming, social media, and Internet surfing. Underline those activities that you can identify as characterized by Sabbath restfulness. Now circle those that you can identify as anxiety-inducing. Show your list to family members or a close friend; or if you are doing this study in a group, show it to another participant. Commit to eliminate as many activities that do not provide Sabbath restfulness as possible, or at least to reduce the time you spend doing them.

- In the coming week, pray the following prayer as a part of your time of devotions. Identify for yourself what holds you in bondage. Reflect on where you experience the flash of God's emancipation. Give thanks for the God of Freedom."

Pray the following prayer:

Loving Back the Emancipator by Walter Bruggemann (On reading Exodus 20:1-6)

The demanding, relentless brick quotas

kept arriving at daybreak for our ancient mothers and fathers.

The faced the harshness of harassment;

the heat of the kilns,

the bristles of straw collected.

And then, abruptly, all of that ended . . .

because you, Lord of liberty and justice, in an instant on a dark night,

you led our mothers and fathers out of bondage in singing, in dancing, and in joy.

We remember that ancient bondage. We recall the flash of your emancipation.

We know that bondage now among us:

bondage of our caves of self-preoccupied, insular living,

bondage of our tribes of the like-minded in fear of all others;

bondage of the market and our mad chase after more;

bondage of theater where we live make-believe lives.

But we ourselves also know the flash of your emancipation.

And because of that flash,

we know who you are;

we know the future you would give us;

we know your passion for justice;

we know your deep love for us and for our world.

And so we love you back, wholly, without compromise or distraction,

with all our heart, all our mind, and all our soul.

We will not so passionately love any other,

because you are the source of our life and our future.

We give you praise for your ancient deliverances.

We give you thanks for your liberating presence with us now.

We give you honor and glory for your good future to which you summon us.

You are the one who makes us 'free at last.' And we love you! Amen.

Blessings,

--

Pastor Ben Daggett

Pleasant St. UMC

8 Pleasant St Salem, NH 03079

603-898-2501 www.pleasantstreetumc.org

St. Luke's UMC .

63 E Broadway Derry, NH 03038

603-434-4767 www.stlukesumcnh.org

