

[2 Samuel 7:1-14a](#)

Psalm 89:20-37

[Mark 6:30-34, 53-56](#)

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Drop thy still dews of quietness, till all our striving cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of thy peace. Hymn
653 v.4

AMEN, let it be so.

What beautiful words we will receive today that we will sing in our Communion Hymn.

Written by a local boy, John Greenleaf Whittier grew up just up in Haverhill, Massachusetts in the early 1800s. A farm boy, John grew up a quaker, attended the Haverhill Academy and took to writing. A man of faith contemporary with Edgar Allen Poe and a little bit older than Phillip Brooks, John thrived in learning and in turn writing. He was a poet and journalist, abolitionist, and then settled back into poetry in his final segment of life. This hymn comes

from a longer poem published in 1872, clearly reflecting John's Quaker roots- seeking the divine in the midst of the quiet. A prayer for us today in the midst of our strife and stress filled days.¹

How often has the prayer of your soul been “take from my soul the strain and stress” of these recent days?

Where can you find that peace described within this hymn, within scripture?

Several weeks ago, when I read the lessons for today I will confess, I was a bit disappointed.

The gospel for today does not name a specific person, while it speaks of healing it is not the Samaritan woman nor is it the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000. (Spoiler alert- that is next week and it is the segment of the gospel that is omitted for today.)

Our gospel speaks to the in between.

In our Gospel today, we hear that Jesus has been and is always on the move.

The story today is not scandalous, miraculous, it is down right ordinary.

Jesus begins today not with doing but inviting the disciples to stop doing.

“To come away and rest”

Like a two-year-old resisting naptime, I was resistant to this gospel. I wanted the politics, the drama, to this Jesus says, “Stop, being the drama, come away, and rest”

Our gospel follows directly after last week’s gospel of persuasion, pain, and politics.

Jesus is still on the move, staying alive, seeing people where they are and speaking truth.

“Come away and rest a while with me” he says.

You see, we have to remember that rest, too, is political.

Keeping sabbath, given as a command within the 10 commandments, was a political statement to the Israelites against the Pharaoh’s command to work, work, work, work. Keeping sabbath, reminds us that our worth is not measured in the amount of bricks that we could produce, rather than our worth rests in our identity as children of God. Our worth is found within our relationship with God.

Today, Jesus is taking that sabbath from the work he, too, that has consumed his every hour.

The incessant need for love, for healing, for answers.

While Jesus meets everyone where they are, he reminds the disciples that he, too, needs to reconnect and step away. Press pause, stop, on the chaos of the world. Reclaim his rhythm, his anchor, let go of his frustrations and be refilled.

He gets on a boat and they go to a deserted place.... A place without everything else.
A place without the drama.
A place, also, full of God.
And you can imagine the gift of peace that was felt once they pushed away from the shore
Once they were upon the water
Once they felt the familiar waves on the boat and found that new place to land.
To merely Be.

It is beautiful. It is divine.

And then..... Humanity interrupts.
People in search of care
The quiet moment is short.
The joy and need of the people is great and once again has found this little group.

Jesus had compassion for them.

He does not throw the tantrum of the two year old abruptly awoken from a nap cut too short.

He breathes in and leads with his heart.

He teaches what their hearts need.

He feeds them (this is left out this week but DON'T WORRY- you will hear all about it next week!)

He heals the people.

This too, is beautiful, divine, and God is fully present there.

Unnamed, unnumbered, in the midst of the ordinary day of water and rolling hills of Galilee.

I imagine hot and sweaty Jesus trying to navigate his way through the crowds, putting others first as he encounters them.

It's ordinary and yet right there in their midst.

God is always present.

We, too are in the midst of our own hot and sweaty ordinary time.

We too are on the move, Many are traveling for vacation, for college visits, for camps.

Many of us are trying to navigate the sweltering temperatures of both politics and humidity.

We might feel like we are in the midst of the unnamed,
the massive number of people going to and fro. A bit Lost.

Yet in this ordinary time, these words of rest call to us too.
Come away and rest with me.
Stop and breathe in the peace that passes all understanding, seek
me first.
In the moments we steal away from the scheduled.
In the moments we create and safeguard.
Short or long.

God is there, here, and in the in between, in the travels, in the
myriad of activities and in the rest.

Creating time to pause, reconnect and refresh our faith speaks to
whose identity we claim.
Beloved Child of God.

Another locally known man, theologian Howard Thurman puts it
like this, “there is in you something that waits and listens for the
sound of the genuine in yourself and sometimes there is so much
traffic going on in your minds, so many different kinds of signals,
so many vast impulses floating through your organism that go

back thousands of generations, long before you were even a thought in the mind of creation, and you were buffered by these, and in the midst of all of this you have got to find out what your name is. Who are you?"²

Have you lost yourself in the midst of the comings and goings?
Has the traffic (not just on our streets) muffled and muted the sound of God's light and love in your heart?

John Greenleaf Whittier grounded himself in writing poetry and reminding others that the divine is always in their midst and reconnecting with the divine requires intention, practice and rhythm.

Jesus sought out the space to be refreshed, renewed and be restored.

Humanity will persist.
Will interrupt
Will continue to need

And each day, moment, we will do our one small thing to continue to reconnect the world with a love that can transform, that is greater than the placations of this world that falls short.

A love that stays with them, transforms them.

Each blessed humid, ordinary, unremarkable day, is a day for reconnecting and living within the in between. Being on the move and always moving toward God, being formed through the practice of prayer and listening.

O sabbath rest by Galilee! O Calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee the silence of eternity
interpreted by love. (Hymn 653 v 3)

This week, Jesus says to each of us, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves, and rest a while.”

The world that he and we have been living is nonstop.

Healing, teaching, encountering those in need... make time and come and step away from the rushed paced.

Be restored and become the peace that the world needs as you do the work you, too, are commended to do.

To bear fruit not as the world measures, instead as God delights in you and creation.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Greenleaf-Whittier>

² <https://www.dailygood.org/story/1846/the-sound-of-the-genuine-howard-thurman/> Howard Thurman served as the chaplain at Marsh Chapel on the campus of Boston University from 1953-1965. <https://www.bu.edu/thurman/about-us/who-is-howard-thurman/>