



OVERVIEW

This year, growing in rest has been the vision for All Souls.

welcome

“What if Christians were known as a countercultural community of the well-rested— people who embrace our limits with zest and even joy?” — Rev. Tish Harrison Warren, Austin, TX

Introduce yourself with Your Name + One free (or almost-free) thing or activity that brings you joy (e.g., the smell of rain, birdsong, warm laundry, sunset) + A hope you have for contentment

opening reflection

Luke 10:38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Martha:

What does it mean to you that Jesus sees Martha's worry and the things that make her upset?

What does Jesus do next after letting Martha know he sees her concerns for the logistical burdens of every day life? What does Jesus offer Martha?

How does Jesus seek to relieve Martha of the work of worry underneath the busy work?

How might she receive his offer? How might you?

Take a moment to share with the person next to you:

"This week, I had a Martha moment when I ____" (where you felt worried/upset by many things).

Looking back on that moment, do you imagine it differently with Jesus offer to Martha in mind?

Mary:

Why does Jesus commend Mary's choice?

What is it that Mary sees when she looks at Jesus? What isn't she focused on?

What does Jesus offer Mary? Why does she readily receive it? How can you?

Take a moment to share with the person next to you:

"This week, I had a Mary moment when I ____" (where you chose presence or simplicity)

Looking back on that moment, what helped you chose that?

How do we live with Mary's focus on the One necessary, when Martha's way feels necessary?

CONSUMER CULTURE

Many of us work more than we need to because we've absorbed the idea that success equals busyness and accumulation. But much of this "need" is artificial, created by marketing and social comparison.

HOW LESS BECOMES MORE

Studies show that working fewer hours (and having lower income) doesn't necessarily reduce happiness — in fact, people often report greater well-being because they have more time for relationships, hobbies, and rest.

navigating life today in Seattle with Mary's focus

Four observations, backed by studies, as found in "[The Art of Frugal Hedonism](#)"

- *Busyness is often self-imposed and fueled by consumer culture*
- *The authors argue that time is the ultimate luxury — living frugally buys back time that might otherwise be spent earning money to fund unnecessary consumption.*
- *Busyness crowds out simple pleasures — when we're constantly rushing, we stop noticing and savoring small joys (sunshine, good conversations, homemade food). Slowing down is itself a kind of wealth. Overwork is often a roundabout way of paying for pleasures we don't have time to enjoy.*
- *Much spending is designed to compensate for an overworked, stressed-out life. Consumption breeds more consumption. Spending less builds more and more resilience.*

What lifestyle choices are you facing right now that might create greater margins of time?

What would a summer slowdown look like for you? What could help you find your still point this summer?

building a cathedral in time

Abraham Heschel in his book "[Sabbath](#)" says that the biblical understanding of time was to "build" a cathedral through acts of prayer, study, joyous meals, service, and connection with those we love. Time was intentionally set apart for experiencing the wholeness that transcends the brokenness of the world. What does this bring to mind for you as you think about our community and how we use our time and what we have at hand to practice contentment together? (e.g., Community Clothing Closet, Skill-Share Platform, etc.)

singing It is Well

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul!"

It is well with my soul

It is well, it is well with my soul

Though Satan should buffet,
Though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

It is well with my soul

It is well, it is well with my soul

closing prayer

Father, you know our anxious hearts and troubled minds.

Show us again that you are our deepest desire. As we offer this time to you, please bless us with joy.

Take us to the deep places where you long to dwell within us, and us with you. A home where we are safe in your Kingdom. Amen.