

Sabbath Moments
A Service of Healing and Wholeness
Sunday, March 9, 2008, 6pm
Southport Presbyterian Church
The Toney Chapel

Seeking Rest

**The beloved of the Lord rests in safety—
The High God surrounds him all day long—
The beloved rests between his shoulders.**
(Deuteronomy 33:12)

Jesus is our best example. Even though his journey toward God was without blemish, he found it necessary to go aside to rest and to pray again and again. And in the midst of the great needs of the people around them, Jesus called the disciples to come away by themselves to rest. From that time of rest they were thrust back into the ministry of caring for the needs of the crowds that followed Jesus.

(Rueben P. Job, in *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God*)

Even today, when so many people instinctively grope for a kind of human security in “faith,” it can happen that they are only partly seeking God. That is the danger of a “faith” that is too intimately connected with the idea of “peace” and psychological comfort. When a man is too eager to see his subjective anxieties at rest, he is in danger of selling out to embrace an unreal faith which will bring him, apparently without too much cost, the semblance of peace. The cost may not appear to be much: but if it is the renunciation of responsibility for one’s soul, then it is great beyond measure.

(Thomas Merton, from *Life and Holiness*)

Come away to a quiet place and rest.
(Mark 6:31)

Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray... The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him.
(Luke 9: 28, 37)

Solitude is the furnace of transformation. Without solitude we remain victims of our society and continue to be entangled in the illusions of the false self. Jesus himself entered into this furnace. There he was tempted with the three compulsions of the world: to be relevant (“turn stones into loaves”), to be spectacular (“throw yourself down”), and to be powerful (“I will give you all these kingdoms”). There he affirmed God as the only source of his identity. (“You must worship the Lord your God and serve him alone.”) Solitude is the place of the great struggle and the great encounter—the struggle against the compulsions of the false self; and the encounter with the loving God who offers himself as the substance of the new self. . . . Solitude is not a private therapeutic place. Rather, it is the place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born, the place where the emergence of the new man and the new woman occurs.
(Henri J. M. Nouwen, from *The Way of the Heart*)

We stand in a world completely penetrated by the Living God, the abiding Source and Sum of Reality. We are citizens of that world now; and our whole life is or should be an acknowledgment of this.

(Evelyn Underhill, from *The Spiritual Life*)

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

(Exodus 20:8-11)

So then a Sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God’s rest also cease from their labors as God did from his. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall.

(Hebrews 4:9-11)

Lord, In an over-busy, over-noisy, over-crowded life, help me to hear your call to come away and rest. Help me to find companions and community with whom I might sit and rest, rest and learn, learn and grow, grow and change. Be my rest, Lord. Be my eternal rest. I pray in the name of my Savior, Jesus.

God be with you as you enter a new week.