

Benediction

Parting Music

We carry the light of Christ with us in all times and spaces

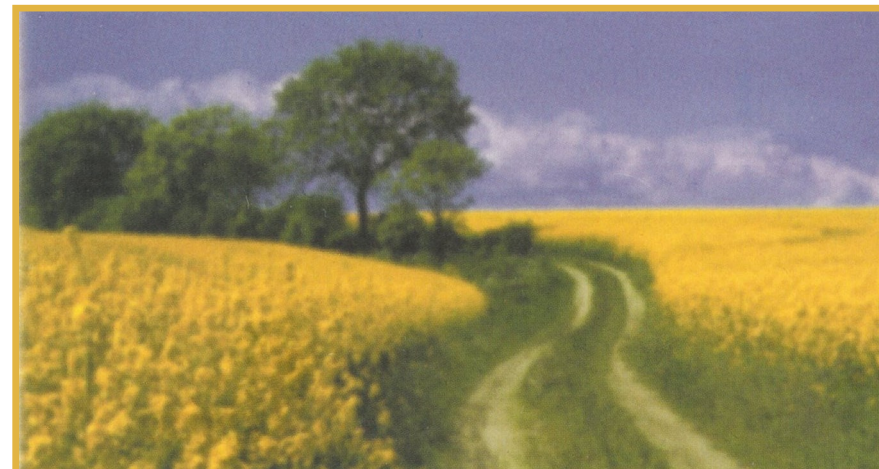
*Join us downstairs for a 6 pm soup supper
and a 6:30 pm discussion on the topic of "Time" (also Zoomed)*



We support the work of our church with financial gifts as we have means to do so. Please consider leaving a gift in the offering plate as you depart or scanning this QR code to give electronically. We also gladly receive checks mailed to the church office.

Fourth Wednesday in Lent

March 30, 2022 | 5:30 pm



"Happiness"

Gathering Music

Sharon Neuenfeldt

*You are invited to quietly greet others as you settle into sacred time and space
Candles represent the light of Christ among us*

Words of Welcome

Pastor Clare Gromoll

Holden Evening Prayer Service

*We join in singing the parts marked "all"
As we repeat this liturgy each Wednesday, it's becoming familiar to us*

Readings

Mary Binger


One: May our prayers come before you, O God, as incense, and may your presence surround and fill us, so that in union with all creation, we might sing your praise and your love in our lives.

All: Amen

Thank you for all who made this evening wonderful: Music Dir. Michael Bjork, Worship Accompanist Sharon Neuenfeldt & Cheri Schwartz (beautiful music), Mary Binger (liturgist), Jenni Shaller (Chancel decoration), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech), Lori Mildon & Mary Ann Litfin (6 pm soup supper host), Walt Richey (6:30 topical discussion co-host)



People's Congregational Church

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Credits & Permissions | *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in your busy lives*, Wayne Muller. | Psalm 23 - KJV | Holden Evening Prayer Service, Marty Haugen

From Jesus (phrases from the gospels, quoted in *Sabbath*)

*Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full...
I have come that you may have life, and that abundantly...
These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you,
and that your joy may be full.*

From “The Pursuit of Happiness” (in *Sabbath*)

Happiness grows only in the sweet soil of time. As our time is eaten away by speed and overwork, we are less available to be surprised by joy, a sunset, a kind word, an unplanned game of tag with a child, a warm loaf of bread from the oven. But for all our striving and accomplishment, our underlying need for happiness does not withdraw and disappear. So we pursue happiness on the run, trying to make our lives more and more efficient, squeezing every task into tighter increments, hoping to somehow “get” our happiness when we are able to fit it in.

When our happiness fails to appear—when we are tired, weary, and spent—we turn to the marketplace for help. There, we are offered something that looks very much like happiness—a tantalizing substitute for happiness—something more easily acquired, more quickly and conveniently bought and sold. We are offered the satisfaction of desire.

At first blush, the satisfaction of desire seems very much like happiness. After all, what could possibly make us happier than acquiring what we want? But if we look closely at the dynamics of desire, we quickly discover that it is a temporary and ultimately unsatisfying impulse.

The Buddha taught that desire gives birth to suffering. He said that our thirst—or “craving”—for what we desire actually causes us great sorrow. If we are always seeking for what we do not have, he said, we will always be disappointed...

We can feel the difference between happiness—which is often simple and easy, an inner shift toward appreciation and gratefulness for what is before us—and desire, which is often frantic and relentless, cutting the heart with its sharp and painful demands. (p. 124-125, 127)

From “Selling Unhappiness” & “Sensuality and Delight” (in *Sabbath*)

It is imperative that we recognize that our particular model of civilization is actually *designed to produce suffering*. If we simply work harder and longer and more efficiently to make it work better—without stopping to see what we have built—we will simply produce suffering more efficiently.

Sabbath is a time to stop, to refrain from being seduced by our desires. To stop working, stop making money, stop spending money. See what you have. Look around. Listen to your life. Do you really need more than this?...

The Sabbath rocks us and holds us until we can remember who we are. If we are to deeply and fully integrate rest into the rhythm of our lives, we need a sense memory, a visceral bodily experience of what it feels like to be delightfully inactive... On the Sabbath we smell spices, we bring flowers, we smell the bread in the oven, and we are transported, we recall feelings and insights we have known before, and we remember. When Sabbath is done and we return to our labor, we carry the fragrance of rest in our bodies. (p. 137, 151)

Psalm 23 ~ King James Version

**The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
The Lord maketh me to lie down in green pastures
and leadeth me beside the still waters.
The Lord restoreth my soul
and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for their name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

One: The light shines in the darkness...
All: ... and the darkness has not overcome it.