

# FAITH @ HOME

Week of August 25, 2019

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

## ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

**READ:** Psalm 103:1-8

**REFLECT:** Passion is a strong, beautiful emotion. When you are passionate, you pour your heart and soul into what you are doing. Can you think of something into which you have poured your entire heart and soul? Maybe for you, it was a project, a sport, or your family. The first verse in Psalm 103 is a wonderful reminder that we are called to pour our heart and soul into praising God. It says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." (Psalm 103:1, NRSV) What would that kind of praise look like? How do we teach that kind of praise to our children? Many days, I find myself not fully praising God because there are many distractions that pull me away. It is my heart's desire to praise God with all that is within me and to teach my children the same. The best way I can think to do that is through example, by praising God with my heart and soul alongside my children.

**RESPOND:** Choose some praise music or hymns that you like to sing, turn it up loud and take some time to praise and worship God. Use this as an opportunity to let loose, forget about the other distractions in your life for a few minutes, and just focus on God. Sing at the top of your lungs, dance, and just worship. Take time as a family to bless the Lord with all that is within you!

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MEREDITH EHLER



Meredith Ann Ehler spends her days juggling life as a mama, wife, and daughter of God in San Antonio, TX. She gained over eight years' experience with hands-on parish ministry as both a Youth & Children's Minister before being called to focus on full-time momming for her two children, Camille and Camden. When she is not chasing her own kids or folding laundry, she enjoys helping with her congregation's children's ministry, reading, and living her best life. She has a passion for Jesus and sharing his love with children and families in practical, relational ways.

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## ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

**READ:** Luke 13:10-17

**REFLECT:** Have you ever had a day when you had to do a lot? Maybe you had to get up and go to school. Then, after school, you had to practice a sport. Then, after practicing a sport, you had to spend some time practicing an instrument. After practice, you had homework. After homework, you had chores. Then it was time to shower and brush your teeth. And, all of a sudden, the day went by so fast and it's time to go to bed, before starting a new day--maybe a day that is just as busy. Maybe each of your days are busy.

Adults often talk about being busy. A lot of the time, adults talk about being busy as if to show other adults just how much they do and can get done. Adults often think that doing more is doing better; that people respect you more if you do more. The truth is that, behind all the busyness, there are a lot of tired adults. Just like you might be tired after a long day doing all the things that you do. When we are tired, we can be grumpy or frustrated or mean to those around us.

When we take time to rest and be less busy, we can be our best selves and do our best work and act in more loving ways to those in our lives. God worked hard creating the world in six days then rested on the seventh day, what we call the Sabbath. Jesus went to the wilderness to rest before continuing the work and ministry of telling people about God's love.

**RESPOND:** Take time to rest. Pick a day to do little as possible, or only things that you enjoy and that give you energy. Take a break for 30 minutes or an hour in the middle of the day, or just before you go to bed, to read or listen to music or something else you find relaxing.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: PATRICK KANGRGA



Patrick Christopher Kangrga is the Associate for Youth Ministries at Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park, California. Originally from Arkansas, he left home to participate in two years of the Episcopal Service Corps in Maryland and in Massachusetts. After this came the beginning of his lay-professional journey with positions at parish and diocesan levels in New York and New Jersey. He has primarily served youth, with a foray into children's ministry.

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## ADULT AND YOUTH

**READ:** Luke 13:10-17

**REFLECT:** Sabbath is a holy time of rest that is observed by Christians and Jews all over the world. In this week's Gospel, we read about Jesus healing on the Sabbath. Jesus is doing what he was called to do. While everyone around Jesus sided with him, the leaders of the Synagogue were mad at Jesus for working on the Sabbath.

This is one of many things that Jesus did that made people mad. Jesus was a friend to the outcasts, spoke to women he was not supposed to, healed on the Sabbath, and other things! Jesus did as God called him to do. He showed unconditional love and made the decisions he knew were right. This wasn't easy, and it isn't easy for us to do the same. We are called to live and love like Jesus. Sometimes it is easy to see how to do that, and sometimes we miss the opportunity, like the leaders in the Synagogue. However, we are able to turn back to God and try again.

**RESPOND:** Think about a time that you decided to do something that you knew was right, but maybe not everyone else agreed with; or a time where you could have but didn't. How does it feel to do what you feel is right?

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MAGGIE PAUL



Maggie Paul is the Assistant Director for Youth and Family Ministry at Christ Episcopal Church in Charlotte, NC where she focuses on Middle School and relational ministry as well as curriculum. She previously served at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, GA where she developed and implemented a comprehensive Confirmation curriculum. She is very excited to bring aspects of this curriculum to her new parish. As an undergraduate with a passion for youth ministry, she served as a summer camp counselor and Episcopal student center "church mouse," and she continues to use her gifts and talents as a singer and musician to nurture her own journey and inspire others on theirs.

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## ADULT AND ADULT

**READ:** Luke 13:10-17

**REFLECT:** One of the hardest practices for me to incorporate into my life has been an intentional Sabbath. I so easily find myself working without taking a real break because I love the work, because it's a source of meaning in my life, because many times I have a lot of work to do in a short period of time, and because sometimes it's easier to just keep working. Having an intentional day of rest in my life also goes against a culture that places a great emphasis on productivity.

And so, I often deny the commandment to honor the Sabbath and I don't take routine breaks. After long periods without a Sabbath, I'm much more easily stressed by small things, I don't have the mental and spiritual bandwidth that I need to effectively be present with the people for whom I care, and I am much more prone to sickness and colds.

In this week's reading, Jesus seems to be showing us that the Sabbath is about more than just following a rule. It's not about taking a break because it's "the right thing to do." Instead, Jesus connects the Sabbath to healing. In healing the woman who was crippled, Jesus makes clear that the Sabbath is connected to healing – that intentional rest is essential to being made whole in body, mind, and spirit. Jesus defies the notion that the Sabbath is just a rule to be kept without purpose, but shows it to be a gift from God that can help us find wholeness.

**RESPOND:** If a Sabbath is already part of your routine, thank God for the gift of Sabbath during your prayer time. If an intentional time of rest is not part of your routine, set aside time this week to rest or play without any work involved, even if just for a few hours.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CLAYTON HARRINGTON



Clayton is the Episcopal Campus Missioner at the University of Georgia. He is also the Rector's Associate for Youth and Young Adult Ministries at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Athens, Georgia. In these roles, Clayton is passionate about the potential of Christian community, worship, and service to empower youth and young adults to grow into the people that God has made them to be. Before moving to Atlanta in August of 2014, Clayton earned a BA in History and Religion from Campbell University in North Carolina (May 2014). Clayton is a graduate of Candler School of Theology, having earned a Master of Divinity with a Certificate in Episcopal Studies (May 2017). Clayton is a postulant for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Atlanta.

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