



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — July 12, 2023

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From Canon Clark

Choosing God's restFULness over the world's restLESSness

This is a transcript of a video message.

This is Canon Margo Peckham Clark in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. In her most recent message, Bishop Hughes invited us to a Summer of Sabbath, a time of rest, gratitude, and finding the things that give us joy. The noted biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann goes perhaps even one step further, when he says that Sabbath is more than the pause that refreshes, it is the pause that transforms. He reminds us that we live in a world that is in so many ways characterized by anxiety, and that when we take the time to rest, as God rested after creation, we remember that creation is not dependent only on work. Creation is dependent on God. And when we choose God, we choose restfulness over the restlessness of our world.

So how is it going for you in these first couple of weeks of the Summer of Sabbath? When we truly rest in the way that Sabbath envisions, one of the things that can happen is our minds and our hearts, our spirits, start to quiet. We disconnect from that restlessness that characterizes so much of our lives. And even if we are running around and doing things - I've been running to lacrosse tournaments for my son, a lot of the last month or so - even when we are still busy in some way that Sabbath rest starts to disconnect us from the anxiety of the world, and open our hearts to turn more fully towards God. And when we turn more fully towards God out of this place of restfulness, we can be grateful, and we can seek and find the things that give us true joy, the things that God has made us for. This is a lot in

a world that doesn't always invite Sabbath, or restfulness.

We have suggested three books that you might consider. I would urge you that if you're not yet starting to feel rested, and that kind of disconnection from all the anxiety of the world that is the aim of Sabbath, that you wait a little bit. These are all short books, and they'll all be waiting. So if you simply need to rest, and be, and be with loved ones, and enjoy the summer, do that. When we do get that deep rest of Sabbath though, our hearts are turned not only to gratitude, flowing from that gratitude, we are drawn into a deeper relationship with God and a desire to serve God. And each of the three books that we've recommended help with that in some way.

The first one is called "How to Pray" by Bishop John Pritchard from the Church of England. And it truly is a little manual on how to pray. If you've never thought much about praying besides the Lord's Prayer, or "Please God help me" in moments of crisis, Pritchard's manual is a wonderful way to start to think more deeply about prayer in a way that's really accessible and fits easily into daily life. There's two other books that we've recommended. One is by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, "Being Disciples." And the subtitle is the "Essentials of the Christian life." So as you move through Sabbath, this is a way to think more about all of the elements of a Christian life from one of the great thinkers and theologians of our time. Again, it's short and accessible and covers a lot of areas that connect to our daily lives and being in community. The third book that we've recommended is by Catherine Meeks. It's called "The Night is Long but Light Comes in the Morning" Meditations for Racial Healing." Some of you may remember of Professor Meeks coming to speak to us during the pandemic on Zoom. And this is a

series of meditations that can be digested one at a time, looking at this theme of racial healing and how it connects to our spiritual lives. There are 48 meditations, so you could take one each day as you go through the rest of this summer of Sabbath.

So whether you choose to look at one of these three books now or later in the summer, or if you are simply resting and enjoying your life and your loved ones and feeling connected to God in that way, God bless you and keep you and we will see you in September.

Summer of Sabbath: Suggested reading

As Canon Clark mentioned in her message above, Bishop Hughes has recommended three books for your summer reading – simple, easy reads that can help you think about your spiritual life.

The Night is Long but Light Comes in the Morning: Meditations for Racial Healing

By Catherine Meeks; foreword by Michael B. Curry

From the winner of The President Joseph R. Biden Lifetime Achievement Award, a spiritual guide to restoring yourself from racial trauma and committing to the long work of dismantling racism.

How Do I Pray?: A Little Book Of Guidance

By John Pritchard

John Pritchard explores the art and power of prayer and explains how to slow down enough to hear what God wants to say. A book for all who are curious about how to become more in tune with the Spirit.

Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life

By Rowan Williams

In his typically gentle, inviting, pastoral writing style, Williams offers biblically grounded wisdom for Christians at all stages of their journeys as disciples of Jesus.

Happening at Our Churches

Harriet Tubman region holds 2nd annual Juneteenth celebration

By Julie Crawford

Over three years, ago the Social Justice Team of The Church of Messiah in Chester embarked on the Sacred Ground series under the leadership of the Rev. Jerry Racioppi and Anti-Racism Commission member Michelle Simon. The program served as a catalyst for learning from the other. Since the Sacred Ground Series, Messiah has collaborated in the Chester, Mendham and Washington Township region to offer community events both for Juneteenth and the International Day of Prayer in September.

Marking its 2nd annual Juneteenth Celebration, this year on June 19 over 80 community members met at the Chester Gazebo on Main Street. The program included music, prayers, history including a reading of the Granger Order with period costume, a Stand Up for the Other Pledge, and tributes by the Mayors of Chester and Chester Township, along with the Principal of Mendham High School and the Admissions Officer at Delbarton School.

The event is coordinated as a collaboration partnership of the Social Justice Teams from The Church of Messiah, St. Lawrence the Martyr, and The Community of St John Baptist (CSJB) in Mendham. In addition to participating, CSJB provided the printing services for the program, and Sr. Linda Clare led the following Juneteenth Prayer.

Today, we commemorate the end of slavery in America.

This day partially reminds us of the progress made.

This day also partially reminds us of the progress we have not made.

We celebrate the freedom of black lives in our nation.

We grieve that we have not correctly reconciled racism in our nation.

You created each person in Your image.

The two greatest commandments call us to love

*You with all our heart, souls, and minds; Then, to love our neighbor as ourselves.
 Your love for us motivates us to love each other.
 If we do not love each other, then ultimately, we have not experienced Your love.
 As much as we commemorate and celebrate Juneteenth, we grieve this day.
 We mourn that our black brothers and sisters have not been loved as our neighbors.
 We mourn that our black brothers and sisters have been treated less than created in Your image throughout history. So, Lord, we confess our sins and repent.
 The healing and reconciliation we desire comes from the gospel.
 On Juneteenth 2023, we ask You to guide our nation.
 May the good news of the gospel motivate us to love each other.
 May the ideals of our words match the practices of our lives.
 May a fresh empowerment of Your Spirit unite us together.
 Give us eyes to see and ears to hear Your will and leading.
 Amen.*

Diocesan Announcements

Newark priest in Southern Ohio bishop slate

The Rev. Dr. Elaine Ellis Thomas of All Saints, Hoboken is one of four candidates in the all-female slate for the election of the 10th bishop of Southern Ohio. The election will be held Saturday, September 30 at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati.

Clergy ministry transitions

Retirement

- **July 31 : The Rev. Pam Bakal**
Rector of Grace, Nutley

Happening in the Wider Church

Update on the election of the next presiding bishop

The members of The Episcopal Church Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop invite Episcopalians to join them in prayer as they continue their discernment work leading to the election of the 28th presiding bishop next June. They suggest this prayer:

Almighty God, source of all wisdom and understanding: Look graciously on your church, and so guide the hearts and minds of those who will choose our next presiding bishop, that we may receive a faithful pastor who will care for all of your people, equip us for our ministries, and proclaim your word to us and to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

What happens next:

- July 15, 2023 – Deadline for nominations
- August 15, 2023 – Deadline for nominees to submit paperwork
- The Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop selects final slate from nominees
- June 23-28, 2024 – Election of the 28th Presiding Bishop at the 81st General Convention