

Sabbath



Keep the Sabbath holy

The spiritual rest which God especially intends in this commandment is that we not only cease from our labor and trade but much more - that we let God alone work in us and that in all our powers we do nothing of our own.
Martin Luther, *Treatise on Good Works*, In Marva Dawn, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*

Marva Dawn describes the rhythms of Sabbath as Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting.

Ponder an ideal Sabbath for yourself, together with family, friends, church, community. Be mindful, as a professional church worker or clergy, of whether or not this ideal Sabbath will be Sunday, as Marva Dawn suggests, or another day of the week.

Is this a full twenty-four hour period? If so does it flow from evening to evening, morning to morning, other? Is this a shorter period? Be realistic for the sake of this exercise.

What date(s) do you propose on your present calendar for this Sabbath?

1. Ceasing - what are activities from which you would consciously cease? What preparations would you need to do ahead of a Sabbath period in order to cease from these activities during your Sabbath? How will you consciously lay aside your worries and concerns? What rituals of beginning and ending might help you claim Sabbath?

2. Resting - how will you rest? What mental and physical disciplines are required for you to rest spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically, relationally? What tools, such as journaling, artwork, music, conversation will assist your resting?

3. Embracing - how will you embrace the goodness of creation, of God, of Christian relationships, of life? How does your Sabbath help you embrace the sanctity of time? Do you need to attend to space (your environment) in special ways in order to be free to devote yourself to embracing the freedom of Sabbath time?

4. Feasting - what good things is God inviting you to celebrate at this time of your life? How would you feast with food, fellowship, beauty, nature, friends?