

Madison Mennonite Church
Koinonia Worship

September 26, 2021

GATHERING

Greet one another and add names to the liturgy of those who would like to lead, read, or facilitate. Each blank can be filled by a different person, and all ages are encouraged to participate in leadership! Help non-readers with their lines. Everyone reads the "Many" parts, unmuted for groups reading virtually. Re-mute afterward.

Opening Song (optional)

If your group has discerned you are open to singing together, sing "Brethren, We Have Met to Worship," Voices Together 25 (music on pg. 4). Online groups may want to listen to [this arrangement](#) of the hymn.

Call to Worship: Leader _____

VT 854, adapted

One: Some of us are exhausted.

Many: We come to rest.

One: Some of us are hungry.

Many: We come to be fed.

One: Some of us are disoriented.

Many: We come to pray.

One: Some of us are broken.

Many: We come to be healed.

One: We gather around you today, O Christ.

Many: Renew us, feed us, hear us, heal us. Grant us your peace.

Lighting our Candles: Leader _____

Leader: Each week, we light a candle to symbolize Christ's presence with us and the unity we have with our beloved siblings at Madison Mennonite.

Light candles

Leader: Christ, our light, bless our fellowship with your Spirit's presence. We remember other MMC Koinonia Groups and pray that we are all united in love and peace. Amen.

HEARING the WORD: Reader 1 _____ ; **Reader 2** _____ ; **Reader 3** _____

Reader 1: A reading from Exodus 16.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days."

Reader 2: The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."

However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.

Reader 3: Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. He said to them, “This is what the Lord commanded: ‘Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.’”

Imaginative engagement for all ages (yes, even adults!): **Leader:** _____

“Rain down bread from heaven”?! What would that sound like? What would that smell like? What might it feel like if you were standing outside? What type of bread do you imagine (or hope) would rain from the skies? What would be your first reaction if you awoke to bread laying on grass outside your door? Invite each person to respond to one of these questions, starting with children and youth.

Guiding Reflection: Reader: _____

Side note and credit: This reflection is largely based on ideas brought up by Alison Brookins in her Sabbath sermon in July of 2020. Many of the things she said have been ruminating with me for over a year now and I keep coming back to them, so with our series on Sabbath, it made sense to bring them back into our conversation. These ideas also seem to pair well with koinonia groups and discussion and, truth be told, I really want to hear what my k-group has to say about this! --Annali

In the Exodus reading, Sabbath is an integral part of life in the wilderness. After years of working in Egypt as slaves, the Israelites are now free, but free to what? Wander in the wilderness, completely reliant on God's provision of food each day. As a planner and cook who loves leftovers, I can imagine the difficulty of only gathering enough for one day. And then on the Sabbath, the Israelites are asked to trust in the previous day's provisions and not gather anything. They are asked to trust in God, in enough, and to rest, to be loved by the God who brought them out of Egypt.

Alison used the phrase, “Sabbath is doing the hard work of letting yourself be loved.” That phrase has stuck with me. It's not about a reward when the work is done. Justice work is never done and yet we are still called to sabbath. Our worth is not dependent on what we produce. God is building a new system. Nor is Sabbath about a simplified version of self-care that our culture promotes... “Treat yourself” “You deserve this” ...etc. Self-care is so important, and that's a piece of this, but not in the consumerist way it's proposed in our culture. Sabbath is about relationship and accepting love and worthiness. This is hard work and has shifted the way I, and we as a family, strive to “keep our Sabbath.” For me, this means journaling, singing, praying, walks, reading scripture etc, the things I want to do but never seem to prioritize, honestly because they are hard. And not “productive.” But I'm trying to see it as a new system of time management. One not based in productivity, or work vs. play/rest, but about sitting with God and letting myself be loved.

Questions for Group Reflection: Facilitator _____

At its best, worship enables us to strengthen the connections we have to our faith community, to Creation, and to the Divine. Use this time to reflect together, using some or all of the questions below, or spend time in silence or draft your own questions if that is best for your group today.

1. *Beginning with children or youth, then moving to adults:* Do you do anything different with your family on Sunday?
2. Did your family have Sabbath practices growing up? Do you now? Are they different?
3. What do you think of the phrase, “Sabbath is doing the hard work of letting yourself be loved?” What does that look like for you?



25 Brethren, We Have Met to Worship

HOLY MANNA 8.7.8.7 D

1 Breth- ren, we have met to wor- ship; sis- ters, let us
 2 Kin- dred, will you come and help us? Mo- ses' fam- ily
 3 Is there here a trem- bling jail- er, seek- ing grace and
 4 Let us love our God su- preme- ly, let us love each

praise our God. Will you pray with all your pow- er?
 aid- ed him. Will you help the trem- bling mourn- ers
 filled with tears? Is there here a weep- ing Mar- y.
 oth- er, too. Let us love and pray for sin- ners

Will you hear and preach the word? All is vain un-
 who are strug- gling hard with sin? Tell them all a -
 pour- ing forth a flood of tears? Breth- ren, join your
 till our God makes all things new. Christ will call us

less the Spir- it of the ho- ly One comes down. Chris- tians,
 about the Sav- ior. Tell them that he will be found. Chris- tians,
 cries to help them, sis- ters, let your prayers a- bound! Pray, oh
 home to heav- en, at his ta- ble we'll sit down. Christ will

pray, and ho- ly man- na will be show- ered all a- round.
 pray, and ho- ly man- na will be show- ered all a- round.
 pray that ho- ly man- na will be scat- tered all a- round.
 grd him- self and serve us with sweet man- na all a- round.

For a lower key, see "God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens" (#529).
 Text: George Adkins (USA), Social and Camp-Meeting Hymns for the People, 1817, alt.
 Music: The Columbian Harmony (USA), 1825

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Koinonia Worship for 9/26 curated by Annali Smucker-Bryan and Pastor Valerie

Sources used:

Bible reading from the New Revised Standard Version.

Announcements:

*A reminder that **Youth CE** (for middle and high schoolers) will be happening next Sunday at 3:30 pm at church! **Children's CE** (pre-K through 5th grade) will be offered virtually at 4pm.

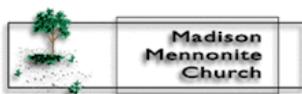
*Next Sunday in All-Church Worship, we will continue our series on **Sabbath**. How do Sabbath principles lead to economic justice?

*Save the date: **Holy Hallowe'en Gathering** Oct. 31, 3:15pm @ Church. An interactive faith formation activity for all ages...ending with trick-or-treating for kiddos!

This Week's Calendar:

- Tues., Sept 28 -
 Menno Works Writing Group 10am
 Menno Works Tea Talk, 7pm
- Wed., Sept. 29 - Community Care Call
 8:15pm
- Thurs., Sept. 30 - Next Phase Working
 Group, 6:30pm
- Fri., Oct. 1 - Guess Who's Coming for
 S'mores, 6:30pm (rain date: 10/2)
- Sun., Oct. 3 -
 3:30-4:15pm In-person fellowship time
 + Youth CE
 4:00pm Children's CE (virtual)
 5pm All-Church Worship & Fellowship

For links to these virtual gatherings, please see the weekly e-calendar. To add an event, please email deni@madison-mennonite.org.



Office: (608) 276-7680 <http://www.madison-mennonite.org/>
 Valerie Showalter, Pastor | pastor@madison-mennonite.org