



Rest as Resistance, Community as Resistance

Diane Melvin

January 26, 2025

Gathering of Community

Music for Gathering

Words of Welcome & Announcements Gordon Bolar

Opening Words 'Slower & Slower' by Mark Belletini Diane Melvin

Introit 'Loosen' (Halpert)

Chalice Lighting Gordon Bolar

If you are lighting a chalice at home, you are encouraged to type in the chat box 'A chalice is lit in (your neighborhood/city/street).'

Words: 'The Light Within Us' by Brian C. Lee

Affirming our Connections

Time for All Diane Melvin

Children and Teacher Recessional 'Go Forth' (Ramsey/Drake)

Go forth in peace, in search of wisdom,

With love to guide you on your way

And may the joy of life surround you

Wherever you may go.

Offering Gordon Bolar

Support the good and important work of People's Church:

www.tinyurl.com/givetopeoples



Offertory

Giving Thanks for All That Sustains Us Gordon Bolar

*From the countless gifts we each have been given,
gifts of life and love and sustenance,
we bring these small portions to share in the works of love
which none of us can accomplish alone.*

Joys and Sorrows Gordon Bolar

Searching for Wisdom and Inspiration

Silent Meditation

Spoken Meditation 'For When Rested Feels like a Risk' by Cole

Arthur Riley Gordon Bolar

Musical Meditation 'Filled with Loving Kindness' (#1031)

Readings Poems from *Rest is Sacred* by Octavia F. Raheem

Music 'Sanctuary' (Newcomer)

Sermon 'Rest as Resistance, Community as Resistance'

Diane Melvin

Returning to the World

Closing song 'We Are...' (#1051)

Closing words Diane Melvin

Postlude 'The Hummingbirds' (Amy Stephens) Jennifer Drake

Coffee Quarter breakout rooms

All are invited to stay on Zoom for 15 minutes of small group conversation.

Leaders Devoted to Rest podcast with Octavia Raheem

<https://open.spotify.com/show/0cz550nq27Rs6sLQ6I3V11?si=68b3fbb3ef164fb1>

"A commitment to spiritual life necessarily means we embrace the eternal principle that love is all, everything, our true destiny. Despite overwhelming pressure to conform to the culture of lovelessness, we still seek to know love" ~ *bell hooks*

For when Rest Feels like a Risk

Rested God,

We want more than a life lived exhausted. That you have woven healing rhythms of rest into our minds and bodies reminds us we are worthy of habitual restoration. Keep us from apologizing for our own healing, that we would know that when we pause or rest, we are restoring not only our own bodies but the very condition of a world held captive by greed and utility. We grow weary of societies who view us as more machine than human, more product than soul. The fear that we won't survive without overworking stalks our days. Liberate us from the depraved socioeconomic structures that require that the poor and vulnerable sacrifice their own rest at the altar of survival and opportunity. Protect us from fear as we rest with you, breathe with you. Remind us that the beauty and paradox of our humanness is that we were made to close our eyes, that we might see. May it be so.

– from *Black Liturgies* by Cole Arthur Riley

The Earth is Trying to Tell Us to Rest

The soil that plans to yield a great harvest for seasons and generations to come can't always be producing. At times, it must lie fallow, unsown, unseeded. It must have moments, if not seasons, where it is not being plowed, picked at, worked, or produced upon. It must rest.

Fallowing soil is a method of sustainable land management that has been used by wise farmers all over the world. On the surface such periods may look like nothing at all is happening. Yet beneath the surface, in the brilliant dark of blackness, an entire universe and ecosystem is transforming into a place that yields wild abundance.

The benefits of allowing land to lie fallow are not unlike the benefits of allowing yourself to rest.

Rest:

Increases your capacity

Provides access to dense nourishment

Offers guidance for sustainable restructuring and organizing

Toward more abundance, not less.

Yields future abundance

It's not always easy to step out of the tilling space of your work, especially in this climate and at this time.

Yet earth wisdom tells us that rest is not a luxury. It is necessary. The alternative is to completely deplete the soil, leaving your future and the next generations a guarantee of famine.

Your seeds deserve the richest soil. Our seeds deserve the richest soil possible.

The land and the most sustainable land practices teach us that devoting ourselves to periods of rest allows for the soil to become as well as possible.

We know the quality of the soil dictates the destiny of the seed.

The seedling of your dreams deserves abundant nourishment, and this requires rest.

Instead of reproducing the same old nightmares, rest creates room for new futures and dreams to grow.

- from *Rest is Sacred: Reclaiming our Brilliance Through the Practice of Stillness* by Octavia f. Raheem

Readings and Poems ~

I return to the earth
and let her remind me
that rest (cold and solemn)
is what winter is for. ~ from 'January' by Alix Klingenberg

Incantations for Rest: Poems, Meditations & Other Magic

By Atena O. Danner

DEAR FEAR,
I see you, Fear. I hear you. I know you.
I'm not mad at you and I don't believe you.
Fear, you are like my teenage child. Sibling. Self.
You flinch and you protect. You warn. You need rest.
Let me relieve you, guard you while you sleep.
I see you still and breathing.
I gently close the door and step away.

Rest is Sacred: Reclaiming our Brilliance Through the Practice of Stillness by Octavia F. Raheem

Rest is a Revelation

Rest reveals what is possible and clears our eyes. Rest can show us a new vision and release us from the tyranny of *how* it will all unfold. There is a part of us that already knows. That part is often covered in thick tapestries of exhaustion. The blanket of rest dissolves the parts of us that continue to align with collective confusion and amnesia instead of remembrance and clarity.

So much revelation is waiting for us to slow down, untangle from the frayed fabric of compulsive busyness, and finally listen.



I scraped my bits of clay together
Until I had a hand to reach out with,
Then shared what I had.

I sang myself together
Until my voice could be heard again,
Then offered a song of comfort.

My friends and I pour the same water
Between our cups, taking turns.
Everyone thirsty; no one dried out.
This is how we survive the drought.

~Atena O. Danner

She asked, What will be different because you were here?
She replied:
People breathe easier because I was here.
People laugh more because I was here.
People have greater access to their tears because I was here.
People are more gentle with themselves, each other, and the earth
because
I was here.

They no longer ask, *What do you do?*
They inquire and share:
What are you here to heal within your lineage?
What are you here to rest or relieve within your lineage?
What does your work allow you to heal within you?
What does your work heal in the world?
What part of you is allowed to rest or access relief through your work?
What does your rest heal within you? The world?

~~~~~  
The more rested you become,  
The more of a safe person  
and place you become.

You become a living  
Breathing refuge  
As you rest,  
Become more grounded  
And regulated.

The more you soften your gaze,  
The safer you become to yourself.

The safer you are to you,  
The safer you are to others.

~~~~~  
You trade in the urgent life
For a softer one
That includes rest on the green belly of the earth
Sky gazing.

You almost missed this sweet life in pursuit of someone else's idea of
what you should be and do.

You know you aren't the only one who is worthy of this kind of life,
So you create space for others to rest.
Space ripples through all of your relationships,
Makes deeper connection

Your love grows as you rest and become
Become more fulfilled from the inside out.
~ *From Rest is Sacred* by Octavia F. Raheem

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***We Will Rest: The Art of Escape*** by Tricia Hersey

Rest is a spiritual practice  
Rest is a justice practice.  
Rest is a care practice.  
Rest is a faith practice.  
Rest is an anti-war practice.  
Rest is an anti-capitalist practice.  
Rest is a freedom-seeking practice.

~~~~~  
Burnout is a scam and its language was created by agents of grind
culture, guided by corporations tricking you into believing it's normal
and a regular part of any working person's career. We speak the word
"burnout" so much when it should be named correctly instead. There
is no "burnout". There is worker exploitation, abuse from capitalism,
and trauma stored in our bodies from a lifetime of overworking.

~~~~~  
Create community. Build community. Be community.  
Community care can seem impossible when you are exhausted.  
It is possible. Community is anywhere two or more are gathered.  
Two is still community. Don't rush to quantity as the marker of deep  
community and care. Don't rush to do anything alone.  
To be an escape artist is to be in the collective. Supported in rest,  
care, and love. Demand the collective as a source of inspiration and  
change. Real change comes from the people.

~~~~~  
Create a concise one-sentence response to the question "**What are
you willing to rest for?**" Then memorize it. Embody it. Become it.
Then lay down in the beauty and power of your plans.