



**Come with me by yourselves  
to some quiet place and get some rest.**

**- Mark 6:31**



**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
129 MILLER AVENUE  
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801  
603.436.6038  
[fumcportsmouth.com](http://fumcportsmouth.com)

**REV. DR. DEBRA J. HANSON**

## Welcome

**Hymn** “Come, and Find the Quiet Center” (FWS #2128)

**Scripture** Mark 6:30-32 (CEB)

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught. Many people were coming and going, so there was no time to eat. He said to the apostles, “Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while.” They departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.

**Message** “Time Out”

“Let us go to a place where we can be alone and get some rest.” Jesus knew the importance of finding time to rest, refresh, renew, and restore ourselves. He often went off somewhere by himself to pray. Jesus understood weary, tired, depleted. He knew what it meant to be hungry, in need of sleep, and tired of the demands made on him. Mark 1:35 tells us, “And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” Jesus needed time out, a break, a place apart so he could reconnect with God and himself.

That’s what vacations, days off, and quiet time offer us. Does God think we should take a vacation? Definitely. Jesus repeatedly demonstrated our need to rest and refresh, whether it is for an hour of quiet time, a day off from work, or a week or two apart from our daily routines. God set the example, as we see in Genesis 2:3, we read what God did after six days of creating the universe: “So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it, God rested from all the work that God had done in creation.” (NRSV) God rested. God renewed. God refreshed.

We sometimes are so busy that we just don’t feel like we can take time out. The kids have to be taken to school, recreational activities, piano lessons, little league practice, or a myriad of other events. We have meetings to attend, housework to do, appointments to keep, work to accomplish. In our society today, everyone is so busy! There are many people who don’t take a vacation or a day off or even a ***little*** time off.

Pastors can be notorious for not taking time off, for working long hours, and neglecting their quiet time. Pastors, and many other people, work on Sundays, which has traditionally been considered Sabbath time. However, over the course of these past few decades, Sunday has become just another day on the calendar. In fact, some of us may have noticed that many calendars have moved Sunday to the end of the week and started the week with Monday. Work has become all-consuming for so many people. Taking “time out” is important for us, not only to replenish our weariness and to take a break from the routine.

When I was in seminary, I remember one of my professors telling us that we don't take “time out” every day, every week, and during vacations because of the work we do. Rather we take that “time out” so we can DO that work. This can apply to everyone. We take “time out” so we can be who God calls us to be, and to continue to grow in faith on our journeys of life.

That is why, when we take “time out,” we don't really go alone. God is with us. God walks with us, guides us, and blesses us. In the translation for verse 31 of today's passage, we read, [Jesus said to the disciples,] “*Come away with me. Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while.*” “Come away with me.” The disciples had been out on a mission of teaching, healing, and ministering to people, and they were tired. Jesus knew all about that, and he invited them to join him at a quiet place. He said, “Come away with me” – to a quiet place – to rest – to refresh – to renew.

During these summer months, many people take vacations. Some go far away to explore new places, some take a “staycation” when they find rest and relaxation at home. Others may take a few days because they can't be away long, and still others work all summer and take time off during another season. The important thing is to be intentional every day, every week, and every year to take “time out.” As followers of Jesus, we have the invitation, “Come away with me to a quiet place.” It's a call to worship and being together for worship helps us to reconnect with God and each other. We look forward to that on September 12 as we re-open our church building!

One commentator wrote: “Together, as the Body of Christ, we have the opportunity to encourage one another and hold each other accountable for wellness, wholeness, and stewardship of all God’s good gifts . . . Don’t give up. Keep trying to feed yourself even as you feed others. Don’t let your emotional, physical, or spiritual well run dry.” (Sharron Blezard, found at Text This Week under commentaries for today’s scripture lesson.)

Maybe we don’t think of taking care of ourselves as stewardship, but when we realize that God has charged us with the job of being managers over God’s creation, the earth and all that is in it – including us – it makes sense that we would take care of ourselves. Jesus’ invitation to the disciples is for all of us, too, “Come away with me to a quiet place” – renew yourselves, rest, take time out.

Where is your quiet place? Maybe you have a favorite chair beside a window where you can watch birds or pray or just sit quietly. Maybe you like to hike in nature. Our oldest son and his family are hikers, and they took a vacation to the Great Smoky Mountains recently where they hiked and enjoyed the beauty of God’s creation. Or maybe, like my husband and I, you like to spend time on the beach, walking, collecting shells, or enjoying the sunshine. I have a friend who spends hours walking in the woods. There are those who like sitting outside on the deck or patio or yard, going to visit family or friends in another town or state, or visiting state and national parks.

There are so many possibilities, and we all can find that “time out” where we reconnect with God, with our own self, and with others as we strive to be the best person we can be, and as we grow into being the person God knows we are. Today, this week, this year, I hope and pray you will find your “time out” space and accept the invitation from Jesus, “Come away with me to a quiet place.” Amen.



## **Prayer**

Jesus, our Example and Teacher, you taught the disciples that they needed time away, time to refresh, time to renew, time to pray. Remind us again how important it is for us to do the same. Lead us to that place in our homes, on vacation, taking a walk, or in some quiet space where we can retreat from the world's noises and recommit our lives to you. Help us to be good listeners and to hear your guiding voice, feel your calming presence, and be empowered to return to our daily lives with the knowledge that you walk with us always. Amen.

## **Lord's Prayer** (From the Rainbow Cathedral)

God, lover of us all, most holy one. Help us to respond to you. To create what you want for us here on earth. Give us today enough for our needs. Forgive our weak and deliberate offenses, just as we must forgive others when they hurt us. Help us to resist evil and to do what is good. For we are yours, endowed with your power to make your world whole. Amen.

## **Hymn** "Take Time to Be Holy," vv. 1,4 (UMH #395)

## **Sending Forth**





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# WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER

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Juliann  
Joan Allen  
Naomi  
Erin Frane  
Madeline  
Charles Gilman  
Josh Jones  
Jenn

Harry Junkins  
Marilyn & Gil  
Donna Smith  
Sophia  
Bobbie Noble  
Dan Strange  
Danny Westbrook  
Marion Collishaw

Christine & her parents  
Those in nursing and assisted living care  
Our Church family





# WHO WE ARE

## FUMC PORTSMOUTH A RECONCILING CONGREGATION

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated in worshipping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors". We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801  
Office Phone 603-436-6038  
Email - [office@fumcportsmouth.net](mailto:office@fumcportsmouth.net)  
Website - [fumcportsmouth.com](http://fumcportsmouth.com)

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