

Dear Friends,

In the beginning, God created a world filled with beauty, order, and rest. From the first pages of Scripture, we see God inviting us to rest and find joy in being human and in relationship with Him. **This precious gift is called "Sabbath."**

The word "Sabbath" literally means to stop, cease, or desist. It is a day to set aside our work and remember that we are human beings, not human doings. Throughout the centuries, Sabbath has taken many shapes and forms, often subjected to religious legalism and neglect. Yet, **the gift of Sabbath** remains available to all who follow Jesus.

This year, we are excited to invite you to explore **the gift of Sabbath** in your unique and complex everyday life. This booklet offers fun and practical examples and ideas on the foundations of Sabbath, encouraging you "to pray and to play."

We encourage you to use this booklet like a cookbook full of recipes for great meals. Pick an idea that looks fun and give it a try. Use it with your family or on your own. Each Sabbath page includes Scripture and a theme based on the "I Am" statements of Jesus, along with discussion questions for individual or group reflection and ways to "play" (which can be the most challenging to figure out).

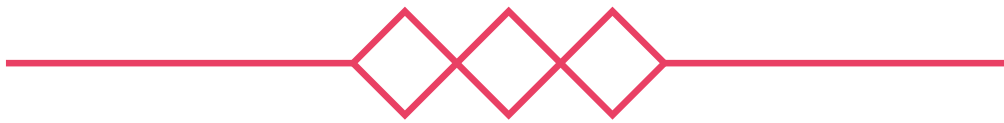
God loves you and longs for you to experience the rest, delight, trust, and joy that come from practicing a weekly time of "playing and praying" with Him and with one another.

Shabbat Shalom (May Your Sabbath be full of peace),
CEC Pastoral Team



Super simple ideas to help get started

- **choose a meal** (something you don't eat unless it's Sabbath)
- **write a short sabbath prayer** together that you can use each week
- **light a candle** to welcome the Sabbath time
- have **special Sabbath toys** set aside for the littles to be used only on Sabbath
- **No screens** - unless watching a particular movie or show together
- **Brainstorm together** ways to Sabbath this summer (See questions opposite)



In this booklet, **YOU'LL FIND WAYS TO:**

- **Talk about God:** Scripture & Theme
- **Pray:** Sharing about your week and praying for each other
- **Play:** Activity ideas (both related to weekly theme and in general)



"Puritan sabbaths that eliminated play were a disaster. Secular sabbaths that eliminate prayer are worse.

Sabbath-keeping involves both **praying & playing**"



"Eugene Peterson

REST

R: Reflect

E: Experience God's goodness

S: Spend time together

T: Talk to God

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being bored out of our minds, 10 being mind- blowingly busy), how busy would you say we are as a family?
2. What activities would you give up if you could?
3. What activities would be hard to give up? Why?
4. What activities do you wish Mom/Dad would give up? Why?
5. If we were to have a free day as a family once a week, what would you want us to do?
6. What would you like to do regularly as a family together that we seldom do? What would you like to do regularly as a family together that we seldom do?
7. When do you feel most relaxed?
8. What could we do as a family to fight busyness more?
9. Why do you think God commands us to rest?
10. What do you think it looks like to rest as God did?

11. When you think of Sabbath, what comes to mind?

12. Is it possible to do things that seem restful but actually don't help us rejuvenate? Why or why not?

13. Does incorporating Sabbath seem impossible to you? Why or why not?

A small brown and white dog is sitting on a sandy beach. The dog is wearing red sunglasses and a colorful lei made of pink, orange, and blue flowers. It is also wearing blue flip-flops. To the right of the dog is a small yellow rubber duck. In the background, there is a blue ocean and a clear sky. A wooden sign with a black chalkboard top is standing in the sand. The sign has the words "QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER" written on it in white, bold, capital letters.

**QUESTIONS TO
CONSIDER**



THEME: LIGHT

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 1, JOHN 8:12

FOCUS ON GOD

- Watch Bible Project video - John 1 Light
- Describe a time when you were afraid of the dark.
- What does Jesus mean when he says he is the “light of the world?”
- Who is he talking to and how do they react?
- What does it mean to bear witness?
- What did Jesus know about himself?
- What do you think it means to “know Jesus?”

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each person.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Play flashlight tag.
- Turn off the lights and use flashlights to make shadow puppets with your hands.
- Stay up 'til dark to see the stars.
- Make a chalk family shadow tracing outside on the driveway or sidewalk by tracing each other's shadow.
- Go for a hike where there are lots of shadows. Notice the ways the sunlight filters through.
- Watch a sunset (or if you're an early riser- the sunrise).
- If you're able, have a campfire in your backyard - or go to a park where that's allowed. Have s'mores, roast hotdogs.

Sabbath reminds us that "our time"
was never our time in the first
place. All time is God's time.
-AJ Swoboda

THEME: LIGHT



THEME: LIVING WATER

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 4, JOHN 7:37

FOCUS ON GOD

- Watch Bible Project “Water of Life” video.
- Are you “Team Carbonated” or “Team Plain” water? Why?
- What do you notice about Jesus in this story?
- How do you think the woman might be feeling as she talks with Jesus?
- What do you think Jesus means when he says she won’t thirst again if she drinks the water he gives?
- What does Jesus want her to know about himself?
- What does God want you to know about him?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Hike to a lake or waterfall.
- Go to the splashpad downtown and play in the water.
- Play in the sprinklers in the yard.
- Paint with watercolors. Display them in the house.
- Make special placemats to use only on Sabbath days.
- Find somewhere to skip rocks across the water.

"The Sabbath is God's solution to FOMO anxieties. On the Sabbath, we are "in" because we are with Jesus Christ. God is with us. And the world does not define us.

-AJ Swoboda

THEME: LIVING WATER



THEME: BREAD OF LIFE

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 6:35–40, 48

FOCUS ON GOD

- What's your favorite kind of bread?
- What do you notice about Jesus in the passage?
- What do you notice about the people he is talking to?
- How does physical bread give life?
- How does Jesus, as the "bread from heaven", give life to the world?
- What does God want you to know about himself?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

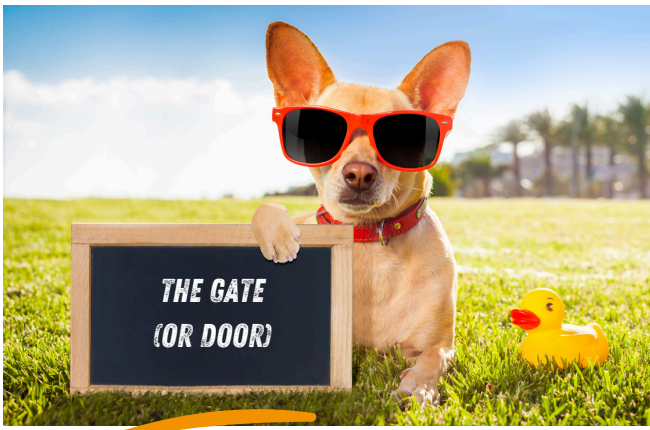
PLAY TOGETHER

- Make your favorite bread (or muffins, or pastries) together & maybe share some with someone who would enjoy it!
- Make cookies to share with neighbors or friends.
- Eat dessert first.
- Make a gratitude list. (or a gratitude jar) - each week write something you're grateful for and then read them together at the end of year.

God always and eternally intended the Sabbath to be a lifestyle—an attitude, a perspective, an orientation for the living that enables us to govern our lives and steer clear of bondage.

—Priscilla Shirer

THEME: BREAD OF LIFE



THEME: GATE (OR DOOR)

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 10:1–9

FOCUS ON GOD

- What is the purpose of a gate or door?
- Who is Jesus talking to and what does he want them to know?
- What does an open door or gate tell you?
- What does a closed door or gate tell you?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Go on a photo scavenger hunt - find the most interesting doors and make a collage of all the doors/gates you find. (Downtown is full of unique doors or gates)
- Build a fort together. Crawl in and out of the doors.
- Have an object lesson: each person picks an object and shares a lesson from the Bible using that object.

Sabbath is that uncluttered time and space in which we can distance ourselves from our own activities enough to see what God is doing.

—Eugene Peterson

THEME: GATE (OR DOOR)



THEME: GOOD SHEPHERD

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 10:14-18

FOCUS ON GOD

- Why does Jesus call himself the “good” shepherd (& not just the shepherd)?
- What do you notice about the good shepherd?
- What do you notice about the sheep?
- How has Jesus been your good shepherd?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Play Follow the Leader.
- Play Simon Says
- Take a drive and see what animals you spot.
- Stop & listen. Take a blindfolded walk around your house - what do you hear? (let your family guide you so you don't crash into things)

The sabbath helps us know
experientially that nothing we do
will make God love us more.

—Lynne M. Baab

THEME: GOOD SHEPHERD



THEME: RESURRECTION & LIFE

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 11:25–26

FOCUS ON GOD

- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- What do you notice about Mary & Martha?
- What was the hope they had?
- What does it mean to “believe in Jesus”?
- How do you live a life that shows you believe in Jesus?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Go on a walk and look for a plant that is alive in a very unlikely place.
- Spread out a blanket, lay on your back and look for shapes in the clouds.
- Talk about each person's favorite current worship song and why it's their favorite.
- Play a card game together.

"Keeping the Sabbath teaches us to trust God and enjoy Him...It's God's way to set us free from worry and anxiety, ambition and adrenaline, self-importance and anger, even loneliness."

—Bill Gaultiere

THEME: RESURRECTION & LIFE



THEME: WAY, TRUTH & LIFE

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 14:1-14

FOCUS ON GOD

- Talk about a time you didn't know how to get somewhere.
- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- What do you notice about Thomas and Philip?
- What does Jesus want them (& you) to know?
- What does Jesus want them (& you) to do?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Explore somewhere you've never been.
- Read a special book together outloud.
- Enjoy a picnic lunch in your backyard or nearby park.
- Tell a story one word at a time - each person add one word at a time to keep the story going. Make it as funny as you can.

The sabbath helps us know
experientially that nothing we do
will make God love us more.

—Lynne M. Baab

THEME: WAY, TRUTH & LIFE



THEME: TRUE VINE

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 15:1–8

FOCUS ON GOD

- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- Who does Jesus say that God is in this passage?
- What does a good gardener do?
- What do you notice about people?
- How do you “remain” in Jesus?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Put together a flower bouquet & share with someone you know.
- Create a lego Bible scene.
- Play a board game together.
- Design a family flag that represents things your family believes are important.

“The Sabbath is the presence of God in the world, open to the soul of man. God is not in things of space, but in moments of time.”

— Abraham Joshua Heschel

THEME: TRUE VINE



THEME: SERVING OTHERS

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 13:1–17

FOCUS ON GOD

- Has anyone ever washed your feet? What was it like?
- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- What do you notice about the people Jesus was talking to?
- Which do you think is harder: to serve someone or allow them to serve you? Why?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Invite someone living alone to come and eat with you.
- Hand out water bottles or healthy snack bars at a park.
- Offer to babysit children for a single parent.
- Plan a random act of kindness and do it together.

“The solution of mankind’s most vexing problem will not be found in renouncing technical civilization, but in attaining some degree of independence of it.”
— Abraham Joshua Heschel

THEME: SERVING OTHERS



THEME: DON'T BE AFRAID

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 6:16–21

FOCUS ON GOD

- What do you do when you're afraid of something?
- What happened right before this story begins?
- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- What do you notice about the disciples?
- What does Jesus want them (& you) to know?
- What does Jesus want them (& you) to do?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Make homemade toy sailboats and find somewhere to race them. (Use foam shapes for the base, straws, and paper for the sails)
- Watch a movie together.
- Listen to an audiobook or short story podcast together.
- Write a parable in your own words.

"If you keep the Sabbath, you start to see creation not as somewhere to get away from your ordinary life, but a place to frame an attentiveness to your life."

- Eugene H. Peterson

THEME: DON'T BE AFRAID



THEME: BUILDING

SCRIPTURE:

LUKE 6:46–49

FOCUS ON GOD

- Why do you think Jesus is telling this story?
- What do you notice about Jesus?
- Why is it important to lay the foundation on a rock - something solid?
- Why do “hearing” and “doing” go together?
- What might God want you to remember from this story?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Invite someone living alone to come and eat with you.
- Think of questions you would like to ask Jesus.
- Write in a family journal - what's happening in your life that you want to record?
- Build a tiny fairy garden with things from nature.

"Most of the things we need to be most fully alive never come in busyness. They grow in rest."

- Mark Buchanan

THEME: BUILDING



THEME: LOVE

SCRIPTURE:

LUKE 6:27–36

FOCUS ON GOD

- What does love feel like to you?
- How do you know someone loves you?
- How hard is it to show love to someone who isn't nice to you?
- What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?
- Why is Jesus saying these things to these people?
- Why are we to show love and mercy?

PRAY TOGETHER

GLAD: What made you happy this past week?

SAD: What made you sad this past week?

MAD: What made you mad this past week?

SCARED: What made you scared this past week?

Share the answers to these questions with each other and then take time to pray for each one.

PLAY TOGETHER

- Look through family photo albums together.
- Share one thing you love about each other.
- Make handmade cards to send to someone who is sick.
- Find a project you can do that shows love to someone.

"Sabbath is a period of 'trying on' God's promised completion, trying on God's future... Sabbath is the inviting of all creation to be still and imagine the coming of God."

- Andrew Root

THEME: LOVE

MORE SABBATH IDEAS

More activity ideas (some specifically related to Sabbath and some not):

sabbathideas.org


artfulparenting.com (a great variety of fun art activities!)

Sabbath Resources:

unhurriedliving.com

practicingtheway.org

transformingcenter.org



Living the
Sabbath
Life!