

# Summer of Sabbath

Summer 2007

## ***What Makes Sabbath for You?***

God's gift of Sabbath involves setting some things aside to make room for other things in your life. When you picture a Sabbath, a genuine time of rest and renewal of the soul, what comes to your mind? What would you cease doing and leave behind? What would that free you to do that feeds your soul? How would it connect you to God?

This summer at First UMC will be an intentional time of setting aside "life as usual" in the life of the congregation so that "life unexpected" can emerge.

## ***What We Set Aside***

For June, July, and August, committees will not meet (except for emergencies). Choirs and music groups will not rehearse. Classes will not meet except for the Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study, because they are certain it feeds their souls!

## ***Food for the Soul***

With is space freed in our lives, you can discover things that will help draw you closer to God and to each other. Perhaps you aren't certain how to find those things. We are offering some ways you might try. The Un-Workbook – a booklet of ideas for observing Sabbath will be available for any who want to use it. Each Sunday, one sheet will be reproduced and handed out with the bulletin. Each Sunday, someone will say a few words about a particular approach to Sabbath and what they've gained from it. Simple Worship – Sunday Worship will be simplified. The bulletin will be simple, the style will be a bit more informal – no robes, leadership from the floor (not the high, hot pulpit). Each week will begin with a hymn sing. Themes will be touched by Sabbath – themes that encourage rest, restoration, peace, and connection to God. Wednesday Sabbath Parties – Every Wednesday evening, beginning June 6, will be a bit like a "dinner party" in the parlor and the courtyard. We will gather there for a meal at 6:00 pm. We will begin with a prayer and the lighting of candles. The time after dinner will be unstructured, but these things may happen...children's stories from the children's library...a table of books for adults will encourage people to bring books to share or talk about...a pile of games in case someone wants to play...maybe someone will bring a guitar and people will sing...a basket of garden tools for those who like to weed or play in the dirt...a basket of children's toys to play in the courtyard...some people may leave and go for a walk...some people may just sit around and talk.

Too often we complain that we just don't have enough time to tend our souls. This summer, God is giving you the gift of time to do just that. Don't fill it up with more work, more games, more running around. Guard it as a precious time and fill it with something that will give you the most joy in God's presence.