MLG to read these.

Readings prior to sermon : Thomas Merton

There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence. . . [and that is] activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence.

To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to violence.

The frenzy of our activism neutralizes our work for peace. It destroys our own inner capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of our own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.

Wayne Muller: Sabbath p 26.

The practice of Shabbat, or Sabbath, is designed specifically to restore us, a gift of time in which we allow the cares and concerns of the marketplace to fall away. We set aside time to delight in being alive, to savor the gifts of creation, and to give thanks for the blessings we may have missed in our necessary preoccupation with our work. Ancient texts suggest we light candles, sing songs, pray, tell stories, worship, eat, nap, and make love. It is a day of delight, a sanctuary in time. Within this sanctuary, we make ourselves available to the insights and blessings that arise only in stillness and time.

Call to worship – WA

Use your usual call or whatever you think appropriate.

Chalice Lighting – WA

In the Holy Quiet of This Hour – Richard S. Gilbert

In the holy quiet of this hour we pause to reflect.

This is sacred time that cannot be taken from us,

these few minutes of calm in an often-hectic week,

this island of serenity in an ocean of events,

this peaceful interlude in the midst of a warring world.

We sit here to receive the blessings of life:

the memories that drift across our minds,

the hopes harbored in these few moments,

the dreams we dare to conjure in the magic of this time.

I have used this for the meditation. However, it sounds like you have your church’s ritual. Incorporate this is you wish – or not. It will be OK either way.

Meditation - WA

Wind Chimes at my Window – Richard S. Gilbert

I sit in my office at work, my mind full of ideas –

too many ideas – when suddenly and without warning

a gentle breeze moves through the open window and stirs my wind chimes.

Their gentle ringing distracts me from the buzz of my computer

and transports me to another realm.

It is sheer beauty, an exquisite sound the resonates

with deep places of my being.

I stand in a monastery courtyard, taken with the beauty

of carefully raked gravel, lovely bushes, and bamboo.

It is all too perfect; it could not have been arranged any other way.

A gong sound – a deep, mellifluous chime

that seems to come from an eternal past

and beckons me to contemplation.

Its resounding tone reminds me of the mystery within.

I purchase a small bell, a replica of the great gong.

It hardly imitates the gong’s majesty, but it reminds me

that I have an inner life, that everyone has an inner life.

It is a reminder to give time to the journey within.

Wind over chimes,

hammer on gong,

tiny clapper on bell,

sounds of the spirit,

sounds that have echoed down through the ages,

sounds that have inspired monks and priests

and priestesses and gurus and oracles and prophets

and all who have aspired to hear the inner music of creation,

sounds that speak of ultimate things,

music for a healing heart.

The breeze blows in my window again and stirs the wind chimes.

A tiny tinkling becomes a melodious scale,

and I hear for a time an inner music that restores.

And I am glad.

Benediction – MLG

Carpe Diem – Richard S. Gilbert

Carpe diem. Seize the day

Grasp this moment, nettlesm rosebuds and all.

Seize the day.

No roughly, but gently, as if picking a flower.

Seize the day.

Celebrate life.

It is all we have.

Seize the day. Rejoice in the meaning of sheer existence.

Seize the day. cherish the past,

envision the future,

but embrace the present.

It is all we have.

Carpe diem.

 Amen.