



# Lifelong Discipleship Through Practices

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Think of a time when you had a formative experience in your life...where were you, who was there, what was going on in your life?

# Our faith is formed....

In authentic relationships

In camp and/or retreat settings when time apart is intentional

During transitional and milestone moments of our lives

In small group settings

With our peers and in intergenerational community with mentors



In meaningful,  
intentional  
community



# Belonging Behaving Believing

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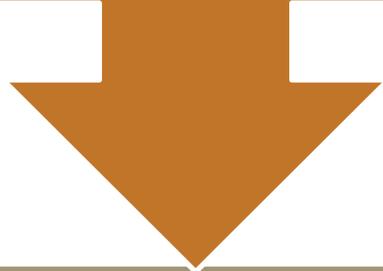
“Instead of believing, behaving, and belonging, we need to reverse the order to belonging, behaving, and believing. Jesus did not begin with questions of belief. Jesus’ public ministry started when he formed a community.”

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Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*, Harper One, pp. 11-64, 2011.

# Practicing Together

Sharing repeated **practices** fosters identity. Those practices create **memories** for the group over time that direct their actions and bond them as a **group with shared understandings.**



That group is a **community** – we need community to foster faith and lifelong discipleship

**Where do we  
find  
intentional  
community?**

In our households

In our neighborhoods

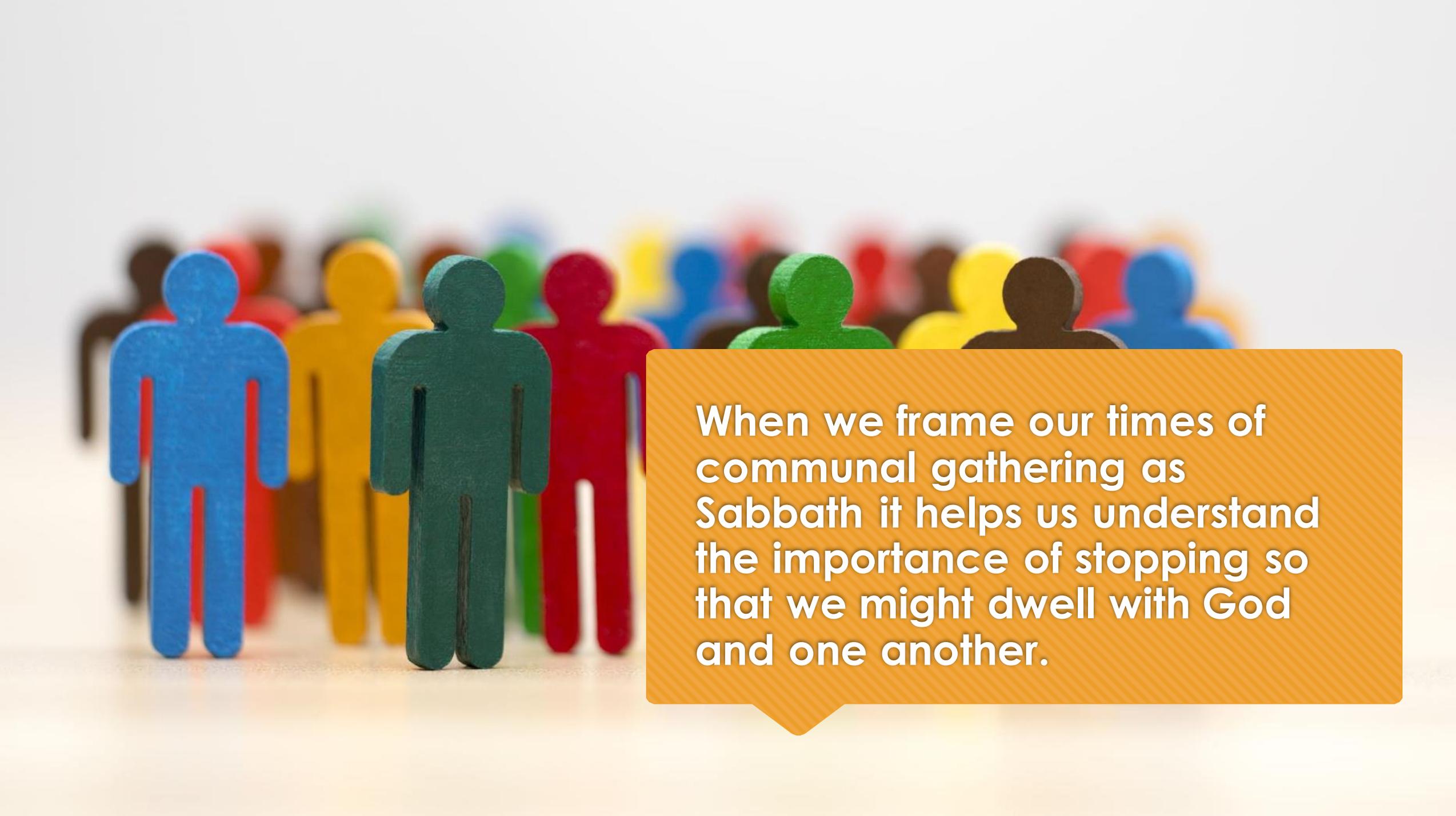
In our congregations

In our online spaces

# Sabbath

The literal meaning of Shabbat in Hebrew is “to cease.” While this ceasing can be realized during a Sunday worship service or a restful walk through the woods, there is more to it than that. Observing the Sabbath means ceasing from those activities that are linked to our subsistence on this earth in order to experience a different kind of reality.

*(Faith Practices Toolkit, Office of Christian Formation)*

A group of colorful wooden human figures standing in a line, representing a diverse community. The figures are in various colors including blue, yellow, green, red, and brown. They are arranged in a line that recedes into the background, creating a sense of depth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white.

When we frame our times of communal gathering as Sabbath it helps us understand the importance of stopping so that we might dwell with God and one another.

Come together  
and practice  
so that we can  
go out into the  
world



We gather as faith communities and households, develop authentic relationships through communal faith practices and then go out into our neighborhoods to join God's work of equity and justice.



MATTHEW 25



**So, Now What?**

Think about your context and where communal practices and times of intentional Sabbath are already happening



# What practices shape your communities of faith and your households?

Communal Prayer

How you show up  
for one another

How you mark a  
milestone or a  
transition

How you welcome  
people into your  
community of faith

Every year  
we.....Every Sunday  
we.....Every week  
we....Every Day  
we...



**Hospitality**  
**Prayer**  
**Service**  
**Storytelling**  
**Retreat**





# Being Intentional

Naming

- Naming the practice

Set Apart

- Making it holy and set apart

Holy Rhythm

- Paying attention to everyday rhythms as holy rhythms

Engaging

- Engaging all ages and stages in the same practice



## What have we learned the last 2 years?

- ⦿ Authenticity matters
- ⦿ Connection matters
- ⦿ Less is More
- ⦿ Adaptive Leadership is important
- ⦿ There are no magic solutions; every community is different

**How did Jesus  
engage his  
followers in  
lifelong  
discipleship?**

Gathered those in the  
margins

Parables

Prayer

Engaged in Radical  
Hospitality

# Exploring more about Sabbath Practices

- [pcusa.org/formation](https://pcusa.org/formation)
- Faith Practices Toolkit <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/office-of-christian-formation/faith-practices-toolkit/>
- Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living <https://www.pcusastore.com/Pages/Item/15439/Follow-Me-Curriculum.aspx>
- Opening Doors to Discipleship: Faith Formation Path module <https://odtd.net/leadership/your-faith-formation-ministries-path/>