Message from Rev. Melanie

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."
--Luke 10:38-42

This passage is not one we would generally be thinking about during the Advent and Christmas season, but it does have something to tell us. It is so easy to be busy as we prepare for Christmas. We might feel like we have to find all of the right gifts and set a perfect table and serve the best food. We might feel like we have to accept all of the invitations and bring the exactly right bottle of wine to each event. There is a lot of stress built into the holiday season. Martha is certainly feeling this when Jesus and his disciples show up at their home, and she finally has enough and she goes to complain to Jesus. Jesus surprises her by telling her that her anxiety and hard work are not needed and she would feel better if she would do as Mary is doing, setting down her work and listening to Jesus.

Realistically some of the things that we are doing do feel necessary, but perhaps we can lower our anxiety by lowering the bar for the activities. The most important gift we can give each other is to show up, to be present with one another, and the most important gift we can give ourselves is to show up for ourselves, to take time to take care ourselves, to take breaks to really enjoy what we are celebrating.

Our theme for Advent and Christmas is "The Gift of Being Present." We are having Advent services each Sunday morning in December at 10:30 A.M. and a Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols at 4:00 P.M. on December 24. Please take some time out from your busyness to come enjoy the ancient story that still means so much today and sing our favorite carols, new and old. We look forward to seeing you!

Rev. Melanie will be traveling to New Jersey from December 14-17 to participate in her nephew Adam's bar mitzvah. She will preach via Zoom on December 17 and there will be several church leaders in the sanctuary to make sure all goes smoothly. Feel free to reach out to her during this time, but please know that replies might be slow especially on travel days.

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