

A LITURGY FOR

Entering into Sabbath Rest

By Brian Keepers

God of Rest,

In the beginning,
after You created all things
by Wind and Word,
and it delighted Your heart
and You called it “good,”
You rested.

You sat down
on Your throne,
O Sovereign One,
watchful and steady,
at one with Your creation,
ruling over all things
with peace, wholeness
and joy.

When You assumed
flesh and blood
in the person of Your Son,
our Brother,
our Savior and Lord,
You rested.

Early in the morning,

while it was still dark,
before the sun’s gold rim
would awaken the day,
You rose early to be alone,
to enjoy intimacy with the Father
and be reminded of Your Name,
“Beloved.”
And of Your Mission,
“To do the work of
the One who sent Me.”

“The Sabbath is for humans,
not humans for the Sabbath,”
You said to the sneers
of religious leaders who
claimed to be guardians of the rules,
gatekeepers of what’s “right,”
but who could not rest.

“The Sabbath is for *you*,”
our Savior and Lord
says tenderly to you now.
“My beloved Child,
this is for *you*.”

A gift.

Like a fresh evening breeze
whispering in the garden.

Like the gurgling water of a stream,
singing over you your baptism.

Like the crackle and sputter of a fire,
Pentecost tongues above you and in you.

Like a window into eternity,
a future rest and delight coming
to meet you in the present.

Here and now.
Receive it.
Enter into it.
Let it enter into you.

Leave behind all
that forbids you to enter.
Let go of all
that holds you back.
Surrender every burden
you carry.

For He holds all things together,
and He will heal all that is fractured.
This is not yours to do.

Yours is to rest.

And remember
who you are, and
whose you are, and
why you are.

And in the beauty,
goodness, and
truth of it all,
may you be *renewed*.

*This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy one of Israel says:
“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and
trust is your strength....” (Isaiah 30:15)*