

**Sermon**  
**Sit...Be Still**

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Bacon Memorial Presbyterian Church  
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Think of a time when you were expecting someone that you couldn't wait to see – maybe a child returning from college or a tour of duty, maybe a spouse coming home after a stay in the hospital, or perhaps a friend who you missed terribly and they are on their way for a visit. I was blessed to receive my best friend this past week and I spent much time anticipating her arrival. I had a vase of flowers next to the area where she would sleep with a card saying how thrilled I was to see her and how much I love her. It is a wonderful feeling to welcome someone who brings beauty into our lives.

Then I want you to think about a time when you were the welcomed guest and the hospitality that was extended to you. How that made you feel and how lovely it was you're your host to make you feel so welcome.

In our first reading today from Genesis, we find Abraham and Sarah in an extraordinary moment of everyday life. Strangers appear—travelers whose identity isn't known to them. Yet something stirs in their hearts. Maybe they sense the significance of these visitors... or maybe Abraham and Sarah are simply the kind of people who extend kindness freely, always eager to make others feel seen, valued, and welcome. Either way, their hospitality is wholehearted and beautiful.

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Inspired by [workingpreacher.org](https://www.workingpreacher.org) commentary on Genesis 18:1-10a by Rev Kyong Jin Li and commentary on Luke 10:38-42 by Rev Jennifer Wyant. Excerpt taken and read (with minor liberties) from [Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World](#) by Joanna Weaver...p. 56-57.

Abraham responds with reverence. He offers water to wash their feet and welcomes them as honored guests. He calls on Sarah and his household to prepare the finest meal—a choice calf, fresh bread, everything done with care. And as the guests graciously receive this generosity, they speak a quiet and life-altering promise: Abraham and Sarah will have a son.

At first glance, this may seem like a simple story of kindness and generosity. But it holds much more.

The first striking thing is how God chooses to show up. Not in thunder or dazzling display. He comes humbly, clothed in humanity—as three familiar figures who stand nearby, who wait to be received. This moment reveals the heart of God: one who draws near not in spectacle, but in simplicity. He approaches us in ways we can recognize and respond to—not as a distant force, but as a presence within ordinary life, a Spirit that fills and empowers.

Abraham's welcome matters. His openness, his willingness to offer the best without knowing exactly who stood before him, shows us the kind of vulnerability we're called to. This posture—without pretense or control—is where true encounter begins. And because of it, Abraham receives one of the most profound promises ever spoken.

Here's the deeper truth: welcoming the stranger is not weakness. It is trust. Trust in the God who shows up in the unfamiliar, the inconvenient, the overlooked. Spirit-led hospitality isn't built on mastery or certainty—it flows

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from compassion and the willingness to be interrupted, to be reshaped by someone else's presence.

Where host and guest share vulnerability, where self-sufficiency is set aside—there, right in that fragile space, is where God chooses to appear.

And the hope He brings? It doesn't bypass our frailty... it moves right through it.

Our story from Luke is a familiar one for most of us...and again speaks to hospitality. Martha is doing her best to serve Jesus, to make him welcome, to feed him but her sister Mary just sits quietly at Jesus feet eager to listen to his words and feel his presence. We are taught, like Abraham, welcoming the stranger, being a good host, is what we are supposed to do...so why is it in this moment Jesus says to Martha – Mary does the better thing?

There is a central truth here that I think we can lean into...do you think we spend our time giving God what we think he needs from us rather than contemplating what God desires? In the book, Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World by Joanna Weaver, she says...

*“We make promises and New Year’s resolutions to be more heavenly minded. This year we’ll read the Bible through. This year we’ll join a prayer group – or start a new one ourselves. This year we’ll try that forty-day fast everyone’s talking about.*

*‘We make goals to be more loving and less selfish. We look for opportunities to serve. We visit a shut-in on Monday, and the crisis pregnancy line on Tuesday, volunteer at school, work at a food bank, volunteer at church, play with our grandkids and go to church. And all of it is good...all of it is important. The problem is, contrary to popular belief, we can’t do it all. We’re not even supposed to try.*

*‘Paul explained just that in Romans 12. He said that the body of Christ has many members, and each of them as a different gift or different job to do. “*

*“Many of us are over serviced, trying to do so much – but “only one thing is needed” as it says...We must take time to sit at Jesus’ feet, to worship him, to get to know him better. When we put that as a first thing first, then God will reveal his will and our part in fulfilling it...”*

Sitting in contemplation and prayer, allowing God into our hearts and minds on a regular basis can calm the anxiety and fear we feel when we are yet again faced with a mountain to climb or a valley to move through.

Today is a great day at our picnic to allow yourself time -time to listen, time to laugh, time to be...don’t rush to the next thing – sit for a bit, like Abraham and Sarah – enjoy the visit with excitement...like Mary, sit to listen and understand. Don’t listen only to prepare a response...listen in curiosity because it just might be the divine speaking.

Remember - Where host and guest share vulnerability, where self-sufficiency is set aside—there, right in that fragile space, is where God chooses to appear.