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Before writing my first sermon I called my Ma, who is a pastor, because that seemed like a good place to start for advice. Something she said that has really stuck with me was, “write the sermon you need to hear this week.” I’ll be honest this week I spent a lot of time hoping to hear that miraculously all my work was done and I should take a nap. While it might be something many of us have wanted to hear I wasn’t sure there was a sermon worthy message in there. So I went back and reread the readings for this week.

While I was reflecting on the readings I found 2 Corinthians really sticking with me. Paul wrote, “it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need...As it is written, ‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.’” In the context of the reading it can seem he might only be talking about monetary balance or physical worldly goods. I think that this sentiment can be extrapolated beyond those simple terms and it can be applied to mean finding a balance between the needs in our daily lives as well. I certainly felt that I had too little to give at points this week.

In today’s world we often have to make a conscious effort to find balance in the demands of our lives. Whether that is between family, works, friends, or even this church community. That doesn’t even include politics or any other less tangible demands that can seem just as intense at times. I don’t know if anybody else did the torturous act of watching the presidential debate on Thursday, but that alone was enough for me to want to take a nap.

I am not advocating ignoring parts of your life or looking away from the struggles that we see, rather that it’s important to be mindful that we cannot help people to our best abilities if we are constantly running on an empty tank. In the 2 Corinthians lesson Paul also says, “I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you..” Challenging us to ask ourselves to ask when are you providing relief for others by taking on more than we can do? Perhaps, I would even argue it encourages us to take that nap if we need it to refill our reserves when we don’t have more to give.

It's times like these where having a community like ours is especially important. Having a place where you can lean on people who have more when you have less, and vice versa. This service for example is helping energize me for the week to come. We are celebrating the fact that we have called a new Priest-in-Charge, we have a special pick up choir singing, and are getting to highlight the amazing gifts that Noah has shared with us this past year. Unfortunately, not every day can be a Sunday so I would ask all of you how we might help to support and revitalize each other when we are not here? How does this spiritual community follow us into our week so we can continue to draw on it even if we are not physically together? Some of you might already have answers to this question for yourself, and I would encourage you to share in your conversations at coffee hour after church.

I will leave you with a prayer I found in The Episcopal Church's *Book of Prayers*.

*God, please guide us in our daily lives as we try to balance the many things we commit ourselves to. Help us discern your priorities – especially when we get overwhelmed due to so many things that need to be done right away. Please continue speaking to us in your still small voice until we hear and obey. Help us know your will for us and make it ours. Thank you for always being there for us and for forgiving us when we are so busy trying to do what we think you want that we don't take time to seek your guidance and heed it.*

*Amen*