

## Winter Message Series: Making a Life

Our relationship to work can be... complicated. Human beings long to be useful, to see the value and meaning behind what we do in the world. Yet we know, on some level, that we're not here just to "earn a living." The poet Maya Angelou said "making a living is not the same as making a life." In this series we'll explore our experiences with work – and examine what it truly means to make a life.

**Challenge:** The difference between "making a living" and "making a life" can look different for each of us. Not everyone can make a major life change, but we can all make small changes that bring meaning to our lives. The challenge for this series is to make one small change that will bring a sense of purpose. Check out the resources below for some ideas about how to do this.

**Spiritual practice:** The practice for this message series is one of contemplation. It can take any form you like: perhaps journaling, artistic expression, silent contemplation, or simply carrying this question mindfully into your everyday life. The topic, to borrow a phrase from Beth's most recent sermon (*Ingredients for Making a Life*), is how can you "love the world more"?

**Discussion questions:** What did Maya Angelou mean when she said "Making a Living is not the same as making a life."? In what ways are you "making a living" and in what ways are you "making a life"? Do you feel like there is a good balance between the two?

**Journal/reflection/art prompt:** what "making a life" looks like to you

### **Resources for Kids/Families/Parents & Caregivers:**

Animated video on work/life balance & acceptance of imperfection:  
"Work-Life Balance" by The School of Life

Kids' video with ideas for balance in their "work"/life/fun/activities:  
"How to Balance School, Homework, Friends, and Everything In Between" by Peacock Kids

List of books for kids on careers/callings/jobs/meaningful work/inspirational people:  
"25 Inspiring Children's Books About Careers" by Rebecca Carnahan

Articles - ideas for teaching kids pursuit of work/life balance:  
"16 Ways To Teach Your Kid Healthy Work-Life Balance Lessons Every Day" by Cameron Huddleston  
"How To Teach A Work Life Balance To Children" from Successful Black Parenting

Articles - on embracing life:  
"5 beautiful things we must learn from kids to make the most of life" by Dr. Chandi Tugnait  
"Teach Kids to Embrace Life" by Sarah Lyons

## **Readings, etc.:**

### **Books**

*Beloved Economies: Transforming How We Work* by Jess Rimington & Joanna Cea

*Work: How to Find Joy & Meaning in Each Hour of the Day* by Thich Nhat Hanh

*Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* by Parker Palmer

Published in 2000, this powerful little book explores how we can learn to listen to our own inner calling

*I Will Not Die an Unlived Life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion* by Dawn Markova

*The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron

As the subtitle of the book says, Cameron offers a “spiritual path to higher creativity” through weekly activities and reflections

*The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brene Brown

Honestly, I could list all of Brown’s work but this one is specifically about living a wholehearted life

*Working* by Studs Terkel

This is a brilliant oral history of people talking about their life in relation to work. The book was adapted into a stage musical.

### **Articles**

“What No One Understands About Your Job” by Derek Thompson in *The Atlantic*

“The Year in Quiet Quitting” by Cal Newport in *The New Yorker*

“While Some Say Quiet Quitting is Over, the Spirit of It May Carry into 2023” by Lauren Aratani in *The Guardian*

“Finding Your Life’s Purpose: 6 Steps To Your Personal Path To Passion” from *Zencare*

“How To Find Your Path In Life? Discover 12 Strategies to Help You Find Your Path In Life” from *The Suited Monk*

### **Podcasts**

“How to Find Meaning through Work, Set Boundaries, & Embrace Change” from *The Good Life Project*

“How to Let Your Life Speak” from *The Good Life Project*

## Poems

["For A New Beginning"](#) by John O'Donahue

["The Journey"](#) by David Whyte

["Old Maps No Longer Work"](#) by Joyce Rupp

## Songs

["A Beginning Song"](#) by The Decemberists

["Love of Our Lives"](#) by The Indigo Girls

["Level Up"](#) by Vienna Teng

["Late For Your Life"](#) by Mary Chapin Carpenter

["True Colors"](#) by Cyndi Lauper

["Brave"](#) by Sara Bareilles

["Working: A Musical"](#) London recording playlist

## Videos/TED Talks

["A Life of Purpose"](#) by Rick Warren

Pastor Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, reflects on his own crisis of purpose in the wake of his book's wild success. He explains his belief that God's intention is for each of us to use our talents and influence to do good.

["The Happy Planet Index"](#) by Nic Marks

Statistician Nic Marks asks why we measure a nation's success by its productivity instead of by the happiness and well-being of its people. He introduces the Happy Planet Index, which tracks national well-being against resource use (because a happy life doesn't have to cost the earth).

["Why Some of Us Don't Have One True Calling"](#) by Emilie Wapnick

What do you want to be when you grow up? Well, if you're not sure you want to do just one thing for the rest of your life, you're not alone. In this illuminating talk, writer and artist Emilie Wapnick describes the kind of people she calls "multipotentialites," who have a range of interests and jobs over one lifetime.

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Please feel free to contact one of the members of the Spiritual Development Ministry:

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