

Senior Pastor's Blog

Autumn is my favorite color.

Fall has always been my favorite time of year. Maybe it's because, when I was a kid, I always knew that the arrival of fall meant that my birthday was approaching, but I know it's more than that. I love the cool mornings that turn into warm days and back into cool nights. I love the arrival of soccer season. I love the return of some of the comfort foods my wife makes that we set aside for the summer. I love fresh apples picked from the trees and the sight of blooming mums on doorsteps. I love curling up on the couch with a warm blanket as we strive to see how long we can wait before turning on the heat. I love that it means Thanksgiving is on the horizon—my favorite holiday to celebrate with my family. Even the sight of yellow buses crisscrossing the town, makes me nostalgic for the days when I would be starting school.

And then there are the leaves. While I don't love raking them, I do love the sight of the leaves coloring the landscape with vibrant reds and yellows and oranges. And I especially love the sight from mountain tops shocking, I know as I look down on a landscape splashed with color.

As the saying goes, autumn is my favorite color.

But I think what I like most about the leaves is that they cause me to slow down a bit. The sight of a tree, in full color, literally will stop me in my tracks. When Norah was younger, we would often stop what we were doing, and laugh, as we'd try to catch the leaves, falling like confetti, around us. Sometimes, when I'm running, I'll make sure to shuffle through the leaves on the side of the road just to hear them crunch beneath my feet. And even though the days are often hard to find, I do try to carve out some time to make one final trip up to New Hampshire, before the early-arriving snow blankets all that color in white.

The leaves, for me, are a reminder—amidst all the craziness of fall schedules and programming and meetings—to just slow down a bit. To breathe. To enjoy the beauty that is around me every day. To appreciate the day and the season as the gift that it is. And to know that when I am doing all that—when I am noticing and appreciating creation—I am offering a prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving to God.

So my hope for you—as we enter into the busyness of fall and the stress of an impending election—is that you will, also, find those moments to slow down, to breathe, and to connect with God. Maybe it is the leaves, for you. Or maybe it's preparing the garden for winter. Maybe it's savoring a pumpkin-spiced latte. Maybe it's creating monsters for our scarecrow on the Green or knitting for our Christmas Fair.

Whatever it is, take a moment for yourself, and for God. And even if it's while raking leaves, I promise, it'll be worth it.