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Isaiah 55:1-5
8-6-23

Shalom means all, y'all

Shalom be upon you. Shalom be upon all of your families and all your relations. Shalom be upon this Church. Shalom be upon this community, this nation, and upon all of creation.

Who here needs some peace and quiet right now?

Summer can be an exciting time. People with school-age kids plan vacations. Hopefully, those without young kids can also get out of the valley for a few days. Up to Camp Keola for a weekend, like for a family camp that you can register for today. I know for others, summer is a busy time. Hard work packing fruit at the farm. Traveling for conventions like Kansas City or peace summits in DC or abroad.

But regardless of whether this is a time of relaxation or busyness. I know that you all will need to take a break at some point. Even if that is sitting down for a meal or indulging in an energizing project.

Though, today's passage is about a much more difficult weariness than a busy summer. Today's passage is about weariness that has soaked into people's bones. The weariness of exile. The weariness of being bowed down, like under a back-breaking heavy load. I know some of you are there. Even if you are not there now, most of you can remember really hard times. Like in those stories right before the big miracle, before the full remission, before someone comes with a well-digging rig.

In those times, I hope that people feel ready to share with one another. Letting us all know that not everything is okay. Because it is better to be not okay together than alone. At least, that is how I read today's scriptures.

Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters.

Come, come to the living waters of God. Come and eat some free food. Come listen to God. Because God is coming toward you. Because God is bringing you rest. And if we read on:

For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace

Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace. Shalom is bigger than the absence of violence. Shalom is health, wellness, having food to eat, right relationships with your neighbors, and the kind of justice that means everyone is well.

God calls us in our weariness with a promise of joy and peace.

But I hope we will not end today's service only thinking about ourselves. This summer, some of us are tired, while others are energized. Some of us are burning out, while others are finding new warmth to enjoy.

I hear this in the Psalm, the Lord upholds ALL who are falling, raising up ALL who are bowed down. The eyes of ALL look to you.

The beauty of the church is that God willing, we are all in different seasons of our lives. I know some days I have nothing to give anyone. Nevertheless, let us be filled with each other's weirdness and joy. Because My shalom is tied up in yours. Or, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, no one is free until we are all free.