

Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

Three summers ago I took a sabbatical (this word comes from the Greek word meaning Sabbath). For three months, I primarily stayed in our sunroom, reading, taking naps with our cats, and engaging in fun things I'd long wanted to do but never got around to. I took pottery classes, I went on retreats, I went back and read book after book after book of the old classics of literature. I tracked the sunshine as it made its way from the east to the west and watched how the shadows changed in our backyard. It was magical. And I really needed it. But sadly not everyone gets time away like this.

Summer can be a time of getting away from your routine. Whether you're on vacation or working, summer can be sabbath. Think of it this way: for those of you who can (students and teachers, for example) summer provides greater periods of rest and relaxation. For those of you who still work, there is the opportunity to engage in the world around you in a different way, even in your busy-ness. After the long harsh winter, with short days and long cold nights, summer is warmth, it's sunshine, it's green grass and leaves and flowers. Summer is grilling out, listening to the birds sing in the mornings, looking up at the stars of night. Engaging in the sabbath of summer is something all of us can do.

Why does this matter? Because, just as there is a rhythm to the week, with Sunday being the day of sabbath (or the day of rest), there is also a rhythm to the year. And you need this rhythm, because you are a creature of rhythm—think of your heartbeat. You need periods of rest and rejuvenation. Let summer be the season of rest. Not just rest for your body, but also rest for your soul.

I'd like to propose that you work intentionally to make this summer a sabbath for yourself. I'd like to encourage you to wring every drop out of it that you can. Remember things that used to be magical for you to do during the summer, and maybe do some of them again: read, garden, look up at the stars, try to catch a firefly. Find periods of rest. Like storing up food for the winter long ago, we need to store up moments of sabbath for the rest of the year. Happy summer! I'll see you at First!

Pastor Kara

