

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

A Boy in Solitude

Feeling lonely and scared, this shaggy haired boy plants himself on a mossy log in the woods pondering

“What did I do to deserve this life of mine?”

Feeling the weight of parents’ expectations nearly as high as this old tree, her bare branches casting narrow, grey shadows upon his skinny frame.

Yet how many parents care enough to allow freedom to wander and find their own way? not just feeding tacos, sushi, and burgers but space to find oneself.

Those siblings drive him crazy and fights like Cane and Abel are too common, but in good times there couldn’t be a better friend than his brother.

Rolling the smooth buckeye around in his hand while watching the few leaves left to fall twirl to the ground and rest in a colorful, crunchy pile

Continued

November 9, 2022

Isiah 65: 17-25

New Heavens and a New Earth

17-25 “Pay close attention now: I’m creating new heavens and a new earth. All the earlier troubles, chaos, and pain are things of the past, to be forgotten. Look ahead with joy.

Anticipate what I’m creating:

I’ll create Jerusalem as sheer joy, create my people as pure delight.

I’ll take joy in Jerusalem, take delight in my people: No more sounds of weeping in the city, no cries of anguish; no more babies dying in the cradle, or old people who don’t enjoy a full lifetime; One-hundredth birthdays will be considered normal — anything less will seem like a cheat.

They’ll build houses and move in.

Continued

A Boy in Solitude

Continued

he rests here in gratitude for the
love of life he feels and is now wondering
in new ways
“What did I do to deserve this life of mine?”

As I write this devotion on the day after mid-term elections, when we’ve prayed for certain people to be elected and issues to be resolved, the idealism of Isaiah’s poetry seems glorious. In it, we are reminded to continue protecting the home we call earth and say kind words to those in distress. We are grateful for the homes we inhabit, the food we eat, and meaningful employment. We pray with hope for those without basic necessities.

This poem was sparked by holding a buckeye that I’d picked up while hiking at the arboretum last month. Do remember collecting them as they fell from the trees in autumn? Do they remind you of seemingly simpler times, maybe from your childhood?

In this month of gratefulness, God’s love for each of us is foremost. Gazing upon a leaf, noticing its edges, how it smells, and the color may bring you back to a time that nurtures you. Sniffing a pinecone might restore memories of climbing a tree and the beautiful views from up on a high bough. Thank goodness for memories that cause us to smile and remind us that that we are safe.

May good thoughts and healing memories be with each of you, from all of us at Saint Paul,

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler

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November 9, 2022

Isiah 65: 17-25

New Heavens and a New Earth

Continued

They’ll plant fields and eat what they grow.

No more building a house that some outsider takes over, no more planting fields that some enemy confiscates, for my people will be as long-lived as trees, my chosen ones will have satisfaction in their work.

They won’t work and have nothing come of it, they won’t have children snatched out from under them.

For they themselves are plantings blessed by God, with their children and grandchildren likewise God-blessed.

Before they call out, I’ll answer. Before they’ve finished speaking, I’ll have heard.

Wolf and lamb will graze the same meadow, lion and ox eat straw from the same trough, but snakes—they’ll get a diet of dirt!

Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill anywhere on my Holy Mountain,” says God.