

**Sermon Outline - Sun, August 14, 2022 – New Roots in Nature – Carson Beach**  
**WATER – Psalm 23; Psalm 137**

**Keyword Summary –**

**Overview** – We are in our second week of New Roots in Nature – a time to get closer to the Creator by spending time in the Creation. Some of us are gathered in person or online and many of us are out in nature hopefully finding usefulness in the devotional guides for this month.

**Exegesis**

- We have two scriptures both along the water's edge. One full of hope in the face of a lot of conflict and one from a place of deep despair.
- Psalm 23 reminds us that nature can be a healing balm as part of God's larger guidance. It offers hope in the midst of tough times.
- Psalm 137 is a clear reminder that beautiful places can also be sites of deep pain and even terror. This psalm is written in the midst of captivity with no end in sight.
- These are the realities not just of the Israelites time but of our own time. Carson Beach is a place of joy and memories but also of danger of drowning and deep racial exclusion.
- Black folks have a particularly challenging relationship with water. Many Africans brought across the ocean from their motherland to a place of slavery. Restricted from learning to swim to prevent their own escape. Beaches and pools shut down rather than be integrated. In 1975 Black Bostonians decided to own their right to be at Carson Beach; Even in 2020 Juneteenth commemoration there was over-policing. Continuing flashpoint.
- What do these Scriptures tell us about how we restore relations with God and nature?

**Key Points**

- 1. Even as we fight to restore respect for creation, we need to be honest about the mixed history of human activity in nature spaces**
- 2. We need to grapple with our own relationship with nature. Things that have happened there, the ways that we have lost connection because of societal traumas and norms.**
- 3. We must commit to healing ourselves, restoring relationships with each other and doing that work in natural spaces so that we can restore our connection with the Creator and the Creation!**

**Questions**

1. As you think about your relationship with natural spaces and particularly with water, are there any tensions that you need to work through in your personal, familial or community history that prevent you from being in or finding God in natural places?
2. The writer of the text is able to keep it real about their feelings as a necessary step before trying to find solutions. Are their places where you need to be open with others about your own experience of trauma and oppression or are their others that you need to create space for to express their concerns?
3. How are you/we called to create spaces to heal from the history of exclusion and colonization of the natural world that has left so many folks disconnected from the beauty of God's creation? Is there an event or practice you can invite folks into that breaks the cycle of exclusion to foster joy?