For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Eccl. 3:1

Lately Heidi has been reading a chapter of Charlotte’s Web aloud every morning after devotions. It is a familiar, beloved story. My favorite detail is the description of the crickets’ song before the big county fair. “Summer is over and gone, over and gone... Summer is over and gone, over and gone.” Even the first time I heard the story as a kid, that way of interpreting the sound of cricket seemed so sad and yet so beautiful at the same time that I never forgot it. I even opened a sermon with those words one time at the beginning of the school year.

Today, of course, summer has just begun. The days have only this week started getting imperceptibly shorter, and most of the big summer traditions, like fireworks, pool parties, and vacations, are still ahead of us. But so many of them won’t be the same this year. This year it seems like it isn’t just a season, it is an era that is over and gone, over and gone. When will things go back to normal? Maybe it is a new normal.

Will church ever be what it was? Will parades and county fairs be what they were? Storefront sidewalk sales? Park league baseball?

Such unknowns and major changes often fill people with anxiety. Sometimes that anxiety comes out in anger, despair, or complete disengagement. Sometimes we simply indulge in nostalgia. But I think it a more hopeful and constructive approach to remember that there is a time for everything under heaven. There was a time in God’s plan for the season, stage of life, or era that is passing. And the next season, stage of life, or era is also something God has allotted a time for. It is sad, but it can also be beautiful to witness the changes and transitions.

The important thing for Christians to remember is that God Himself came into world “under heaven” not only to redeem it but to give us citizenship in an eternal kingdom, about which crickets will never sing that it is over and gone or that it is dying.

Even when “change and decay in all around I see” we know that the God “who changest not” will abide with us. All times and seasons are His, and His love for us is eternal.

In Christ, Pastor Speckhard