The world has changed since the beginning of the year and with it so many of our goals have gone unmet or drastically changed. Where we thought we’d be in September is so much different than where we are today. And many of us have been drawing on our short-term “surge capacity” to deal with the acutely stressful realities we face—which is normal during a short-term disaster but difficult to maintain in a longer-term unfolding pandemic.

At a recent board of directors meeting, Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing, our board Theologian-in-Residence shared the story of Ezekiel who worked hard toward his goal of becoming a priest and carrying the Ark of the Covenant into battle. After years of study, he passed the test only to be exiled to Babylon where he would never serve as a priest or carry the Ark of the Covenant. Despite his hard work, he fell short of his goal.

And yet Ezekiel wrote that a day would come when the powerful presence of God would no longer be confined to a small space but that God’s presence would fill a new city whose name from that time on would be “The LORD Is There,”-- or in Hebrew, *Yahweh Shammah* (Ezekiel 48:35). Not The LORD “was or might be or will be” there, but *is* there. What Ezekiel envisioned, Jesus fulfilled.

As we approach the upcoming Labor Day weekend, may you find time to rest, to reflect, and to remember *Yahweh Shammah*.

In gratitude for all that you do,

Charlotte Haberaecker
President and CEO