Welcome to year 5782, the Shmita Year! This phase of the Jewish Calendar, also known as the Year of Release and a Shabbat Shabbaton for the land, is part of a seven-year cycle that calls for rest for the land and debt release for people. Shmita invites us all to re-examine our relationships with the earth, G-d, and one another.

The Shmita Project Northwest is a partnership of Congregation Beth Shalom and Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power & Light. Along with regional Jewish congregations and organizations, we are building a larger community working together to elevate Shmita values, which address many of today’s challenges. We hope this pamphlet will provide a springboard for you to think about the significance of the Shmita year in our time and place, inspiring you to bring awareness of Shmita to your congregation this year.

Join us in partnership as we creatively engage with Shmita values in our lives and communities in the coming year and beyond. Contact melanibaker@bethshalomseattle.org to get involved!
How do the texts below inspire you to envision and enliven a Shmita-aware community in the Diaspora?

**Vision for a Just Society**
For six years you are to sow your land and to gather in its produce, but in the seventh, you are to let it go (tishm’tenah) and to let it be (u’nitashta), that the needy of your people may eat, and what remains, the wildlife of the field shall eat.
Do thus with your vineyard, with your olive-grove.
– Exodus 23: 10-11

**Other Shmita Teachings**
Sabbath for the Land – Leviticus 25: 1-7
Release of Debts – Deuteronomy 15: 1-2, 7-11
Hakhel – Deuteronomy 31: 10-13
Jubilee – Leviticus 25: 8-55

The year of Shmita...promotes a sense of fellowship and peace through the suspension of cultivation, even for the needy of your people, for one is not allowed to exercise over any of the seventh year produce the right of private ownership. And this is undoubtedly a primary factor in promoting peace since most dissension originates from the attitudes of ‘mine is mine,’ one person claiming ‘it is all mine’ and the other also claiming ‘it is all mine.’ But in the seventh year all are equal, and this is the real essence of peace.
– Kli Yakar, on Deuteronomy 31: 12

For further learning, we recommend Hazon’s Shmita Sourcebook.
Shmita Values

**THE LAND**
We acknowledge that the land does not belong to us.
We take care of the land,
and the land takes care of us.

**FOOD**
We ensure that everyone has equal access to food.
Food is shared freely.
It is appreciated and eaten in-season.

**REST**
We let Earth rest.
Like us, Earth needs a Shabbat.
We rest alongside the land.

**GENEROSITY**
We all have gifts to generously share with one another;
gifts of food and material possessions;
gifts of our time and talents;
the gift of stories that connect our past and future.

**SUFFICIENCY**
We know the difference between “need” and “want.”
We realize when we have enough,
and do not need to grasp for more.
We may not take more than we need.

**RELEASE FROM DEBT**
We periodically get to start fresh.
We release debts and treat one another as family.

**JUBILEE**
We take a longer view.
We look ahead 7 years to the Shmita and 50 years
to the Jubilee.
While benefiting from the Earth in our lifetime,
we leave it vibrant for generations to come.
The Shmita Project Northwest invites your congregation to become our partner in educating, inspiring, and building community around bringing Shmita values to life in our region.

**Congregational Partnership**

The Shmita Project Northwest invites your congregation to become our partner in educating, inspiring, and building community around bringing Shmita values to life in our region.

**Shmita Project NW will provide:**
- Learning opportunities and educational materials
- Community space for clergy and lay leaders to collaborate and create Shmita-inspired social change
- Publicity for your organization’s Shmita-related events
- A central platform for the region’s Shmita activities

**We ask your community to:**
- Share your logo on the Shmita Project NW website
- Publicize Shmita Project NW events in your community
- Join us for a community-wide opening festival Sept 26, 2021
- Participate in a Hakhel celebrating the completion of the Shmita year during Sukkot 5783 (2022)

Learn more and sign up at bit.ly/shmitanwpartners