

A Note from the Revs....

May 21, 2020



Dear friends in Christ,

Molly is on study leave this week taking in all the goodness from the online version of the Festival of Homiletics! So, this note is from Rev. Caroline.

The return of gardening season is upon us and so this Note from the Revs takes us out into the Garden...

Conversations with friends this weekend revealed that people are busy planting: nursing baby tomato plants in small pots in anticipation of planting them, planting a strawberry patch, or simply getting the soil ready for planting soon. Even though I have no green thumb to speak of, I even ordered dog-friendly annuals for my new balcony, and I look forward to the colour they will bring to my little outdoor space.

This year, as many of us are beginning to feel a little cooped up, being able to get outside and garden; to get our hands in the dirt and contribute beauty in a tangible way, is especially important. Several weeks ago, I preached about baking bread as a spiritual practice and for so many, digging in and tending to the garden is also a spiritual practice – one that leaves us feeling more grounded, more peaceful and more grateful.

Gardening can also be a social justice practice; a way to practice resurrection together. **Rob Palo** reminded me of this when he shared with me an opportunity to sign a petition to have local government make it possible to re-open community gardens during this time of Covid-19 restrictions. The Orient Park Community Garden community, advocated for the social benefit of keeping these gardens open: much of the food grown is given to local food banks, which at this time of increased food insecurity, is a blessing to those accessing the food bank. Rob and his 80-year-old garden plot partner donate produce to the food bank system each year.

Here is a picture of Rob in his garden:



An Outreach Event for MHI:

Multifaith Housing Initiative is holding its Tulip-athon virtually this year. Instead of registering to raise funds by walking 3K through among the tulip beds, this year, MHI is asking people to raise funds for them by taking a socially distanced walk alone or in household units on Sunday, May 31, 2020. To participate, register at:

www.multifaithhousing.ca/tulipathon.

We will host a Zoom call on May 25th at 7pm so you can find out more. To register for the call, please email Rev. Caroline

Kudos!!

Kudos also to our own OUC garden care crew, led by **Peter & Shirley Holt and Dot Cooper!** Thank you for all the hours you spend mowing, weeding, and watering to make sure that the OUC grounds look as beautiful as they do!! I am sure that the OUC garden crew could use a few more volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare and would like to get out of the house and help keep OUC's grounds looking beautiful and well-loved, please contact Shirley Holt at pjholt49@yahoo.ca

More Kudos!!

A big thank you to all those **OUC angels** who helped to put together and deliver care packages to some of our more isolated members as part of our **Pastoral Outreach Response**. It is a blessing to witness the ways in which you share God's goodness with one another. Your enthusiastic "yes" and your kindness are very much appreciated.

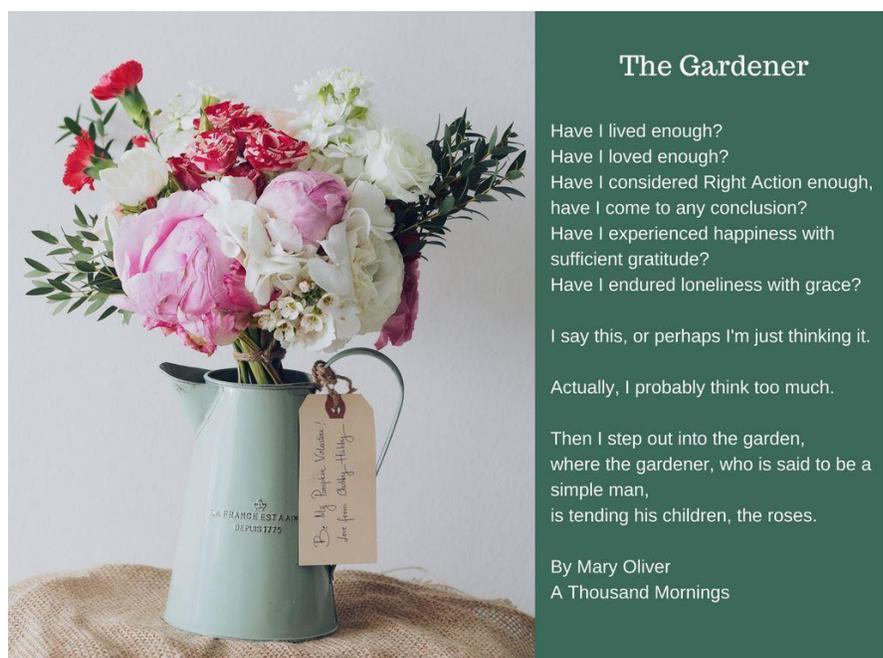
Keeping Connected Through Zoom:

This week, you will once again also receive, as a separate Pdf document, more information about a variety of Educational and Community Connection opportunities that will be offered via Zoom or that are in the works. Recently, I have heard that **parents of young children** gathered for a Zoom call; Molly met with some of our kiddos for a **virtual Sunday School** conversation; and **group spiritual direction** is working well on the Zoom platform. I give thanks to God for the blessing of technology that makes all this connection possible and for volunteer leaders who bring skills and willingness to learn and adapt quickly to a virtual church (or **VIRTCH**, as Scott's son Ian has named it!) way of being.

Until next time, we wish you God's grace and peace,

Molly & Caroline

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The Gardener

Have I lived enough?
Have I loved enough?
Have I considered Right Action enough,
have I come to any conclusion?
Have I experienced happiness with
sufficient gratitude?
Have I endured loneliness with grace?

I say this, or perhaps I'm just thinking it.

Actually, I probably think too much.

Then I step out into the garden,
where the gardener, who is said to be a
simple man,
is tending his children, the roses.

By Mary Oliver
A Thousand Mornings