

AROUND THE CROSS

Immanuel Anglican Parish, Regina, is a diverse, open and caring community of people who have come together in fellowship to joyfully live out our love for God and to actively engage in loving our neighbours.



Immanuel Anglican Parish, Regina joins together communities of Jesus' disciples to share the Good News through worship, word and action and to engage the world as a sign of God's blessing and promise.

IMMANUEL ANGLICAN PARISH



How does your garden grow? No, I'm not talking about your garden that still sleeps under the last vestiges of snow...I'm talking about your "spiritual garden"...the garden you still plant, tend, water and nurture...the *garden of your soul*. I have shared with you my journey through Lent using, what I call, my "Lenten Words". One word a day to travel with, pray and reflect on. One of my words this week was "plant" and that got me thinking of where and how we are "planted" - on good and fertile soil or in rocky ground - what seeds do we plant and what to we expect to see grow from those seeds - and how do we handle the challenges that all "gardeners" face.

We intentionally, and un-intentionally, plant many seeds in our garden - the seeds of love, compassion, forgiveness, generosity, justice, charity, friendship, support etc. - and we also plant the seeds, that become the weeds in our garden - the seeds of hate, anger, revenge, jealousy, greed, malice, unkindness, injustice etc. We want the garden of our souls to bring forth good fruit - we want a bountiful harvest - beautiful flowers, pleasing to the eye and attracting the good in all living creatures. But we can't always control a bad seed or two that slips into our garden and if we allow those bad seeds to take root and spread our garden is no longer a fruitful and peaceful place of

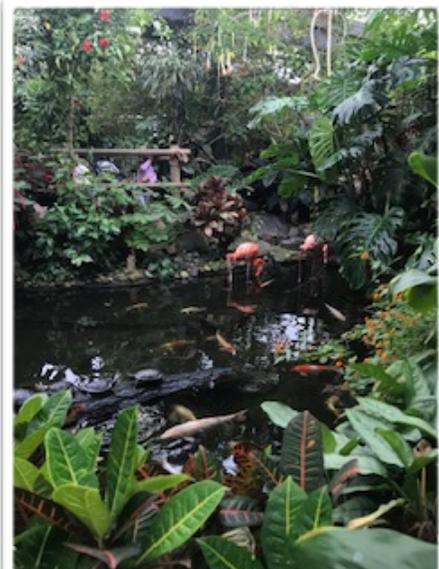


rest, comfort and growth but an unsightly, unattractive and definitely unwelcome place.

Just like the gardens we plant in the Spring and nurture through the Summer - our souls need that same careful planting and nurturing. Like any good gardener we need to be ever watchful for the weeds that might take hold or the other garden pests that can destroy a carefully thought out and laid out garden. No matter how carefully we plot out the gardens of our souls - no matter how faithful we are in tending those gardens - those bad seeds will creep in.

St Therese of Lisieux was a Carmelite nun who is most known for her "Little Way" - she spoke of not doing great things but small things with great love. She once said, "If all the lowly flowers wished to be roses, nature would lose its springtime beauty". Therese saw herself as a tiny flower in the garden of God and believed His power shone more clearly through her weakness. Therese often attached garden imagery to her spiritual journey. Now anyone who knows me knows that I am most definitely not a gardener. The fact that something actually grows and thrives in my garden is always a mystery to me and a continuing source of amazement. I have been thinking a lot about my garden lately - I am actually looking forward to getting out there and planting flowers - weeding out the dead growth and lovingly tending the new. This year I am going to use this time as a time to also tend my spiritual garden. Every time I pull a weed I am going to think of that weed as something I am pulling from the *garden of my soul*. Those weeds that represent sins, vices, nagging temptations, and bad habits as well as those harmful thoughts that enter my mind when I'm feeling anxious and insecure.

Since gardening is not something that comes easily to me what might seem obvious to all the "green thumbs" out there is a constant revelation to me. Weeds are something that we are always going to fight - sunlight, water and good soil brings forth weeds along with flowers. I have learnt that weeding should be done slowly, gently and intentionally. Now that took time to learn. I used to just yank those suckers out willy-nilly and of course I only got the tops - not the roots which could go down an amazing distance! Guess what, if you don't get the whole darn thing those suckers come back. And they spread - from one root can spring forth a wide area of growth. Weeding is my least favourite garden chore but something that has to be





done. I find that I actually enjoy the smell of the earth, the feel of the warm sun, and the joy of seeing growth poking through. I love to see the flowers I plant spring into life - a glorious, colourful display - I love to inhale the fragrance and marvel at each colour and formation.

There is a strong correlation between my soon to be spring and summer garden and the garden of my soul. Here we are well into Lent and I have found this Lenten journey a time of preparation - a time to clear out my spiritual garden in preparation for Easter. It made me aware that I always need to be tending the garden of my soul - that it must be consistently nurtured and cared for so that life can bloom year-round. When cleaning out the weeds of my soul I need to be intentional, slow down, get dirty and take time to find the roots of all my sins and vices. I need to let God's hands guide mine in rooting out those weeds. I need to invite God into my garden to journey with me or just to sit a while in the sunshine.

When we clean out the weeds of our spiritual gardens we are then able to recognize the gifts, strengths, and charisms that God has given each of us. We see each beautiful flower, each plant, as a reflection of God's beauty, vitality and faithfulness in our lives. Getting rid of the weeds lets us enjoy our garden to the fullest and to share the fruits of our labours with others.



Gardens are in many ways a part of life's journey. Our gardens die in the fall and winter only to spring to life in in the warmth of April and May and throughout the summer. Gardens are a place of life and a place of death. They are a place of struggle and they also offer a place of peace and a place of healing. Lets make the effort to really nurture the gardens of our souls - to weed out the bad seeds and plant seeds of love, seeds of hope, seeds of forgiveness, seeds of peace and seeds of joy. Imagine the gardens we could have!

Gardens can be places of surprises too. This is Kemba my grand-dog and a lover of gardens and all they offer - especially mice! lol!

MARCH 8, 2021

You will note that we have a new logo! Unbeknownst to me the old logo was copyright protected so when I realized that I was quick to create a logo that is of a cross that hangs in my guest room so no copyright infringement there!

Please stay tuned for an announcement next week of a Bible Study geared for our senior's but open to all who might like to explore *Women of the Bible*. We will begin with the Old Testament and work our way through as many interesting, exciting, and intriguing women as we can. It will be an "easy" study of learning and conversation as we explore the impact these remarkable women made in their time and how that effects us today. Come and join us! We will begin mid-April and go to the end of May/early June and pick up again late summer/early fall. I am looking at Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

A few other things to take note of...

Seniors Coffee Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81151849728?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81151849728?pwd=UHZVZWt0V0U0dUoxOUw1UGM5VndvQT09)

[pwd=UHZVZWt0V0U0dUoxOUw1UGM5VndvQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81151849728?pwd=UHZVZWt0V0U0dUoxOUw1UGM5VndvQT09)

Meeting ID: 811 5184 9728

Passcode: 946753



OUR NEXT GATHERING IS: FRIDAY, MARCH 19th

We are called "Seniors Coffee" but don't let that fool you - we like to be called "Friday Fun and Fellowship" - we are a welcoming bunch - sharing our stories and praying with and for each other. No agenda - unless you count lots of laughter an agenda. Come and check us out!

Friday Night Evening Prayer of the BCP Service of Compline

This quiet and reflective prayer service is led by me, Rev. Winna and Father Michael Bruce with the grateful assistance of our ZOOM host, Laura French.

Compline Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89324033051?
pwd=QUxCQjBoQW9xdklEWVlVZlVzak52dz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89324033051?pwd=QUxCQjBoQW9xdklEWVlVZlVzak52dz09)

Meeting ID: 893 2403 3051

Passcode: 701044

*Compline is a lovely way to end your day and your week.
Please consider joining us...*



We, the clergy of Immanuel, hold you all in prayer daily...and we invite you to pray along with us. If you have a specific prayer request please let us know so that together, in community, we can lift your prayers to the Lord. I invite you to send your prayer requests to our Office Manager, Mojgan Shirazi, at officemanager@immanuelanglicanregina.ca Mojgan is keeping a list for us that will be updated regularly. These are some of the prayer requests that I have had this week...

We pray for healing mercies for: Doug O., Rick (Allison), Heather, Jan, Kay, Krystal, Leslie, Ruth, Shawn, Sheila F. (Tom), Theo, T.J., Trina, Wayne, Linda & Lloyd (and family), Bob G., Jessica K., Jackie, Lori, Pat L. (Dennis), Keith, Corrine, Declain, Allan, Marion, Greta, Pat, Pat B., Phillip, Beth, Stan (Gwen and family). We remember in our prayers all those who have passed in the peace of Christ remembering especially Phyllis and Elaine...and those who we hold in our hearts....

We pray for Bishop Rob and Lorraine, as they begin this new journey into retirement and relocation with family and friends in the UK. We pray for comfort and strength in the days, weeks and months ahead and may God's peace surround them. We pray for Dean Mike and Archdeacon Catherine and the staff of the Synod Office. For our parish of Immanuel and for the AGM

happening this month - that God will place a call of servanthood in the hearts and minds of those who are to let their name stand for the new Vestry of Immanuel; for our Ministerial and Team Leader Father Michael; for Archdeacon Cheryl; for the co-chairs of Parish Council: Mae and Richard and for all members of Council. We pray for Deacon Alexander Campbell who will be ordained to the Priesthood in May. - Lord hear our prayers.

READINGS FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - MARCH 21

Collect

Most merciful God, by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you created humanity anew. May the power of his victorious cross transform those who turn in faith to him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A Reading from the Book of Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt — a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 31.31–34

Psalm

Refrain Create in me a clean heart, O God. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offences. Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin. **R** For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. **R** And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgement. Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother's womb. **R** For behold, you look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly. Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; wash me, and I shall

be clean indeed. **R** Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the body you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. **R** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. **R** *Psalm 51.1–13*

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. *Hebrews 5.5–10*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say — ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. *John 12.20–33*

I hope you are enjoying Around the Cross. As editor I am always delighted to receive your articles, information, pictures, etc. - anything you would like to share. I do however reserve the right to "edit" as appropriate or to not publish anything that I deem inappropriate. Remember this is YOUR Epistle so please send me whatever you think our readers may enjoy - we would love to hear from you!

*****I have been told that there are people, and I quote, "...who are annoyed at getting Around the Cross each week in their email..there are people who want to be taken off the list for Around the Cross..." It of course saddens me to hear this but from the many, many positive comments I receive every week it tells me that it is reaching the folks that I hope to reach and providing some measure of comfort. To my knowledge, in spite of the above comment, only one person contacted the office and asked to be taken off. Unfortunately I cannot remove folks from receiving the publication as it would mean extra work for the Office Administrator, and I no longer control the distribution list - all I can suggest to those folks who do not want to receive it is to simply delete it and I deeply apologize that you are receiving unsolicited and unwanted email. It is always my intention to bring a little happiness into your life and not upset anyone. Stay safe everyone, you are all very dear to me!***

God's richest blessings....Winna+

The Members of the Ministerial and Their Primary Areas of Responsibility...

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****Until May 30, 2021*** Rev. Nancy Yee (*Family Ministry, Mission, Christian Education*) yeen@sasktel.net

ON LEAVE**Pastor Zsofi Schmiedge

****All members of the Ministerial work together on Worship Services within the Parish - sharing in the Preaching, Presiding and Assisting.***