



Healthy Reflections

October 2015

Beauty, Gratitude, and Life



At this time of year, with the fall foliage displaying its grandeur and beauty – and, after a wonderful time with family at Thanksgiving - I, at least for a time, find it natural and easy to be grateful. It is easy to look around me at the splendour of God's handiwork, and then to look to the heavens and say, "Thank you!"

It is easy to watch children, young and old, laughing and playing together, even bickering at times... and to find great joy and gratitude in the presence of these dear ones - family and friends. It is easy right now to see all these things as blessing, and to behold the beauty and promise of life unfolding.

And yet this moment too will change – this glorious season will pass, as the wind, in its persistence, strips the last bits of colour and beauty from the trees. We are all too soon left with the dull, grey days of late fall. There is a season for everything - growth, learning, raising families, letting them go, enjoying a time of relative freedom and independence, tending to the



grandchildren - and then later, perhaps we must learn once again to live with less independence, less freedom, and less mobility.

As surely as the seasons change in the physical world around us, so too our lives have seasons of transition and challenge, or perhaps conflict and unrest. Nevertheless, we can live as Children of the Light, even in the midst of trials and troubles.

Several weeks ago Ed Janzen spoke to us during worship about "Being a Beautiful Church." He reminded us that God has made everything beautiful in its time (Ecclesiastes 3:11), and that we are each beautiful and beloved children of God. God has set eternity in our hearts... although we do not always see things clearly from their beginning to their end; we can be happy and do good, celebrate and find satisfaction in our lives. We can live a **Beautiful Life** – this is a gift of God (Ecclesiastes 3: 9-13).



For Everything There is a Season

My friend who visited recently from New Brunswick shared that to her, "living a beautiful life was living a life of peace – from the inside out." She suggested that we can each work at genuinely seeking the knowledge of what true beauty is, and become more aware of what attracts us to the beauty within another. Another way of looking at it might be to explore what prevents us from seeing this beauty in another. What fears, what patterns of thinking get in the way?

Some ways of “Living a Beautiful Life”....

1. Seeking God’s presence in each moment / experience
2. Being Mindful – having an awareness of living in grace and of being beloved
3. Seeking the beauty even amidst life’s messiness
4. Practicing an attitude of gratitude
5. Listening for and responding to God’s call
6. Listening to and offering to be of service to others
7. Being intentional about belonging to community – a faith community and the larger community
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

I invite you to a time of reflection, completing # 8-10 above, or perhaps you will make your own list. I would like to hear what you would add to this list.



How have you or how do you **Live a Beautiful Life?** What response in us brings us fully into life with each other, despite the trials, troubles and challenges of relationship?

Look up Philippians 4: 8-9 What would make you assert with a strong and beautiful voice, like Anni did in Sunday School last week, “I love my life!”

Karen Watson – Parish Nurse

WHATEVER IS *true*,
WHATEVER IS *honorable*,
WHATEVER IS *just*,
WHATEVER IS *pure*...
IF THERE IS ANYTHING
worthy of praise,
THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS.
P H I L I P P I A N S 4 : 8 , N R S V