



August 2020

Dear Friends,

*“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:”* (Ecclesiastes 3) and summer is the season when for many of us life takes on a different pace. Summer is perhaps for most of us our favourite season – long days, short nights, no school!! Summer is perhaps the season when we have most time to take seriously the entreaty *“Be still and know that I am God”* (Psalm 46:10)

Summer is an invitation to contemplate ordinary things; to use our senses to enjoy the sound of waves lapping a shore, the taste of juicy fruit, the warmth of sunlight on our skin, the faintly sweet smell of jasmine. These things are small and they may seem ordinary until we stop to really notice them for what they are: creation speaking to us about God. And for those who like to garden there is something very spiritual about tending to growth and watching beautiful things spring forth from the earth. We know the science behind such a thing as a flower’s growth, but really it is wondrous and mysterious too.

Summer is a time when the momentum of our lives is interrupted. For many it’s holiday time. Part of the joy of a holiday is doing something different, having a break from the normal routine, getting away from the day to day pressures of struggling to get a task finished before the end of the working day, or rushing from one appointment to another in a very full diary.

However we spend our summer we need the chance “to recharge our batteries”, space for relaxation and unwinding – and time to think. Too often we get so caught up in the relentlessness of ordinary life that we never stop to ask where we are going and what it all means. After what we’ve all experienced in the last few months it may be that this summer, more than most, we need to take time to stand back and look at our lives and ask, *“where is all this taking me?”* What balance is there in my life between work and leisure, between home and work, between self and others? How might we adjust the balance in our own lives to make them better for ourselves and those close to us? Is my current life-style fair to me and to my family and friends? Does it enable me to make a proper contribution to the wider community, to nurture friendships, to become a more mature and rounded person? What do I need to change – what can I change?

I really hope that you all enjoy this summer season and that you find time to look around you and see the blessings that daily come your way, not just in nature but in all aspects of your life. The gift of life itself, the gift of people with whom to share it, the gift of clean water, of enough food ... The list is endless.

*Rev'd Nicki*