

Minister's Message

A friend Rob came on Monday to plant Sunflowers in the gardens at the chapel. He comes every year. The flowers are planted as an act of Remembrance, in memory of his dad. His dad had died from Covid, right at the beginning of the pandemic. I had helped him create the service he conducted himself at the side of his father's grave. It was filmed and broadcast around the world, his father had come to Britain from Zambia over 50 years ago. His dad loved gardening and since he died Rob has carried on this legacy. If you ever go to Southern Cemetery, on the edge of Chorlton, and notice an incredibly well kept grave, it is very likely to Rob's dad. He devotes much of spare time taking care of it. He tells me even in his death his dad is taking care of him, keeping him on the straight and narrow. It is truly a labour of love, as was his planting here on Monday.

As Rob was planting he talked and I listened. The planting of the flowers was his gift to me and me witnessing him remembering his dad as my gift back to him. We both gave and we both received and the whole community will benefit from the beauty of the gardens, which blended beautifully with the loving beauty already here.

We are all of us like flowers in the garden of life. Each unique and yet similar. Each with something to offer if we grow and flower and be all that were born to be. Yes a flower looks beautiful when it stands alone. It has its own beauty and own unique qualities but it only truly becomes all that it is when it grows together with other flowers in the garden. It only truly becomes all that it is when it shares all that it is with all the other flowers in the garden of life.

It is the same with us and our lives. Yes, we are all uniquely beautiful and we all have our own qualities but we only truly express them and experience them when we come together in love and share them with others, encouraging them to do likewise. The spiritual life is never truly experienced or expressed alone. These things only really come alive in company and communion with others. Each of us have something uniquely beautiful to offer one another, things that only truly flower when we share them with each other.

In recent months as I have simply enjoyed walking round where I live with Molly I have felt more connected to the people and the nature that I pass and interact with. As my reverence and love for life has grown, so has my love for my own being too. This has helped to continue the healing of my being in so many ways. It allows me to thrive and live and dance in the garden of life and thus be of better use in this life.

The spiritual life is like a flower. I experienced this once again last Monday as Rob came to remember his father and pass on something of him to all who share the beauty of the gardens at the chapel.

May we all grow together in the garden of life, the garden of delights.

Love and respect Rev Danny

From "The Way of Wisdom" by Margaret Silf

"We belong, not merely to the created order of things, but in a great web of relationship, and interconnectedness, in which every particle is intimately interwoven with every other, and in which, in some mysterious way, each particle holds and reflects something of the totality. This makes a huge difference to the way we live. Every choice we make, every response we offer, every reaction we reveal has an effect on that web of being. We are made for relationship. The Wisdom of creation insists on it. No single creature can disengage from the dance of creation without jeopardizing the eternal beauty of that dance. We are indeed created to be 'we'. To opt for merely being 'I' is to opt out of the creative process itself. It is only in interrelationship that we have our being and our meaning."

The Fountain

Many cities and gardens and open spaces have a fountain as a focal symbol, sited at a point where many ways meet. Over the years and visiting all sorts of places I have taken many photographs of fountains. There is something about them that I find particularly attractive. As an object it is all foaming movement, but it is surprisingly calming and peaceful to contemplate. It is living water and is maybe a symbol of life's ceaseless self-renewal.

Events in June

I will be on leave for one week from 5pm on Saturday 6th June. I will return from leave to take the service on Sunday 14th June

10am Sunday 14th June "Flower Communion" A service celebrating the unique beauty and sacredness of each and every life. Please bring a flower of your own to the service. You will be invited to take a flower home brought by someone else.

11am Wednesday 17 June "Our Common Search for Meaning" Subject yet to be announced.

Visiting preachers

Visiting preachers for when Danny is on leave have been arranged as follows:

7th June John Poskitt

12th July Vince McCully

16th August Geoff Levermore

23rd August John Poskitt

30th August Vince McCully

11th October Tanya Smalley

22nd November Vince McCully

Music: A collection of sentences about music

A painter paints pictures on canvas, but musicians paint their pictures on silence.

Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.

Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent.

If music be the food of love, play on.

Music is what feelings sound like.

Music can change the world because it can change people.

One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain.