



Monday Musings: July 29, 2024.  
Flower Power...

A number of weeks ago, there was a Facebook post of a Venn diagram that caught my attention. The four overlapping circles of the diagram represented books: *Brave New World*, *1984*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *Fahrenheit 451*. Each of these books carries a theme of a dystopian future for our society. Each of these books presents a sad, negative, disturbing picture of what life could or would be like if nothing changes. These books were written in 1932, 1949, 1985, and 1953. The meaning of the Venn diagram is that we now sit in the centre of each of these books where the dystopian futures overlap and come to be. Yikes!

I had just finished reading a number of other books: *End Time Politics: From the Moral Majority to QAnon*; *Rebellion Again: How Anti-Liberalism is Tearing America Apart*; *The End of Liberalism*; *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*; *Age of Revolutions: Progress and Backlash from 1600 to the Present*; and *The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory: American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism*. As you can tell, I have been caught as have many others in the perplexing question of what is going on in our world today, and especially south of our border. Given all this, I decided I should take some time and read the books in the Venn diagram Facebook post. After all, it couldn't get much worse, could it!?

Lee had given me *Brave New World* a few years ago so I began there. Then I watched, instead of reading, *1984*. Years back I had read it. The film would save time. I'll start one of the other two, as soon as I finish my current read, *On Call*, by Dr. Anthony Fauci. This is his autobiography and his journey as a doctor through AIDS, SARS, and the COVID pandemic.

As many of you know, and can tell, I love to read. Reading about the past and the present helps me to understand our world a little better and to be able to place or resolve change, good or bad, through gaining a new perspective. These books, and those two still to read, have made an impression on me as they're meant to do. They are good. But they also are scary. And, they helped me to realize just how many of the things on Facebook, and on the news, are scary. I needed to find a way to cushion the scary. So, I began to buy flowers. Real ones, not silk. I have lots of silk flowers.

I had actually picked-up flowers a few months ago for my living room. I am not sure what led me to do so but I found I really liked seeing them. The first thing I notice when coming in my front door is the flowers. They're also the last thing I notice as I leave and lock the door. They lift me up. They are the life in the room. They are like cushions on the table to go with the cushions on the couch. Soft and gentle. Inviting and comforting.

As the weeks have gone by, when I go to the food store, I get a few things – and flowers. When I need milk, I go to the local store for it – and buy flowers. Or just when I feel like it – I

buy flowers. They've become a habit that is happy not scary. They're lovely. Yet I felt I could do more to bring in the happy cushion feeling. So, I began posting pictures of beautiful flowers every morning on Facebook and every evening with a 'Good morning, everyone' or a 'Have a good night world.' I do not want to be part of sharing the negative, upsetting, and scary posts that are all over Facebook. They affect our well-being because they disturb our hearts, minds, and souls. They make us see through one perspective. And that perspective is scary. I want to invite people into a lighter, happier, more comforting feeling.

In addition to the morning and evening posts of flowers, each day I find a lovely picture of flowers, or a garden, and I send it by private messenger to specific friends and family who I know need a special welcome to each day because they are facing difficult times right now. And guess what? My friends are finding flowers on their walks, in their gardens, pictures on Facebook, all over the place, and they are posting them and sending them to me privately too. What a difference this makes! What a brave new world for each morning and so very different from the book. What power these flowers have. Flower power.

I guess the Hippies were right all along. I guess they were really on to something!

Have a lovely day everyone! May you watch for and notice beautiful flowers! May you notice God-bits, rather daisies, all over the place! May they give you moments of happiness and may those moments cushion your days.

Peace always,

Rev. Deb Foster, Minister of St. Andrew's United Church, Markham.  
905-294-0351 [minister@standrewsmarkham.com](mailto:minister@standrewsmarkham.com)

Prayer

Holy One, for the beauty all around us enlivened by the rising sun,  
For the loveliness of the evening and colours of the setting sun,  
For the wonder of flowers, and trees, and creatures  
And together the ability for creation to cushion the troubles of our days...  
May we always notice. May we be grateful. May we pass it on. Amen.

Scripture this Week

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a

Psalms 51

Ephesians 4:1-16

John 6:24-35

Nathan's story that condemns David.

Create in me a new heart God.

A life worthy of your calling; speak the truth in love.

The crowds ask for another sign from Jesus.

TR Question (Theological Reflection)

How do we listen for God, for hope, and for peace within scary and disturbing times?