

*June 12, 2020*

## **Our Own Gardens**

Some of you know that I am a novice gardener. This means that while I find it therapeutic to get my hands dirty and to dig in the dirt, I mostly guess at what I am doing. The last few years have afforded little time in my garden beds, so one of the gifts of this period of sheltering at home is that I have been able to devote more hours outside. I have tried to be strategic in my work of cleaning up, clearing out and planting new plants, which really means I am trying not to get overwhelmed with all there is to do. It seems as soon as I finish one little patch of my backyard I notice an even larger area that is desperate for attention. The work seems to be endless, but at the same time I am grateful for the little bit of beauty that I can place in the world.

I was humbled by a recent visit to 38th and Chicago, where George Floyd was murdered. The energy shifted as I approached that intersection, and I knew I was standing on holy ground. There was the weight of sorrow and pain combined with possibility and hope and beauty created by many hands in the form of artwork and flowers and solidarity and commitment to change. The moments of prayer in that space were deeply profound.

The road towards justice is a long, arduous road. And it can be ugly at times. But each one of us has the capacity to put forth necessary effort to transform that ugliness into equality, into active compassion, into an honoring of people of color. We are called now to be the gardeners of a systemic shift, and we must be willing to till the earth, plant some seeds, do some necessary weeding and tend our work so it may bear fruit. We must believe that racial justice is possible, and if we are to accomplish anything at all, we need to start in our own corner of the garden.

Blessings,

*Beth*