

Checking In: News from the Elders' Gathering November, 2020

Possibility

Theme for November

"It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting."

~ Paulo Coelho

"I am looking for people who have an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done."

~ Henry Ford

We keep looking so hard in life for the "specific message," and yet we are blinded to the fact that the message we really need is all around us, and within us all the time. We just have to stop demanding that it be on OUR terms or conditions, and instead open ourselves to the possibility that what we need may be in front of us all the time.

~ Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander,
from *The Art of Possibility*

From Quotes collected by the Unitarian Church of Montreal



Elders Reflections

**FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH,
FROM 11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M., ON
ZOOM**

Bring your lunch, get comfortable, and join our Director of Lifespan Faith Development Andrea James on Zoom.

We'll gather online - together though we're apart - eat our lunches and move through a guided ritual based on the theme of the month, involving readings, music, sharing, and movement.

We'll begin at 11:30 a.m. and end when we're done, or by 1:30 at the latest. Participants may have their cameras on or off, as they desire, and participate as much or as little as they'd like.

Visit the **Older Adults** page under **Learning** on our church website uuwinnipeg.mb.ca or watch for an email in Our Caring Community.

JOIN US DECEMBER 1ST



I dwell in Possibility

I dwell in Possibility –

A fairer House than Prose – More
numerous of Windows – Superior – for
Doors –

Of Chambers as the Cedars –
Impregnable of eye – And for an
everlasting Roof
The Gambrels of the Sky –

Of Visitors – the fairest – For
Occupation – This –
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise

- *Emily Dickinson*

It's not only moving that creates new starting points. Sometimes all it takes is a subtle shift in perspective, an opening of the mind, an intentional pause and reset, or a new route to start to see new options and new possibilities. [Kristin Armstrong](#)

Distinct Possibility:



Loving, Caring and Technology

One thing Bill Morris has really missed during the pandemic is visiting his wife, Joanna. But, this year, he got a smart phone and is busy learning all about it. He even decided to get a phone for Joanna too! Now he calls her every night and they chat for 3/4 hr. or so. Besides just talking, Joanna names songs she likes and Bill plays them on his electric organ. Then they sing together!

Gracie Sweetstory is back!

I Donated My Body to Science While Still Using It



I thought it would please my children all of whom are in medical professions to know that their mother is donating her body to science. I figured that would impress them and perhaps they wouldn't notice I spent their inheritance. Besides, if one's body is accepted by a university for research purposes it saves the offspring burial costs so that should be worth something.

When my dear friend Nancy, a retired nurse now working as an intake interviewer for the Faculty of Medicine asked if I would like to partake in a flex study I thought I could start donating my body sooner than later. Well, I thought she said flex study. Turns out she said flax study. Nancy has to learn to talk louder. I decided to flax instead of flex as I'm game for most anything. As Nancy well knows. The researchers Nancy is in cahoots with enticed me with a small honorarium, free parking, free snacks and all the flax muffins my freezer could handle.

Being a non-smoker not on any medications made me a hot commodity and instantly accepted into the study. An unexpected bonus to this gig is that all my medical data is stored in the system. They said if I ever have a heart attack I'd be expedited to St. Boniface Hospital. Sort of like a priority post delivery but in an ambulance.

The adventure included blood tests and a stint on the scale every visit and the researchers reviewing my homework log. I had to record every food I consumed at every meal and snack which they graded on a scale of good to tsk tsk. There was one awkward moment when they called in a dietitian to inform me that chocolate and red wine are not major food groups.

To measure my body mass index I had to climb into a space age pod. This is not for the faint of heart or the claustrophobic. The door seals for three minutes which feels like thirty and requires a lot of deep breathing and praying that the power doesn't go off. A reward for all this trauma is a plate of cookies and Earl Grey tea.

Here's where the flax part comes in. I had to eat the stuff cleverly hidden in muffins. What they don't tell you is how much flax is in your muffins. Over the six months of the research project I didn't know if I was in the control group meaning no flax or 10%, 25%, 50% flax or enough to kill a horse. They always gave an extra muffin in the weekly allotment. I tried offering the mystery muffins to guests. Reviews varied from "not bad," to "you actually eat this stuff?"

Eat I did, as they said I could put all the jam, butter, honey or peanut butter on the muffins that I wanted if I didn't like the taste. The five pounds I gained during the study was in the name of science. I learned to flex. I learned to embrace flax. I now put it in every salad, waffle, and cookie that I make. My kids get flax for their birthdays and Christmas and we all flex together.

Checking In is edited by Lynn Clark for the Pastoral Care Team.
Please share your news with us! Stories, photos, readings and poetry.
Suggestions for next month's newsletter will be greatly appreciated.

Send to: lyclark@mymts.net

Projects - Keeping us busy and engaged while "Sheltering in Place"

Kelvin Seifert writes: "I have returned to the piano after neglecting it for the past few years--especially to playing Chopin and other "romantic" composers. Relearning to the "old" music reconnects me with my youth, when I first learned the music. But now, somehow, the drudgery of practicing, which I felt back then, has somehow softened.



Marjorie Doyle has been making hats for newborns at the Birth Centre in St. Vital. Marjorie is also working on a lovely quilt she started when she was 18. She writes: "It sat, in two small pieces, in my home in Birds Hill until my daughter brought the materials to me on Mother's Day this year. I have been working on it over the summer and expect that I will finish sometime over the winter. The quilt is hand sewn and has taken many hours to get as far as I am. The possibility for the future is that it will fit on a queen size bed."



Doreen Stroud – "I am writing daily in a Gratitude Journal. A friend recommended and I just love it. It has daily themes, like today's amazing moments, how could I have made this day better? It also has daily quotes, Buddha, Mark Twain, Jung. It helps me focus my day and plan for the next day."

Doug Wasyliw writes: "Filling my days with volunteering has helped pass the time and bring more meaning and connection."

Gini Martin has been making her own greeting cards. "I have saved many cards that I had received over the years. I decided I *needed* to throw some out, but some were lovely. I cut some stiff craft paper into card shapes. Then I cut the front from the old cards and pasted the picture on the craft paper. Sometimes I cut off the message to put inside but most of the time I write my own message.

Besides the old cards, I also used illustrations from a used Inuit agenda with nice prints and even some illustrations from bridge tallies. It was easy to do. All I needed was scissors and glue. Did not take much concentration nor focus. I had some old envelopes and cut the craft paper to fit into the envelopes on hand. Now when I need a greeting card, I have a stack to pick and choose."

Joe Kaufert presented power point talk on Zoom for the med faculty's series on COVID lessons. "It did seem to generate some discussion about learning from history. I am also working on some Zoom teaching involving sessions for medical students focusing on food security and consumer perspectives on disabilities.