

Small Talk – June 10 2021
By Michael Small

One of the things I appreciate about living in Northern Minnesota - there are four distinct seasons. I also value the relatively – typical moderate summers. This far north it is rare when we have tornadic activity and extreme heat. But. . ., as all of us know by now – June heat records are falling like flies throughout the northern tier of states. It is an old-fashioned Midwest summer with not much relief in sight – so enjoy! Go jump in a lake!

Many who know me might say my words can be “flowery” and that is the extent of my floral talent. Many a plant has died due to my lack of attention, sporadic watering, or lack of understanding. This summer I am trying to turn over a new leaf. (forgive the pun) The jade plants continue to grow and be healthy – and a planter gifted to Sheila by a friend still lives and grows after almost a month. I have discovered regular watering and pruning helps out with plenty of sun. It is a joy to nurture that life inside the house. By the way, I hear that it is helpful to speak to the plants – a word of caution, they might speak back. (Do you remember Clint Eastwood singing in *Paint Your Wagon* – “*I Talk to the trees*” – not to memorable)

I am also learning about trees and how their roots are intricately are connected, and they communicate with one another through fungi and other methods. (I highly recommend the recently published book by Suzanne Simard, *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest*) I am learning how complex the connections are between the young saplings and the ancient trees of the forest. Among the trees there is an awareness, history, wisdom, and nurture that is shared.

The Psalmist writes – sings “*They’re like trees planted by flowing water— they bear fruit in every season, and their leaves never wither: everything they do will prosper.*” **Rooted in Love** is the suggested theme for this year’s stewardship campaign in local UCC churches and **Rooted in Love** is based on the above scripture.

Imagine your roots. Where it is that your roots are buried? Is the ground fertile with truth, imagination, trust, and safety? Are your roots intertwined with family, friends community? Is there room for new and strange roots to mingle with yours? How do you communicate with one another? Do you nurture tender and new conversations whole learning from your past experiences? And the bottom line is, is your tap root grounded , rooted in an infinite pool of love?

Imagine you are like one of those Mother Trees, standing, rooted deeply by the streams fed my mountain snow melt-off. Better yet, imagine yourself having deep roots that stretch deeply into the earth fed by waters that are eternally feeding you living waters. Imagine yourself surrounded by the young and the old, the strong and the weak, the flourishing and the nascent – just beginning. Imagine yourself a part of this life giving, lively forest – with so many stories to share – for your rings run into the hundreds. When examining those rings, we learn of our history. “*Some rings were wider, having grown*

*plenty in rainy years, or perhaps in sunny years after a neighboring tree blew over, and others were almost too narrow to see, having grown slowly during a drought, a cold summer, or some other stress. These trees persisted through climatic upheavals, suffocating competition, and ravaging fire, insect, or wind disruptions, far eclipsing the colonialism, world wars, and the dozen or so prime ministers my family had lived through. They were ancestors to my ancestors."*¹¹

My friends, be rooted in love. Out of that love find ways to connect, relate, and give back. Be generous in spirit, be kind in manner, be wise in your words, be courageous in your actions, and step back and listen! May we all grow together with roots knitted together creating fertile and profound world.

Be rooted in love.

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

To Donate

And watch 11:00 am Sunday worship services live and at any time.

Go to www.uccwalker.com

Find back issues of "Small Talk".