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Beautiful Lives

"My help comes from God, the maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1

Dear Ones,

Monday morning dawns to a much changed Canada, as we learn from the news of the terrible tragedy which took place yesterday in Nova Scotia. Seventeen lives lost – a trail of carnage – so many families and friends bereaved. It is almost too much to bear.

I know those roads. I drove them often. I was the minister in the beautiful white clapboard church in Portapique, where the rampage started and where murdered teacher Lisa McCully lived. I know her family well. Later I was the minister in Shubenacadie, where Constable Heidi Stevenson lost her life. This horror touches me in ways I could never have imagined.

And through me, it touches you all... Suddenly, we are all connected, and we realize that the "six degrees of separation" is not really six. It is four – or three – or two.

Which seems to me to be what we are learning through this pandemic situation, as well. That a person who goes to visit their mother, in a country many thousands of miles from here, can bring home both souvenirs and a virus in a matter of hours. That a politician making decisions for their own constituency can affect every other human life on the planet, for good or for ill. That the air from my lungs is breathed into your lungs whether I am aware of it or not.

We Christians talk about the "Communion of Saints." We mean the connection which binds us to each other – the living and the dead. Not even death can dissolve this sweet bond, because it is forged by Jesus Christ. And truly, we can think of all of creation as united by the will and love of the Creator. There is nothing which divides us. Nothing at all. From the little mother in the homeland, to the traveler to the politician to the virus itself. Everything that exists is held within the heart of God.

Say a special prayer today for the people of Nova Scotia, our sisters-brothers-kin. And know that you also have lost loved ones – whom you never met. None of us is untouched. But equally, none of us is alone.

In life. In death. In life beyond death. God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God! (from *The New Creed* of The United Church of Canada).

Grace to you, and peace,

Kate

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*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*



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