



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

November 10, 2017

We are over a week into November and as I write this on Thursday night, the weather forecast says that we may get the first snowfall of the year in Toronto this weekend

I am a little excited about the snow coming. Oh sure, it can be inconvenient in many ways, but I like winter. I also like spring, summer and fall. I tend to like whichever season we are in, or about to be in. Each time of year has something wonderful about it. Even though science gives us explanations for the changing seasons, our experience of them holds both mystery and miracle.



This week we mark [Remembrance Day](#) with various services honouring the wartime sacrifices of so many. It's a time of many complex emotions. When we think of the "crosses row on row..." we mourn for the many, many young lives cut short by war. Those fallen soldiers never got the chance to grow old, or in many cases, even to grow up.

The seasons of our lives are as precious as the seasons of the year. Each has its joys and challenges, but together they are all part of the fullness of life. We want to experience them all.

We find comfort in the understanding that the lives lost in war had purpose. They sacrificed to protect our freedoms. Other young lives are cut short with no purpose that we can fathom. The daughter of a Texas pastor gunned down along with half the congregation at worship on a Sunday morning. A young man lost to suicide, with a family left grieving. Another family attending a child's funeral instead of reading a bedtime story, after a sudden accident or illness has taken that young life.

I take comfort in the patterns of the season, and the normal cycles of our lives. When they are disrupted it throws me off. I want an explanation that does not exist.

And yet I know (to paraphrase Acts 1), it is "not for us to know the times or the seasons." These things, the things that we cannot control or make sense of, are in God's power.

Somehow, simply accepting that there are things that I will never understand, frees me up to enjoy the simpler things. Like the promise of new snow by morning.

Nora

This message has been sent to subscribers to the General Secretary's Letter, "Note from Nora."
