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## Circles in the Water

*Today's letter was written by Joan Vogel, at Rev. Kate's request, while Kate is away on Continuing Education Leave.*

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that God may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because God cares for you. (1 Peter 5:6-7)*

Friends,

I've been thinking a lot about pebbles dropped in ponds and the concentric circles that are formed.

Just last week I had an experience that I would like to share with you. Long ago in another city, in another decade I was a Family Care Worker. Through my work I came to know "Cindy"...she was just 14. She had been tossed and turfed from family to foster families to treatment centers, to group homes.

She did know her mother, as along the way stops sometimes included living with her mother and varied offspring. At this point I'd like to say I prefer "Anne" outcomes (from *Anne of Green Gables*) with a firm but loving Marilla mother-figure and gentle and kind Matthew father-figure. "Cindy's" outrage with the world and luck of the draw did not result in White Ways of Delight and kindred spirits. I liked her... she had spunk. We stayed in touch over the years.

Back to the present.... I received a text message the day following Mother's Day that "Cindy's" mother had died in the Maritimes from heart failure. I called right away. We talked, she cried AND she had sent flowers for Mother's Day, talked to her mother on the phone and told her she loved her. She felt she could have done more, been more understanding...

Later in the evening I received an email from "Cindy" thanking me for our ongoing friendship and for forwarding online church services. As my head rested on the pillow that night I pondered how she (as every child) had deserved bedtime stories, parades, flying kites. But she had not been nurtured in love and showered with goodwill. Yet, she sees a glimmer of God and sees it primarily through the lens of real people with skin on. I reflected on just how difficult it is to seek God when so many primary needs were never met AND YET ... in her own way she does.

And from her emptiness she poured her love onto a mother who had not been capable of loving her as she had deserved. May God guide her through her immense struggles. Through "Cindy" I recognize how very much I take for granted.

"Cindy" welcomed an online church service that I hesitated to send. When we cast our pebbles on the pond may our circles spread far and wide and may they be born of Love. **Joan**

*"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."*