

CELEBRATION OF LIFE, ANNE GOODMAN. Aug 12, 2013, Edwards Gardens
Prepared by Mary Beaty, Humanist Chaplain, University of Toronto

2:30pm Ring Bell Introduction, Mary. *We've just found a little bell that my mom kept in our house as kids that will be great to signal the start of the service.*

Peace be to this place and all who gather here.
let us be mindful of each other in this space.
We come in Love and in Hope.
To give thanks for life itself and for the comfort and joy
of each other's presence.

We gather here today to celebrate and give thanks for the life of Anne Goodman – among her family, her friends, her colleagues and students – all part of the great web of connections woven by Anne. We're here at Edwards Garden - favorite family picnic spot, a favorite spot for walks, and of course trees and flowers. Surrounded by the flowers and cranes from all of you.

My name is Mary Beaty, I'm a friend of Anne, a librarian & teacher by trade, the Humanist Chaplain at the University of Toronto, head of the Ceremonies committee of the Ontario Humanist Society, which trained Anne to be a humanist celebrant.

I'm also a dear friend of Carole Berry who performed the family Celebration and Committal for Anne last week. I'm honoured to be helping us all celebrate Anne. I'll be using some of Carole Berry's words from that service for us today.

We've been told that many other people are celebrating Anne today, all over the world – especially in India, Africa, Australia, and in other countries. Her family present here today thanks you for coming – and looks forward to visiting/mingling with you after this part of the celebration.

The family hopes this celebration of Anne will also be about the importance of building community, sharing memories, connecting with each other, and I'll give you some practical suggestions to help us all do that in a moment. We'll have family and friends and colleagues talk about Anne, a great slide show put together by her family, and some reflections to share. Then we'll all get to work, connecting.

Because I'm a librarian and a teacher -

Here is a short poem that reminds me of Anne.

Cecil Day-Lewis (1904- 1972) was an Irish [Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom](#) from 1968 until his death in 1972. He is the father of actor [Daniel Day-Lewis](#)

She Charms: By Cecil Day Lewis

“Her laughter was better than birds in the morning, her smile
Turned the edge of the wind, her memory
Disarms death and charms the surly grave.
Early she went to bed, too early we
Saw her light put out; yet we could not grieve
More than a little while,
For she lives in the earth around us, laughs from the sky.”

We remember Anne’s wonderful ready laughter. How it lit up her face, and her eyes, and caused us to laugh with her, infectiously.

Jennifer Ball who travelled with Anne to Kenya and Uganda wrote from Australia with a list about Anne, Jenn said: “I will always remember:

- her welcoming smile and hug
- the twinkle in her eyes when she was excited – whether by being with people or talking about ideas
- her spontaneous laughter – sometimes like a giggle
- her love of biking and of walking –
- her love of nature and plants and most especially of trees
- her love of sharing food with people!
- her love of music making and fun
- her love of Michael and their enjoyment of each other
- her love of her family, and journeying her daughters in their lives
- her willingness to sit with the uncomfortable and difficult parts of life and find a way through together
- her sensitivity to justice/injustice, inclusion/exclusion and her willingness to challenge people and systems
- her passion for peace and for the power of ordinary people building peace in communities
- her ability to connect people and, in so doing, create a vast web of interconnections”

That’s a complex list – and that was Anne – complex!

This afternoon we come together to reflect on these many parts of Anne, and on her life. And we will do this together, as Anne would want, building our community, as Anne taught us, with her laughter and her joy in our hearts.

At times when we must face death and loss, we need one another's good company. Just to be together, to look into one another's faces, takes away some of our loneliness and draws our hearts together in the healing which we can offer one another.

So – the practical List of activities:

- *Food and drink (cookie loot bag)
- *Contribute to the tree
- *Contribute to Carolyn's project
- *Learn about Interchange, *the peacebuilding organization she founded* www.interchange4peace.org
- *Contribute to the Anne Goodman tree fund, city parks
- *Sign guest book -give name, email address for networking
- *Please take other people's flowers and cranes as you leave
- *Also take seed packets and cookie loot bag [explain cookies]

EULOGY:

As Jennifer Ball said in her list of Anne's qualities, she admired Anne's ability to connect people and, in so doing, create a vast web of interconnections

Today has been about Anne's web of connections. And also about each of us, who are in that web, and in each other's intertwined strands.

At the suggestion of her daughters, I'd like to read a few parts of Anne's email letters –

"...What I have realised so powerfully through this unexpected journey is a sense of interdependence and deep connection. I feel like a node in a spider's web, or one of the pearls in the Hindu concept of Indra's web. My family have been utterly amazing, and I've also had wonderful support from friends, colleagues, students, my community around the world, many wonderful people in the medical profession, and many people I don't even know!"

(she was also envisioning the web of connections reaching out to people beyond her knowing, and that's part of Anne the visionary)

She gave us another image of a web:

"Another profound experience of the last few weeks was contributing to the final activity of our Community Healing and Peacebuilding class. For this activity, the students and I are given a blank piece of a large jigsaw puzzle (created this time by Michael) which we use to describe, symbolically, what we see as our role as a peacebuilder or wounded healer. While I wasn't able

to be at that class in person, I did create my puzzle piece, the beautiful blue colour of the image I used was a web. I chose the web as my image, seeing myself as a node in a web that is connected across vast dimensions of space, time and meaning."

What did this web of connections mean to her?

Anne said: "I am not an isolated, separated individual, but rather an interconnected " I ", needing to rely on others for help and support. This resonates very much with the African philosophy of Ubuntu, a word that can't really be translated literally but means that "a person is a person through other persons".

Of course, 400 years earlier, we heard this in John Donne's meditations

No man is an island,
Entire of itself.. Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind,

To be involved in Mankind (and today we'd say Humankind) means working for real results, real transformation, for yourself and for others.

Marta Santamaria quoted Anne this week: *"All a student needs is a humble teacher," I heard Anne say that more than once. And, she embodied everything she said."*

So I've got another short poem, by that old transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson. This is not often read at a memorial, it's read at Graduation – but it's appropriate for a teacher, which was what Anne was

What is Success? By Ralph Waldo Emerson

To laugh often and love much;
To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;
To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;
To give of one's self;
To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;
To have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation;
To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived...
This is to have succeeded.

Tor Iorapuu, from Nigeria says: "But that is who Anne was. An ordinary radical who did extraordinary things".

We've heard some of Anne's words, about the webs she built and empowered, and the work she did. I'm going to end with her own words, about her love of nature and plants and most especially of trees

Anne wrote to us all:

"I'm enjoying the pleasures of Spring in the air—my favourite season. I ventured outside to see snowdrops in bloom and Spring bulbs pushing their way through the surface. I've opened the windows to the fresh air and birdsong. I'm also eagerly looking forward to the arrival of my brother, David, who arrives from South Africa tomorrow evening..." And we saw that lovely picture of her in the park under the blossoms...

So here is Anne's poem, WHICH IS THE BEST TIME FOR A FLOWER, which I told Sonia would read – which combines this love of the world, and the work of working for the good of others, especially the young and the marginalized:

Sonia has 250 copies of Anne's poem "Which is the best time for a flower" - she wrote this some years ago for no special reason, but seems very appropriate now, and I would like it given out with the seeds etc. Also perhaps you could thank my friend Elizabeth Kohl who had them printed and paid for these.

WHICH IS THE BEST TIME FOR A FLOWER? By Anne Goodman Published in Now What? Developing Our Future Understanding Our Place in the Unfolding Universe (Anne Goodman, 2003)

Which is the best time for a flower?
Is it that moment when,
By an ancient wisdom we cannot understand,
The seed emerges from its dormant, pregnant state
Of months, even years,
That state when everything is possible,
but nothing is assured,
And begins to grow?

Or is the time when the first rootlet pushes into the earth,
And the first shoot breaks through into the sunlight,
With exultation,
When the first pair of leaves open into their tender green goldness,
That the soul remembers and thrills to, anew
Is this the best time for a flower?

Perhaps it's the period of glorious growth.
When stems, buds and leaves proliferate with abandon,
As the plant proclaims its presence,

While out sight the roots are deepening, anchoring, spreading,
And, coincidentally (?),
Preparing the ground for earthworms and new growth.

Surely the best time for a flower is its culmination?
Its flowering moment of supreme glory and beauty,
Which is followed so closely by its supreme moment of sacrifice,
That you have to wonder if that's what it was celebrating after all.

Is it possible that the best moment for a flower is its decay?
Which is not just a breaking down,
But a building, providing, nurturing time,
Ensuring not just the survival of its own seeds
But of life?

Which is the best time for a flower?
If we could answer that question we couldn't do what we do.
Push our babies to the margins of life,
So they don't interfere with our own self importance.

Treat our children as if we know more than they do,
When they have forgotten much less
And are so much closer to the truth.
And our adolescents, so angry, so idealistic,
Trying so hard to make sense out of a senseless world.
We couldn't criticize them, or worse, ignore them,
(Then wonder why they turn to suicide or drink).

Adults we respect,
At least if they're Productive and Successful.
But we'd have more time for dreamers and poets
If we knew what the question meant,
And we couldn't waste the precious resource of elders.
The insanity of shunting people to the margins again
Just when they have finally figured out what life is about.

Which is the best time for a flower?
Not our time, that's for sure.
But maybe, just maybe,
Our time most of all...

And I'll end with a short poem by ee Cummings,

in time of daffodils by E. E. Cummings

in time of daffodils(who know
the goal of living is to grow)
forgetting why,remember how

in time of lilacs who proclaim
the aim of waking is to dream,
remember so(forgetting seem)

in time of roses(who amaze
our now and here with paradise)
forgetting if,remember yes

in time of all sweet things beyond
whatever mind may comprehend,
remember seek(forgetting find)

and in a mystery to be
(when time from time shall set us free)
forgetting me,remember me

REFLECTION:

Could we take a moment to think about Anne, in our own hearts, and about how she touched us, and would want us to reflect on each other and what we can do to help each other and the world we share.

One last poem, also read for the family at Annes service:

Mary Frye, who was living in Baltimore at the time, wrote the poem in 1932. She had never written any poetry, but the plight of a young German [Jewish](#) woman, Margaret Schwarzkopf, who was staying with her and her husband, inspired the poem. Margaret Schwarzkopf had been concerned about her mother, who was ill in Germany, but she had been warned not to return home because of increasing [anti-Semitic](#) unrest. When her mother died, the heartbroken young woman told Frye that she never had the chance to “stand by my mother’s grave and shed a tear”. Frye found herself composing a piece of verse on a brown paper shopping bag. Later she said that the words “just came to her” and expressed what she felt about life and death. ^[1]

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and weep.
I am not there; I do not sleep.

Carole's words: We are profoundly glad that Anne lived. We are glad that we saw her face and felt the glow of her love. We cherish the memory of her words and deeds and character.

Ask all to rise

Let us honor the life of Anne by living, ourselves, more nobly and loving in the days ahead, holding Anne and each other in our thoughts as we go forth and greet each other and build our community.

May you go in love, and may an abiding peace go with you.

- 2:35 - 2:40 5 min Sonia Goodman (Yaya)
- 2:40 - 2:55 10-12 min daughters – Sandy Murray, Vicki Adelson, Susie Adelson
- 2:55 - 3:10 13 min - slideshow
- 3:10 - 3:15 5 min Carolyn Webb
- 3:15 - 3:20: 5 min Ed O'Sullivan
- 3:20 - 3:30 10 min Michael Wheelr
- 3:30 - 3:35 5 minutes Doug White Feather
- 3:35 - 3:45 10 min Mary (reading selections from Anne's letters)

- 3:45 Drumming by Popcorn