

## Monthly Meditations November December 2010

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### Meditation for November

This time last year we struggled around the garden with buckets of water. Strict water restrictions made gardening a time consuming and wearying task. Plus it was so hot! What a contrast this year is. Dams full, our garden waterlogged at times and needing cracker dust to fill up the squishy patches. The temperature is mild, so much so that the strawberries have taken on a new lease of life.

Last year I was not a happy gardener, I can still hear my moans and whinges. This year I'm enjoying the garden and singing away to myself. Last year was an absolutely bumper mango crop. The description "famine fruit" describes how they love the hot dry weather. This year there is not a mango in sight as you ride around the district. (We have one solitary mango hanging on.) The wet weather caused all the flowers to drop before setting. Instead this year peaches are sweet and plentiful. I am challenged to learn to live as Paul described writing to the Philippians "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation" (Philippians 4:12)

How easy to think that is impossible for me. Again my garden has a message. About 5 years ago Rod's sister gave me some Agapanthus bulbs. So easy to grow! Well they have never flowered. I have moved them to different positions and still nothing – until now. This year no matter if they stayed in the same spot or I moved them they are blooming, lovely blue heads of flowers. Also the pineapple top I planted some years ago is actually growing a pineapple. I nearly pulled it out this year, it was only spared because I saw a little green frog had claimed it for its home. Patience and the accepting that every thing has its season enables one to enjoy the present.

The sweet peas have all been removed and the garden beds look bare, but they are resting. Another important season to respect and enjoy. A time for the soil to renew its vitality and prepare for the next crop.

The Elder Tree has been a mass of big puffy balls of white dancing in the wind and giving shade to the chooks. Every time I go to gather eggs I come out with the tiny star like flowers sprinkled through my hair like confetti. It made me think of weddings and reminded me that I am the bride of Christ and what a delight that is to celebrate. A visit to the chook yard has become a sacred place, a reminder of the joy of my relationship to God.

How does God speak to me in the garden? Firstly it is about noticing. What catches your attention? Then think about what words come to your mind and finally give it a title. This month I was struck by the nasturtiums climbing up the fence, over the fence and up the neighbours' tree. Words such – climbing, new heights, escape, reaching beyond, exploring, blaze of colour came to my mind. The title for this picture - **A Trail of Glory**. The message that came from this picture is "Trust me, when you reach out into new areas I will be with you and it will become a trail of glory to me". A timely message as I prepared to go as a guest speaker to a ladies breakfast speaking about my involvement in the Quiet Garden.

What is God drawing your attention to today?

Judy.

### Meditation for December

My beautiful Lavender Bush has died. Wet feet from all that rain is my diagnosis. Lavenders like dry spots. I feel sad every time I look at the brown withered caricature of what it was. I miss its perfume, its colour and the way it bloomed from May to October with abundant flowers. I'm actually grieving for an old lavender bush! Yet it has become symbolic for me of the amazing fact that we have a God who has a heart – A God who grieves for our broken relationship with Him so much that His heart is filled with pain.(Genesis 6:6)

What a way to enter Advent ( this Christmas time) -To understand that God so longs to restore our relationship with Him that He sent His Son as a baby.

I'm a great dreamer, and have many wonderful dreams of how my dream garden would look. Just as there are certain facts of life that can't be changed; like who my parents are, my skin colour etc. The same is true in the garden, there are facts that can't be changed - like the straight right angled paths, the huge ugly tin shed that takes up a third of the back yard and the pool taking up another third. No matter how much I dream of meandering paths with mysterious twists and turns, garden rooms such as one filled with lemon scented plants or another with silver leafed plants, and ponds and bridges. I have to accept reality. I can be forever hankering after the unattainable or accept what is and work with it.

On the other hand there are some areas where I do have a choice – whether we have chooks, a vegetable garden and what plants I put in. Yet in this area of choice there is the possibility of making mistakes. I seem to make plenty.

I was excited about buying an old wooden cart to display my herbs for sale. It had a rustic look and I couldn't wait to fill it with pots of herbs. Unfortunately the only place to park it didn't get the rain yet got too much sun- so the poor plants baked. I have now rescued them.

The choices we make in life depend so much on what is growing deep within us, the essential 'Me'. So often I get hung up about what other people think instead of allowing my 'God seed' to germinate and grow and become God's unique manifestation in me. Are we able to join with Mary and say “Yes” to the invitation of growing God in us?

Since I removed all the sweet peas the roses have come to life, new shoots, buds and beautiful blooms.

May you be blessed this Christmas time.

Judy