



Rev. Dr. Daris S. Bultena, Pastor
Minister of Word and Sacrament

August 21, 2009

Trimming and Pruning

Dear Readers,

I have just returned from being away for some good long days off. It is good to be back to my "normal" routine. While my vacation time was not jetting off to Europe or sailing around the cape, it was filled with fun days and an array of accomplishments.

Family from South Dakota visited and we did a number of the tourist attractions. It has been some time since I had visited Mt. Vernon; I really did enjoy seeing the sights and walking in the place where the first of our "first families" did walk. Since I had been there a dozen years ago or so, they have added a new visitor's center and museum. It is worth the short trip and the full day that one needs to really explore. The perspective of George Washington as a "gentleman farmer" was really insightful and an aspect of his life I had not considered or heard before.



While there were other fun times with my family here, it was after they left that some of the real action happened. I had a few days in order to accomplish some things that I do not normally get to in the course of the week. One of those days was the yard. I have good intentions with the yard. I would like to have things look nice, but the truth of the matter is that I don't find much joy in yard work. In fact, I feel it is more drudgery than it is anything else.

Yet, there are things that have to be done. Many of the things that are planted in my front garden had gotten over-grown and had literally gone wild with all the rain that we have had. I "attacked" it all. And the word "attacked" is really the right word. I cut and trimmed. I pruned and I removed.

As I was cutting the one bush back to the trunk, a passer-by questioned me if it was really the right time of the year to be doing such a radical trimming. I replied simply and laughingly, "If it



Rev. Dr. Daris S. Bultena, Pastor
Minister of Word and Sacrament

August 21, 2009

isn't it is too late." We chuckled together. Were I a gardener sort I might pay attention to such, but since I'm more of a "get the job done" than I am a "gentleman farmer" I was not real concerned.

I must admit that this is not the first August that I had gone at growing things around my place with trimming abandon. I did it last year too and things survived well. There are some truths I do know—that if I would just work at this a little bit each week then my yard would not get so out of hand. I know that, but...it just does not seem to happen. So along comes a day when some radical trimming and pruning is the order of the day.

It makes me think about life and even my walk of faithfulness. What if, we just took that day where we step back, look at the landscape of our living and ask, "What needs to go here?" "What needs to radically be cut back?" "What needs to be gone?" And then...oh, and then...what if we invited the Holy Spirit to really help us radically trim back those things in our lives that need to go.

I'm open to the sign that my day in the yard may hold a truth in living life too. Yes a little gentle pruning is good. But sometimes some radical "attack" is needed too.

Blessings,
Rev. Dr. Daris S. Bultena, Pastor
Minister of Word and Sacrament
www.holy411.org