

By: Rev. Mark Breese

Pastor Mark is the Agency Minister and the Director of Ministry & Community partnerships at Community Missions.

The Violets Have Arrived!

Let the fields be jubilant; the violets have arrived in my front lawn! I LOVE the violets. I love the way they make these little dots of color in the blanket of bright green that one sees only at the start of spring.

My family will say, “But we thought that the crocus was your favorite?” That is true, but for as much as I love the crocuses, they also bring a bit of worry for me. They are early enough that the snow can still come. With the crocus I still feel like spring is . . . tentative.

But the violets are another story. Once they show up, I have this little sigh of relief inside. We made it! Spring is truly here! I know that is not a guaranteed thing, especially considering that I live in Niagara and there could be a really, really late snow. But the violets seldom see the snow. And anyway, it’s much more of a feeling thing.

I love how small they are, yet so vibrant. They are unobtrusive, yet at the same time they bring joyful, almost playful, splashes of color to the newly greening lawn. And even if you have hundreds in your lawn, because they are close to the ground, they don’t stick up and dominate the space. Unlike the dandelions, with their tall stalks that make your lawn look like it’s having a bad hair day.

There are also the all the memories of little bouquets the violets bring to mind. My daughter, when she was little, would go and pick them while they were in bloom and make these teeny-tiny violet bouquets. So many bouquets!

And of course, as everyone knows, the violet is the state flower of New Jersey—The Garden State *and* my homeland.

Psalm 96:12

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.



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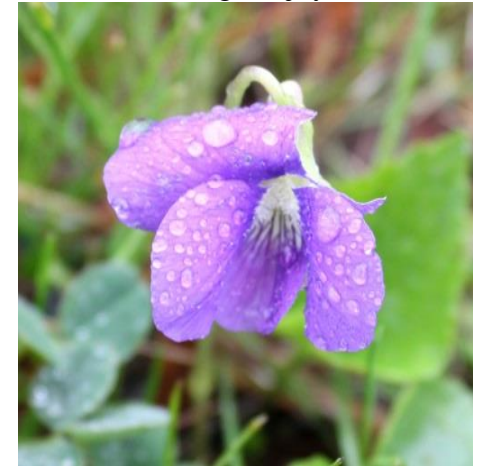
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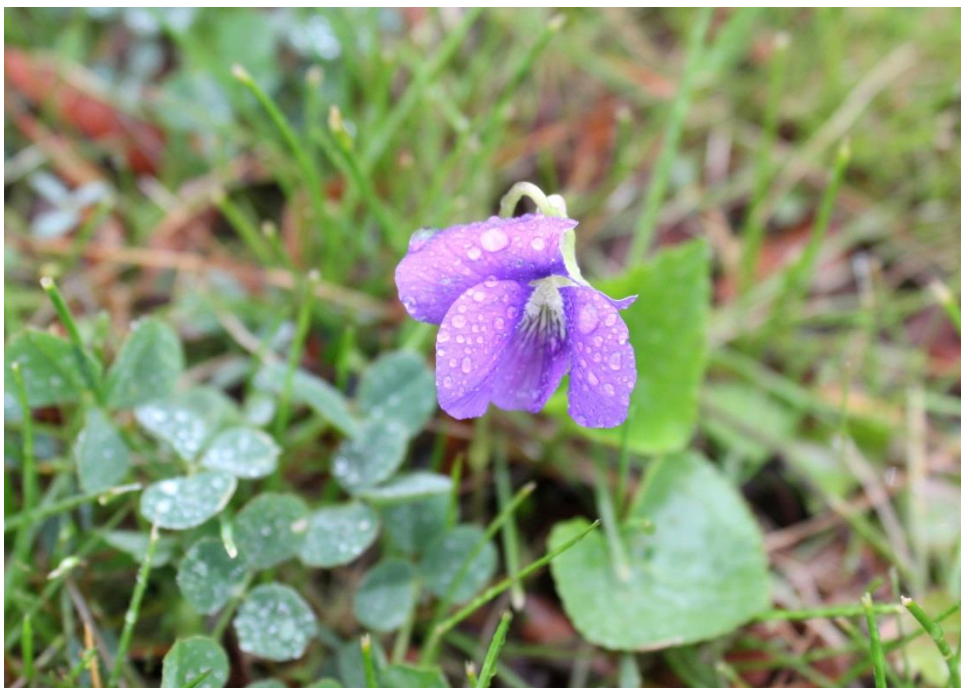


That all said, with the violets comes the cutting of the lawn, and it's a real struggle to make myself do it. I don't want to cut down my violets! But in the spring the lawn gets out of hand so quickly. I always try to let it go as long as I can. Sometimes I even set the wheels to the lawnmower really high. It makes it look almost like the lawn was never cut, but the blade whirls above the heads of the violets, and they are spared.

So why all this about violets? I guess it is because of the hope they always bring to me. There is a certainty to their return. It reminds me that the Earth continues on its course through time, blessedly unheeding of my momentary worries on any particular day. Even in all their smallness, their inevitability and their simple beauty reminds me of how truly wonderful is God's creation.

Indeed, "Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them!" The violets are in bloom!

Pastor Mark



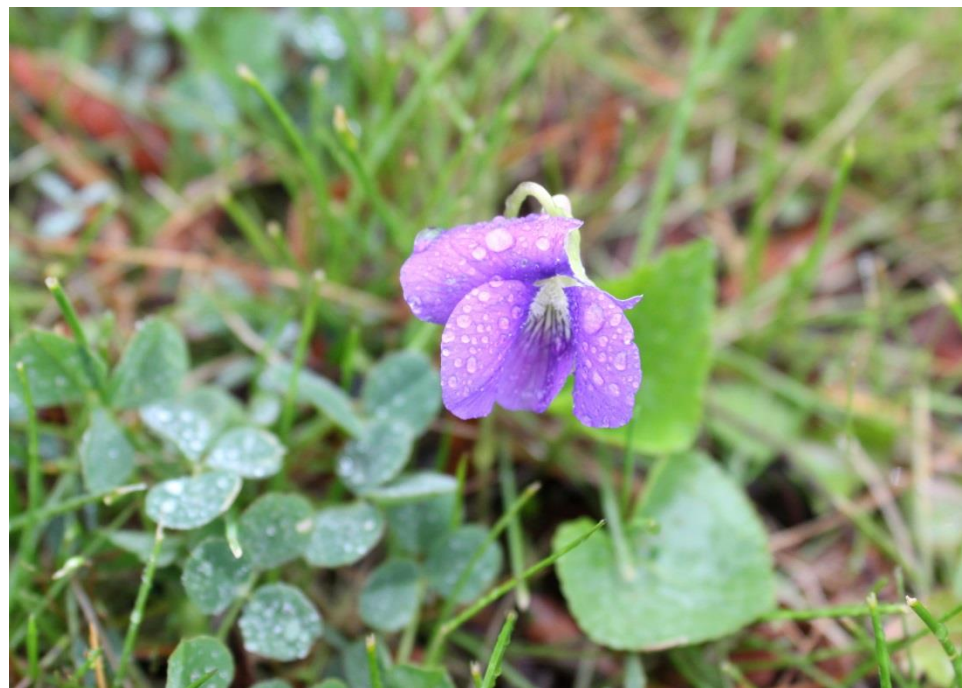
"Violet After A Rain" from Pastor Mark's front lawn.

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