**Bearing Fruit – September 12, 2021**

**“A Flower Remembered”**

This past week we had to say goodbye to a young woman, Haley Jablonski, and support her family in her death. Haley died after a long three-year battle with brain cancer. Today would have been her 21st birthday.

There are other moments that are wrapped in our hearts that are difficult to revisit - moments of tragedy. We remember where we were when we hear of these events. Yesterday, Saturday, was the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. There were 2,997 victims, including 412 first responders of whom 343 were firefighters. Many of the first responders who survived have had ongoing health problems. It is reported that since 9/11 3,439 first responders have died as a result of exposure of hazardous materials while serving at the twin towers.

There have been additional tragedies in our nation’s history and in our personal lives, but other parts of the world suffer, also. In March 2011 there was an earthquake and tsunami that hit the Tahoku area of the pacific. There were 19,747 deaths and 2,556 people missing. The tsunami caused the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in northern Japan, the second worst nuclear accident in the history of nuclear power generation.

Today, our Southminster Singers offer to God and us *A Flower Remembered* by John Rutter, which was written in memory of the victims of the Tahoku area earthquake and tsunami in 2011, ten years ago. They sing it to honor the many losses we have suffered as individuals and as people who love. As Christians we embrace all people, no matter their religious beliefs, because we believe that everyone is loved by God, no exceptions. We bear the fruit of God’s love by loving all the world, near and far.

*A flower remembered can never wither  
Forever blooming as bright as day  
Its fragrance lingering like music softly playing  
A gentle voice that’s saying  
I'll never fade away  
I hear the echoes of many voices  
Sometimes they're distant sometimes so clear  
Through all the sounds of life they seem to whisper  
Will you remember Will you remember  
Will you remember*