

*Garden Of Weedin'  
...Life Began In A Garden*



# The Garden Of Weedin' ...Life Began In A Garden

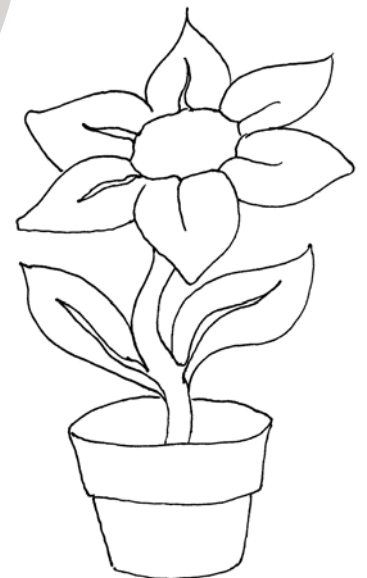
*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)*

*When the earth was finished, "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." (Genesis 2:8)*

That is where our human story begins...in a garden created especially for us by our Creator. Eden is the world's most famous garden which begs us to question, "Were there weeds in the Garden of Eden? Who got to do all the weeding?" It could be that those pesky weeds cropped up after that little incident with the alluring fruit and the sly snake. We may never know but we can have a terrific time creating our own Garden Of Weedin'!

**It's Spring!**  
**It's A Garden!**  
**It's A Banquet!**

**It's Time to celebrate Spring  
in a Garden at a Banquet!**



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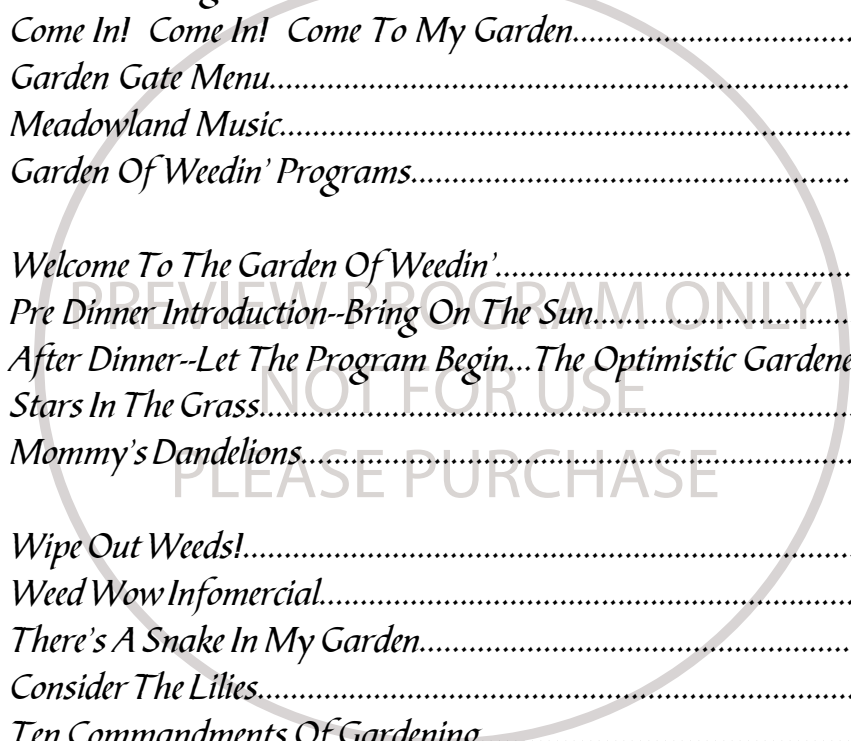
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# Through The Garden Gate

*"Weed 'em and Reap!"*

Follow these tips and add your own creative touches to make your Spring event a unique banquet that will be remembered for years. Manage basic arrangements and then have fun developing the delightful garden theme.

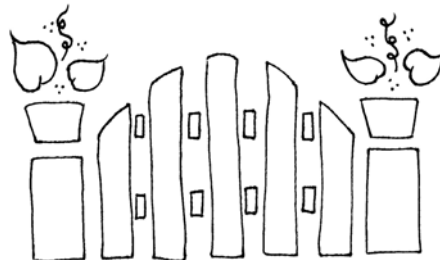
## A Garden Banquet

A banquet is a party with food as the main attraction. Add a short program, a speaker or entertainment. The occasion is enjoyable, comfortable and social. The most popular traditional spring banquet is the Mother and Daughter Banquet. There are other occasions when banquets are enjoyable. Ladies evenings, Women's program, Holiday gatherings, Annual Retreats, summer picnics and even father and child banquets.

## A Garden Party

A party is a fun and games event where people mix for sparkling conversation, good food and laughter. Parties tend to be informal and hosts do not go to extra trouble to decorate. While party games were once wildly popular, there are groups who do not enjoy a lot of organized activity. It should be a highly enjoyable experience. The activities should fit the needs of the guests.

Sometimes parties do not have to be planned at all. A larger party requires good planning to handle the program, publicity, decorating, welcoming, refreshments and clean up. Delicious refreshments are offered and you know you have a great party if you had a chance to create your own fun and remember the event fondly.



## Pay Attention To Details

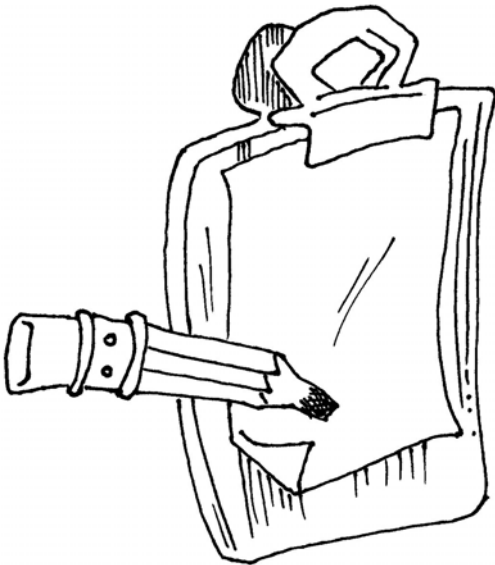
Often it is the smallest detail that makes the biggest impression. Wild flowers on a table, small table gifts for each guest, background music, greeters at the door and other thoughtful gestures make individuals feel welcome, special and pampered.

## Practice Christian Hospitality

In the middle of a fun activity, people should be growing in their understanding of the Lord. Everyone should be giving affection and receiving love from other Christians in the family of God. Begin friendly conversations, avoid gossip or mean spirited comments.

## Set Realistic Goals

What do you want to see happen during the two hours your guests are with you? Be specific! Plans in this workbook are complete. However, you may have more fun if you change our details to fit your needs. Add creative ideas and change any activities as desired.



## Work With A "Landscaping" Team

Choose a small leadership team to complete advance arrangements. The team may be as few as three or as large as ten or more. Divide tasks between team members and trust them to finish their tasks. While the leadership may be divided, one person should be in charge to keep the whole affair moving smoothly.



## Organize

Follow our suggestions adding your own creativity at the beginning of the planning process. Write down exactly what will happen and when the jobs must be completed. Do not leave organization to the last minute.

## Purchase Supplies As Needed

Decide what the banquet budget is and stay within the limit. Keep expense records. Use the church tax exemption number.

## Practice A Positive Approach

Maintain a light and happy atmosphere during the planning process. If your attitude is right the rest of your team will catch the spirit. After all, this is a party!

## Pray!

Pray for the event, the team and the guests. Pray as a team. Take each detail before the Lord and then-Relax!

## Set Up

Provide adequate time to set up tables, decorations, props, food and other items necessary for the event. Reserve the church for the entire day and there may be situations when room arrangements must take place a day before the party.

## Say Thank You

The behind-the-scenes team is the core of this event. Take time to write thank you notes, call and give small thank you gifts. Recognize your team publically at the banquet.



## Clean Up

When the event is over, clean up begins. The party is not complete until the church is in order. Encourage the team to remove their props immediately. Stay to help with kitchen clean up.

*What do you get when ants live in your yard?*

*Ants in your Plants!*

**NOTES:**

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*Speaking Of...*

## A Delightful Speaker

*"A dedicated gardener, dwells within."*

### Invite A Speaker

By all means invite a special guest to share inspirational thoughts. When scheduling a speaker, consider reducing program segments we provide that are best performed by the guests themselves. The speaker should conclude the evening festivities.

### The Perfect Person

A good speaker makes a faith connection with the specific group. Choose the speaker from a list of possibilities suggested by friends, relatives, pastor, other churches, community groups or national organizations.



### Consider The Cost

Ask the speaker if she has a set fee. If not, give a generous monetary gift including traveling costs. Think about the time they invest in preparation, travel and presentation.





## Specific Instructions

Send a letter, make a telephone call and stay in contact through the internet. Include information like highway directions, arrival time and place, group size, time limit, lodging information and other personal details.

Tell the speaker the type of program and details of what you would like their speech to include. Continue to make contact periodically until the speaker leaves home to travel to the event.

## Care And Feeding

Be aware that it is disquieting for a speaker to enter a room of strangers, be expected to speak about personal and spiritual issues and leave still feeling as if everyone is a stranger.

Assign a pre-arranged hostess "friend" to handle introductions, sit and converse with the guest at dinner to give the speaker a sense of belonging.

The banquet budget should include payment of all expenses from the time the speaker leaves home until she returns. If more meals are required, host or pay accordingly.

## After The Banquet

Pay promptly. Stay with the speaker until they leave to return to their home. Thank that person from your heart and always follow up with a handwritten thank you note!





*Tell Everyone...*

## Publicize!

*“Weeds! -All you can pick for free!”*

Because you make the effort of preparing a lovely event, filled with fun, fellowship and fantastic food, go the extra mile to publicize. Let's face it, you need enthusiastic guests so do your best to convince them it will be a unique experience in fine dining and entertainment.

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It's All About The Details

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Invitations, posters, registration forms, programs, handouts and centerpieces should all relate to your theme. Use the same colors, scripture, picture or logo on every piece of publicity.

### Invite Every Gal!

Send invitations. If a community wide event is desired, place posters in local restaurants, businesses, offices. Insert invitations in the weekly worship folder and in the monthly newsletter.

Don't forget...one of the best places to put posters is in the Ladies Room at church and in community businesses. If a local business hesitates to put another poster in their window, suggest their ladies' room as a great "out of the way" place!



### Create Buzz!

Involve lots of people in the planning stages. They don't have to be on the team but delegate tasks or small parts. Ask as many people as possible to participate in the formal program. No memorization! They read their part. The benefit? Everyone who is involved will attend and will be more likely to talk about the event and invite others. Many hands make light work. Cut stress with more help.

### There's Even More Fun!

Let guests know prizes will be awarded for various games. Enjoy the company of friends.

### Be Creative!

If the banquet is around a holiday like Mother's Day, advertise the event to men of the church that this is a great Mother's Day gift they can give their wives and mothers. Find creative ways to make your banquet a "gift" to the women who attend.





*Decorating...*



## In The Garden

*“Plant kindness, gather love.”*

Create a simple garden. When guests enter the party area, they should immediately see and feel the theme. Discuss decoration at the beginning of the planning process. Follow our suggestions or invent your own “Garden Of Weedin’”.

Our tips are meant to spark your own creativity. Read and follow directions but use items that are available locally. Not every decoration listed must be used.

***Choose the best and leave the rest!***

### How Complicated Is This Going To Be?

This event can be as simple or involved as desired. If there are folks in your church who love to decorate, give them the responsibility to turn the room into a work of art. If no one comes forward, decorate simply at each table.

### What Should Be Decorated?

Decorate tables with centerpieces and theme related items. Consider decorating the ticket table, entry door, stage area and four walls of the large room.



## Tasteful Elegance

Remember that less is more. Do not clutter any area with an overabundance of garden decor. Choose a few lovely pieces to make the room come to life. It is generally better to choose one suggestion rather than try to have all of these ideas on different tables—too confusing! So, pick one idea that works for your group and your budget.

### Tables

**1. Green On Green:** This monotone color is just the thing to create a simple yet elegant garden feel throughout the entire room. Pale green table covers, clear glass hurricane lantern with green or white candle, crystal or clear glass accessories.

...Green ivy swag draped around the centerpiece  
...Green grass grown in terra cotta pots and clipped to look like mowed grass, tie a green print ribbon around the pot  
...Dark green napkins tied around middle with matching ribbons, sprig of green ivy tucked in ribbon  
...white dishes, clear glassware

**2. Pastel Flower Garden:** Choose pale colors for silk flowers. Mix the pastel colors so each table has every color. Pastel table coverings, flower basket centerpieces. Choose live green leaf plants and tuck pastel silk flowers into the dirt. Gerber Daisies are perfect for this arrangement. They are colorful and come in a variety of sizes.

...tea light candles at each place setting in small glass cups. Choose one pastel tea light color per table.  
...white napkins tied with twine, pastel silk flower tucked in twine



...white dishes, clear glassware  
...pastel colored pebbles scattered on the table.

**3. Honeybee Garden:** Choose bright yellow table coverings for all tables. Add potted yellow and orange flowers as centerpieces.

...The internet has lots of small bees for sale from a variety of companies. Check it out and scatter little bees on the table.

...Bright orange napkins or white napkins with black ribbon tied to each

...small jars or pots of honey with tiny spoons in the honey pots

**4. Butterfly Garden:** Choose pale blue and lavender table coverings. Add large, multi-colored flower arrangements as centerpieces.

...buy decorative butterflies at [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) and tuck them all over the table. Lots of butterflies look terrific. Spray glitter them for that extra sparkle.

Fancy Butterflies IN-48/2326

Design Your Own! Butterflies IN-59/1067

...white napkins with one large butterfly tied to a ribbon

...green leaves sprinkled on the table.

...one large helium balloon butterfly flying from the flower arrangements.

**5. Gardener's Glory:** Choose beige table coverings to resemble a potter's shed. Place one square of newspaper in the center of the table. One large terra cotta pot, tipped over with potter's soil coming from it is the centerpiece. Add gardener's tools and a straw hat.

...place tiny plastic starter plant containers with tiny plants on the table

...tableware should be tucked inside one inexpensive gardener's glove. Tuck the napkin in the glove behind the knife, fork and spoon. Tie the glove with rough twine or rope.

...make place mats from newspaper so it looks like a work area.

**6, Rose Garden:** Choose white table coverings and your choice of





rose colors. Red roses look beautiful but there are many lovely shades. Tip: It's much less expensive to purchase silk roses than to try to purchase live bouquets!

...Add accessories in the same shade of rose. Napkins, ribbon and other items should match the roses

...Make this decor about roses and candlelight and crystal

**7. Garden Of Weedin':** Fill the table with wild flowers and weeds. Dandelions, Creeping Charlie and other lovely weeds or blooming flowers look wonderful.

...The centerpiece should be a vase, watering can or basket filled with a variety of leafy greens and wild flowers or weeds. Thin, leafy tree branches add bulk and look terrific.

...Add a hand weed hoe and garden gloves

...Napkins with brightly colored flowers tied with ribbon, tuck a leafy twig in each napkin

...Long before the banquet, plant tiny pots with grass seed. Let the grass grow and tuck one small yellow silk flower in each pot around the table. Tie a yellow ribbon around each small pot.

**8. Build Your Own Miniature Garden:** Provide a garden container, small plants, sand or soil, ceramic garden decor, rocks, hand tool or spoon and other miniature garden items as available. Allow the guests to build their own miniature garden which becomes their lovely centerpiece. If desired, the centerpieces can be given as gifts at the end of the evening. This is a great ice breaker at each table!

**There are many dazzling and fun options. Choose one that you know will delight your group. Stay within the same color family for a more pulled together appearance.**

## Serving Tables

If the dinner is a buffet, place items in the same colors on the serving tables. Scatter items along the length of the table. Flowers, ribbon, ceramic pieces, etc. follow through the Garden theme.



## Table Gifts

It's always thoughtful to offer table favors. Choose something small to place at each place setting. Tiny white ceramic birds, candles, silver charms, candy, tiny flowering plants, chocolate rose shaped lollipops tied with ribbon or other items that match the theme.

**More gift ideas:** wooden paint sticks painted for garden stakes, small flower pot with live/silk plant and ribbon tied around pot, garden gloves tied with colorful ribbon and a seed packet, small terra cotta pots with candy and wrapped in netting with ribbon.

## Garden Arbor -- Garden Gate

Set up a lovely garden gate at the entrance of the area. Trim an inexpensive metal arbor with lights, flowers and netting. Set a picket fence garden gate near the entrance so guests must walk through the gate.

*Check out rental stores and garages of friends!*

## Stage Presentation

Feature a collection of garden items on the stage or at one end of the room. If the banquet area does not have a focal spot, scatter lovely items here and there along the walls or in corners.

**GARDEN OBJECTS:** Create your own Garden Of Weedin' by gathering garden items from homes of friends. Here is a list to get your own creative mind moving in the right direction. Use what you have!

GARDEN BENCHES    LARGE SILK PLANTS/TREES    ROCKS  
WOODEN WORK TABLE FILLED WITH TERRA COTTA POTS  
GARDEN TOOLS    LIVE PLANTS    GARDEN STATUARY

GARDEN BRIDGE    STEPPING STONES    WOODEN STEP STOOL  
GAZING BALL    TOPIARY FRAMES    WIND CHIMES  
BIRD HOUSES    FOUNTAIN    HAMMOCK    GARDEN HOSE

POTS/PLANTERS    GARDEN TABLE WITH UMBRELLA



FLOWERY WIND SOCKS    HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS  
WATERING CAN    TRELLIS    BIRD BATH    GARDEN GNOMES

GARDEN FLAGS/ON STAKES PUSHED INTO POTTED DIRT  
GARDEN FIGURES    HANGING BASKETS    GARDEN GLOVES  
WISHING WELL  
BLACK PLASTIC POND WITH RUNNING WATER/DECORATE WITH GREENS  
BUGS    BIRD FEEDERS    IVY/GREEN PLANTS  
GARDEN HATS

**Make a Topiary:** Two styro foam balls of different sizes. Put them through a dowel rod to hold them together and stick in a pot of dirt. Cover with Spanish moss or ivy greens and place on stage, on tables or in the room.

**GARDEN SIGNS:** Make small signs to make your group smile.

SQUIRREL CROSSING    HUMMINGBIRDS WELCOME  
LEAVE ROOM IN YOUR GARDEN TO DANCE  
MY GARDEN-MY WEEDS-LEAVE 'EM WHERE THEY ARE!  
GOD LOVES A GARDEN    LIFE BEGAN IN A GARDEN  
TAKE TIME TO SMELL THE ROSES    PLAY IN THE DIRT  
GIGGLE!    LAUGH!  
CONTENTMENT GROWS IN MY GARDEN  
A DAY WITHOUT A GARDEN IS NIGHT  
OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD-LOOK WHAT HE CREATED!

FROG AND SIGN: WILL WORK FOR FLIES  
WORM CROSSING

**GARDEN LIGHTING:** Scatter twinkle lights along the floor and cover with fabric (sheets) to unify the look. Place floor lighting behind large objects and dim lights in the room or stage area.

## Background Music

Play music as guests enter and throughout dinner. Take into consideration the fact that conversations will be taking place. CD/Cassette volume should be carefully controlled. Play music at the





end of the evening as guests are gathering their belongings.

Consider music from a specific time period. The big bands of the 1940's still offer beautiful sounds with an upbeat temp. Find a few favorites at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) To find cool sounds like Artie Shaw, Frank Sinatra, smooth jazz, Christian jazz and even lovely classical pieces....Ahhh, Bach!

Live music is always appropriate. Ask a pianist, organist, harpist, small jazz group, classical string quartet, college or high school musicians to participate. A guitarist sitting in the garden scene strumming quiet Christian songs makes quite an impression! Be prepared to feed the guests and offer a small honorarium.

## Art Supplies, Decorations, Small Gifts

Check out craft shops, party stores, discount stores and rummage shops. Make table decorations, programs and table gifts. Check the internet for affordable items.

**Door Prizes:** Ask if business and restaurants are willing to donate gifts or gift cards. Buy small items like picture frames, note holders, lamps, make up bags, pill organizers, tea cups, key chains, potted plants, candles, stuffed animals and costume jewelry.

Find inexpensive items that appeal to the feminine eye. Gifts are not necessary but often make the event special for those who attend.

If children are present, include charming toy gifts. Stuffed animals, coloring books, jewelry and books are great choices.

## Catalog Stuff

Check out *S&S Arts and Crafts* web site: [www.ssw.com](http://www.ssw.com) for art



supplies at a great price!

*Oriental Trading Company* offers a wide variety of appropriate decorations and gift items. See their website at: [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com)

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*And So We Begin....*

## Down The Garden Path!

*"Bless My Bloomers!"*



Consider crowd psychology. No one enjoys going to a party where everyone remains a stranger, little conversation occurs and a subdued mood becomes awkward. Everyone enjoys an event where people are talking and laughing, light and temperature are controlled, music sets the mood, strangers are just new friends and tables are inviting.

### When The First Person Arrives, The Party Has Started

Greet guests cordially, give them a name tag and direct them to the party area. If special items are on display, encourage guests to travel from spot to spot as the crowd gathers. They may take a look at table decorations. Help them choose a seat or find their assigned table and specific seat. Point out rest rooms and conveniences within the building. Keep guests out of the kitchen!!!

### Get Acquainted

Put people at ease with smiles and hospitality. Help them get acquainted with simple table activities. Place conversation starters under each plate. Scatter pens or pencils at each table and place paper puzzles or short games in obvious places so guests can work together to win a table prize.

### Getting Together

Help the guests "sense the whole". Enthusiastic group singing encourages togetherness. Play a few table games as ice breakers.



## Small Groups

Place guests in small groups and offer opportunities to make more intimate contact with others. Devise an activity that could be done in pairs or fours. Dividing by birth months is an effective way of creating smaller groups across all lines: age, race, sex.

## Alternate the Pace

Some activities might be interactive and some quiet. Have some activities requiring a mental challenge with pencil and paper, group skits and sometimes activities for the whole group.

## Build Toward A Conclusion

Complete a few exciting activities just before dinner and continue the fun after the meal.

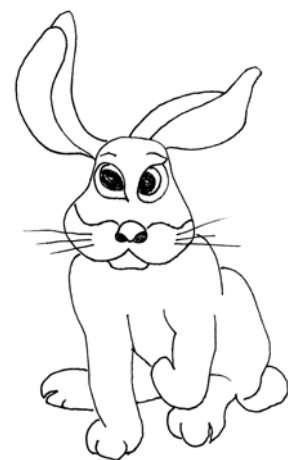
## Close With A Whole Group Activity

Do not end the evening with food. Instead, bring everyone together with a whole group activity. It could be singing, listening to a story, letting people tell what they enjoyed or an inspirational spiritual closing with a serious skit or talk, songs, hymns, praise choruses, sharing and a benediction featuring a fellowship prayer circle.

## Clean Up

Leave the church cleaner than you found it. Often those enjoying the fun are asked to help clean up. That can be fun and don't forget "many hands make light work".

**Tip:** Keep the music playing through clean up. Take a moment to sing and dance with other workers!



*Come In! Come In!*

## **Come To My Garden!**

*“Gardeners Have The Sunniest Smiles!”*

Welcome Garden Of Weedin' guests in an area where they are warmly welcomed and treat to delicious chilled punch. *(Make our recipe or serve your personal favorite beverage)* while coats are removed and table seating is confirmed.

Make this a delightful garden treat by serving a delicious cold beverage in crystal punch bowls with crystal cups. Consider serving small appetizers in small baskets rimmed with silk flowers. Add color coordinated beverage napkins.

Cover the punch table with a white table cloth. Scatter silk flower heads and green leaves along the table. Light a few pillar candles wrapped in twine and tied in a bow.

Play soft background music as guests begin arriving one half hour before the banquet begins. Encourage them to enter the hall where they roam from table to table and enjoy the garden table decorations and staged display.

### ***Green Grows My Garden Punch***

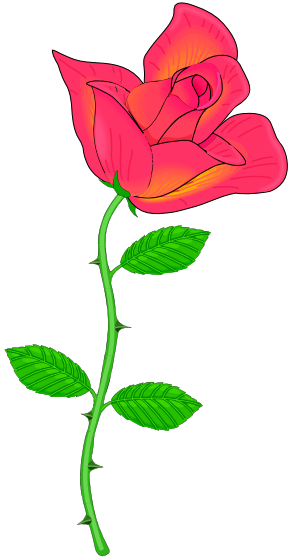
2 Cans Ecto Cooler Hi-C (Green)

1 large bottle of 7-Up

Generous scoops of Vanilla Ice Cream or Lime Sherbet

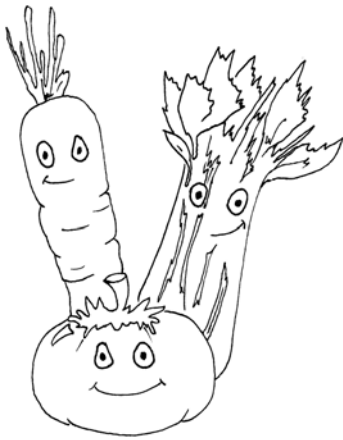
Maraschino Cherries

Pour Hi-C into punch bowl, scoop vanilla ice cream on top of punch. Add 7-Up and watch the punch foam. Sprinkle cherries on top of the ice cream. They will eventually sink but look lovely in a fresh bowl of punch. Serve with punch bowl ladle.





*M-m-m-Magnificent....*



## Garden Gate Menu!

*“Bless the flowers, the weeds, my birds and my bees.”*

The menu is the most important detail of the banquet event. Choose food your group enjoys and will remember fondly! We make suggestions but you know your gang best.

*Plan accordingly!  
Use the Garden theme!*

Plan the menu and assign a kitchen team to prepare the meal. Since this is a special event for the gals, it doesn't seem fair to ask them to cook their own party food. Ask the men of the church to cook and serve or consider local caterers! Ask a local Boy Scout troop. They often look for community service projects.

*Want to have some fun? Ask the servers to serve cold beverages from watering cans. It will certainly spark conversation! And...freeze plastic bugs in ice cubes! What's a garden without a bug! More fun...award one prize to the gal who's ice cube contains a special bug or flower.*

Since this is a Garden party, consider serving foods that come from a garden. Fresh fruit and vegetables make wonderful complements to the full meal. Serve a homemade soup and fresh salad bar!

### *Garden Appetizers*

(While Guests Mingle)

- Carrot and Celery Sticks, Cherry Tomatoes With Dip
- Stuffed Mushrooms (sausage)
- Eggplant with melted cheese
- Cucumber Sandwiches



## Salads

Garden Salad with Ranch and Raspberry Vinaigrette  
Fresh Tossed Caesar Salad with Herb Croutons  
Spinach Salad/grated eggs,  
sliced mushrooms, warm bacon dressing

### DANDELION GREEN SALAD

4 slices bacon, cut in small pieces  
@ 2 C. Chopped new Dandelion leaves  
2 hard boiled eggs, sliced or chopped  
1/4 C. Butter    2 T. Chopped onion    1/2 C cream or milk  
1 egg, beaten    1/2 t. salt    Dash of pepper  
1/4 C. Cider Vinegar    2 T. Sugar    1 T. Flour

**Toss together:** chopped dandelion, chopped onion and fried bacon pieces.  
Set aside.

**In Skillet:** warm butter and cream until butter melts.

**Beat** egg and then add salt, pepper, vinegar, sugar and flour. Blend the egg mixture into the slightly warm cream mixture. Increase heat and cook, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens.

**Pour** hot dressing over the greens and toss gently. Add eggs before tossing. Serve at once. Gather the dandelion leaves early in the spring before the plants flower or they will be bitter.

### Option #1-Entree Ideas

Choose One or Two: Baked Chicken, Herb Grilled Cornish Hen,  
Stuffed Chicken, Swiss Steak,  
Pasta Primavera, Pork Tenderloin, Salmon  
Baked Potato or Rice Pilaf  
Corn on Cob/ Mixed Vegetables    Rolls/Butter    Dessert

### Option #2-Breakfast Buffet

An endless buffet of scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties,  
home fries, fresh breakfast sweetbreads,  
orange and cranberry juice, coffee, tea, milk.



### *Option #3-Continental Breakfast*

Include an assortment of pastries, bagels with cream cheese, fresh fruit tray, orange and cranberry juice, coffee, tea, milk

### *Option #4-Formal Luncheon*

An assortment of wraps and classic sandwiches served with a tossed salad, pasta salad and bowl of chips.

Iced Tea    Cookie Tray

### *Option #5-Dinner*

Salad of Choice

Stuffed Pork Chops    Roasted Red Potatoes

Vegetable: Carrots and Peas

Rolls/Butter    Dessert

Sometimes children do not enjoy the delicious foods adults anticipate eating. Consider an optional Children's Dinner Menu at a lesser cost.

#### *Children's Menu #1*

Chicken Nuggets W/Ketchup

Jello Cubes    French Fries

Cold Drink    Dessert

#### *Children's Menu #2*

Hamburger on Toasted Bun W/Ketchup and Pickle

Potato Chips and Celery Sticks

Apple Slices    Cold Drink    Dessert

#### *Children's Menu #3*

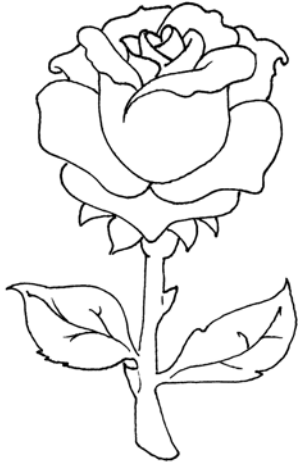
Hot Dog on Bun ~ Choice of Toppings

Tater Tots    Fruit Cup    Cold Drink    Dessert



*Sweets To The Sweet....*

## Garden Delight Desserts



The dessert makes the meal! Pull out all the stops and make dessert delicious, beautiful and fun.

Consider offering a Dessert Sampler with an array of delicious delicacies served from rolling carts. Guests choose their favorite dessert at the appropriate time. Replenish beverages as needed.

Here are suggestions to get you started. Add your own creations too! Notice there is no lack of wonderful choices:

*Chocolate Cake Topped With Cherry Pie Filling/Whipping Cream*

*Angel Food Cake With Sliced Strawberries*

*Cheese Cake With Berries*

*Pie: Apple, Peach, Cherry, Pecan*

*Cobblers: Peach, Apple, Cherry, Blueberry*

*Assorted Mini Fruit Tarts*

*Brownies and Vanilla Ice Cream*

*Tropical Fruit Kabob*

*Frosted Cupcakes Topped with Berries*

*Strawberry Shortcake/Whipping Cream*

Of course, charm is in the presentation. Squirt ribbons of chocolate or fruit topping across the plate before placing the dessert on it. Add a live flower on the side. Cut fruit and place on plates as accessories. Drizzle warm toppings just before placing the dessert on the cart.

**DIETARY RESTRICTIONS:** While it is not possible to prepare totally separate foods, it may be possible to accommodate those who have restrictions due to health or allergies.



## *Dirt!*

There are many wonderful recipes for this delicious and fun dessert. Choose your own favorite to serve table by table. Each table should receive one container of "Dirt" and a small garden spade. Add dessert dishes and allow the guests to serve their own portions.

Make a day ahead for a great party centerpiece. You will need a large (10") flower pot (no hole) and some artificial flowers.

2 (8 oz.) Cream Cheese  
2 (3 oz.) Instant vanilla pudding  
3 C. Milk  
2 (16 oz.) Cool Whip  
2 t. vanilla  
2 large packages Oreo Cookies  
Gummy worms (optional)

Cream sugar and cream cheese. Beat milk, pudding and vanilla until thick, then add to cream cheese mixture. Fold in Cool Whip. Grind Oreo cookies in blender.

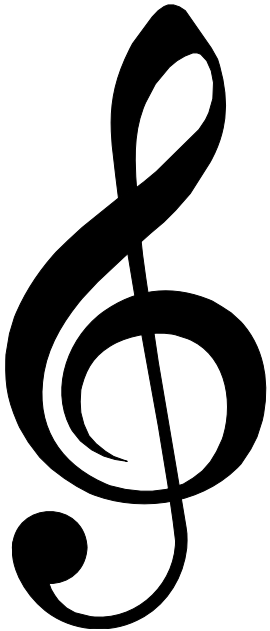
Layer Oreo mixture and creamy mixture, hiding gummy worms in flower pot, ending with cookie mixture on top. Chill overnight. Put flowers into "dirt" and surprise your guests when you serve your centerpiece for dessert! Makes enough for 2 pots.





*As Sunshine Is To A Garden....*

## Meadowland Music



Play pre recorded background music throughout the event. Christian CD's, soft jazz, classical music or show tunes are appropriate.

There are terrific Big Band CD's available. Non vocals work best. Check [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for The Glenn Miller Orchestra, Cole Porter orchestrations. Excellent Christian jazz and Christian Big Band music is also available online.

Conversations are a priority so play CD's softly as a pleasant diversion, setting a garden mood for the event. Control the volume carefully.

Does your community have amateur/professional musicians willing to perform? Think about asking a violinist, guitarist, harpist, pianist or ensemble to perform as guests arrive and as they enjoy dinner.

Sing fun songs and Christian choruses after dinner.

Ask a pianist to accompany the group.

Choose familiar songs.

### *Consider This!*

Provide a strolling violinist or guitarist during dinner. The musician wanders from table to table playing lovely pieces of music as desired.

### *Group Song Suggestions....*

Piano music is not included. Here are a few common songs that you may have or can obtain easily. Some songs can be sung A capella.



### Glow Worm

Shine little glow worm, glimmer, glimmer  
Shine little glow worm, glimmer, glimmer  
Lead us lest too far we wander  
Loves' sweet voice is callin' yonder  
Shine little glow worm, glimmer, glimmer  
Hey, there don't get dimmer, dimmer  
Light the path below, above  
And lead us on to love.



### Choruses and Hymns:

Tis A Gift To Be Simple      Majesty  
In The Garden      His Eye Is On The Sparrow

### *He's The Lily Of The Valley*

I have found a friend in Jesus, He's everything to me,  
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;  
The Lily of Valley, in Him alone I see  
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole:  
In sorrow He's my comfort, in trouble He's my stay;  
He tells me ev'ry care on Him to roll:  
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star,  
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

### *Apple Blossom Time*

I'll be with you in apple blossom time  
I'll be with you to change your name to mine.  
One day in May, I'll come and say,  
"Happy the bride the sun shines on today".  
What a wonderful wedding there will be.  
What a wonderful day for you and me.  
Church bells will chime, You will be mine...  
In apple blossom time.



## *Put On A Happy Face*

Gray skies are gonna clear up, Put on a happy face,  
Brush off the clouds and cheer up, Put on a happy face.  
Take off the gloomy mask of tragedy, It's not your style;  
You'll look so good that you'll be glad you decided to smile.  
Pick out a pleasant outlook, Sick out that noble chin;  
Wipe off that 'full of doubt' look, Slap on a happy grin.  
And spread sunshine all over the place! Just put on a happy face!

## *I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing*

I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love,  
Grow apple trees and honey bees and snow white turtle doves.

CHORUS: I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony,  
I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company.  
I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand.  
And hear them echo through the hills  
for peace throughout the land.

That's the song I hear, Let the world sing today  
A song of peace that echoes on and never goes away.

Put your hand in my hand, let's begin today,  
Put your hand in my hand, help me find the way.

REPEAT CHORUS



### *May The Good Lord Bless and Keep You*

May the Good Lord bless and keep you, whether near or far away.  
May you find that long awaited golden day today.  
May your troubles all be small ones, and your fortune 10 times 10,  
May the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again.

May you walk with sunlight shining, and a bluebird in ev'ry tree,  
May there be a silver lining back of ev'ry cloud you see.  
Fill your dreams with sweet tomorrows,  
Never mind what might have been,  
May the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again,  
May the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again.

### *Add Special Music!*

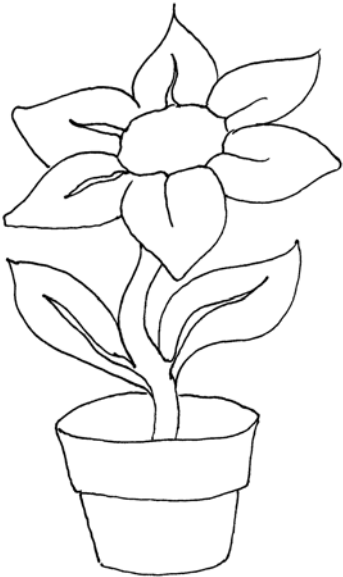
Consider asking local talent to sing or perform throughout the program. Tuck a solo here, a duet there and a trio near the end. You choose the appropriate music.



*Make A Memory...*

## Garden Of Weedin' Programs

Many groups enjoy creating a "take home" keepsake in the form of a printed program. While not necessary, it is a nice addition to the banquet event.



### *Cover*

The program cover should match the predominant color of the table decor.

Use heavier card stock and make copies on the church printer/copier.

Simple artwork may consist of the name of the event:  
The Garden Of Weedin'

### *Trim*

Punch holes in top or sides and thread with twine or raffia tied in a large bow.

Add an inexpensive charm or colorful bead to the twine.

Scrap booking departments offer beautiful, flat, silk flower heads to attach to the front.

If not available, consider hot gluing a small green silk leaf to each cover.

**Option:** Tuck a flower seed packet inside each program!

### *Printed Information*

Include the menu, committee members, kitchen crew and servers.

Add song lyrics, small artistic touches and a bit of garden poetry.

Be sure to use garden titles.





*Spice Of Life....*

## Welcome To The Garden Of Weedin'!

*"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill  
except for learning how to grow in rows."*

Seat guests informally  
at prearranged tables.  
Be sure families and friends sit together.

As groups arrive,  
encourage them to get to know  
one another by playing games  
provided on each table.  
Guests may team up to answer the questions.



Furnish small prizes for each successful table group.  
Prizes may be Hershey Kisses,  
Mini candy bars or other tiny treat.  
Walk the prized to the guests as they win.

**Secret:** Let EVERYONE win at least once!

Use games we suggest  
or find others to fill the need.  
Copy as many as desired  
on colorful paper.



### *Tray Game*

Place a number of gardening and common items on a large tray. Cover the tray with a towel. Carry it to each table and allow the guests to view the items for one minute. Cover the tray and move on. Their task is to write down as many of the items as possible in a numbered list. This can be accomplished as a table team or individually. Give a small prize (Hershey Kiss) to each winner.

### *Have You Ever....*

Provide sheets of paper that guests number 1-18. Ask the questions and give a prize to the gal with the "lowest" score! If it appears there is a good story in the crowd, stop the game and let the person share their experience.

#### *Have you ever....*

1. Locked yourself out of the house?
2. Lost a member of the family while out shopping?
3. Put something unusual in the refrigerator?
4. Turned white colors pink (or another color) in the wash?
5. Gone away from your home and left the iron on?
6. Put your heel through the hem of a dress?
7. Had your zipper break in public?
8. Gone somewhere with two different shoes or socks on?
9. Remembered an appointment after it was too late?
10. Called a member of the family by another name?
11. Been ready to bathe and found no hot water?
12. Fallen up the stairs?
13. Gone shopping for groceries and discovered you did not bring money with you?
14. Driven away from somewhere while a member of your party was still out of the car?
15. Dialed a phone number and forgot who you called?
16. Locked the keys in your car?
17. Got into the car to go somewhere and forgot where you were going?
18. Put something in the oven to bake and forgot about it?



## Give Yourself A Point

*Narrate the following story while the gals keep track of their points. Provide small scraps of paper and pen so everyone can keep track of their point throughout the story. Give small gifts to the winners.*

This is a rather peculiar game.  
It really does not have a name.  
It's simple to play as a game should be.  
You just do as you're told and you will see.

So now if you'll please give me your attention,  
We'll put an end to this suspension.  
In the end, who ever scores most  
Will receive a prize of which to boast.

Now since you're all fashionable girls,  
Give yourself 5 if you have any pearls.  
I wonder who came here from afar,  
Give yourself 5 if you came by car.

Were you on time? Not one minute late?  
Punctuality pays so give yourself 8.

A watch is 6 and each ring is 2,  
Ten more points if your eyes are blue.

Score yourself 5 if you show any pink.  
But take 10 away if you left dishes in the sink.

You may add 3 if your toes peek out  
And earrings will give you 2 more to shout!

Give yourself 6 if your pants are tight.  
Add 1 for a scarf which is just about right.

Give yourself 5 if your heels are high,  
And why not take 10 for the green in your eye.



10 more points for a rose on your clothes.  
Take away 5 if you forgot to wear hose.

Count all of your buttons...each gives you 1.  
Except if they are white and then you'll get none.

For each bow that you have, add on 2. But safety pins are taboo,  
So for each one you're wearing you must subtract 2.

If you've kissed your boyfriend or husband today, add 10,  
But if you've kissed both you're in trouble plenty-subtract 20.

One point for each year that you have been wed,  
But take away 5 if you have on red.

Pets are sweet, we all agree,  
So for each add 3.

But when adding it up, kids count for more,  
So for each child give yourself 4.

This game is done so total your score  
-unless you brought a friend,  
Then give yourself 20 more!

### Scavenger Hunt

Divide the entire group into table teams. Give each time a copy of the Scavenger Hunt List. Allow each team one-two minutes to find the items on the list. They must find the items in the purses of the gals at their table. When time is called, see which team has the most items. You can make up your own list or use the one provided.

- |                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Child's toy                   | Candy           |
| Safety Pin                    | Calendar        |
| comb                          | grocery receipt |
| shopping list                 | pink lipstick   |
| ticket stub                   | eyeglass case   |
| pony tail holder/tie          | Dental floss    |
| gift card from any store/shop |                 |



**The  
Garden  
Of  
Weedin'**

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY  
NOT FOR USE  
PLEASE PURCHASE



*...Life Began In A Garden*





*These program segments may be used any way desired.  
Ask gals of all ages to participant.  
No one needs to memorize.*

*Make as many copies as needed from the Master Copy.  
Do not give the program to any other church or group without  
permission from CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MINISTRIES*

*If a speaker has been invited, consider using a few of these  
theme related parts instead of all of them.  
Consider time limits for the event.*

*Encourage each speaker to communicate clearly.  
Provide microphones.*

*No rehearsal is necessary.*

*The participants follow directions in their segment.  
The program comes together "live."*

*Be sure to confirm involvement with each person  
before the event to be sure each one is coming.*

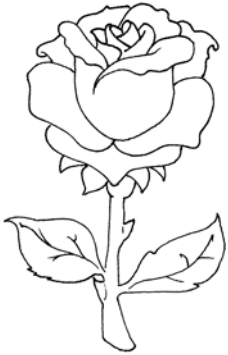
*Adapt the material as desired.  
Add material of your choice as available.  
Enjoy the humor and inspiration of each segment!*



*Pre Dinner Introduction....*

## **Bring On The Sun!**

*Take Time To Smell The Roses!*



Welcome to the Garden of Weedin'! It is our sincere desire that you delight in your garden evening. Close your eyes and let your mind wander into the most beautiful garden you have ever visited.

Ahh, yes. Roses and daisies nestled between majestic rhododendron bushes. A graceful grape arbor offers shade for the old chain swing. Massive oak, bending willow and slender maple shade the growing plants. The old wicker gate swings freely in the spring breeze.

Those rugged stepping stones from your childhood are still pointing the way to the rows of peonies. Step lightly! Do not disturb the ladybugs. Hush! Tiny wild canaries are singing as they dart in and out of the branches. Listen to the reassuring buzz of the busy honeybees. Be careful! Do not touch! They sting!

Take a deep breath. Yes, there it is... the sweetness of flowers ...fresh turned soil and garden hose ice water sprinkling the leaves leaving the smell of fresh, pure air in its' wake.

Look down! What is that? It just can't be....why, I'm shocked! It's...it's a...dare I say it...a WEED! In our perfect garden there must be no weeds. It is against the rules of gardeners. No self respecting gardener allows those scraggly, ugly, pathetic excuses for greenery to overtake their world!

Wait a moment. Those little weeds *are* a bit attractive. Look at them bobbing in the wind with their wee purple heads and puffed yellow plumes. Maybe I've been misled. Could it be that weeds serve a purpose in our garden? Well, at least keep an open mind!

Enjoy your delicious GARDEN OF WEEDIN' dinner. We'll talk later!



*Let The Program Begin - After Dinner:*

## **The Optimistic Gardener**

*The Earth Laughs In Flowers!*

**Costume:** *Wear a large gardening hat, overalls, long sleeved shirt, crocs or other appropriate gardening shoes, garden gloves. Carry a large bucket or basket with gardening tools.*

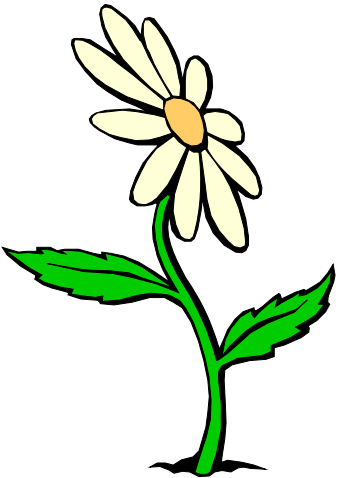
I am The Optimistic Gardener. Every day I can be found smiling in my garden. I hereby confess to regularly buying too many seeds, forgetting to replant seedlings, building unrealistic dreams with weeds in the lawn, weeds in the flowerbeds and weeds by the kitchen door.

I also confess to being in love with my compost, having an unnatural affection for digging dirt and talking to earthworms. If I'm truly honest, I must mention I love lying on my back listening to the bees, being obsessed by gardening and believing I am the best gardener God created. Well, after Adam and Eve, that is. If I tend and love my garden, it will grow into a beautiful reflection of God's Creation.

Have you heard the "Earth laughs in flowers"? God must have been having a wonderful time the day He created flowers.

He must have smiled when He formed each petal of a rose and then swept His Hand over them to color them in the most beautiful hues. To top it off, He added a sweet, rosy aroma that I long for every winter and sigh for every spring.

I can hear the Lord giggle as He touched the ground and tiny bachelor buttons, forget-me-nots and clover sprung up. Who doesn't love to sit in a yard filled with the sweet blues, purples and pinks.



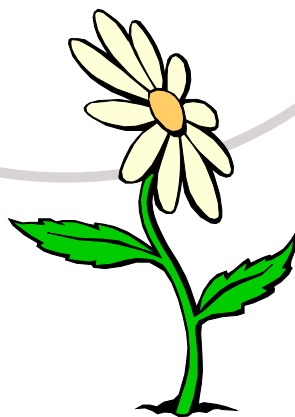
I suppose He laughed as He drew plans for strawberries. Sweet, delicious and perfectly challenging for the everyday gardener. Can you hear Him thinking, "Mmm, strawberry shortcake."

God may have smiled, giggled and laughed but I bet He fell down laughing when He created our favorite...the Dandelion! Can you imagine? He creates this gorgeous yellow fluff of a flower. He makes sure that fields will be filled with it every spring. He even makes the delicate leaves edible and then....we call them WEEDS! How ungrateful can we be?

Personally, I never remove a dandelion from my yard or garden. Someone once said that a weed is just a misplaced flower. My Optimistic Gardener philosophy has always been, "God put them there. God can take them away."

Actually that's my philosophy about falling leaves in autumn too. I just wait for a good breeze and suddenly...no leaves! Of course, my neighbors may not be as thrilled with my philosophy as I am. They seem to do a lot of garden raking.

Yes, I think the Earth laughs in flowers. When you listen hard enough you will hear God in the laughter.



# Stars In The Grass

## *In Defense Of The Dandelion*

**Costume:** *None. Carry dandelions if they are in season. If not, consider making tissue flowers from bright yellow tissue paper.*

Let's get it out there. I know you are all thinking it. The Optimistic Gardener just loves dandelions and you have been graciously smiling and politely applauding her love of weeds while thinking, "I just hate dandelions. They are all over my yard. I can't get my husband (or my kids) to pick them and my neighbors look at me like I am a slum lord."



Most gardeners detest them. The more you try to weed, the faster they grow. Unless you get the whole thing, it regenerates. If you break off more pieces than you unearth, the dandelion wins. A dandelion once asked, "What's a dandelion digger for?" Another dandelion replied, "It's a human invention to help us reproduce."

Well, get over it! You obviously have not been informed about this wonderful little flower...er, weed. You may not know that the flower has long leaves shaped like a sharp tooth. The French named them "Dent-de-lion" which means lion's tooth in Old French. See? You're smiling! You are liking them a little better.

Guess where they grow best. Anywhere! But then, you probably knew that. They grow best in lawns and sunny, open places. They were brought to America from Europe to provide food for honeybees each spring. They grow all over the world.

Dandelions are edible. Collect dandelion leaves in early spring before the flowers appear. Dandelion greens are delicious in salads. You can also eat the flowers or use them to make wine. Feeling sick? Dandelion root is one of the safest and most popular herbal remedies.



It's supposed to make weak bodies strong. It's good for hepatitis, reduces jaundice and helps indigestion. Are you stressed out, sluggish, lazy? Drink Dandelion tea. Now we're getting somewhere. Sneak in a few dandelion greens with your next vegetable dish and watch your family come to life. Of course, even Popeye didn't eat spinach until he absolutely had to.

Children have loved Dandelions since the beginning of time. One cannot count the yellow chains made on a warm spring day to wear as crowns and decorate the dog.

Remember the old game, "Do you like butter"? Just put a dandelion under your chin. If you like butter, your skin will shimmer yellow even in the shade.

It is often called Mother's Favorite Flower. What mother here has not been rewarded by her little one with a gathering of scraggly dandelion heads mixed with long stems and a few bits of grass tucked inside for good measure. I wouldn't trade one of those wilted bouquets for all the opulent orchids in Asia.

I love dandelions. They are stars in the grass. I'd rather be a dandelion than a rose because dandelions are survivors. They grow where roses will not. Could it be? Is there proof that God knew what He was doing when He created the common dandelion? What do you think?





## Mommy's Dandelions

*Choose one child or several children who take turns speaking. The younger the better but if there is no time for memorization, choose young readers who will enjoy being in front of a group.*

MOMMY, GUESSING YOUR FAVORITE FLOWER  
SHOULD NOT BE ALL THAT HARD.  
I'LL BET THEY'RE GREEN AND YELLOW  
AND GROW ALL OVER THE YARD.

I ONLY PICK THE SPECIAL ONES  
BECAUSE THEY ARE JUST FOR YOU.  
THEY ARE MY WAY OF SAYING THANKS  
FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO.

AND EVEN IF THESE FLOWERS  
ONLY SEEM TO LAST A DAY,  
THE LOVE THAT THEY ARE GIVEN WITH  
WILL ALWAYS BE THERE TO STAY.

FOR WHEN IT COMES TO PICKING  
THE MOMMY THAT'S THE BEST,  
IN MY PRECIOUS LITTLE EYES  
YOU STAND OUT FROM ALL THE REST!

I REALLY LOVE YOU MOMMY.  
I HOPE YOUR DAY IS FUN,  
HERE'S HUGS AND KISSES  
AND SOME FLOWERS  
FROM YOUR DARLING LITTLE ONE.



## Wipe Out Weeds!

Three enthusiastic gals carry hand printed picket signs. Wear hats and large buttons printed with the letters W-O-W. March around the tables chanting, "Wipe Out Weeds, Wipe Out Weeds."



**Sign Messages:** WIPE OUT WEEDS, WEEDS-B-GONE, WEEDS ARE NOT OUR FRIENDS! Each sign should have W-O-W printed somewhere.

#1: (Shouting...) Join the cause! Stop the madness! Wipe Out Weeds! (See if you can get the audience to chant, "Wipe Out Weeds"!)

#2: Calm down, calm down! To make an impact we must organize. We can do this. After all we are women and we do the impossible every day.

#3: (Chant enthusiastically...) I'm on strike! I'm on strike!

#1: We know dear. You're on strike. I'm on strike. We want everyone to go on strike until there are no more weeds anywhere in the world.

#2: Join our cause. We call it WIPE OUT WEEDS! We women can wipe out stains, wipe out windows, wipe noses and wipe baby behinds. We can surely take on this task and get rid of garden weeds everywhere.

#3: Is that possible? I mean, I joined up because I wanted to go to McDonald's for lunch. I never thought I had to do actual work.

#1: If we work to WIPE OUT WEEDS, there will no longer be work to do! You can enjoy your garden every day of the year without fear of the dreaded weed whacker.

#2: Let's get busy. First we need a catchy phrase. How about "Weed 'em and reap" or "Don't water your weeds" or "Make haste, weeds are waste"?



#3: Oh my, don't you think that's a bit harsh? Let's appeal to our inner feminine grace and beauty. Try "May all your weeds be wild flowers". Or, "Real women weed gently". By the way, do we really need to carry signs and take to the streets?

#2: Let's get her another cup of coffee. We're in a war! That's it! Weed War. We're in a Weed War and we want you to weed wherever weeds wallow!

#1: That's our catchy phrase! Now we need to get the job done.

#2: Money! We'll pay Weed Warriors for every weed they pick. We'll see if the government will subsidize the cost and we're home free!

#3: (Softly...) I have a better idea.

#1: Yes dear, we know. You don't want to work. We won't make you work. Just hold your sign.

#3: (Louder...) I really have an idea.

#2: Now, now, don't get worked up. We'll handle the details and you just pick up lunch now and then.

#3: "Free Weeds-You Pick 'Em". That's my idea. If we give everyone a sense that there is something very special about weeds, they will pick their own. We won't have to make signs and march around and become Weed Warriors in the World Wide Weed War.

#1: Hmm, you may have the perfect solution. After all, a good garden may have some weeds.

#2: Here's what we say, "Roses are red, Violets are blue; But they don't get around like the Dandelions do. Pick yours today!"

#3: See? I told you we could work this out. Come on Weed Warriors. I feel a Big Mac Attack coming on and there's a burger place across the street. Just step over the weeds. They'll be waiting for us tomorrow.





# Weed Wow Infomercial

## You Grow, Girl!

*One enthusiastic, fast talking Salesperson, one hand vacuum cleaner, small table with a variety of weed clippings scattered across it.*

*This is a fast paced infomercial "take off" on the famous Sham Wow sales pitch. Practice it until you can say it easily. Place the script on the weed table so it's easy to read as you demonstrate vacuuming weeds.*

Weed Wow! You'll be saying Wow every time you use it. It's like a rake. It's like a shovel. It's like a plow. Wow! Easily removes weeds from every garden. You're going to spend \$20 a month on other weed tools anyhow. You're throwing your money away. You might as well get Weed Wow now and save that \$20.

A regular weed tool doesn't work like this. It's for the house. It's for the garden. It's for the farm. Look at this. It's easy to carry and easier to use. Weed Wow!

Are you following me camera guy? We're going to do this in real time. Look how it works like a vacuum. Weed Wow! You'll be saying Wow every time you use it. Look at those weeds disappear! Holds 12 times it weight in weeds. It just does the work. It works wet or dry. Wow!

It's made in Germany. You know how those folks make good stuff.

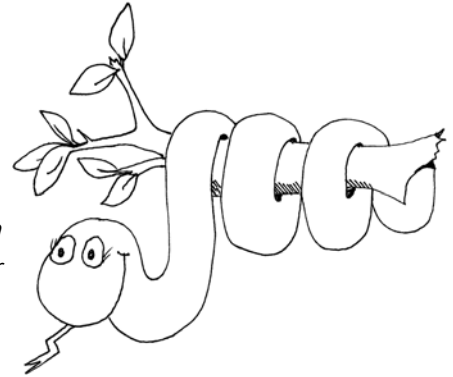
Easily removes dandelions, creeping Charlie and even small bugs. Doesn't drip, doesn't make a mess. Won't scratch any surface. Lasts ten years. You'll be out of your mind not to own one of these things.

Weed Wow sells for \$19.95. You get one for the house, one for the car, one for the garden shed. If you order today, we include four mini Weed Wows absolutely free. Wow! How can you pass that up? Weed Wow, you'll be saying Wow every time.



## There's A Snake In My Garden *Life Began In A Garden*

*Eve: One gal dressed in a flowing robe or caftan with a silk flower head wreath and silk flower bracelets and ankle bracelets around bare feet. Wear a flowery garland around the neck.*



Eve reflects on her "Garden Of Eden" experience from the luxury of time passing. What would she do differently? What are her thoughts about garden life?

**Bowing Gracefully:** I am Eve. I once lived in a garden. God gave it to Adam. You do know God, right? He's our wonderful Creator. We took good care of Eden. We loved God's bright flowers and delicious fruit. Adam and I were happy in the Garden. God visited us in the cool of the evening. The garden was at it's best during those hours. I could have lived in the garden forever...

There was a snake in my garden. He was a friendly snake, always hanging around, smiling and blinking. I kind of liked him. He twirled that long body around the branches of my favorite tree and just watched me. He was a comforting companion, not ugly or scary.

There were no wise women to help me make choices. I thought a snake in the garden was a good thing. How did I know that snake was planning a vicious attack on me and Adam and God and...and...you?

In those days there were no weeds to pick so I was walking through Eden collecting fresh fruit for dinner. I picked persimmons and bananas and grapes and...there was that one, lovely, gorgeous fruit hanging low to the ground, ripe and ready to be eaten.

I turned my back on that one. I knew God's rule, "Don't eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil for when you eat of it you will surely die." What's evil? What's die? Oh well, God's rule was good enough for me. We had plenty of delicious food. And yet....it was the most luscious looking fruit. I always wondered what it tasted like.



I heard the snake before I saw him. He was twisting his body into the branches of the tree and he was smiling. He talked to me! He said, "Ah, lovely Eve. We meet again. Have a bite of fruit. You know you want to."

"Oh no," I said. "I must not eat from the forbidden tree. I must not disobey my Creator."

The snake wiggled closer and hissed, "Oh dear, sweet, beautiful, naive Eve. You still think God wants the best for you. How old fashioned. God knows when you eat this fruit your eyes will open and you will be as gods, knowing good and evil."

I believed the snake. He was soft spoken and earnest. I took a bite. It was absolutely delicious. I took the fruit home and Adam ate one too. Then something happened. It wasn't exactly a stomach ache but there was a strange ache that came from deep within each of us. We looked at each other and knew in a moment we were changed.

Where was the smiling snake? I have no idea. He did his nasty work and disappeared. We were left to face God on our own. God called our names and we hid from Him. God knew we disobeyed Him when we said we were naked.

We don't live in our beautiful Garden of Eden anymore. We live on a dusty farm. Adam digs and I try to make our house a home. We are disappointed in each other and God is disappointed in both of us. God, in His wisdom, knew that love must be a choice. He gave us that choice in the garden and we failed.

Life is different now. There are weeds in my garden. Fruit doesn't taste as good and the flowers don't sparkle like they used to. God said it's because we sinned. He doesn't visit us in the cool of the evening anymore. And by the way, that having babies thing? It's a lot more painful these days than it used to be.

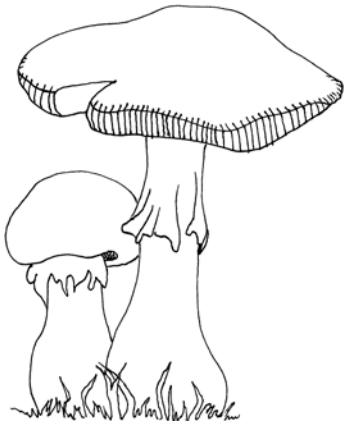
I've got to leave. There are weeds to be pulled and vegetables to be planted in my Garden of Weedin'. I apologize for the weeds in YOUR gardens. I have a feeling it's my fault. EXIT





# Consider The Lilies

## ...and How They Grow!



Two friends instant messaging each other on computers. Set up two laptop computers and key boards. The friends sit or stand back to back as they pretend to type and say aloud their messages.

#1: Hi!

#2: Hi!

#1: How are you?

#2: Fine. And you?

#1: Fine. I've been in my garden all day. Taking a break now with a coke and doughnut.

#2: Mmmm.. Sounds good. Many weeds?

#1: Everywhere. LOL. I don't mind weeding. Leaves me time to plan my next novel and think up the perfect come back for that rude kid in the grocery store yesterday.

#2: LOL I hate weeds. But I love flowers. So, I guess I'll weed to get the reward.

PAUSE.....

#1: Been thinking about that Lily Bible verse.

#2: Which one?

#1: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."



#2: Luke 12:27

#1: How did you know that?

#2: Googled it.

#1: LOL Consider the lilies....most of the time my eyes are on the weeds. I forget how pretty the lilies are.

#2: Me too.

#1: Gotta love that verse. The lilies just stand where they are and look gorgeous. No working, no stressing out...they just bloom where they are planted.

#2: BBB...Bloom, baby, bloom.

#1: JBN...Just Be Nice

#2: KMS...Keep Mouth Shut

#1: SIS...Say It Sweetly

#2: CTQ.. Control The Queen

#1: FTL...Follow The Lord

#2: KOKO...Keep on Keeping On

#1: GTD...Go The Distance

#2: NGU...Never Give Up

#1: Sl...Stop It.

#2: SW...Stop What

#1: SSLOIM...Stop Sending Letters on IM.

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#2: OK

#1: GLY...God Loves You

#2: You going to that banquet at church...The Garden Of Weedin'?

#1: Maybe. You going?

#2: If you go, I'll go.

#1: Let's go. Might be fun.

#2: See you there!

#1: Byeeeeeeee!

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## TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GARDENING

I. *Thou shalt be patient till it's Thyme to garden.*

II. *Thou shalt be outstanding in thy field.*

III. *Thou shalt lovingly care for the Earth.*

IV. *Thou shalt weed thy garden diligently.*

V. *Thou shalt take time to smell the flowers.*

VI. *Thou shalt keep a "fresh from the garden" attitude.*

VII. *Thou shalt give freely of the bounty of thy harvest.*

VIII. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's soil.*

IX. *Thou shalt listen  
to thy Heavenly Gardener.*

X. *Thou shalt grow strong under God's tender care.*



# The Worm The Whole Worm And Nothing But The Worm!

*This is a great poem about worms written by a six year old named Sophie. Ask several young girls to read the poem. If possible, make large worm shaped signs to hold with numbers 1-10 printed on them.*

Worms, worms everywhere,  
Under the flowers and under the chairs.  
Slipping and sliding around on the ground,  
just how many worms can you see and count?

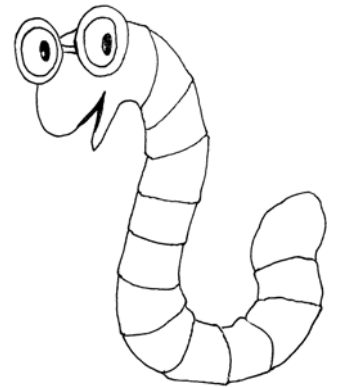
There's ONE in the soil where he spends the day  
Munching a big leaf someone threw his way.

Look in the plant pot and there you will see  
TWO shimmering worms enjoying their tea!

Down by the fish pond under the moonlight  
Are THREE little worms who just said goodnight!

Down dance the raindrops beating on the ground!  
FOUR worms wiggle out and move to the sound.

One the lush green lawn FIVE goal scoring worms!  
Shooting penalties, each one takes a turn!



SIX is the number of worms to be found  
If you get your spade and dig underground!

Look by the poppies! How many do you see?  
Five, six or SEVEN, count along with me....

Sitting in a row on the garden gate,  
All smiling brightly...How many worms? EIGHT!

Under the sprinklers NINE worms can be seen  
Scrubbing with soap 'til they're nice and clean.

Down at the farmyard is Peggy the hen.  
Her best friends are worms. Can you count all TEN?

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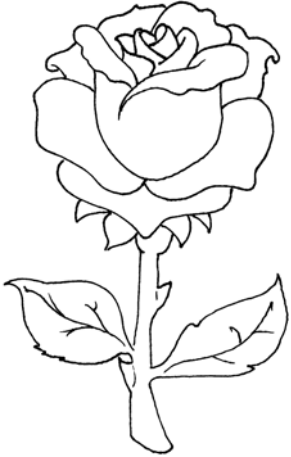
NO

PLEASE





## Mary, Mary Quite Contrary



One gal dressed in old fashioned, ruffled dress, bonnet, carrying a parasol. Become the Nursery Rhyme Mary with attitude! As the piece moves along, become more "contrary" even though denying it! It doesn't hurt to stomp your little foot once in awhile for effect.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow?  
With silver bells and cockle shells,  
And pretty maids all in a row.

You may know me as "Mary, Mary, quite contrary." Well, I'm here to inform you that for many years I've been getting a bad rap.

Quite contrary! Indeed! I have never been contrary one day in my whole nursery rhyme life. Some people think I am so difficult to live with that I should enter a "Twelve Step" program.

Have you ever been asked every day of your life, "How does your garden grow?" What if I want to take a day off? What if I miss a weed? What if I plant a shade loving plant in the sun or a sun loving plant in the shade? Oh yes, then you would criticize Miss Mary! Pressure, I'm under pressure.

And another thing, tell me where to find silver bells and cockle shells! I have searched every seed catalog from here to Mother Goose Land and the only bells and shells I can find are the real thing. I have been reduced to duct taping little jingle bells on a yucca plant and hot gluing seashells onto my *Sagina subulata*--that's Irish Moss to the rookie gardener. Then I have to lie, "How does my garden grow? Very well, thank you so much for asking." All the while, trying to keep people from getting too close to notice the tape and the glue. Pressure, I'm under pressure!



I work so hard in my garden. I tried to hire "pretty maids all in a row" but the only maids to answer my want ads are 2 Merry Maids and a homely gardener from HGTV. Are you beginning to see my problem? Pressure! I'm under pressure!

Not one of you has ever taken a moment to ask, "Why is Mary contrary?" Not that I am but if I was, I'd have good reason to be difficult. You don't care about my garden problems. No, no, you are just concerned about your own garden issues. You want free advice from 'Mary, the perfect gardener'. Who cares if Mary's garden is overrun by rodents and infiltrated by garden grubs. You just want to know "How does your garden grow?" Like I have all the answers. Who made me the garden expert of the universe?

I'm tempted to actually tell the truth from now on. How does my garden grow? You really want to know? It's been a bad year. My roses have weevils and my hosta are being held hostage by the Japanese beetles! If that's not bad enough, the garden hose was left running and there's a flood in the freesia. The gerber daisies are dead. The mums are mum and the orchids are over themselves. That, dear friends is how my garden grows. Are you happy you know the truth?

Contrary! That's just insulting. I've never been contrary. I'm just misunderstood. I'm going to find that nursery rhyme writer and when I find her she's going to be in BIG trouble! Contrary!

FLOUNCE OFF STAGE IN A BREATHLESS "CONTRARY" HUFF!





## Money Tree Tips

6. Use a silk tree as a money tree. Attach real one dollar bills to the tree with paper clips or tape. Hide the tree until it is time for this segment. Make a grand entrance by pulling the tree into the room on a little wagon. Place the tree beside you as you speak. Become the "Dear Abby" styled expert wearing glasses, pencil behind the ear and carrying a clipboard.

I am fondly known as Dear Miss Money. I am an expert gardener and specialize in money trees. I have a newspaper column where readers are invited to send in their money tree questions. Those of you who have your own money trees, may enjoy learning a few tips.

Dear Miss Money:

I recently purchased a money tree. Unfortunately, I'm terrible with plants and frequently end up killing the poor things soon after I buy them. This is a fairly big money tree and very pretty but the leaves have been drooping and looking very crinkly. I'm worried it's not doing well and I'd really like to keep it. It's a shame to see such a beautiful plant go to waste. I've been throwing away leaves for a week.

Worried in Washington

Dear Worried in Washington:

There is nothing to worry about. Please do not throw away the crinkly leaves. That's the money part of the money tree! Gently remove them from the tree or pick them up off the floor. If necessary, iron the crinkles with a dry iron at the lowest setting before taking them to the bank.

Dear Miss Money:

My lovely money tree seems to be dying after seven prosperous years. It is a big tree that has kept growing more and more new trees. Now it has started to lose whole big branches. I'm so upset. This money tree has been with us through thick and thin. I'm now in the process of buying a new house and having the money tree will help in that effort.

Crying In Cincinnati



Dear Crying In Cincinnati:

Dry those tears. You are most fortunate. Your money tree is telling you it is time to make two trees from the one you already own. Tap the branch gently with a saw until it divides. Plant both trees in rich soil. Watch your returns with great joy! Go ahead and buy that house. Your money trees will be with you for many years.

-----

Dear Miss Money:

Is the money plant poisonous? I have small children and am worried.  
Puzzled In Punxsutawney

Dear Puzzled:

The answer is, yes, the money tree can be poisonous to small children. If children harvest too many money leaves, they become lazy and demanding. These poisoned children have been known to speak rudely and spend money on frivolous items. Have a serious discussion with children and by all means keep pets away. Pets have never been wise about spending money. All those treats and toys spoil them.

-----

Dear Miss Money:

I bought a Chinese money plant a year ago. The only money that grows is the Chinese yen. The exchange rate is killing me. Any suggestions?

Clueless in Cleveland

Dear Clueless:

The solution is simple. Exchange your Chinese money tree with a gardener in China who mistakenly purchased an American money tree. If you think the exchange rate is killing you, he's in big trouble!

-----

Dear Miss Money:

My money tree is producing so much money that I cannot possibly spend it all. I have placed it's leaves in every drawer and corner of my home. Help! What do I do?

Embarrassed in Elmyra



Dear Embarrassed:

Hide your head no more. The perfect solution is to spread the money to those who need it. Share liberally and find folks who need to be encouraged by your generosity. Owning a money tree is a serious responsibility but I'm convinced you are up to the task.

That's all the time we have. It has been a rich pleasure to visit The Garden Of Weedin'. If you ever have problems with your plant, write to me, Miss Money, at your local newspaper. Remember my tips for growing your own money tree and enjoy the benefits of generosity the rest of your lives.

(Carefully pick money from the tree and as you exit, rolling the tree in the wagon with you, hand one or two dollars to guests at random.)

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## Angels In My Garden



One gal, preferably a true gardener at heart reads this poem dressed as a working gardener.

There's talk of angels in my garden  
and I believe it's true.  
My garden's just their stopping place  
to rest and travel through.

Oh, they don't speak and I don't speak  
But I know when they've been there.  
The weeds are gone and flowers bloom  
As if God Himself took care.

There's talk of angels in my garden,  
I hear them day and night.  
They whisper in the wind  
and sing at each morn's light.

I picture them with wings aglow  
On heaven's breezes gently blown.  
I like to think those angels know  
Their Father is my own.

There's talk of angels in my garden,  
Heavenly Father sends them there.  
He sees my needs when times are hard  
He sends the best of care.

So when you're tired and weary  
Fly to the Savior in prayer  
There's talk of angels in your garden  
The Lord will meet you there.

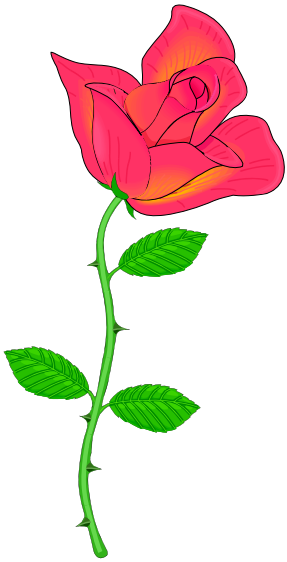
-Ellen Bunnell  
February 20, 2009





## A Rose Within

Four gals stand in separate corners of the room. Speak slowly, loudly and clearly. Speak the final line in unison.



#1: A certain man planted a rose and watered it faithfully. Before it blossomed, he examined it. He saw the bud that would soon blossom and also the thorns. He thought, "How can any beautiful flower come from a plant burdened with so many sharp thorns?" Saddened by this thought, he neglected to water the rose, and before it was ready to bloom, it died.

#2: So it is with many people. Within every soul there is a rose. The God-like qualities planted in us at birth grow amid the thorns of our faults. Many of us look at ourselves and see only the thorns and the defects. We despair, thinking that nothing good can possibly come from us. We neglect to water the good within us and eventually it dies. We never realize our potential. Some people do not see the rose within themselves; someone else must show it to them.

#3: One of the greatest gifts a person can possess is to be able to reach past the thorns and find the rose within others. This is the characteristic of love, to look at a person, and knowing her faults, recognize the nobility in her soul, and help her realize that she can overcome her faults. If we show her the rose, she will conquer the thorns. The will she blossom, blooming forth thirty, sixty, a hundred fold as it is give to her.

#4: Our duty in this world is to love God and help others by showing them their roses and not their thorns. Only then can we achieve the love we should feel for each other.

**In Unison:** ONLY THEN CAN WE BLOOM IN OUR OWN GARDEN!

~Author Unknown



# Life Began Again In A Garden!



*Adapt this 'Garden Of Weedin' conclusion to fit your group. One person may present it or divide it into several sections with different readers participating.*

It's time to pack up the garden tools, tuck away the leftover food and go home to our own lovely gardens large or small.

Is it true that "Gardeners know all the dirt"? Or, "You reap what you sow"? Or, "Be careful not to be led down the garden path"?

It is often said, "He who plants a garden plants happiness. If you want to be happy for a lifetime, plant a garden". Every gardener desires a "Green thumb".

Some of us must apologize to the flowers we grow, telling them sadly, "I have sentenced you to death row." I know for certain that "Cares melt when you kneel in your garden."

Gardens must be God's favorite spot. His gift to Adam and Eve was Eden. He touched the earth to create trees, flowers, fruit, vegetables, fountains of water and animals for them to enjoy. And then...God Himself joined Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. They walked, they talked. What a joyful garden!

God's human creation has had a love affair with gardens ever since Eden. We know of the beautiful hanging gardens in Babylon and other lush garden spots where people rested from the cares of the day.



Jesus prayed amidst the olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was arrested in the same garden on a cold, dark night that looked like it was the end of the story. The snake from Eden thought he had come full circle from garden to garden. If there was ever a garden of despair, it was Gethsemane.

The snake from Eden was wrong. One bright resurrection morning, Jesus shook eternity as He conquered death and rose from the grave. That garden was the full circle garden. It was there that Mary Magdalene thought she was talking to a common gardener. "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him." Can you imagine her delight when she heard His familiar voice calling, "Mary". It was at the garden tomb that life began again!

When we keep a garden, we must remember how much God loves a garden. Tend it gently, become God's own gardener and enjoy it. Our gardens become the brief glimpse of Heaven God provides here on earth.

Break out the water hoses and the hedge trimmers. Till the soil, mulch the mulch, pull the weeds, plant the seeds!. Listen! The rain is drawing near! The voice of the bluebird is heard.

And...because a garden is a friend you can visit any time, don't forget to add a garden bench.

GROUP SINGS: "In The Garden"

