

Mary Neathway's Reflection During Worship, July 27, 2014
Based on Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

The Kingdom of God is like.... in Matthew, chapter 13, Jesus uses parables to tell his audience what to expect. The Kingdom of God is like yeast, a hidden treasure, a mustard seed. It isn't flash and fireworks, but a small wee thing that will develop into something magnificent.

Will that be our story? We, like the mustard seed, are small. The treasure of our faith is often unseen in the North Thompson Valley. We are only a few grains of leavening in the life of this community, but we are transforming, growing, changing. Soon, we will have a new name, reflecting how our roots have entwined with the Anglican and Lutheran denominations. Will we rise and become bread of life for those around us, or will our yeast fail to ferment and leave us flat?

Will we, like the mustard seed, grow to add flavour and zing to the world, provide a bit of bite and snap? Or will we be the seed that falls on rocky soil and doesn't grow?

Seeds are pretty amazing. Somewhere deep inside this tiniest grain is an amazing secret. The seed knows its purpose. And that purpose is to grow into what it was destined to be. Conditions don't have to be perfect for the seed's purpose to be met. Plants find a way, pushing through the pavement if that is what they are meant to do. Do we have that kind of strength and determination?

I wonder what might happen if we were clear on our purpose as Clearwater United and as people of faith and determined to achieve our goals.

We are called to grow in God's way. As we gather for worship, choosing to feed our faith and not our doubts, we know that which is fed will grow. The seed needs sun, soil, water; the yeast needs water, perhaps a bit of sugar to feed on before it will bubble to life.

In this community of faith we find rich soil in the accepting atmosphere in which to plant our ideas. We can question and we can seek answers. We find the warmth of our friends in Christ, we are nurtured to grow more fully into the people God intends us to be.

The mustard seed grows and provides a place of rest for birds, seasoning for our food. We grow as Christians to provide service to others, not out of duty, not because that is what a church must do. We serve to give and to receive joy. It isn't our purpose to be a weed in people's lives, choking them with committees and meetings. Those gatherings help us know each other better, to welcome others, to offer comfort. Sharing ideas is a way of spreading the seeds.

We plant carrot beds for the food bank. We hold a plant sale. We gather personal care items for the homeless. Will we solve the problems of world hunger with carrots? Will the ugliness of the world disappear behind blooms from our plants? Will all the homeless live better lives because we gave them shampoo and soap? Not all the hunger; not all the ugliness; not all the homeless. But some; a bit. A tiny seed of kindness, goodness, justice can be planted by our actions. We won't save the whole world but we can bloom here where we are planted.

Small things. Mustard seeds and grains of yeast. Carrot seeds and travel sized bottles of shampoo. We are called to persist in the growing of God's grace. The Kingdom of heaven has been planted, and is still being planted and we are the gardener's helpers. Find your shelter in the outstretched branches of God's love. Live so that others might know the Kingdom come, God's will be done. Once before, now and in the future, we are a church that can do amazing things. Let us spread the seeds of our faith till people want to grow with us in Christ. May it be so. Amen.