

Bulletin for Sunday

12th July 2020

Dear Friends

Good Morning! I hope you are all well, and able to set aside some of the worries of the current time as we come to worship this Sunday.

Hymn: O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder (Rejoice & Sing 117)

Prayer: Great and wonderful God,
as we pause this morning to worship you,
we thank you for all that you have given us,
and we ask for the further blessing of open hearts and minds:
to listen for your word in our hearts,
to hear your call amongst the many voices...
and to understand your meaning for us today.
Bless everything we give in your service
Now and always. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Matthew chapter 13: verses 1-9 and 18-23

Reflection: Jesus paints a picture in words of a scene familiar to his listeners. A poor farmer (obviously not well-off, since he does his own sowing, by hand, and his land is pretty marginal with all those rocks and weeds) entrusts his precious seed to the wind, to land where it will.

The term for sowing seed like this - apparently un-targeted, but scattered right across the landscape - is 'broadcast' sowing. And just as our radio or T.V. broadcasts are sent out everywhere across the land (or, as we used to say, the 'airwaves') and may be picked up by anyone and everyone, so the seeds were thrown out willy-nilly and reached a huge variety of places, some suitable for crops to grow, and some inevitably not so suitable.

At first sight it seems a crazy way to farm. That seed represented his hope to harvest enough food for himself and his family to be able to eat next year, so why risk some of it landing in places where it had no chance of growing? Probably he had no choice, as his land consisted of small pockets of good soil mixed in with stony areas and hard trampled paths. He had to hope that the seed would find its own way to a patch of soil big enough to form a seed bed with some potential for healthy growth.

Just as the distances were short between the good and bad soil for the sower, so, within each of us there is a short distance between places or occasions where the words of Jesus will take root and thrive..... and others where those same words will encounter obstacles and just wither and die.

God is extraordinarily generous - broadcasting good things abundantly, widely and repeatedly. The good news of God's grace is not restricted to a selected audience; nor to those who show signs of being fertile listeners. Rather it is available to absolutely everyone everywhere, including the apparently hardened, the constantly distracted and those who have failed to listen before.... Thanks be to God! Amen

Hymn: Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult (R&S 355)

Prayer: Compassionate God,
we pray today for all called to share your good news:
those who preach or teach; those who write or paint,
and all of us who seek to follow you in our lives.
We pray for those who are mourning loved ones,
those who are sick or in pain,
and those finding life an almost impossible struggle.
Help us to find better ways to support each other
and to share your love really generously with all...
Amen

Hymn: We plough the fields, and scatter (R&S 124)

May the fertile seed of God's love be sown deep within you
and grow, through all the sun and rain of everyday life...
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
this week and every week. Amen

There will also be an evening service - Sunday at Six - on Zoom at six o'clock tonight; contact Karen or me for an invitation.

Please let me know of any news or prayer requests to be shared.
Every blessing for the coming week - stay safe.

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