

Morning Prayer 13th June 2021

The Third Sunday after Pentecost

Morning Worship with Daphne Norwood



Personal preparation before the service begins.

Please take time to remember where you are,
and why you are here.
Give thanks and become still
in the presence of God

Prelude

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with us.
This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Let us pray with words from Psalm 20

May the Lord hear you in the day of trouble, ♦
the name of the God of Jacob defend you;
Send you help from his sanctuary ♦
and strengthen you out of Zion;
Remember all your offerings ♦
and accept your burnt sacrifice;
Grant you your heart's desire ♦
and fulfil all your mind.
May we rejoice in your salvation
and triumph in the name of our God; ♦
may the Lord perform all your petitions.
Now I know that the Lord will save his anointed; ♦
he will answer him from his holy heaven,
with the mighty strength of his right hand.
Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, ♦

but we will call only on the name of the Lord our God.

They are brought down and fallen, ♦

but we are risen and stand upright.

O Lord, save the king ♦

and answer us when we call upon you.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,

**As it was in the beginning,
is now and shall be for ever.**

♪ **Over all the earth** ♪

Over all the earth
You reign on high
Every mountain stream
Every sunset sky
But my one request
Lord my only aim
Is that You'd reign in me again

*Lord reign in me
Reign in Your power
Over all my dreams
In my darkest hour
You are the Lord
Of all I am
So won't You reign in me again*

Over every thought
Over every word
May my life reflect
The beauty of my Lord
'Cause You mean more to me
Than any earthly thing
So won't You reign in me again

*Lord reign in me
Reign in Your power
Over all my dreams
In my darkest hour
You are the Lord*

*Of all I am
So won't You reign in me again*

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Brenton Brown
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The Collect for today, third Sunday after Pentecost

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The reading is taken from 1 Samuel 15.34 - 16.13

Let us prepare ourselves for the word of God
Our hearts and our minds are open

Then Samuel left for Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

But Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me."

The Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either." Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The reading is taken from Mark 4.26-34

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

The Kingdom of God

Just recently between Ascension Day and Pentecost our church participated in Thy Kingdom Come. This movement which was started in the Anglican Church has spread across denominations all over the world. In fact this past Thursday, the orthodox church celebrated Ascension Day and are using the same materials that we used in “Thy Kingdom Come”

But what is the Kingdom of God? Is the kingdom and who is a citizen of this kingdom? Are you part of the kingdom when you are a member of a church? Is the kingdom just a vague theological doctrine or is there physical evidence of it?

In today’s Gospel we have one of Jesus’s seven parables describing the Kingdom of God. In these seven parables Israel is presented with a new message that ends the old covenant and begins the New Covenant. No longer is the Kingdom only in existence in heaven with occasional heavenly visits to selected individuals. The Kingdom of God bursts upon this earth at the birth of Christ. The Wise Men of the nativity story where the ones to first recognize that Christ was King. This was radical and extremely offensive to the Pharisees and Sadducees who had over the years put God in a neat box. Over the years the Talmud was written and modified by the religious leaders to tell the Israelites how God wanted them to live their lives.

They too waited for the Messiah to come and establish an earthly kingdom. For them this earthly kingdom would be political and free them from the tyrants who had oppressed them for about a thousand years. From the Assyrians to the Romans the nation of Israel was ruled by many different dynasties. When Jesus came and ushered in his kingdom, this is not what they were waiting for. This Jesus walked around the countryside speaking in riddles, healing people, and calling people to follow him. Never once did he call together an army. Contradictory to the religious leaders of the day he did

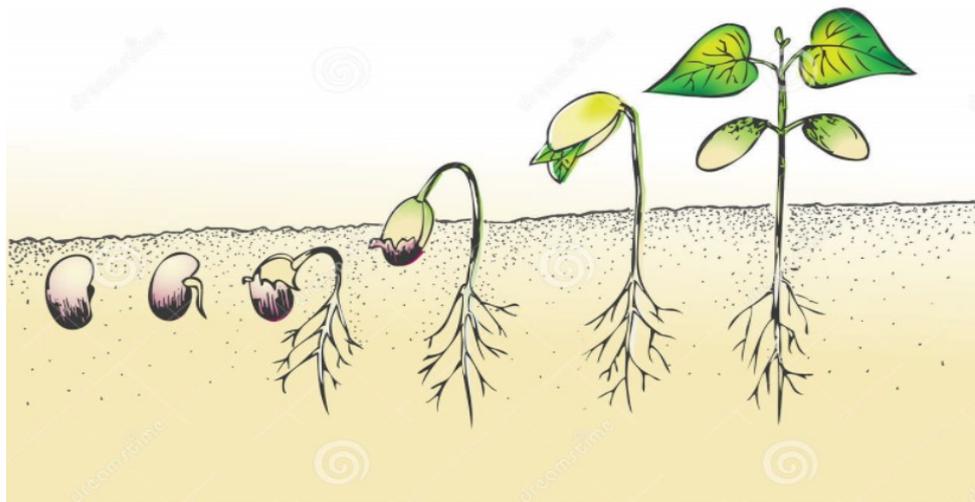
not shout a cry to battle but a cry to become servants who were called to be merciful and just. What an opposing movement as to what the Pharisees and Sadducees were waiting for.

In today's Gospel we heard two of the 7 Kingdom of God Parables. Jesus spoke often in parables to help people not only hear but in their minds form a visualization of what he is saying. In the words of Narnia author C. S. Lewis, "sometimes fairy stories may say best what's to be said." Jesus was able to speak to a remarkably diverse audience when he used parables. As we know from the Gospel narratives, Jesus's audience was young and old, rich and poor, male and female, servant and master, healthy and ill etc. The Parables are what listeners and readers of the Bible can remember easily because of their simplicity.

The fourth chapter of Mark begins with the Parable of the Sower and then the illustration of being a lamp set upon a hill. Our two Parables are towards the end of Chapter 4. The first parable in our passage is about a seed that is planted and the growth that follows.

Parable of a planted seed

Mark 4:26-29 "He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."



One of the first pictures in my head when I read these verses was a textbook from Primary school where we had our first lessons in biology. Most of us at some time in our young life had the experience of planting a seed and waiting for a glimmer of green to appear in the dark black soil our seed was planted in. When my children were small there were often yoghurt containers filled with dirt on a windowsill somewhere in our home. One of the first things they did in the morning was to run with great anticipation to check on the progress of their plant. Besides the planting and occasional watering, the farmer has nothing to do to make his plant grow.

Jesus's plan for kingdom growth was in direct contrast to what the religious leaders were expecting. They were looking for visible growth that would be measured by political power. As I said in my sermon last month, I once again want to emphasise that much of our service to Christ is passive. Yes, we are called to plant seeds but then we return to our daily tasks. We return to our responsibilities and mysteriously we notice growth in our lives. In order for a plant to grow the seed must remain in the earth. As soon as a plant is detached from the remains of the seed in the earth, the plant dies. This parable does not talk about the soil, but I believe the soil is Christ Jesus. When we are planted in Christ the kingdom of God grows in our lives. The potential of one seed is so great, out of one seed can many tomatoes be harvested.

. Perhaps what Paul is referring to this in I Corinthians 3:5-7 "5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow...."

Parable of a mustard seed

The second Parable we are looking at is probably the most famous of the seven kingdom parables. It is found in Matthew, Mark and Luke (the writer of the gospel of John does not use parables) and is a common Christian symbol. One Childhood memory is that my mother wore a necklace that carried a glass ball enclosing a mustard seed. We didn't regularly attend church as children, but someone had given it to her during a medical crisis. Years later when I read the gospels, I remembered my mother's mustard seed and the hope that it gave her.

Mark 4:30-32 Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."



A mustard seed represents the humble beginning of Christ's Kingdom here on earth. The nativity story is one of poverty and weakness. Jesus enters our world as a vulnerable baby. Even as an adult he was not received by the religious readers but was rejected and crucified. Yes, there was a glorious resurrection, but the early church was full of suffering and martyrdom. Most of the Apostles he left when he ascended to heaven were killed because of their relationship to Christ. I sometimes wonder how today's marketing geniuses would spin Christ's story to make it more vibrant. Theologically it was a burst, but it was

hundreds of years till the Kingdom was known across great parts of our world. Even though in the early years of the church it was not visible the seed had been planted and it grew first in secret and then years later it was visible.

Once again Christ uses an illustration that everyone in his audience would know. Mustard shrubs and trees grew all through the areas Jesus visited in his earthly journeys. Mustard seeds are basically weeds and grow uncontrollably. They are sort of like the dandelions of Israel. This is a splendid example of the kingdom of God. The kingdom grows in the most unexpected places upon our earth. You do not have to be a biologist to know what happens when a seed is planted or how weeds spread.

Who is part of the Kingdom of God

Every Sunday we pray the Lord 's Prayer where we pray "your kingdom come". Every time we pray these words it is a request that we are willing and ready to be part of this Kingdom. Before these two parables Jesus tells his followers that they are the light of the World, we are the ones who bring blessings into this world. We are the ones who bring light into the darkness of this world. No matter what we are responsible for in our daily lives, whatever your job is, whether you are a politician or a kindergarten child we all have the same opportunity to be a blessing and to make the kingdom visible. What is so beautiful about the kingdom is the mystery of it's growth. So much of the growth of the kingdom in the concealed hearts of each of us. God is the one who takes our "hearts of stone and gives us a heart of flesh." A stone has no life but a heart is life and a vital part of every organism.

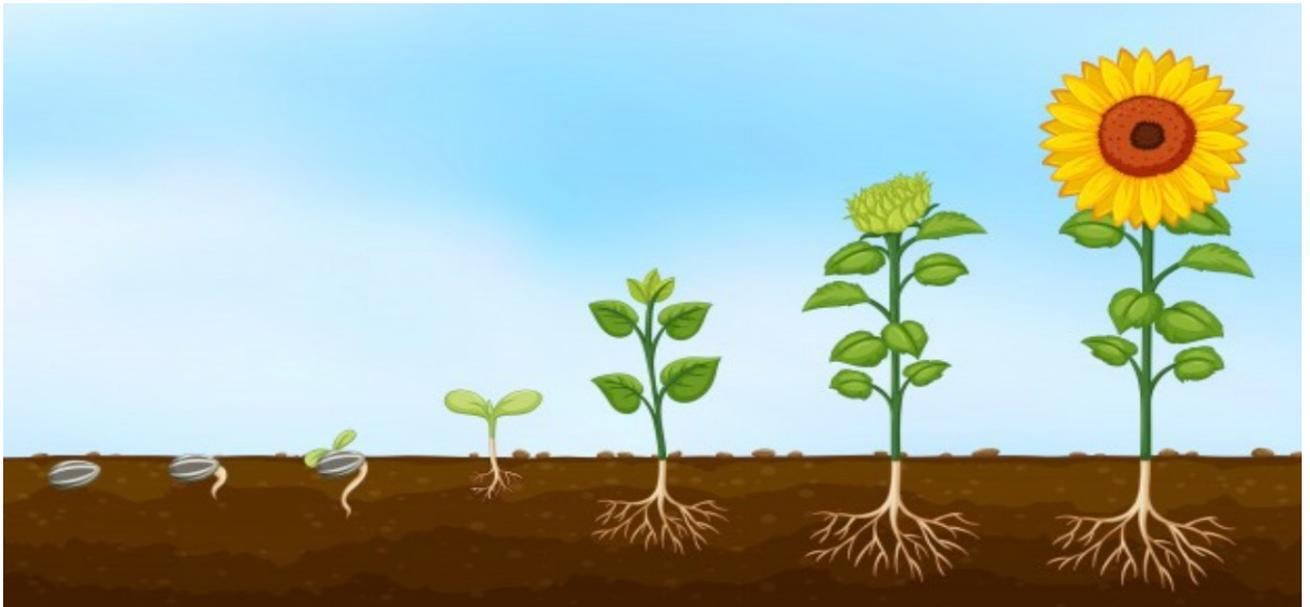
Ezekiel 36:26 6 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Many of us have doubts that we are good enough to be instrumental in the growth of the Kingdom. We may think we are not holy enough, we make too many

mistakes, our live is too chaotic and we are just not good enough. Guess what none of these things matter! Part of being a human being is imperfection. The only requirement to being part of the kingdom is a willingness and desire to be planted in the soil of Christ. Then the mystery begins in the darkness, but that seed will break through the soil and become a blessing to our surroundings. Remember the humble beginnings of the Kingdom, the tiny mustard seed grows to a tree where birds can be blessed in it's shade.

The Kingdom of God that has a hidden beginning becomes visible when we allow ourselves to be a blessing. The kingdom of God is not a church but the body of Christ, his followers scattered throughout the world.

Meditation



♪ Seek Ye First ♪

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And His righteousness
And all these things
Shall be added unto you
Allelu alleluia

Alleluia, alleluia, alleuia
Allelu alleluia

Man shall not live by bread alone
But by ev'ry word
That proceeds
From the mouth of God
Allelu alleluia

Alleluia, alleluia, alleuia
Allelu alleluia

Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find
Knock and the door
Shall be opened unto you
Allelu alleluia

Alleluia, alleluia, alleuia
Allelu alleluia

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Karen Lafferty
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Intercessions (by Solveyg)

From the first reading we learn: “People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” Corresponding with the parable about the mustard seed from Marks Gospel it means to me: within the most tiny things we find the kingdom of God, if we allow ourselves to give up our own selfish point of view. So we pray: Let your seed fall on fruitful soil to make your Kingdom grow.

Merciful Father we pray for our world which seems to be forever caught up in violence and conflict. Through the media we are witnesses to terrorist violence in so many parts the world. As we continue to pray for peace and goodwill towards all people we also pray for the

innocent victims and their families caught up in conflicts which are not of their making.

We pray for our world leaders, especially for the meeting of the G 7 in Cornwall this weekend. It looks like a visible turning point back to diplomacy and serious talks, aiming to find compromises and agreements.

Let your seed fall on fruitful soil to make your Kingdom grow.

We also pray for our community leaders and those in public office dealing with difficult situations and especially for those dealing with the ongoing Pandemic. The numbers are constantly improving and we are hoping for a more relaxed summer. Help us to always be aware of the part that we can play by always acting carefully and unselfishly.

Let your seed fall on fruitful soil to make your Kingdom grow.

Most righteous God, we pray for the worldwide Christian Church in all its wonderful diversity. We pray especially for churches in places where religious faith is suppressed or where Christianity is an unwelcome minority.

We pray for our Chaplaincy here in Freiburg; still waiting for our new minister, dealing with all the challenges in this Pandemic. Bless all people in our congregation giving themselves in pastoral care, holding us together, coordinating our services and midweek activities, finding appropriate decisions according to the ever changing Corona policies. We keep on praying for our new minister, that he and his family may arrive soon, so that he can start his ministry here with us.

Let your seed fall on fruitful soil to make your Kingdom grow.

Mercyful God, we bring before you all people in need for any reason, a difficult economic or social situation,

We are living in the love of God
We are living O-oh
We are living in the love of God
We are living O-oh
We are living in the love of God

We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving O-oh
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving O-oh
We are moving in the power of God

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Anders Nyberg | Andrew Maries
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The Blessing

The Lord bless us and watch over us,
the Lord make his face shine upon us
and be gracious to us,
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace;
and the blessing
of God Almighty, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us now and always.
Amen.

The Conclusion

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.
Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Announcements

Look forward to our next service
with Margaret + Malcolm Rittman

20th June 2021
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
11:30 hrs, Zoom link see website



For those who like to keep their hands busy during services: **you will need things to make a card** - either a card of thanks or of encouragement ... Margaret will explain what and why at the beginning of the service 😊



Evening Prayer on Wednesdays

Wednesday, 16th June 2021
9pm (for 20-30min)

(Please use the usual
Sunsay service link.)