



41B PENTECOST 2B - ONLINE LITURGY

The in-crowd

Abstract

Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Mark 3:34-35

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GOSPEL

Mark 4:26–34

²⁶ He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

³⁰ Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. ³² 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.”

³³ With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴ He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. ¹

Response

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

¹ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

41B Pentecost 2B - Online Liturgy

The in-crowd

SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 2021 | AFTER PENTECOST | PROPER 5 | YEAR B

Old Testament & Psalm, Option I

Old Testament *1 Samuel 15:34–16:13*

Psalm *Psalm 20*

or

Old Testament & Psalm, Option II

Old Testament *Ezekiel 17:22–24*

Psalm *Psalm 92:1–4, 12–15*

New Testament *2 Corinthians 5:6–10 (11–13) 14–17*

Gospel *Mark 4:26–34ⁱ*

Jesus draws crowds of followers in Galilee where his family are concerned about the fear and rumours that surround him. Mark uses a story within a story to increase the ever-present drama. Both stories speak of relationships and how we behave towards one another. Jesus redefines family as those who do the will of God and therefore redraws the boundaries for community.

This week, we tune into the subtle or loud voices that undermine the well-being of community, and we listen for the equally subtle or insistent voice that patiently restores us as individuals to community; to being part of God's in-crowd. It is hard to be fully aware of what is influencing us, and we need diverse and honest voices to help us see us as we really are.

This week we explore how what we say or do creates or breaks down community.ⁱⁱ

	Pre-Service
	Introit Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace)
	Greeting May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all and also with us
	We Gather Come, all of you, just as you are, to worship. Whether today you feel strong or weak, full or empty,

	<p>God welcomes you all into God's in-crowd. Come just as you are to worship</p> <p>Acknowledgements</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> Loving Lord, you look us in the eye and remind us that we are already part of your family. Help us to let go of anything that gets in the way, that we may worship you with all our hearts, and wholeheartedly love all our neighbours.</p> <p>Amen</p>
	<p>We say Sorry Lord Jesus, when our in-crowd is not your crowd: forgive us, and help us to build community. When our words are harsh and our actions unkind: forgive us, and help us to build community. When we judge others rather than join with others: forgive us, and help us to build community. When we are set in our ways and not open to change: forgive us, and help us to build community. To the glory of your name. Amen.</p>
	<p>Words of Assurance God of truth and mercy, where we break down – you build up; where we damage – you repair; where we blaspheme – you bless; where we isolate – you include; where we go wrong – you put us right; where we confess – you forgive; where we begin again – you are with us.</p> <p>In Jesus' name. Amen</p>
	<p>Hymn/song TIS #670 – “Jesus put this song into our hearts” Kendrickⁱⁱⁱ</p>
	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Jesus draws crowds of followers in Galilee where his family are concerned about the fear and rumours that surround him.</p> <p>Jesus redefines family as those who do the will of God and therefore redraws the boundaries for community.</p> <p>This week, we tune into the subtle or loud voices that undermine the well-being of community, and we listen for the equally subtle or insistent voice that patiently restores us as individuals to community.</p>

	<p><i>Let us pray</i> God of all, as one family we worship you. We are mothers and fathers, we are sisters and brothers, and we worship you. We are sons and daughters, aunts and uncles, grannies, granddads, and we worship you. We are cousins and neighbours, friends and colleagues, and we worship you. As your family, as your church, as your community, we worship you. Amen</p>
	<p>Readings</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song Refiner's Fire (Purify my heart) Doerksen</p>

Response

Whoever Would Have Thought?

Mark 4:26-29, Mark 4:30-34

A teacher remembers teaching a ninth grade class "new math" a number of years ago.

Her students were working hard,

 but she could tell that they just didn't understand the new concepts.

 And they were growing more frustrated and edgy with each passing class.

Then one Friday afternoon Helen decided to depart from her lesson plan.

 She instructed each student to list each person's name in the class

 and then write something nice about each one.

The next she compiled a list for each student of what others in the class liked about them.

 On Monday she gave each student a paper

 with what other classmates had written about them.

Instantly, her students were smiling again.

 The students were happy with themselves and one another again.

It was time to continue with their math lessons,

 and no one ever said anything about those papers again.

Years passed. Students came and went.

At a reunion,

 the teachers former students gathered around her.

One of them had something to show her.

 Opening his wallet, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper.

 The papers were the ones on which she had listed

 all the good things of each classmate.

She was amazed as another former student told her

 that she still kept her list in the top drawer of her desk at home.

Another had placed his list in his wedding album.
 Still another classmate took out her wallet,
 showed her worn and frazzled list to the group,
 and said she carried it with her everywhere she went. ^{iv}

Whoever would have thought that what a teacher did out of desperation on a Friday afternoon
 would have such a lasting effect on her students? You never know.
 You never know how something you or I might do
 might affect someone else.
 The funny thing is that we may not even think that what we did was all that important,
 but to another person it made a world of difference.
 Jesus taught us that the kingdom of God is like that.

I. The Kingdom of God Is like Seed Scattered on the Ground.

Now listen to Jesus' words,
 "The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground."
 Now you and I would call that very inefficient farming.
 A lot of good seed would be lost if we simply scattered seed upon the ground.
 But Jesus is not giving us lessons on agriculture.
 He is telling us about the kingdom of God.
 And he is saying that the very tiniest of seeds can produce an enormous harvest.
 That's the way the kingdom works
 " great harvests from tiny seeds.
 That's the first lesson from this parable.
 But there is a second lesson that is equally as valuable.

II. Growth Is Happening, Even if We Can't See It.

And that is that growth is occurring even when it is not evident to us.
 Jesus said, "The earth produces of itself, first the stalk,
 then the head, then the full grain in the head."
 It is a mystery; centuries later we still don't know what causes a seed to sprout.
 So far scientists have not been able to create a synthetic seed and make it grow.
 Growth is a mystery.

Now our task is to plant seeds.
 We don't know if the seeds we plant will ever take hold,
 but that should not discourage us.
 Growth doesn't take place because of our understandings or manipulations;
 it is God's initiative that brings forth growth.

It is often easy for us to lose patience and wonder what the use is.
 We don't see anything coming from our efforts and be ready to give up.
 But the parable of the scattered seed teaches us that
 just when we are ready to give up some seed will sprout.
 Just when we think nothing will happen, growth will take place.
 We need to be patient and not give up,
 because sometimes growth takes longer than we expect.
 God works in ways we don't understand, often hidden from view.
 And we have to be patient.

III. Great Things Happen from Small Beginnings.

Now the upshot of all of this is that great things happen from small beginnings.

Jesus explained that the kingdom of God is "like a mustard seed,
which, when sown upon the ground is the smallest of all seeds on earth."

But from the smallest seed known in Jesus' day grew a large shrub.

The mustard seed is only a tiny, tiny speck of a seed,

yet when it grows, Jesus tells us, it is,

"the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches,
so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

It is hard for us to get excited about this,

since we live in an age with all sorts of amazing discoveries,

but for people living in prescientific days it must have truly baffled their minds " that something so large could come from such a small seed.

The parable of the mustard seed is a word of encouragement for us.

Things might not be what you and I want them to be,
but there is still hope. God works in mysterious ways.

God is still with us even when our efforts are frustrated

because He is the source of growth.

Growth often starts out small like a mustard seed and then blossoms into something huge.

And that is the story of the church as well.

Whoever would have thought that from the often inept disciples,
the gospel message would spread to all the corners of the globe?

Yet you and I are here today

because twenty centuries ago a tiny seed was planted.

They planted the seed. God gave the growth.

Are there some tiny seeds that you and I could be planting?

Some word of love, some act of encouragement?

Is there some ministry you and I could be involved in,

realizing that from the tiniest seed great growth can come?

The kingdom of God is like seed scattered on the ground.

Have you some seed that you could scatter today?

Amen

	<p>Hymn/song TIS #787 – "Christ be our light" Farrell</p>
	<p>Offering OFFERTORY SENTENCE God's love is alive in the world around us, a gift for all. We share in our offering as a response to God's love.</p> <p>OFFERTORY PRAYER Holy One, your generosity calls out the best in us. Help us to share in generosity towards the earth and all its creatures. In your holy name we pray. Amen.^v</p>

	<p>Notices</p>
	<p>Prayers for all people Loving and eternal God, our prayers for others challenge us and move us and bring us ever closer to your presence. We pray for those so overburdened with wealth and belongings that their lives are a constant worry...</p> <p>We pray for those so starved of food and deprived of comfort and even basic amenities that their lives are a constant worry...</p> <p>We pray for those near to us who need our prayer because of illness, death, neglect or trauma...</p> <p>Eternal God, you hear our prayers, you know our yearnings and desires and you know those for whom we pray. We commit them and ourselves, our living and our dying, into your hands. Amen.</p>
	<p>Lord's Prayer</p> <p>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. AMEN^{vi}</p>
	<p>Hymn/song TIS #726 – "I will give thanks to you" Chambers</p>
	<p>We are sent out</p> <p>Loving God, you sent your Son into your world to gather us all up into your kingdom. Be with us, as we hear and respond to your call to do the same. Amen.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace Amen</p>

	Benediction
	Thank you

ⁱ <https://app.logos.com/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.rootsontheweb.com/lectionary/2021/113-may-june-2021-b/proper-5>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://togethertocelebrate.com.au/6-june-2021-pentecost-2-10b/>

^{iv} Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hanen, CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL. (Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, Inc., 1993), pp. 126-128.

^v Words for Worship © Mediacom FW180527.DOC

^{vi} English Language Liturgical Consultation, 1988