



SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL

Tiny, Mighty Seeds

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches. Matthew 13:31-32

September 25, 2026

Dear Parish Family,

A garden is a place of ongoing labor: pulling weeds, pruning, digging holes, turning in fertilizer, watering. Harvesting. The cucumber with its little black spines. Zinnias bright pink and orange, cut for a vase on the table. Yellow sunflower on which a yellow finch perches to gobble seeds.

But it all comes back to the seeds. Without the seeds, nothing.

Thin black and white stubs: marigolds. Fat acorns. Four o'clocks like little grenades, exploding with growth. We poke the seeds into the damp soil. It seems unlikely that anything will come of this. How could this peach pit contain a peach tree that will grow and produce more peaches that the tree can hold? How could that be?

In the same way, we give for the greater good. We give with faith that our gifts will increase and bear fruit. And we work together to help that happen. Pruning, tending, paying attention. As we say in our baptismal covenant: *I will, with God's help.*

And what we give goes out into the larger world. The oak tree gives shade and clean air for everyone, not just the squirrel who planted it years ago. What kind of world do we want to live in? What kind of home? We work together with each other and with the Creator, doing what we can, knowing we can't do it all. Nobody can make the sun shine or the rain fall. But we stay busy doing physical tasks for the larger, spiritual good.

This stewardship season, maybe we can think of our time, talents, and treasure as if they are packets of seeds that will grow and do what they're meant to do. To beautify, sustain, and feed the world. We each bring something different to this patch of earth. But each different gift is needed for a bountiful harvest. Something miraculous happens when we give what we have for the common good, for God's kingdom. It seems unlikely. But then it happens. How can that be? God's generosity rises to meet our own.

If it doesn't feel like enough—if your gift feels too small—you can give anyhow. God meets us and makes up the balance. Some seeds are so small you must weight them with ash to sow them; they would be too light otherwise to even fall to earth. Yet they grow. They do what they're meant to do.

Soon, we will be asking you to sow the seeds of your generosity for our parish family. A pledge form will be delivered in the coming weeks. Thank you for taking time to prayerfully consider how your own generosity might rise to meet God's.

Gardening is not a solo project. We can't do it alone, and we don't have to. In John 4, Jesus tells his disciples, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; they are white already to harvest. And he that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal, that both he who sows, and he who reaps, may rejoice together." Let us rejoice together in the giving, the working, and the harvest.

Sincerely,

Joni Tevis & David Bernardy
2027 Stewardship Co-Chairs