



Church At Home
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church – Pembroke, Ontario
Pentecost 7 **July 12, 2026**

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you O Lord.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!" "Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our risen Lord. Amen.

Gardeners and farmers would tell us that soil which is good for planting has particular characteristics: good soil has a lot of humus—decayed material like grass roots and leaves—these encourage good nutrients, good drainage and good aeration. Good soil has room for water and air to move through it and gets to the seeds and plant roots. And although it seems like it's just a lifeless substance, good soil is full of life. And so, looking at our flower beds at our home one can see that it was not good soil, usually very heavy soil, not conducive for plants to grow and flourish. We need to improve the soil. The heavy clay soil is tilled; we add peat moss

and manure. Once completed, there is a noticeable difference. So good soil seems to be the result of letting go of some stuff; die even, to allow room for life-promoting systems to do their work.

The first century farmers were not this sophisticated. Farmers did not carefully prepare the pH balance level in the soil and then inject the seed into the ground. Farmers in Jesus' day cast the seed and then plowed the land. It was no surprise that some seed fell on hard soil, other seed on ground too rocky for good roots, and still other seed among thorns and weeds. Those were the facts of life and everyone knew it, including Jesus.

Both Jesus and those who followed him also knew such facts applied not only to farming, but also to his own ministry at the time. The seed of his teaching had fallen on rock-laden, thorn-strewn ground. The disciples lost faith during a storm at sea. Pharisees want to choke out his message. Jesus will soon experience the hard soil of his hometown as Nazarenes reject him. Jesus does not just tell this parable. He lives it.

This is the early church. A hard time and place to be if you are Christian due to poverty and persecution, massive numbers of people are migrating out of Palestine. There are dissenters and false prophets. Jesus may have wondered: Why didn't everyone who heard the word believe? Why is what is so plain barely visible to others? What is wrong here? And so, while in a boat, Jesus reminds the crowd gathered on the shore, and as Matthew reminds his community, that rejection of his message does not mean it is wrong or their efforts are foolish. It is a simple fact of life, whether in farming or in faith.

We come this day wondering ourselves. Faith in God and Jesus is important to us. We read our Bibles. We go to church. We're here listening to this sermon. Why isn't the church full? Where is everyone? Why are we the minority in our community, showing up, giving, and serving? Why are churches getting smaller and closing? Is there something wrong with the Word? Is the seed not what we thought it was?

In this parable often times we focus on the seed and the soil be it good or poor soil. And may I say this; there is nothing wrong with this approach. Today, though, perhaps Jesus has another message for us in this parable. It may not be so much about seeds and soil as it is the sower. Perhaps Jesus is inviting us to be sowers.

The sower's approach to sowing is carefree, to say the least. The sower flings seed willy-nilly as he goes, with seemingly disregard for where the seed will end up. You would think the seed would be carefully placed in some meticulously prepared narrow furrow where it has a better chance of germination and survival. Not with this sower. To this sower, it's as if the seed is so precious and bountiful that he can't hold onto it – it has to be shared. To hold onto the seed would be to squander it. This sower's method is to let it land where it will land and keep going. This sower covers a lot of ground, not sticking to the pathway or field. The point for the sower is to sow.

The story helps us to stay focused on our mission; our calling to be disciples; to be sowers. And here is the thing – often times we despair when the seed does not take root. We despair as parents whose guidance has seemed to fall on packed soil as our children are now part of the Christmas and Easter crowd. We despair when a business person produces a quality product, pays their employees a living wage is well acquainted with shallow roots as they see their customers go where things are cheaper. We despair when the seed does not take root. Yet, did you notice – the sower did not despair. He accepted the reality some seed and a goodly portion of it will fall on bad soil and he keeps sowing.

It is our job to trust – trust in the outcome. The parable ends with a harvest – not any old harvest – but a miracle – a hundredfold harvest! That too is our challenge; is to believe in God's abundance.

My friends in Christ! Jesus knew how hard the ways of the world were then and now. He also knew the abundant ways of God.

Sow dear people sow! Don't worry about whether you think the soil you're walking on is good or bad, receptive or not. Don't be saving up seed for the place you think will be the most fertile. This seed is so precious it needs to be shared and there is plenty more seed where that came from. You will never run out because we have a God who is an abundant God.

So.....

Fling it! Toss it!! Share it!!! Just get out there and sow!!!! Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

Dismissal

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

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STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....Marie Lenser, Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

At the Congregational Meeting of June 28th, it was decided to enter a call process with St. Peter's Alice and Grace Rankin. Your input is important to the call committee. A questionnaire is available for you to consider. Please return your responses to the church office by August 3, 2026. Your voice is important.

Vacation.....Pastor Bruce and Charlotte will be on vacation starting tomorrow, July 13th and returning August 3rd. If you are in need of pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Jim Goos at 613-401-8750.



*"Seeds fell on the path,
and the birds came,
and ate them up"*

