

June 13, 2021
Third after Pentecost

Meditation: "Scattered"

Scattered. That's how I felt this week, scattered. On top of the regular things, deciding on a theme for worship, selecting music choices, writing prayers, reading and reflecting on scripture, and commentaries on scripture, and, eventually, writing a reflection.... On top of the regular things, responding to emails, placing phone calls, providing pastoral care, attending mid-week coffee time..... on top of the regular things, meetings on Monday and Wednesday evenings, a United in Learning webinar on Tuesday evening, a Monday morning meeting to learn about how another church has done integrated worship as we start to think about returning to our buildings...hopefully this fall.... On top of the regular things, this was also the week of the annual meeting of Antler River Watershed Region. We met Thursday evening, my fourth evening of the week, and our Friday evening meeting was rescheduled to Friday afternoon to accommodate another event that popped up during the week, and we met Saturday, morning and afternoon. Scattered, my brain was going ten different directions at once.

"The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground." I thought about this as I walked the seven Kilometers from where the Afzaal family were killed to the London Mosque, along with thousands of others. What are the seeds we scatter? Do we scatter prejudice, intolerance, and hatred? And if we do, what do we reap? Death, fear, terror? Do we scatter love, grace, and peace? And if so, what do we reap? A community that stands together in time of tragedy? Or do we hang on to the seeds for a rainy day, not scattering seeds at all? Do we deny the isms (sexism, ageism, racism, and so on) but stop short of speaking or acting out to stop them? Do we hang on to the seed, let the seed rot on the shelf until it is no good? What do we do with the seed we have to scatter? What do we do with the seed that has been entrusted to us?

Or, perhaps, we are the seed. "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how." What if we are the seed that God has scattered? What kind of seed are we? Are we like a giant hogweed that is toxic and causes adverse reactions to those who come into contact with it? Are we like a rose that has beautiful flowers and a beautiful scent and thorns that scratch and prick? Are we like a vegetable, like asparagus, that nourishes the body, but has a short season? Are we like an everbearing berry, that gives pleasure to the senses, nourishes the body, and bears fruit all season long? When I got to the railway overpass on Oxford Street, just west of Wonderland Road, I looked back up the hill towards Hyde Park Road, the hill that I had just walked down. There was a river of seeds, thousands of them, seeds of love, seeds of righteous anger, seeds of hope.... There was a river of seeds that stretched from

where I was all the way up the hill, and out of sight. The seeds were of every variety imaginable. I walked with Christians and Muslims, with Jews and Hindus, with Sikhs and Bahai and secular humanists. I walked with men and women and children and dogs, with young and old. We walked, a veritable garden of diversity. We walked united in our purpose: to stand against hatred, to stand with those who mourned, to stand with those who were afraid, to stand with those who felt excluded, to stand in the belief that love will overpower hatred, for the darkness of hatred cannot overcome the light of love.

Earlier that day, we may have been scattered, but Friday evening we came together to live out our faith. Perhaps we aren't the seeds. Perhaps faith is the seed that God scatters in our lives. To quote Marianne Williamson, "It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone." How will we care for the seed God has planted in our lives? What will we be like? Will we be like shallow earth, and faith will spring up, but then wither in the droughts that come in life? Will we be rocky ground that does not even have enough for faith to germinate? Will we be fertile ground that will grow a strong, healthy faith? Will we water it and feed it with scripture reading, and prayer, and worship, and study, and Christian fellowship?

As restrictions loosen and we look forward to reconnecting with family and friends this summer, remember to also take time to be intentional about nurturing your faith and your relationship with God. Just as it takes time for seed to germinate and grow, be patient and persevering when it comes to growing your faith until it reaches full blossom, revealing God's love in and for the world. May it be so. Amen.