

WELCOME TO...  
The Presbyterian Church of  
**Saint David**

June 14, 2015



Our Gathering: *We pray that you would inspire us to commit to and act on the small difference we can make: **May we bring peace through small acts of gentleness and reconciliation; May we bring wealth through small contributions and collaborations; May we bring safety through small acts of consideration and acceptance; May we bring wholeness through small acts of care and service.** And in the small ways, O God, may our small difference make a big contribution to your saving work in our world. Amen.*

Hymn: Be still and know

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Our Confession: *Lord Jesus Christ, we remember with gratitude those people who generously sowed the seeds of faith in our lives. (a time of reflection) Above all, we recognize how you have blessed our lives with the gift of the Holy Spirit so that our faith has miraculously and mysteriously grown. **We confess the times we fail to involve ourselves in planting any seeds of faith in the lives of others; the times when our personal agendas become more important than yours; the times when we have denied others the opportunity to expand their faith through our lack of interest or involvement; the times when our lives become so entangled with the values of the world that we forget what you have said and done and promised.** Lord Jesus Christ, we know that when we become disconnected from you, our lives becomes parched and unfruitful and our faith becomes stunted and dry. **Bless and renew our lives, we pray, so that we remain connected to you at all times and in all places, strengthening our faith to expand and, growing strongly and vigorously, to bear the fruit of your mercy, your love, your undying life. Amen.***

Hymn: Creator God, creating still (1-2)

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**Mark 4: 26-34** He also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,<sup>27</sup> and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.<sup>28</sup> The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.<sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.'<sup>30</sup> He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it?'<sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest

of all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.’ <sup>33</sup>With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; <sup>34</sup>he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

**Comment:** Jesus tells parables not for explanation but for exploration. Not for answers but so as to engage the imagination. Not for certainties about faith but for discoveries about how faith works. In this regard, Jesus asks us to talk in parables, too. Because something happens in telling parables that cannot occur in just listening to them. Figuring out a parable to tell is a different experience than securing its purpose.... (now, on to the parable itself!)

Once again we are dealing with the value of the small. There are obviously so many applications of this text to historical and personal evolution, but from a process perspective the point is simply that from one moment to the next, God is present and offering us a way forward. When we open ourselves to God’s possibilities, it is often the tiniest change that opens up a new trajectory, weak at first, but then growing stronger, until it overcomes resistance, obstacles, habitual behavior. The mustard seed metaphor stands on its own, but there are so many more organic images that reinforce the point—such as the Mississippi River, which starts as a stream in northern Minnesota small enough to step over and becomes progressively wider, until it spreads through the Louisiana delta to the Gulf of Mexico. Wherever we are in journey, God is always ready to gurgle up from underground, to plant a small seed, to open us to more than we can imagine.

Hymn: Creator God, creating still (3-4) **286**

**Invitation:** *This is the joyful feast of the people of God! According to Luke, when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. This is the Lord’s table. Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast which he has prepared. We come, for this is a table where all are invited and all are welcome.*

**Hymn:** Let us break bread together (1-2) **548**  
Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise. Creator God, we give you thanks for the grain farmers, the bread bakers, the grape growers, the juice makers. Redeemer God, we give you thanks for all that we remember as we have shared this meal: your birth, your life, your death and resurrection. Sustaining God, we give you thanks for the eternal presence of your Spirit with us, surrounding us and filling us with Divine life. May this meal we have shared renew us and inspire us to join more joyfully with you as you work for peace and justice in the world. Amen.*

### Communion

**Hymn:** Let us break bread together (3) **548**

**Prayer following communion:** *Send us out in the power of your Spirit... to live and work to your praise and glory, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

**Hymn:** For all your goodness God) **804**

Sending: *All of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called - that you might inherit a blessing. For “Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and God’s ears are open to their prayer.”* 1 Pet. 3:8-12