

John Sampson
"Gardening with God"
Text: Genesis 1:26 - 31
Preached at KVCC
July 7, 2019

Will you pray with me?

God, may the words of my mouth, and the meditations of all of our hearts, be acceptable to you, our rock, and our redeemer.

Amen.

I wanted us all to come out to see this.

We're standing right before a new garden. And I hope you'll help me build this garden over time. Now it might not look like much at first glance; it might look a little scraggly. It might look like someone simply stopped mowing the grass. And we did.

To start this garden all we did was stop mowing the grass. And do you see what happened?

Do you see these white flowers growing there? It's a plant called yarrow, and the bees love it.

And do you see these small purple flowers? This is wild thyme. And lots of insects like that plant too.

If you take a minute you can see all the different plants and flowers that are growing because we let them.

I started thinking about making a garden because I read an article about how there aren't as many monarch butterflies as there used to be because we're not allowing them to find the food they need, and have the places to lay their eggs, and grow up – from caterpillars to butterflies.

I thought about the story that Ingrid just read about how God created all the things in the world: the plants and the animals, the rain, and the soil, and how God gave all of these things to me and you. And when God gave the world to us she wanted us not to abuse the world, and pollute it, and make it so animals and birds and insects couldn't find homes, and had a hard time finding food. God gave us this world so that we could take care of it, and take care of all of the plants and animals that live in it.

And we did something really easy to help. We asked the man who mows our grass to stop mowing this area.

By stopping mowing and letting the plants grow, we're letting the insects and butterflies find a place they'd like to live. And once the insects come and move in then the birds will move in and the animals too.

Do you see this plant here? It looks like maybe a deer came by in the night and had a little snack. By having snacks available for the deer we're inviting them to come and find a home right here. We're saying your home is here with us, not somewhere far away.

But we can do more to take care of the world than simply stopping doing something. There are lots of things we can do to help grow more food and homes for God's other children.

What else do you think we could do to help?

One thing we're going to do today is we're going to plant some seeds. I hope you got a cup filled with some seeds because we're going to scatter the seeds all around in our garden. The seeds we have are from all different kinds of wildflowers, the kinds of flowers that bees, and crickets, and birds love.

Now we will throw the seeds out into the garden and we'll see what happens. Over time some of the seeds will grow, some won't. What we plant today might grow into beautiful plants, but the reason we plant these seeds is not for us, but for God's other children all around us.

So come with you seeds, and I'm inviting all who are here today to bring your seeds and come and scatter them throughout the garden. You can scatter them anywhere. There's even a section that Paul Vincent rototilled recently that might help some of the seeds to germinate. You choose.

I am also hoping that while you plant we'll be setting up a sign to let everyone who comes by here know what this place is. It's a garden that you helped to make. check

But before we plant our seeds, just take a moment and hold the seeds in your hand and imagine what you hope for these seeds. And say a brief pray over them, that they may grow, and thrive here in this place. That they may become food and shelter for the insects and animals that need these things.

[Moment of silence]

Now everyone take your seeds and scatter them in the garden, wherever you want. Have fun!

[People scatter their seeds.]

Did everyone plant their seeds? Let's all come back to where we were standing.

Now we just need to be patient, and let nature do its work. Hopefully, there will be some good rain, and some sunny days, and that the birds won't come and eat too many of the seeds we left in the garden.

So what did we do today? We acted a little like God didn't we? We planted a garden. We made a place where animals and birds could find a home, and find food. We did this work for them, and not just for ourselves. And look. Everything is good. Yep, it's very good.

Amen.