

**St. Andrew's United Church of Christ**

7610 Ann Arbor Street, Dexter, MI 48130

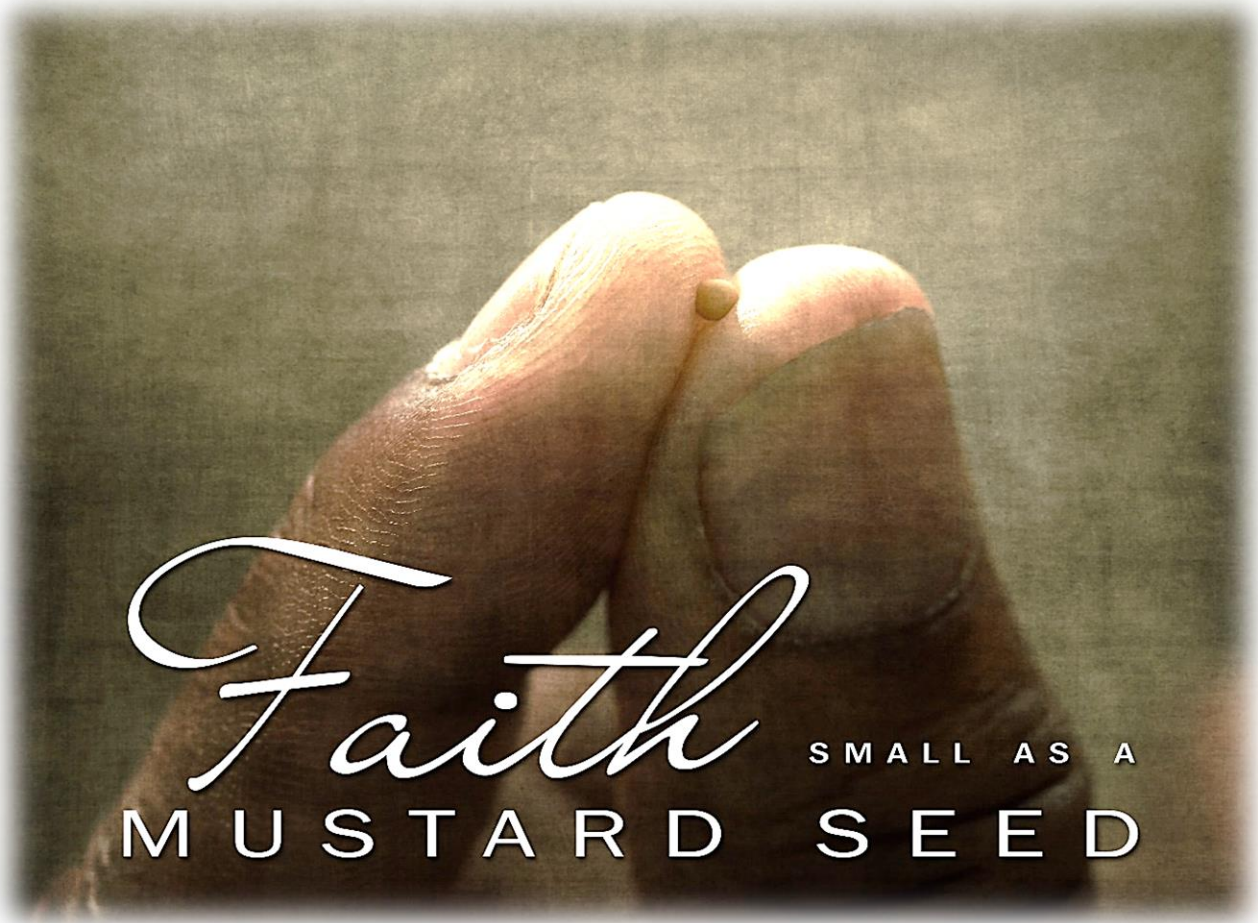
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**TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

October 18, 2020

10:00 A.M.



*Faith* SMALL AS A  
MUSTARD SEED

*Dear Friends in Christ,*

*Greetings on this Lord's Day! The WORD PICTURES OF GOD – the Parables of Jesus have served as the worship theme where we have learned that parables – Jesus Word Pictures of God, God's Kingdom, and God's reign are painted with familiar scenes of everyday life. Jesus takes scenes from everyday life but then puts them together in stories that have a way of catching us off guard.*

*Since August these WORD PICTURES OF GOD painted by Jesus are Pictures like the Parable of: the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin, the Pharisee and Tax Collector, the Good Samaritan, Fish, Snakes, Eggs and Scorpions, A Sower, Weeds and Wheat, A Great Dinner Invitation, and Discovering Hidden Treasure.*

*This morning, the theme concludes with the Parable of the Mustard Seed summoning us to Mustard Seed Faith. Faith in Jesus Christ is the RX that helps us find peace and joy in these turbulent times.*

*It my hope and prayer that as you have worshipped in spirit and truth and in person worship or at home, that these Parables have helped you gain a clearer picture of God, God's Kingdom and reign and our place in that picture.*

*Peace and Prayers In Christ,*

*Pastor Bigelow*

## SILENT PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Gracious God, you pour out the spirit of grace and love. In this moment of worship deliver us from cold hearts and wandering thoughts, that with steady minds and enthusiasm we may worship you in spirit and truth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## WE GATHER TO WORSHIP THE TRIUNE GOD

### RINGING OF THE BELL AND CHIMES

WELCOME

PRELUDE

### CALL TO WORSHIP

([Psalm 31:1-5](#))

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge; do not let me ever  
be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me.

**Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily.**

**Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.**

You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your  
names' sake lead and guide me, take me out of the net  
that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

**Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed**

**Me, O Lord, faithful God.**

### SALUTATION

To those who are called, who are beloved in God the Father,  
and kept safe for Jesus Christ:

([Jude 1-2](#))

May mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.

**Amen!**

The Lord be with you!

**And also with you!**

(based on [Ruth 2:4](#))

# 48 I Sing the Almighty Power of God

*O come, let us worship . . . let us kneel before the Lord our maker. Psa. 95:6*

1. I sing th'al-might - y pow'r of God That made the moun - tains rise,  
2. I sing the good - ness of the Lord That filled the earth with food;  
3. There's not a plant or flow'r be - low But makes Thy glo - ries known;

That spread the flow - ing seas a - broad And built the loft - y skies.  
He formed the crea - tures with His word And then pro-nounced them good.  
And clouds a - rise and tem-pests blow By or - der from Thy throne;

I sing the wis - dom that or-dained The sun to rule the day;  
Lord, how Thy won - ders are dis-played Where-e'er I turn my eye,  
While all that bor - rows life from Thee Is ev - er in Thy care,

The moon shines full at His com-mand And all the stars o - bey.  
If I sur - vey the ground I tread Or gaze up - on the sky!  
And ev - ery-where that man can be, Thou, God, art pres-ent there.

## OPENING PRAYER

Give us, God, a sense of your presence as we gather for worship. Give us gratitude as we remember your goodness, penitence as we remember our sins, and joy as we remember your love. Enable us now to lift up our hearts in humble prayer and fervent praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.

## WE ARE RENEWED BY THE SPIRIT

### CALL TO CONFESSION

When we gather to praise God, we remember that we are people who have preferred our wills to his. Accepting his power to become new persons in Christ, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Living God, we trust that you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you and so we humbly confess our sins and seek your grace. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, and walked humbly with you, our God.**

**Have mercy upon us, and in your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin.**

**(silent reflection)**

**Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore us to the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.**

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND FORGIVENESS

(from [Isaiah 49:15, 66:13](#))

Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion on the child of her womb? As a woman comforts her child, so will I comfort you, says the Lord.

### GOD'S DIRECTION FOR OUR LIVES

([Philippians 4: 4-9](#))

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice<sup>[a]</sup> in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, beloved,<sup>[c]</sup> whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about<sup>[d]</sup> these things. <sup>9</sup> Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.



## WE HEAR AND LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

New Testament [Matthew 13:31, 32](#)

SERMON – *Mustard Seed Faith*

(Text Pg. 10)

HYMN OF RESPONSE [Rejoice the Lord is King](#)

(below)

## 165 Rejoice, the Lord is King

*But we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honor. Heb. 2:9*

1. Re - joice, the Lord is King: Your Lord and King a - dore! Re -  
2. Je - sus the Sav - ior reigns, The God of truth and love; When  
3. His king - dom can - not fail, He rules o'er earth and heav'n; The  
4. Re - joice in glo - rious hope! Our Lord the Judge shall come, And

joice, give thanks, and sing, And tri - umph ev - er - more: Lift up your  
He had purged our stains He took His seat a - bove: Lift up your  
keys of death and hell Are to our Je - sus giv'n: Lift up your  
take his serv - ants up To their e - ter - nal home. Lift up your

heart, lift up your voice! Re - joice, a - gain I say, re - joice!  
heart, lift up your voice! Re - joice, a - gain I say, re - joice!  
heart, lift up your voice! Re - joice, a - gain I say, re - joice!  
heart, lift up your voice! Re - joice, a - gain I say, re - joice! A - men.

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Lord God, we thank you for the people gathered around us today. We thank you for the things of earth that give us the means of life. We thank you life that you have given us not only in years but the life we receive in Christ.

We pray for all of God's people. For people who are blind and cannot see, and for those who can see but are blind to people around them. Lord, help us to reach out to one another.

We pray for people who move slowly because of accident, illness, or age, and for those who move too fast to be aware of the world in which they live. Lord, help us to work together.

We pray for people who are deaf and cannot hear, and for those who can hear but ignore the cries of others. Lord we ask that you help us to respond to each other.

We pray for people who learn slowly, for people who learn in different ways, and for those who learn quickly but often chose ignorance.  
Help us to grow in your wisdom.

We pray for people who live with chronic illness and pain, for which there is no known cure or relief, and for people who live in fear of developing chronic illness we seek your help and healing.

We pray for people who think they are worthless and beyond your love, and for people who think they don't need your love, help us to accept your love.

We pray for the people in your creation, that we may learn to respect each other and learn to live together in your peace.

We pray this in Jesus' name who taught us to pray:

***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 debts,  
as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory forever. Amen.***

**WE GO FORTH TO REVEAL JESUS CHRIST IN THE WORLD**

**God of Grace and God of Glory 446***Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time . . . ? Esther 4:14*

1. God of grace and God of glo - ry, On Thy peo - ple  
2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us Scorn Thy Christ, as-  
3. Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; Gird our lives, that

pour Thy pow'r; Crown Thine an-cient church's sto - ry, Bring her bud to  
sail His ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us, Free our hearts to  
they may be Ar-mored with all Christ-like grac - es In the fight to

glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, Grant us cour - age  
faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, Grant us cour - age  
set men free. Grant us wis - dom, Grant us cour - age

For the fac - ing of this hour, For the fac - ing of this hour.  
For the liv - ing of these days, For the liv - ing of these days.  
That we fail not man nor Thee! That we fail not man nor Thee! A-men.

**BENEDICTION**

Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong, Let all that you do be done in love and as go,

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, and the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace, on this day, now and forever.

**Amen!**

**POSTLUDE**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ✚ **St. Andrew's generously donated a total of \$500** for the Crop Walk which was held last Sunday. THANK YOU to all who donated. Over \$29,000 was raised in Chelsea & Dexter, 25% of the total raised will be given to Faith in Action. Thanks again.
- ✚ **Rummage Sale Update:** It has been decided to postpone the fall rummage sale until after January 1<sup>st</sup>. St. Andrew's members may bring donations to the church in the meantime and store them in the back rooms.
- ✚ **Phone calls and Cards of Support** while Betty Davenport is recovering from a broken arm can be send to her at the following address: *Betty Davenport  
c/o Pam Pollard  
43636 Hanover Ct.  
Canton MI 48187  
Ph#734-207-3886*

- ✚ **Special Offering:** For the month of October, special offerings can be made to Neighbors in Need, a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ.



**all children have the right to simply be children...**

**UNLEASHING POTENTIAL** (formerly Neighborhood Houses)  
**OF ST. LOUIS, MO**

***"Unleash[ing] the magnificent potential in children, families and neighborhoods that leads to a just community for all."***

**D**enise Carter, early childhood education director, was well aware of a rather large need within the population served by Neighborhood Houses. Many of the families are low wage earners, 75% of them earn less than \$20,000 annually. Truthfully, some simply struggle to provide many of basic needs for their children.

To that end, she designed a program to meet the health and development needs of infants and toddlers. Thus, the "Baby Essentials" program was birthed. The main goal was to provide diapers and formula for all of the children enrolled at the early childhood education center for families who could not afford a consistent supply.



credit: UP - early childhood webpage

Denise met with interim director of development, Christine Krueger, and shared her desire and need for funding. Christine went in search of those sources. She applied wherever she felt the need of the program matched the granters requirements. Fortunately, she filled out an application for a NIN direct service grant and was awarded \$3,000 in 2019.

In 2020, it was reported back to us that 100% of babies ages six weeks to 12 months received milk they needed while attending the Center. 50% of those babies also received one canister of formula per month for home consumption. Lastly, 100% of babies/toddlers ages six weeks to three years had diapers needed for Center and home use.

According to Christine, "thanks to the Neighbors in Need grant, our babies are dry and their tummies are full, and parents, who are already stressed financially, socially, and emotionally, have two less potential health issues with which to contend!"

Because of your generosity, direct service programs like that of Neighborhood Houses are grant funded, communities are strengthened, and neighbors experience love without judgment.

***all children have the right to simply be children...***



## St. Andrew's United Church of Christ Prayer List

*Someone has said that when we work, we work; but when we pray, God works! God's strength is available to praying people who pray and believe God can make a difference. In your prayers this week, we ask that you especially remember the following people and circumstances and believe that God is at work in each situation.*

*"Devote yourselves to PRAYER, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving."*

*Colossians 4:2*

*"Lord, let your loving kindness be upon us, as we put our trust in you."*

*Psalms 33:22*

### Friends and Family of St. Andrew's

Irv & Babe Hollis and Family- *Parents of Coleen Tomshany*

Kyle Yaeger- *Sister of Coleen Tomshany*

Carl Lesser

Mary Rettig

Bob Rose

Janet Stanfield- *Daughter of Bob Mast*

Jerry Stoll

Jacob Thompson- *Grandson of Carol Jones*

Molly Thompson- *Granddaughter of Jerry & Sharon Stoll*

Betty Davenport

The family of Walter Mayer

### Prayers for the World Around Us

*Let us pray for patience and perseverance as we continue to live with Covid-19; as we remember those who have lost loved ones, employment and their businesses. We ask that all essential people be given strength and wisdom as they continue to seek solutions to bring health and healing to our world. Help us to remain vigilant and guide our actions in the days to come.*

### Prayer for the Healing of our Nation

*Lord, we seek peace as unrest ripples through the streets of our land. Help us listen to the hurt and pain of those who have been dehumanized and brutalized because of the color of their skin and to begin to understand the reasons for protest. Just as unrest is breaking out, we pray too, that understanding can break out just as well.*

### Members Serving in the Military

Brandon Campbell      Jacob Hargrove

Scott Mosher      Joshua Ware

Noah Campbell      Sterling Hargrove

Clinton Olberg      Nick Gagalis

Richard McCleery      Joel Slavik

### People Beyond the St. Andrew's Congregation

Lauren Allison- *Audrey Marshall's Great-Granddaughter*

Janis Clark

Bill Coté- *Friend of Elaine Owsley*

Judy Cote- *Sister of Gale Cobb*

Lillian Donald

Rylee Donaldson- *Audrey Marshall's Great-Granddaughter*

Glenn Ehrstine- *Son of Joan Ettinger*

Linda Ehrstine- *Daughter of Joan Ettinger*

Chuck Feldkamp- *Audrey Marshall's Nephew*

Greg Gardner- *Husband of Sue Gardner, Quilter in Piecemakers*

Chuck Gooding- *Brother-in-law of Cathy Gagalis*

Gene Harvey- *Brother-in-law of Sharon Stoll*

Dale Hoffman- *Brother of Ann Egeler*

Anna Jones- *Mother of Denise Marshal*

Ollie Knapp & Melissa Taylor- *Friends of Shirley Cobb*

Troy King- *Audrey Marshall's Grandson-in-law*

Kristen Kowalski- *Bob Brueninger's Daughter*

Gary Kuehnle- *Friend of Elaine Owsley*

Lori Pliner- *Coleen Tomshany's niece*

## SERMON- Mustard Seed Faith

Many people today are fascinated by the “cult of bigness.” We are tempted to believe that what is the largest must be the most significant- that size is value, and that big numbers mean success. There is an itch in every city to have the tallest building; often a claim to fame is to have the most of this, the largest collection of that.... we shop at large Box Stores and strive to live in “McMansions.” Biggest seems to best, so it is difficult for us to hear this parable where Jesus suggests otherwise. He tells a story about a mustard seed.

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”*

Among the Israelites the lowly mustard seed was a symbol of smallness.

“Tiny as a mustard seed” was an expression for something so small that it was almost invisible. The plant the seed produced when it was fully grown was quite large. A bird could devour mustard seeds by the hundreds but there was room in a mustard seed bush for hundreds of birds.

In some ways this story is exaggerated. Technically, the mustard seed is not the smallest of seeds, nor is the full grown mustard shrub a bona fide tree. However, the image in this parable is clear: small insignificant beginnings can offer a result that exceeds all expectations. God’s kingdom, Jesus teaches, grows like that! Little becomes much when God is in it!

There were times when Jesus’ closest followers had questions about the success of His mission. John the Baptist, who had proclaimed Jesus as the mighty one by the waters of the Jordan, raised the question from his prison cell, “Are you the one who is to come or do we look for another?” Jesus had said, at the outset of his ministry, that “the kingdom as arrived.’ They believed him, and left everything to follow, but where was the kingdom? Maybe they were mistaken about Jesus, so in these moments of disappointment and fading hopes, Jesus reminds them about mustard seed.

There was no doubt about the small beginnings part. God’s visit to planet earth was hardly a grand entrance. Who noticed the night Jesus was born except a few shepherds. To everybody, the big thing that was happening was the Roman census in Bethlehem. People of means did not have the slightest interest in a peasant girl giving birth to her first born. When

the man Jesus left Nazareth 30 years later he was still unknown. A carpenter from a small Galilean village with no schooling or political clout, no money, never owned land, wrote a book, and could claim no one important among his friends. He was spiked to a cross between two criminals. Where was his kingdom? Did this movement have a future? If it did, it was about to be buried, that was pretty clear. What could come of it?

The world in another way has begun to recognize the amazing complexity and power hidden in small things. Listen to these words from famous preacher in the 1920...: "Science has recently shown us the infinitude of the little. A drop of water is Venice with tides of traffic flowing through the streets. A drop of blood is a battleground with marshalled hosts of red and white corpuscles. An atom is not the smallest particle, but a universe with worlds weaving amazing patterns in its fields of space." If he were writing today, what would he say about the power of that can be released from one of those tiny atoms?

Today there is nanotechnology that delves even deeper into small particles and spaces in the universe measuring units in billionths. One billionth of a meter, from a human hair, dust mite, to a red blood cell, down to a single atom... and in nanotechnology atomic microscopes are used to see and move individual atoms. The surface of the power of this technology is just being scratched.

So who would have dreamed that, when Jesus was crucified on the cross, dead and buried, that a world changing movement would grow out of what happened there? Who would have thought that, 21 centuries later, hundreds of millions in the world would worship Jesus, trust his promises, obey his commands, and be ready to suffer and sacrifice for his sake? Who would have imagined He would have outlasted the Caesars and be in every country in the world? And so that unknown writer hit the mark when he or she said, that this one solitary life affected the world more than all the armies that ever marched and all the parliaments that ever sat.

That goes even deeper when one thinks all the ministries to human need – education, social reform, struggles for justice, hospitals and healing, art, and beauty, comfort extended to the broken hearted, the despairing who find hope- all through Jesus. Jesus was the mustard seed who became a tower of strength and a place of shelter for all of us little birds.

What does this parable say to us this morning? It gives encouragement about the ministry here. The growth of the seed is not complete. For those who give of themselves and work and pray for Christ cause not of that is in vain.

In a world of big, where much of life seems to have lost the idea of small – businesses, institutions, and leans toward the mega stores and churches, Mustard seed faith in the living mustard seed of Jesus tells us to trust Jesus, and stand tall where little people and institutions are not insignificant and that little can become much when God is in it.

Let us pray.

Lord God, where our doubts are strong and faith is weak, give us this day mustard seed faith that will bring encouragement to know that your kingdom cannot fail, that you continue to rule over heaven and earth, and that the keys to death and hell to Jesus are given.

Amen.