

Carol's Reflection for July 12, 2020 *on sowing seeds for an unknown future:*

"This COVID thing is changing everything" was the start of a grocery store rant as someone was none too happy about waiting.

There is a lot of waiting, that's for sure. We are waiting for our turns time and time again.

Our wait is over for one thing though. This week our family got to see the musical 'Hamilton'. We love theatre and were intrigued to see this show. The Broadway production was filmed in 2016, and with 'this COVID thing' their plans to release it in big screen theatres were changed to a release to small screen home video (thanks to DisneyPlus).

Hamilton is the story of Alexander Hamilton – an American politician and one of the Founders of the Constitution that formed the US. It is song and dance in modern style – jazz, hip hop, R and B and 'Broadway'. We watched the story unfold with great interest.

There were a few 'tips of the hat' to the lyrics of other great musical theatre productions – 'You've got to be carefully taught' and 'a modern major general' for example.

And there was the reference to the vine and fig tree in the words of the prophet Micah:

They shall sit every one under their vine and under their fig tree,
And no one shall make them afraid,
For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.
For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god,
But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.

It is a vision of a world where everyone has something, and that something is enough. It is a vision of sharing and caring, it is a vision of hope and promise. It is a vision that is worth working for and worth waiting for.

At one point, Hamilton sings about his legacy, about trying to build the foundation for a new country, describing it as "planting seeds in a garden you never get to see." That is the work of all generations. We plant seeds for a future. What we do now impacts the generations that follow us.

Do you know the poem Place by W. S. Merwyn?

PLACE
On the last day of the world
I would want to plant a tree

what for
not for the fruit

the tree that bears the fruit
is not the one that was planted

I want the tree that stands
in the earth for the first time

with the sun already
going down

and the water
touching its roots

in the earth full of the dead
and the clouds passing

one by one
over its leaves

Planting, a gift of hope for an uncertain future.

That's echoed in the poetry of Walter Farquharson in Young Apple Trees:

Young apple trees of love I'd plant,
though this should be God's day.
For apple trees set firm with hope,
the stance of faith display.

In times of change and times of doubt,
and times of crippling fear,
if we can live within God's love,
we find our way made clear.

Today's the day in which I live,
this breath is all that's sure.
But acts of love and tender words:
Christ says that these endure.

For life we live in service free
and strength and love we spend,
these supersede the present time
and grace us to the end.

How timely that our scripture lesson is the parable of the sower as told in the Gospel of Matthew:

A sower went out to sow – seeds fell on the path; on the rocky ground; among the thorns, and onto the good soil. The good soil brings not only growth but fruit. Sowing seeds, farming, and gardening are complex things. They require our intentional actions. They require us to care about the seeds we sow and the land that receives them.

And sowing seeds is a metaphor for other things too. We sow our ideas, our hopes and our love.

Right now our online church is sowing seeds: we are recording messages without seeing anyone. What happens to our words?

Church at home is about sowing and scattering seeds of faith, hoping and praying that these words we offer will connect with your faith. It is about scattering seeds of love and community, hoping and praying that the care we offer will encourage your faith, help it grow, grow into good action.

The legacy of ‘this COVID thing’ is a mystery. We do not know what the future holds, we are just sowing seeds each day hoping and praying.

May the legacy of this time be a church that is alive in our homes, in our lives, and will be in our worship when we gather again. And, while we are waiting to gather – we are still a congregation, we are still the church, we are still “All are Welcome”!