

SCATTERING SEEDS FOR THE HARVEST



I remember early July as tragedy. The asparagus had just finished being harvested from the garden because it needed to go to seed for the year. Unfortunately, those tender, delicious shoots were replaced with canned beans. It was what we could afford, but it felt to me like

a kick in the gut. I longed for the delectable taste of fresh vegetables, but what we were served instead tasted like gruel and looked like soggy, faded, green mush. No matter how much margarine I slathered over them, no matter how much salt I sprinkled, they never tasted like real food.



Then, after a few weeks, the sun shone once more on my taste buds. Fresh beans from the garden – both green beans and wax beans – abounding with vibrant flavour, ignited my appetite. My groans of resignation were replaced with peals of ravenous delight. I didn't want to use a drop of margarine or a grain of salt so as not to spoil the taste. I just wanted to bask in the return of something good and nourishing. It made meals a joy once more.



The Chalmers Garden Ministry provides the same kind of respite from the bland sameness of canned produce. It adds depth and flavour to the nutritional benefits of the diets of those visiting the local Food Bank. Because of the efforts of a diverse and dedicated group of people from within our community, the Food Bank is provided with fresh produce to give people the same experience of delight that I remember from my childhood.



Why does this make a difference? First, it's locally grown through the volunteer labour of people in our community. Second, it is shared freely and only to the Food Bank for those who our society has marginalised – particularly during this pandemic. Third, the bounty of the earth is being scattered to nourish people who need it most.

Consider this biblical passage: "What do you make of this? A farmer planted seed. As he scattered the seed, some of it fell on the road, and the birds ate it. Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun

came up it withered just as quickly. Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled by the weeds. Some fell on good earth and produced a harvest beyond his wildest dreams. Are you listening to this?" (*Matthew 13:3-9*)

Later in the chapter Jesus explains his parable. However, I would like to offer a different interpretation. All seed is offered to us through the wonderful bounty of God's good Creation. Those seeds are scattered everywhere. If we intentionally take up the offered seeds, if we plant them in good soil, water them, weed them and harvest them, they provide delight to each of us. Even more importantly, if we share that



harvest freely with the wider community, we live more fully into the call of Jesus to love our neighbours as ourselves. We end up scattering the fruits of love for our neighbours, thus creating closer bonds of connection between neighbours. It costs us – in time, in labour, in equipment, in water and in land – but the relationships we nurture through such generous sharing are more than worth it.

This Sunday is our Mission Sunday service. Guest speaker **Tom Franklin** will share with us the concept of the garden and the good it contributes to our community. Tom is a high school teacher as well as a farmer who lives on the North Line and has been a leader in this project. He will bring us up to date on the garden's progress and the anticipated direction for the future. The project is still evolving, having just completed it's second summer. Already, because of Mission Sunday, a gently used and well-maintained rototiller has been donated to help till the soil. To the delight of the volunteers, it has already made a difference.

Future needs include:

- Seeds \$150
- Organic pest control \$75
- Irrigation Supplies \$200
- Long term: Storage Shed



Our goal is to raise **\$2,000.00** for this worthy initiative.

To make donations, please follow the online instructions on our website and note it is for "Chalmers Community Garden."