

Mustard Seed Eucharist

In the week that we launched Dancing Scarecrow we received the final notification from the council that they intended to compulsorily purchase the church building. We all felt a mixture of emotions. Relief: that we no longer had to wrestle with a crumbling building that was well beyond the end of its life; anger: that the council had the power to impose its will upon us; fear: that the future is not settled.

We decided to focus our Sunday worship on the Parable of Mustard Seed. Perhaps the most hopeful of the parables. The kingdom of heaven - Shalom - is not like a mustard tree.

Let's not bother with eucharist today.

What?

Let's not bother with eucharist today.
In fact, let's not bother with worship at all.

What on earth do you mean?

Well, Deborah, Rachel, Andy and Joel aren't here. And it's cold. And I'm hungry. And I've got decorating to do. Let's not bother with eucharist today.

But Jesus said, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Where?

Here?

Where? I can't see him.

You're not looking in the right place. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Look at Joan. Jesus is there. Look at David. Jesus is there. Look at Imy. Jesus is there.

OK, I get it. Look at Beth. Jesus is there. Look at Clare. Jesus is there.

Yes, and look at Tim. Jesus is there.

**We are the Body of Christ
Present in Openshaw today**

But I still don't see why eucharist is so important. Why can't we just say a quick prayer and go home?

**We are the Body of Christ
Present in Openshaw today**

What?

On the first night of Passover, Jesus sat down at table with his friends. He didn't go to the Temple. He didn't go to Synagogue. He didn't wait for a 'proper church' to be built. He did as Jewish families have always done. He sat down to eat with those around him.

**We are the Body of Christ
Present in Openshaw today**

He didn't wait for the roast lamb of the festival. He didn't share the special food. He took a piece of ordinary unleavened bread. Food of the poor. Food of the nobodies.

And he broke it.

He broke it. And he shared it. He gave it to his ordinary friends.

[Break bread]

Take, eat. This is my body. Do this in memory of me.

[Raise cup]

Drink this, all of you. This is my promise to you, sealed in my blood.

But wouldn't it have been better to go to church?

No! You still don't get it do you? Jesus didn't say, "the kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard tree, strong and fully formed with birds resting in its branches."

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

It is the seed which is the kingdom of heaven.

So, we can take and eat, remembering Jesus?

That's what I've been trying to say!

And we can drink the wine - and even our little church can claim God's promise?

Even better - our little church *is* God's promise?

How does that work then?

O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.

What?

Try for yourself and find out.

[Share bread and wine]

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

Give us faith to believe

Give us hope to dare

And give us strength to live.

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