



The Mustard Seed

Volume 16
Issue 6

September 26, 2010

Celebrating Harvest and Thanksgiving

Agriculture in Biblical Times

Lev. 25:1-7; Deut. 15:1-10: YEAR OF REST - Lest the productiveness of the soil be exhausted, it was decided that the whole land should rest every seventh year, when all agricultural labor would entirely cease

Deut. 22:9: It was forbidden to sow a field with diverse seeds

Deut. 23:24-25; Matt. 12:1: A passer-by was at liberty to eat any quantity of corn or grapes, but he was not permitted to carry away any

Lev. 19:9,10: The poor were permitted to claim the corners of the fields and the gleanings. A forgotten sheaf in the field was to be left also for the poor.

Plants of the Bible



Genesis 3:7: Figs The small quick growing fig tree produced fruit which was a significant part of the Israelites diet. Figs were eaten fresh or dried. The leaves are large and leathery. A fig tree has many branches and is also a good provider of shade

Exodus 38: and 18: Flax (linen) Linen comes from flax and is one of the oldest textiles in the world. Many things were made from flax. The curtains in the Old Testament Tabernacle and the Temple was made of linen and Jesus' body was shrouded in linen prior to burial (John 19:40).



Numbers 11:5: Onions, leaks, and garlic are all from the same family of plants. They were used by the Egyptians to make food savory. When the Israelites wandered in the Sinai desert they bemoaned the loss of these food enhancers.



Deuteronomy 8:7-8: Moses chose cherished plant products to describe the abundance that existed in the promised land of Canaan. He described it as a "land of wheat and barley (late and early grain crops), vines, figs, pomegranates and olives."

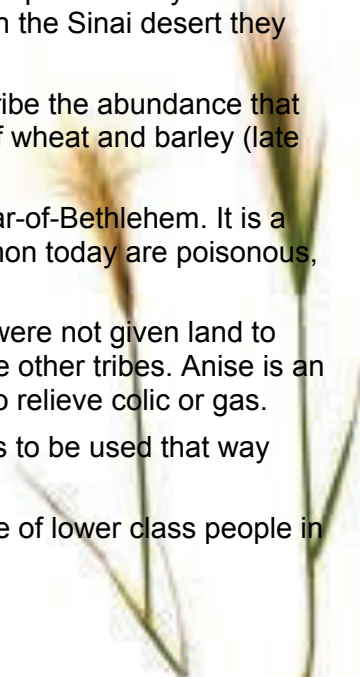


2 Kings 6:25: Narcissus - another common name for this plant is Star-of-Bethlehem. It is a wild perennial very common to Samaria. While the varieties most common today are poisonous, the one mentioned here was used as food during a famine.

Matthew 23:23: Anise seeds were a required tithe to the Levites, who were not given land to raise crops or animals. Levites were to be supported with tithes from the other tribes. Anise is an aromatic annual used in cooking and pickling. Medicinally it was used to relieve colic or gas.

Matthew 23:23: Mint (Spear-mint) was used to season food and tea and continues to be used that way today. It was so much a part of life that it was tithed for the scribes and Pharisees.

John 6:8-13: (Feeding the Thousands) Coarse Barley bread was a common staple of lower class people in Palestine. These loaves were a humble gift from a poor lad.





Charter for Compassion

On February 28, 2008 Karen Armstrong won the TED Prize and made a wish: for help creating, launching and propagating a Charter for Compassion. Since that day, thousands of people have contributed to the process so that on November 12, 2009 the Charter was unveiled to the world.

Background

The Charter of Compassion is a cooperative effort to restore not only compassionate thinking but, more importantly, compassionate action to the center of religious, moral and political life.

Compassion is the principled determination to put ourselves in the shoes of the other, and lies at the heart of all religious and ethical systems. One of the most urgent tasks of our generation is to build a global community where men and women of all races, nations and ideologies can live together in peace. In our globalized world, everybody has become our neighbor, and the Golden Rule has become an urgent necessity.

The Charter, crafted by people all over the world and drafted by a multi-faith, multi-national council of thinkers and leaders, seeks to change the conversation so that compassion becomes a key word in public and private discourse, making it clear that any ideology that breeds hatred or contempt ~ be it religious or secular ~ has failed the test of our time. It is not simply a statement of principle; it is above all a summons to creative, practical and sustained action to meet the political, moral, religious, social and cultural problems of our time.

The Charter

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women ~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

For detailed information on the Charter for Compassion, to read stories of compassion or to share your story go to: <http://charterforcompassion.org>

Christine's Corner

“We are Autumn people. We are always called to be in a process of growing and changing. May our minds and hearts be open to this inner season which is a part of us. May we trust you, Autumn God, who calls us to grow. May we find hope as we enter willingly into the...[process] that is needed for our transformation.”

(Out of the Ordinary, Joyce Rupp, p. 216, adapted)

It is late September. I note with delight Autumn's gentle touch colouring the trees in splendour and I remember that the change of the seasons is welcome for some but for others is a difficult transition. Changes of any kind, even the ones we choose, can be unsettling and involve a period of transition – a bridge between the way things were and the way they are now. This is true of happy life changes such as marriage or the birth of a child, or of sad changes which involve the death of a loved one or the departure of a trusted friend or colleague.

For our Community of Faith this Autumn is a time of transition as we adjust to an unexpected change in our ministry personnel. We have, and will continue to experience, many feelings and challenges as we adapt and grow together. Individually we may also be facing changes in our personal health, work, family, living conditions or a myriad of other events which require time and energy to accommodate. As a community of faith, we find ourselves in a time of discernment as we listen carefully for God's call that often happens in surprising and unexpected ways. My hope is that we will all listen very carefully for the ways in which God is calling us and with our actions, grow together as people of faith.

The positive side of change is that we are always called upon to respond to life. When people are faced with life's challenges they find within themselves gifts and strengths they didn't realize they had or that hadn't been called upon for a while. One of the great strengths of a community of faith is that we can be assured that when we share in our ministry together we will be blessed and will, in turn, be a blessing to others in our wider community.

As Christians we know that we are not alone on this journey of faith. We travel with a *great cloud of witnesses* (Hebrews 12:1), past and present, who accompany us through all the transitions in our lives. Knowing that we are not alone makes all the difference. We support each other as we share our experiences of faith and listen to the stories of others. In the ebb and flow of the seasons of our lives and the seasons of the church year we are strengthened by the presence of others on the journey. Christ lives and breathes and works through us as we continue his ministry of love and compassionate service.

May you experience a sense of well-being and an enthusiasm of the Spirit which brings a sense of renewed faith and hope in you. May the blessing of this season of transition enhance your experience of God's guidance and of Christ's presence within our midst.

I'll close with words of encouragement, from an anonymous lay person,

“As we continue to expand our understanding of ministry, the way opens for us to do whatever we can with our own unique gifts. I give thanks to God that I am able to help a neighbour, my community and my world one task at a time. I don't have to be everything to everyone. I just need to be ready to offer what gifts I have.”

(from the booklet, My View of Lay Ministry, compiled by Barbara Langton)

Silence is foolish if we are wise, but wise if we are foolish. --Charles Caleb Colton

HMMM....., SHOULD I?

How many times have you read an announcement in the bulletin or learned of something interesting going on at the Church and for a fleeting moment, thought “Hmmm, should I?” If you are like me, in an instant that thought is met with: “Oh, I’d be afraid to try!”; “I don’t know enough – I might embarrass myself!” or “If I don’t look up and catch their eye, I’m sure they will ask someone else –let me shrink down a bit and look smaller!”

With David’s absence for an unknown length of time, there will be lots of opportunities to do new things, try something that always intrigued you! I have often been intrigued but the excuses flood in and the moment of interest passes. But this time I said yes – and the result is I am doing the service this Sunday. This is a big step for me because until a year ago, I had never written a prayer and said it in public. I can do things like planning and financial analysis; I am comfortable leading groups around an issue I know something about – but knowledge about spiritual things and understanding the Bible are probably rated even lower than my ability to sing!

So what happened when I stepped off the precipice and volunteered?

I was inundated with offers of help! Christine gave me a planning guide with comments on the suggested readings, complementary songs and children’s stories AND “*Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary: Feasting on the Word*”. The latter is an edited volume of four different articles on each of the four suggested readings from Scriptures for each week. Lois gave me a template for the Order of Service – and the Order of Service from when the same readings were used back in 2004! Roy offered guidance and support, Elaine and Dorothy had already committed to doing the Scripture readings and the Prayers of the People. Wow, did this fall together quickly. And I enjoyed doing all this reading, this exploring; it gave me a much deeper understanding of this small segment of the Bible and opened the possibility of learning so much more. I don’t know how I will do on Sunday but what a discovery, what a joy I am getting from taking that one step of speaking up.

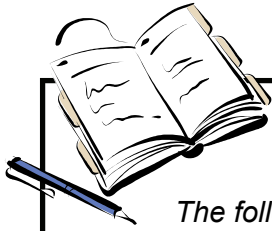
You could almost hear the air go out of the room when David made his announcement three weeks ago! Some of that air has returned as we recover from the shock but if we all dare to sing a little louder so that the air between us is filled with sound, if we take the little steps and dare to do what intrigues us, we will grow wonderfully as individuals and as a congregation. Please take your own steps, this is our opportunity to get more from Sunday Service and our lives within the NUC family.

Blessings and courage to all. Norm Carruthers



Over the years many dates were used for Thanksgiving, the most popular was the 3rd Monday in October. After World War I, both Armistice Day and Thanksgiving were celebrated on the Monday of the week in which November 11th occurred. Ten years later, in 1931, the two days became separate holidays and Armistice Day was renamed Remembrance Day.

*Finally, on January 31st, 1957, Parliament proclaimed...
"A Day of General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed ... to be observed on the 2nd Monday in October.*



Information Regarding the Remembrance Books
(These books are also referred to as the "Memorial".)

The following guidelines are now used for making entries in the Remembrance Books:

1. Names of deceased members or adherents of any United Church of Canada will be entered in the book when Nelson United Church receives a donation on their behalf to the Memorial Fund.
2. As well, names will be entered if the donation is designated to a specific cause such as window replacement, piano purchase, Women's Scholarship, et cetera.
3. If the donation is made to cover a single item such as a new Bible, a power point system, et cetera, the name will be entered with a description of the item.
4. Donations to the memorial fund without naming anyone to be entered will simply go in to the Memorial Fund.
5. The "Offering Counters" will pass the information regarding donations of the above kind to the keeper of the Remembrance Book.

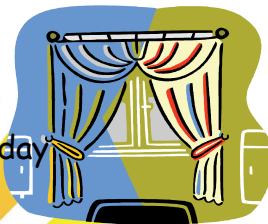
Speak to Bill Costain for clarification or if you wish to make a donation on behalf of someone who does not fit the above guidelines. The Memorial Fund Committee does not wish to exclude anyone worthy of recognition.

Sun on My Windows

There comes a certain hour each day
(depending on the time of year)
when the sun comes round full blast
to shine - blatantly
on my windows.

Yellow beams paint golden glows
on smudges, smears, and old rain streaks
(as if drying still wet tears)
proclaiming sacred truth:
Light always comes -
to shine on us.

By Carol Prochaska



In morning service at our church, the pastor asked the congregation if anyone had something to thank God for. An elderly gentleman rose to his feet and said, "I want to thank God for my new hearing aid. Now I can hear you." He paused before adding with a smile, "When I want to."



There are only as many days in the year as you make use of.



Soup for our Souls

On Sunday, October 3rd, following the church service, Caritas will serve a soup and bun lunch. (by donation)
Please plan to join us.

**“In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.”
Kahlil Gibran**



ALZHEIMER DONATIONS

The UCW has decided not to have a Saturday Alzheimer’s Coffee Party this year. We will instead be putting out a collection box for the Alzheimer Association at coffee time on October 10 and October 17. We hope you will consider making a donation at that time. Any donation \$20 or over can be recorded for a tax receipt.



SAVE YOUR PRODUCE

We will be decorating for Thanksgiving at 10 am on Saturday, October 9. If you have produce or flowers to donate or simply lend, please bring them to the church at that time, or take them to Lynne or Leah on Friday. All decorating help is gratefully encouraged!



Annual General Meeting – Thursday, October 28th, 2010

All welcome! Become a member (Annual membership fee is only \$1), find out about volunteer opportunities, or simply learn more about the important work we do to alleviate hunger in our community. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Lauren at 250.354.1633. We look forward to seeing you there!

Location: Nelson United Church (Fairview Room)

Registration begins at 6:45pm, and the meeting commences at 7pm

Amazing! You hang something in your closet for a while and it shrinks 2 sizes!

Camp Koolaree Update

By Robin Murray



The 79th summer season at Camp Koolaree was another success! The camps were held throughout the month of July and the first week of August, and were well attended. For many campers, their time at Koolaree was made possible by the financial support of United Way, the UCW, individual donors to the campership fund, and by the countless hours volunteers gave to make the camps fun and keep fees affordable. We were also the lucky recipients of new canoes and much needed life jackets thanks to the Osprey Foundation and many individual donors. The final work party to “put the camp to bed” for the winter will be held Saturday, October 2nd.

Our other major news for the summer is that the Board of Directors has now officially incorporated as the “Camp Koolaree Society”. This is a fairly simple legal change that will facilitate community giving and support by opening up new types of grant eligibility. Camp Koolaree remains under the ownership of the United Church B.C. Conference and is still a charitable organization.

Looking ahead to our 80th season, the Board of Directors is rolling up their sleeves! The cookhouse roof is now more patch than structure and has reached the end of its useable life. Plans are underway for a complete building replacement to ensure Camp Koolaree remains a safe and fun place for generations to come. This means a big effort ahead! There are many volunteers needed for a project of this scope – everything from grantwriters and construction assistants to envelope lickens. If you find yourself called to help out in any way, please contact Robin Murray at 250-354-1412, or Keith Simmonds at 250-368-5411.

Camp holds a special place in so many of our hearts. In this day and age where children spend more and more time in front of screens and less and less out in God’s Creation, our Outdoor Ministry at Koolaree is as important than ever, perhaps even more so. Please keep Camp Koolaree in your prayers that our youth of today and tomorrow can share this wonderful opportunity to grow, to learn and to “Be still and know that I am God”.

Plea from 1st United Church in Vancouver:



First United has maintained a secure storage area for the homeless. Funds are running out and they are asking Pepsi for a \$25,000 donation. The donation will be determined by on-line votes. You can vote once a day up to October 31st.

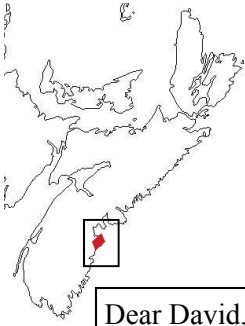
Please Help

go to: <http://www.refresheverything.ca/login> and register (quick and easy)

- Select Food & Shelter button

- Select the \$25,000 button

*- Find the First United Project and click on the "vote for this idea" button
bookmark the link for quick access!!*



*Nelson United Church has partnered with Riverport Pastoral charge in Nova Scotia.
 Riverport Pastoral charge is made up of three churches;
 St. John's United at Middle LaHave
 Trinity United at Rose Bay
 Wesley United at Feltzen South*

Dear David,

How thoughtful it was of you and the Nelson Pastoral Charge to send us i) the information gathered by the Sunday School and ii) the chalice. We, the Riverport Pastoral Charge, accept them with gratitude and thanksgiving.

The information gathered by the Sunday School has found its way into the hands of our Sunday School Superintendent, Sally Gerhardt. Our Sunday Scholl resumed on September 12. I feel confident that it will be put to meaningful use, soon.

The chalice sits on my mantle piece. It would be an adornment to any Communion Table. We will use it on Worldwide Communion Sunday for the first time.

Again, thank you.

Ron
 for Riverport Pastoral Charge

Greetings from St. John's UCW.

"Small but Mighty" is probably the best way to describe St. John's UCW. There are 15 hardworking, loyal members who are always up for a challenge. 2009 proved to be a year filled with challenges not just in our own area but in far off lands as well.

The biggest change for our group was the loss of May. At 99 years young she was an inspiration to us all. We will miss her smile, here wisdom and the many talents she shared with us. We feel honored to have known her and thankful that she was able to be with us for so long.

We were very pleased to obtain the hymn book "More Voices" for St. John's. We wish to thank Rev. Frampton for the bookplates he designed especially for these books. We once again did the road side cleanup and thank everyone who helped with this worth while project.

Although we do not do a lot of fundraising, we do try to offer support where we see a need. One such need was the very courageous Jennifer. We held a special Silent Auction with all proceeds going to her. We also sent money to the students of Belize in the hope that they too will realize that we care about them. Our Angel tree was a success and a local family was given a real boost for Christmas. The local food bank also gets a share of this money. Our "Christmas Elves" once again made their special deliveries to nine shut-ins although the visits seem to be the most appreciated.

Our visits though out the year are also appreciated. Members reported 111 hospital calls and 108 visits to shut-ins. Our monthly visiting committees have done a wonderful job of keeping in touch with those who cannot get out to church or a meeting.

At our June meeting we were very pleased to have out president present two Life Memberships.

We continue to decorate the Church for special occasions and provide refreshments for special services. Many of our members have participated in Church services through scripture readings, minute for mission, or taking part in special programs. We also helped with the dinner theatre held at Trinity in November. It is a wonderful way to bring the three congregations together and everyone seemed to have as much fun in the kitchen as those on the stage!

Answers to Brain Teasers on Kid's Page
 A. ONE WORD
 B. A Sponge
 C. A nickel. The dog cost \$1.05
 D. N for Nine
 E. The year reads the same upside down.

Beatitudes for the elderly:

*Blessed are they who understand,
my faltering step and palsied hand.
Blessed are they who know my ears today,
must strain to catch the things they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know,
that my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.
Blessed are they with cheery smile,
who stop to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say,
"You've told that story twice today."
Blessed are they who know the ways,
to bring back memories of yesterdays.
Blessed are they who make it known,
that I'm loved, respected and not alone.*

*Taken from the Church of Scotland Publication
'Life and Work'
- shared by Irene McIlwaine and Edna*

The Mustard Seed is the newsletter of
Nelson United Church



Submissions are
welcome and can be dropped off at the church office.

Next Mustard Seed to be published:

Nov 21, 2010

Jan 9, 2011

Deadline for submissions is

Nov 17, 2010

Jan 5, 2011

Electronic submissions to tkbaker@shaw.ca



Check out the website at: www.nelsonunitedchurch.ca

Note from the Food Cupboard



As our client totals and monthly grocery bills have risen dramatically in 2010, we are asking the community for support. We hope that businesses or communities will consider sponsoring boxes of fresh vegetables:

1 box: \$30

4 boxes (week's worth of produce for the NFC): \$120

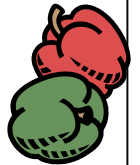
16 boxes (month's worth of produce for the NFC): \$420

Payment can be made by cheque payable to the Nelson Food Cupboard, by cash, or through paypal on our website. Please indicate if you wish to be acknowledged as a sponsor or remain anonymous

Call 250.354.1633 for more details or go to <http://www.foodcupboard.org/>

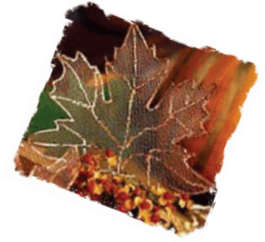
Finally, I would just like to thank the Congregation for their ongoing support of the Nelson Food Cupboard – we are so grateful for the many ways in which the Nelson United Church encourages our work, and acknowledge that it makes a real difference in the success of our ongoing efforts.

Lauren Steeg
Coordinator, Nelson Food Cupboard Society



Oma was telling her little granddaughter what her own childhood was like: "We used to skate outside on the canals. I had a swing made from a tire; it hung from a tree in our front yard. We rode our pony. We picked wild raspberries in the woods." The little girl was wide-eyed, taking this all in. At last she said, "I sure wish I'd gotten to know you sooner!"

Kid's Page



Lacy Leaves

Scatter the graceful leaves around a pumpkin or squash to create a seasonal centerpiece.

What You Need:

- Real leaves (oak and maple leaves have wonderful shapes)
- Window screen (available by the foot at hardware stores); approximately 6 square inches for each leaf you wish to make
- Newspaper
- Gold spray paint
- White typing paper
- Permanent black marker
- Old scissors (cutting metal screening may dull your favorite scissors)
- Gold, copper, or bronze paint pen (often used for fabric painting; available at fabric, discount, and crafts stores)

Instructions:

1. **Collect your favorite fall leaves.** Pick shapes that have some cleanly formed edges.

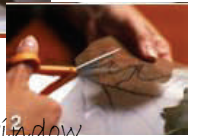
2. **Cut and paint the window screen.** Cut the screen a little larger than the leaf.

Lay the screen on some newspaper and spray the screen gold. Let it dry and paint it on the other side. Let the paint dry thoroughly.

3. **Transfer leaf shape onto screen.** Lay the leaf on the piece of white paper and put the painted window screen over the leaf. Draw around the leaf with the permanent marker. Add the veins of the leaf with marker. (See Photo 1.)

4. **Cut out the leaf shape using old scissors.** (See Photo 2.)

5. **Use the paint pen to edge the leaf and trace over the veins.** (See Photo 3.) Let the paint dry. Bend the leaf slightly to make it look real.



Give a Thanksgiving Dinner to Those Less Fortunate

Use some of the money you have been saving to help purchase a Thanksgiving dinner for those in need. Check with your local Food Cupboard

Brain Teasers:

- A. How can you use the letters in NEW DOOR to make one word?
- B. What is full of holes but still hold water?
- C. You have a dime and a dollar, you buy a dog and a collar, the dog is a dollar more than the collar, how much is the collar?
- D. What letter is next in this sequence? O, T, T, F, F, S, S, E, __
- E. What happened in 1961 and will not happen again until 6009?