



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.

Luke 8:5-8 'The Parable of the Sower'

Jesus told this parable: ⁵“Once there was a man who went out to sow grain. As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it up. ⁶Some of it fell on rocky ground, and when the plants sprouted, they dried up because the soil had no moisture. ⁷Some of the seed fell among thorn bushes, which grew up with the plants and choked them. ⁸And some seeds fell in good soil; the plants grew and bore grain, one hundred grains each.” And Jesus concluded, “Listen, then, if you have ears!”

At this time of year, we are thinking of youngsters preparing to go up from primary to senior school. Also, nursery and other children will be starting school. This year, of course, has been like no other, and our own nursery, like others, has not been able to say the traditional goodbye to its boys and girls all together to who are due to start school in September. As this goes out our nursery school is looking to appoint a new manager – what a time to start!

We have all been praising the work of teachers particularly these last few months, and I have renewed great respect for them. There has been much home schooling – I do not know how I would have managed, as school lessons are so different these days! Young people taking GCSEs and 'A' levels have had to completely reassess any plans for university and further education and the job market. Our four nephews, as with others we know, will find it very tough. Our niece is only three, bless her.

The phrase 'what one sows one reaps' comes to mind. We may not have children, but those of us in the church have the responsibility of mentoring the youngsters who come through our church doors and those with whom we have contact otherwise. Young people have great ideas, a more tolerant view of others and have much to teach us. They often can have a very clear way of the ways forward.

I think of the accounts in the gospels of when Jesus blesses little children, when the disciples scolded the people. I find this very difficult to believe but, then, it was only a century ago, probably later, when the phrase 'children must be seen and not heard' was common talk!

It is likely that the effects of the pandemic will affect life for many years. Young people will have to work even harder to achieve their goals and dreams, and we must be with them too. The Parable of the Sower reminds us that we have to prepare, tend, watch and listen whether it is in preparing young people for the future, or indeed any task.



Prayer: Lord Jesus, we pray for all young people, particularly for those starting or changing schools and those due to take exams next year. We pray also for those at or due to go to college and university who are uncertain of how their lives will be from now. Also, for all teaching staff and parents who face enormous challenges as young people face worries about their future.

Help them and us to prepare, sow and reap what is good, and which reflects you to others in the wider community. We ask this to your praise and glory. Amen.