Last week I was in New York visiting our granddaughter, Samijo, for a few days. While I was there we planted a small garden in front of her new home.

She knew just what she wanted when she saw it, as we walked through the nursery.

She was excited to learn and had lots of questions.

What kind of soil did she have, what kind of perennial would thrive where it would be exposed to snow and salt in the wintertime?

How often should she water? And how much sun does it need? Fertilizer?

Though these were established plants and we did not plant seeds the concept is the same. It is fun to watch new things grow and even more so to watch *the smallest of all the seeds* push its way through the soil.

 There is an element of surprise as little *sprouts emerge and grow even if we do not know how.”*

The more we garden, the more we learn, and understand the process but we never have all the answers.

 Why some do not survive while others pop up in the crevice of a slab of cement, a rock ledge or along the highway.

But we know what we do matters, we know that how we care for *our* garden counts for something,

but in the end, it is God who does the work to make it beautiful.

And that’s how faith works. What we do here on earth matters. As teachers, mentors, parents, grandparents and pastors, we sow seeds of God’s amazing love.

Through our actions and words... faith grows.

*“No matter how small it begins*

 *it becomes the greatest of shrubs and stretches out putting forth large branches.”*

**What** we start ...God will make even greater.

Faith and the church will flourish, not because of our grand schemes and plans, but because God will have it no other way.

When I think of the people who ***have*** come through the worshipping doors of Trinity Colebrook over the past 250 years, I see a faithful God...One who was, is and will be...

Each. Of. You. Sitting. Here. are proof of faithful fathers and mothers...friends and neighbors.

Teachers and Mentors.

Someone somewhere planted a seed of faith in you.

Someone or many someones planted the desire to appreciate God’s undeserved, unsolicited love.

**And that is what we celebrate this fall on September 11 & 12.**

We celebrate God’s faithfulness, we celebrate our living Christ who through the power of the Holy Spirit has made this little country church thrive for two and a half centuries!

And now we are the sowers of the gospel. We are the ones who scatter the Good News... through word, deed and that intangible thing called emotion...

ours and those whose lives were and are enriched somehow by our presence.

Maya Angelou *believed,*

*“People will forget what you said,*

 *people will forget what you did,*

*but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*Digitalsparkmarketing.com

For example, yesterday a family, from across the way, celebrated the graduation of their daughter, right here, outside ...in our pavilion.

The day before ...they came to set up and decorate .... I was able to speak with them a little and show them around.

Later the mom sent me a text along with a beautiful picture of a decorated pavilion.

She told me how much she loved the setting, and how beautifully the grounds are kept.

She said they felt so blessed to be able to be there outside... this beautiful country church.

So thank you to those who mow, plant, pull weeds, and all the other maintenance required to keep our church and church grounds looking so nice.

 Thank you to the countless people before us who have helped us bloom with such simple beauty.

It may be many small things done by many hands and feet, and you may not even realize *what* you have done, but you brought joy to this family. And others before them.

And though we cannot take all the credit, any more than we can take credit for the growth of a plant ...we *are* participants in the glory that surrounds us.

It may be something as simple and insignificant as a tiny mustard seed,

 yet through the power of the Holy Spirit, those we have never met or may not see again,

will remember that one small thing forever. Maybe a seed was planted.

Because when God breaks in to our world... as He does daily... whether it is extraordinary or ordinary, a tiny seed is established.

How many lives have you touched inside and outside of the church? How many hearts have been reinvigorated?

“For...if *anyone* is in Christ, there is a new creation!”

JESUS continues to cultivate and nourish hearts and minds...through our hands, feet and voices.

Some of you have inquired about members missing from our church services;

wondering about their return...but have you considered picking up the phone and asking them yourself?

 Have you invited them reminding them of the new service time?

The upcoming picnic or fall celebration.

Or whatever you think might spark an interest.

Since we do not walk in their shoes, and do not know what prevents them from joining us on Sunday mornings,

through our imperfections, even our stumbling, God will take the slightest good gesture, one small word and make it grow into something much greater.

That is all it takes to plant a seed of hope in a disgruntled, despondent or apathetic person.

When we treat one another with the same grace that God shows us,

God sees...God enhances and God produces abundantly.

Be good to those who are different from yourself...who have different needs...who may not have grown up in the same way as you.

For some of us it is natural to be here, for others it is something that needs to be caught or felt ... to be understood.

No matter how we worship, Faith will grow through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We may not even realize the one thing we said or did that made a difference.

We may never know the impact we have had on someone if they don’t tell us, but be assured God produces, God multiplies that which began as a tiny morsel of goodness...and God makes it endure.

A grocery store owner noticed, one day, a small poor boy, ragged but clean, who always focused in on a basket of fresh produce when he came in to the store.

When the owner asked the young lad how he was doing, the boy would reply “just fine thank you sir. Just admiring the fresh picked peas. They sure look good.”

When the owner asked if he would like to take some home, the little boy said he had no money.

 Then owner asked if he had something to trade for those peas.

When the little boy opened his hand and showed him his prized marble

Of which the store owner complimented him on such a prize marble but told the boy he was partial to red. And asked if he had one at home.

Then he sent him home, along with the marble *and* peas, to fetch that red marble.

Each time the little boy came in to the store the conversation would have a similar tone.

Now there were two other boys like him – with whom the owner would bargain for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever fresh produce he had.

When they came back with red marbles he decided he didn’t like red marbles and sent them back with a bag of produce searching for another color.

Years later when the store owner passed away.... these three young men showed up at the funeral... one in military uniform and the other two in nice dark suits with white shirts.

*One* by one *they approached the coffin -* stopped to place a warm hand over a cold pale hand and left wiping their eyes.

 Later when the widow made one last respect to her husband, she saw...there resting beneath her husband’s hand lay three shiny red marbles.

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are, and a difference will be made.

  A seed will have been planted.

That seed is the Grace of God which Martin Luther said “lies quietly in the soil, and does not sleep but awaits the nudging of the Holy Spirit.”

James Blay writes in d365.org “Think about ways you can speak and act out gratitude as you go about your day, **then do it.”**

Amen