

Bible reading Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

Wait and see

THIS WEEK WE EXPLORE WAITING AND TRUSTING.

This week we explore how to slow down and open our eyes to notice the small signs of the treasures of God's reign already around us. Jesus offers us images of God's reign to help us recognise its presence like an unstoppable weed that can grow from tiny beginnings of love if we wait and trust.



Find a small basic cardboard box (e.g. an empty shoebox). Decorate the box with whatever you like. When it is done, all the paint and glue dry, etc., add little treasures to the box. These can, of course, be anything that is treasure or precious to you in the normal worldly sense; but try also to add reminders – actual things or words/images on small slips of paper or card – of treasures in God's kingdom

Plant

You will need: a plant pot, compost and seed(s). Prepare a pot and plant one or more seeds. What will you need to do to care for the seedling as it grows? Make a plan – after taking advice as necessary – and nurture the plant over the coming days and weeks. As you do so, look carefully at when and how it grows. At the same time, think about where you are or could be noticing God's kingdom growing around – or even within – you.

LISTEN



Listen to track 'While I Wait', Lincoln Brewster, on *God Of The impossible*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKBj457ILUo>

Fold an A5 card in half, greetings-card style. Design a cover for the card around the theme of 'trust' – whatever comes to mind.

In the middle of the card write five simple sentences about trust – especially trusting in God's time – each beginning with one of the letters T R U S T. if you prefer, write the sentences first, and use them to inspire your cover design.

Bible notes



How can Jesus' disciples make sense of the kingdom of heaven? This week's reading offers five pictures that challenge hearers to see the details of ordinary life in a kingdom perspective.

The mustard seed (vv.31-32) is tiny and easy to miss.

Even when someone does venture to plant it, it will take time to grow into a tree, big enough to be a home for birds – yet it is still there, growing at its own pace; do not underestimate the small things! The yeast takes us into the world of baking: the amount of yeast is tiny, and it disappears into the flour, the dough takes time to rise – yet the baker can be confident that she will have bread to share. The parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl focus on the value of the kingdom of heaven and the cost of gaining it. The workman – perhaps a hired day-labourer – risks all he has to profit from his life-changing discovery. The parable of the merchant may depend on a comparison from less to greater; if a merchant, focused on profit, behaves like this, how much more should those who long for the kingdom commit to pursuing it! And the final parable suggests that the kingdom is a 'catch-all' net, where good and bad coexist – a reflection of the disciples' lived experience, then as now. It points to a future time when the kingdom will come fully and evil will be wiped out.

First impressions

- How does it feel to be waiting and trusting?
- What everyday examples might you use to describe the kingdom of heaven?
- What is your part in making it a reality?



A prayer of thanksgiving

God, we thank you for teaching us the things that matter, the things of true value. We praise you that the treasures of your kingdom are hidden beneath the mundanity, and sometimes the drama, of everyday life; and that they are often there in small ways that, if nurtured, grow in abundance. Thank you for your pearls of wisdom and your seeds of faith. Let your kingdom grow among us. **Amen.**

Pray



For this body prayer, sit comfortably, feet on the floor, hands in your lap, and with the instructions you when you can see them easily.

Feel a sense of your body.

(wiggle your bottom)

Your feet on the floor. (tap your toes gently)

Become aware of your breathing. (listen to your breath)

As you breathe in, imagine it is God breathing life into you.

Hold that breath and remember who you are – a child of God.

As you breathe out, imagine it is God's love flowing from you to everyone around you.

Remember your hands, feet and love are useful to God.

Say, 'Amen'.