

GRAPEVINE

JUNE 2026



LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER

Each year I grow a few tomato plants in my greenhouse and although at the end of the season last year, amidst the challenges I faced with chemo and radiotherapy, I had said I wouldn't bother with them again; towards the end of last month, I changed my mind and was hunting around the local garden nurseries for new plants for this summer.

I eventually managed to find some beautiful sturdy plants at Stanton Nurseries, a cherry tomato 'Gardener's Delight', full of potential to produce delicious fruit this year.

But for that potential to be realised, I have to nurture them, I have to look after them; transplant them into growbags, feed and water them regularly and check on their progress. If I don't do that they will quickly die or become straggly.

Nurturing people and our relationships with one another follow a similar pattern. Our existing relationships need nurturing to keep them refreshed and deepening, and sometimes we have the gift of new contacts: a new neighbour, people we meet socially or who come to help care for us at home, for instance. How might they be nurtured?

A little bit of time is needed.

Time for a conversation, time to make an offer of help or to receive kindness.

Nurturing is not only about building up, but it can also be about encouraging better habits, listening to different points of view rather than assuming that we have the right answer, avoiding sarcasm. We may not always be in agreement, but we can learn to understand and grow together in a way which is much healthier for us as a community, both in our faith and the wider world.

Safeguarding is also part of that positive nurturing, building a culture throughout our church and society in which we are careful in our dealings with one another, watchful for any imbalances of power at work and being robust in reporting and weeding out any concerns of injustice, abuse or inappropriateness.

Jesus used the picture of a farmer planting a tiny mustard seed to demonstrate this nurture at work: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches." God bless you as you nurture the good things in yourself and others.

Derek



FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

MONDAY MORNING CUPPA – In need of some company and fellowship? Come along every Monday morning for friendly cup of tea/coffee. 10.30am onwards. All welcome.

LUNCH LIGHT our group that supports folk who are bereaved, plan to meet in church on **Friday 26th June between 12.30pm – 2.00pm**. So, if you have lost a loved one and would like some company, a chat and a bite to eat, why not drop in or Telephone Janet 01283 215000, if you want to know more and would like to join us, or if you wish to help out. There is a charge of £5

COFFEEANDCHAT@CHURCH will meet in church on **Tuesday 2nd June between 9.30 and 11.00am**.

JUNE SERVICES and EVENTS ACROSS THE WOODFIELD TEAM.

(all starting at 10am unless otherwise stated).

Monday June 1 st 8 th 15 th 22 nd 29 th	Monday Morning Cuppa (in church) 10.30am
Tuesday June 2 nd	Coffee & Chat at St. John's Donisthorpe at 9.30am
Saturday June 6 th	St John's Prayer Group meeting Winnie Meadows' home at 10am
Sunday June 7 th	Donisthorpe (MP), Measham & Snarestone (HC), Normanton & Sweptstone (MP), Packington (Breakfast Church), Appleby (Baptism), Norton (Flower Festival Songs of Praise 3.00pm)
Sunday June 14 th	Donisthorpe (HC), Appleby (HC), Packington (MP) Measham (MP Lay Led)
Sunday June 21 st	Donisthorpe (Lay Led Worship), Measham (Breakfast Church), Appleby (Sunday People), Norton, Normanton & Sweptstone (HC),
Friday June 26 th	Lunch Light at St. John's Donisthorpe (12- 30 – 14.00)
Sunday June 28 th	Donisthorpe (HC & Baptism), Packington (HC), Appleby (Family Worship), Measham, (MP & Baptism), Sweptstone Patronal Festival (HC).

ST. JOHN'S IS NOT JUST A CHURCH.

We are home to Village Heart @ St. Johns; that side of our operation that provides our church building as a resource for the local community to use for recreational, social activities.

While our primary purpose is to be a centre of worship and spiritual comfort to all people in the parish, we have lots of non-religious activities take place during the week. Things such as Yoga & Pilates classes, Model Railway Club, Tots Play, and many use it for family parties. If you want to join in with any of the activities just check out our calendar by going to 'hallbookingonline.com/villageheart/' and coming along to a scheduled session.

Having a Party?

St John's is the venue for you

Hold your celebration event here :



Weddings



christenings



Birthdays



parties ect.

Bar and food available by arrangement.



Tel : 07759 404226



Email : villageheartdonisthorpe@gmail.com

For more details.

One way to begin thinking about Mark's 'seed' stories is to ponder what Jesus meant by 'The kingdom of God' when he introduced these stories.

If we think of ourselves as 'children of God', a part of his family, does it not follow that we should also consider ourselves, 'citizens of God's kingdom'?

If that is so, then 'God's kingdom' is not a destination, not somewhere we journey towards in this earthly life, but a reality within which we live, here and now.

As a child of God and a citizen of his kingdom we are challenged to live as God would like us to, or as the prophet Micah says *"See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern and humbly obey your God."* (Micah 6 v8b).

Jesus also emphasized the themes of justice and mercy in his teachings, seeing them as hall-marks of citizens of God's kingdom. (Matthew 5 v1-10)

The apostle Paul links God's mercy to the ministry of Jesus, as he encourages us to *"be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ"* (Ephesians 4 v32)

Bearing these thoughts in mind, the 'seed' stories told by Jesus could be seen as stories about us, as seeds/citizens of God's kingdom.

God plants the seed, his Spirit, within us. Our transformed minds and bodies* are the good soil** that enables the Spirit to thrive. As we grow in spiritual maturity we become a source of blessing to others. (Grain-flour-bread-food that sustains life). God is the farmer that lovingly tends the soil, hoping for a good harvest.

The mustard seed could be viewed as a seed of God's kingdom sown in the hope that it will flourish and become a place of sanctuary for 'others'. The bird's nest is the home of something unlike the plant itself, the bird is the 'other'. The story then is a challenge to us to become a people with open hearts and minds like Christ, able to welcome the 'other' into God's 'here and now' kingdom, to provide a place of safety, a place they can call home.

* *"Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person."* (2 Corinthians 5 v17).

** *"Seeds that fell on good ground"* (Mark 4 v20)

Mark says: *"Jesus used many other stories when he spoke to the people, and he taught them as much as they could understand."* (Mark 4 v33)

Jesus uses stories/parables to help us with our thinking. These stories show us how we can be both fully human and citizens of God's kingdom at the same time.

His 'seed' has been sown.....