

Devotion – Seventh Week after Pentecost

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

“Maters and Miracles”

Jim got brave this year and ordered some heirloom varieties of tomatoes. When they came, they were barely alive, having been delayed in the mail, and were almost completely dried up. Nevertheless, we planted them, along with some Better Boys he bought locally, and we were delighted to see almost all of them recover and start growing. Then disaster struck. A type of wilt struck once the plants got about 3 feet tall, and overnight, they would just wilt and die. We lost about half of the plants. The others have hung on and we finally began to see little tomatoes, and this past weekend we finally got our first ripe ones. Not a lot so far, but there are other green ones that will ripen soon.

We had another disaster with the green beans. Although we had sprayed for deer twice, the constant rain finally washed that away and we went out one day and found all the nice bean blossoms on our first two rows eaten. We had planted a second set 4 weeks later, and they hadn't started blooming yet, so back to the store for more deer granules that we put all over the ground around the newer ones. Maybe the new ones would make something. But lo and behold, on Sunday we found fully grown green beans underneath the leaves in the older two rows. A lot of them. We picked and picked from the two older rows – they're only about 12 feet long each, but they filled up half the sink when we got them inside. Another miracle.

So I'm reminded of the sermon Sunday about sowing seeds – this time the tomatoes had bad soil but produced anyway, and the green beans had good soil but the blossoms were exposed enough that the “enemy,” those dang-blasted deer, ate them up. And we got green beans anyway. It just goes to show that just sowing in good faith often produces a bountiful harvest. And not everything is a disaster – we have a lot of bell and cayenne peppers.

Pat Randolph told me that they had so many squash that she had no idea what to do with them. John brought in a huge one Sunday night that she couldn't deal with at all, so she decided it would be the dog's dinner. After all, dogs need vegetables too, right?? On the other hand, we're barely getting any squash – lots of blooms, but not a lot is happening with them. Feast or famine. Seeds in good soil and seeds in bad soil. Predators and protectors. Gardening is almost always out of our hands – we just sow the seeds and let God handle the harvest. But I must say, and I hope Jesus doesn't get too ticked off with me, I wouldn't mind if God boosted the return on the 'maters. They're kinda my favorite thing in the summer.

Hope your harvest this summer is fruitful, regardless of the soil or the rain. And blessings to God for providing for us.

Jeanne