

**Open Benefice Churches from July 19th, 2020.**

**Little Paxton.**

**Sundays: 9.15am Morning Service with readings and prayers.  
Open for quiet time/private prayer: Sundays 10.00am to 12 noon.  
Wednesdays 2.00pm to 4.00pm.**

**Great Paxton.**

**Sundays: Public worship at 10.30am for 30 minutes  
Then open for quiet time/private prayer from 11.00am to 4.00pm.**

**Southoe.**

**Open for quiet time/private prayer:  
Sundays 11.00am to 4.00pm  
There will be public worship on Sunday July 24<sup>th</sup> at 3.00pm  
Followed at 4.00pm by Southoe PCC's AGM**

**Let us Pray.**

**Our small difference**

We may not be able to challenge the powerful in the world  
Nor have the capacity to divert resources to those who need them  
Or uplift communities who are struggling.  
We may not be able to silence wars or have words to negotiate peace.  
But, as we follow you, O Christ, we are able to do something.

We pray that you would inspire us to commit to and act on  
the small difference we can make:  
may we bring peace through small acts of gentleness;  
may we bring aid by small contributions and teamwork.  
May we bring safety through small acts of acceptance and  
consideration;  
may we bring wholeness through small acts of care and service.  
And in the small ways, O God, may our small difference make a  
contribution to your saving work in the world.  
*From: John van de Laar <https://sacredise.com>*

**A Blessing.**

God be with us, God be in us  
God be around us; God be behind us.  
Sow in our hearts the good seed of love, joy and peace;  
That we might be a blessing to people around us. Amen.

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**Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe  
"Keeping in Touch" Edition 17: The Sixth Sunday after Trinity.  
Matthew 13 v 31-34 The Parable of the Mustard Seed and Yeast.**



Picture by Neil Hawkes from Rutland.

**Annette writes:**

I would like to thank everyone who has given very positive feedback on these newsletters which we have produced since mid-March. We keep adding to those who receive what we now call K.I.T. (Keeping in Touch) so if anyone knows of someone who might like to receive K.I.T. by email or have it hand delivered, please do let Annette know.

As I write, face coverings will be compulsory in shops and supermarkets from July 24<sup>th</sup>, as they are already on public transport. A lady from Great Paxton is involved with making free 3-layer cotton face coverings for those who are vulnerable within the St Neots area. They are made according to government guidelines and can be washed with soap by hand or in a machine. Two can be provided per person, allowing them to be washed. If you would like to receive two or know someone who would benefit from having two, please let Annette know by Monday July 20<sup>th</sup>.

It's a nice example of the many up and down the country where care and support is being given to those who need it most. A simple idea can lead to a lot of good happening as the parable of the mustard seed reminds us. Thanks to Mel for her reflections on the parable in this edition.  
Keep well and safe

With love and prayers, Annette.  
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## **Gospel Reading Matthew Chapter 13 v 31-34.**

### **The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast**

He told them another parable: “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.”

He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet:

“I will open my mouth in parables,  
I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”

### **The Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity**

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding: pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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## **Reflections from Mel Eyeons our Benefice Licensed Lay Minister.**

Jesus came to tell us about the kingdom of God. But he never just sits down and gives a factual description. Instead he gives us stories about what it's like. This is probably partly because it's hard for us to understand heavenly things.

But another reason is that images can help us get closer to the truth, and stories tell us about things we can relate to. Jesus's stories are part of his attempts to create a community of people with a vision and a dream of how the world should be, and a desire to see God's kingdom grow on earth.

In today's parable the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which starts off tiny but becomes a tree able to shelter birds. A mustard seed is not much to look at but give it a chance to work and the results can be amazing. We're not sure which of two possible plants Jesus was talking about, but whichever one it was it grew to between 8 and 20 feet, so a tiny seed did become a large shrub or tree.

Two things seem important to me in this image. One is that the kingdom of God starts off small and hidden. We might not be aware of God's kingdom growing right now. It might seem like nothing is happening, especially when we see chaos and difficulty all around us and we don't know how things will turn out. But slowly, quietly and surely God's kingdom is growing among us, and we can see its beginnings in our day-to-day lives. When people look out for one another, when new hope comes, when wrongs are put right, when good overcomes evil, these are the seeds and buds of God's kingdom.

Secondly, this image suggests to me that God's kingdom may be bigger than we can imagine. It may be something we can't predict or limit to a particular size or place – much like my buddleia. And it may reach further and draw more people in to enjoy its benefits than we expect.

So, this apparently simple image tells us a huge amount about God's kingdom. It tells us that the kingdom grows from tiny beginnings into something bigger and more welcoming than we can imagine. It tells us that the smallest and most unlikely of things can be the start of something amazing. And, last but not least, it tells us that God's kingdom is alive, growing and offering its welcome to all, even in the smallest of ways and the most unpromising of circumstances.

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