

Pastoral Prayers
Sunday, July 12
On the Parable of the Sower
By Zac Koons

Farmer God, if we can be quite candid, it sounds like you are the one who sowed the seed on the unpromising ground in the first place. Our hearts are never adequately prepared for your arrival. We are confused, shallow, and distracted. We are not what you deserve. But you are both Sower and seed. You send yourself to us. You plant your Spirit in our hearts. And we are grateful. You grow despite the conditions of our lives. From the inside out, transform us into good soil, so that together your Church we may yield thirty, sixty, and one hundredfold, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

God of our common life, you sowed your seed Jesus into this broken world. Those in power did not recognize him as a source of life, but did everything they could to keep his word from growing. They stood in his path; they oppressed his followers; they choked him with thorns. It feels like our politics today are such that it is impossible for your truth to take hold. Stir up the soil in the souls of those in power today. Banish enemies from the path of truth, roll away stones that destroy, transform choking thorns into crowns of glory. Cultivate new seeds of hope in our midst, so that our earth may begin to look more like your heaven, and the world may know the inevitability of resurrection, in your Son's name. Amen.

God of creation, you made the good soil, but it must not be anywhere near where we are. Many joys of friendship have been snatched from us. Our endurance for this virus is wearing thin. Our attention is scattered between an anxiety for safety, an eagerness for security, and a longing for escape—it is difficult to remember to keep time for you. Give us thirtyfold helpings of your patience, sixtyfold portions of your peace, and one-hundredfold portions of your grace as we navigate a dark night of the soul. Bring us by your Spirit into a brighter light than we have known before, in Jesus' name. Amen.

God of the harvest, we commend to your mercy those who have died. And we rejoice in the example of the saints who have gone before us. Comfort us by the knowledge that they are enjoying the fruits of an everlasting bounty, give us patience as we wait to join their perfect fellowship with you. Amen.