



Grain

“How we live and work together in communities and cities can have a huge impact in tackling climate change.” –United Nations

Field

²⁶He also said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, ²⁷and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. ²⁸The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.” ³⁰He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³²yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.” Mark 4:26-32

Thoughts

In 2019, inspired by stories we heard about local positive changes to address climate change, a few of us organized an event called, “What’s Working in Wisconsin.” A stubborn Wisconsin legislature has moved environmental policies backward. However, that has not prevented individuals, businesses, churches, school districts, universities, and local municipalities from paying attention to the reality of the climate crisis and the need to protect our air and water. A couple of years later, when the Governor’s Task force on Climate Change held public listening (and learning) sessions, we were presented with disturbing facts but also were again uplifted with examples of the dedicated work in communities. More recently, it was encouraging to hear that this is also common around the world in several countries lagging behind in our commitments to the Paris Agreement.

A few of our ELCA representatives at the last COP (Conference of Parties), the UN international conference on climate change, learned that even though many countries are not acting quickly enough to implement needed legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a great deal is happening on local levels. I find hope in this.

The work of addressing climate change seems overwhelming. So much needs to happen in the arena of public policy. However, increasing numbers of individual acts and policy changes even on the level of municipalities, are significant.

A mustard seed, as described in the Gospel lesson, was small and unnoticed. That is the way many of us probably feel sometimes in the midst of what seems out of control in our personal lives or in the news. As faith-based advocates, how do we value God’s creation in our voting and other actions? Mustard seeds have been planted. The reign of God’s love is here spreading in ways we don’t fully recognize. May God guide us in being part of the growth. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy