Sermon: **Once there was a man who went out to sow corn** (Matthew 13.3)

When we first moved in one large area of the garden was a sand pit, and we realised preparing the soil was important, and still is. We fed with compost from grass cuttings, veg peelings, old plants, shredded paper.

Sharon has always wanted to be food self-sufficient, so we grow our veggies – last year: potatoes, carrots, celery, red onions, garlic, broad beans, celeriac, green beans, sugar snaps, beetroot, sweetcorn, red cabbage, cauliflower, courgettes, leeks, (plus rhubarb, apples, raspberries). Not self-sufficient, but not bad.

Gives me an insight into this story Jesus told. TEXT. Obviously a story “once upon a time…”

We all like stories – bedtime stories, films, biographies. Most have a message of some sort, which is not known at the start. True for Jesus’ stories, which usually have a message about God’s Kingdom.

When considering sharing that gospel in our community, what better way than telling a story – maybe the story of how God got our three congregations together, or a personal story of how God has helped us?

This man went out to sow – TEXT. No indication of what preparation he did.

He might have sown what would best grow - we can’t grow tomatoes or peppers - too cold & no greenhouse.

He might have thought about condition of soil – compost/manure - like we did.

He might have considered likely weather – our beans were hopeless this year.

When considering our outreach do we think about what is most efficient, or likely to give a harvest?

Sowing takes place months before the harvest. In that time some seeds don’t germinate, plants tended and watered, weeded, put netting over some to stop Sooki! Some extra work is done for potatoes & carrots.

The seed in the story had mixed fare, but some got there in the end.

In our connection with community, we will plant seed, some of which does not germinate, some gets nowhere, but there is a time-lag to harvest. In an age of instant results, we need to hear this.

Behind all this the story is about God (as sower). How and where God sows his seed is God’s business.

The story tells us that God is not remote and unconcerned, not malicious or impatient, but prepared to sow his seed of love no matter what happens to the seed. Our job is partly to work with the sower, and partly to be a type of soil that will produce a good harvest. TEXT. That’s a story worth being part of and sharing.