

Session Three

# Seeds and Yeast



**Text:** Luke 13:18-21

**Focus statement:** God's kingdom starts small and grows.

## GATHERING

*Welcome*

**Call to worship:** WFW2 4 *Seeds and Soil*

**Song:** HWB 6 *Here in this place*

**Opening prayer:** "God of Caring" (*Together*, p. 4)

## PRAISING

**Song suggestions:**

GR CD *Awake, arise, o sing a new song* (*Together*, p. 3, for text)

HWB 76 *Je louerai l'Éternel* (*Praise, I will praise you, Lord*)

SS 92 *Sing with all the saints in glory*

SJ 11 *Praise, praise, praise the Lord!*

SJ 17 *Halle, halle, hallelujah!*

**Prayer of thanksgiving:**

Gracious and merciful God, thank you for your kingdom and your invitation to us to be part of it. We are grateful that your kingdom is one of mercy, love, forgiveness, and justice. Thank you! We praise you! Amen.

**Offering/offertory**

## CONFESSING AND RECONCILING

*Silence*

**Prayer of confession:** HF2 62 *Prayer of Confession* (with sung response)

*Silence*

**Song:** SS 17 *Alleluia!*

## HEARING

**Children's time:**

*Advance preparation:* Prepare storytelling props. Make a tree trunk and branches out of brown construction paper. Tape several pieces of paper together if necessary to make the tree trunk. It should be as tall as some of the children in your group. Make birds, squirrel, and a nest out of construction paper or use a real nest and

(1) invite the children to be the props—tree, birds, nest, and squirrel; or (2) invite people from the congregation to hold up or be the props to further illustrate God’s kingdom growing. Gather supplies.

*Supplies:* Green blanket, container with grass, session 3 symbol (sprouting seed); storytelling props: tiny seed, construction paper tree, birds, nests, squirrel.

*Gather children.* Say: We gather with our friends to listen to some of the parables Jesus told (*point to container with symbols*).

- We are wise builders when we follow Jesus’ ways (*touch symbol 1*).
- God’s love is like a precious treasure worth more than anything else (*touch symbol 2*).

One day Jesus told this parable. God’s way of living is like a very tiny mustard seed that someone planted in a garden (*show tiny seed to each child*). The seed grew and grew (*invite several children to hold up the tree*) until it became a large tree. Birds came to the tree to find shelter (*invite children to hold birds*). Mommy and daddy birds built nests in its branches for their baby birds (*invite children to hold nests*). There was room for all of God’s creatures (*invite child to hold squirrel*).

Jesus said, “God’s kingdom is like a tiny mustard seed that grows into something big enough to shelter everyone” (*place symbol 3 in grass container*). When we share God’s love with others, God’s kingdom grows. Let’s see how God’s love is growing here at (*name of church*). Look around and see God’s love and kingdom growing (*invite the children to stand up and look around at each other and at the congregation*). Then invite the children to join hands as you pray. (*You could also invite the congregation to join hands with each other and/or with the children.*)

*Pray:* Thank you, God, for the way your love is growing. All of your creation finds shelter in your love. Help us be a part of that miracle of growth. Amen.

**Scripture reading:** Luke 13:18-21

**Sermon seeds:**

In Luke 13, Jesus speaks of the need to discern the nature of the kingdom of God and to count the cost of discipleship. The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast particularly speak of the unexpected nature of how the kingdom of God is present and growing in Jesus’ ministry. It is significant that these two parables are drawn from routine activities of farming life.

**RESPONDING**

**Song of response:** HWB 224 *The kingdom of God*

**Affirming faith:** HWB 717

**Prayers of the people**

**SENDING**

**Song:** HWB 434 *Thuma mina*

**Benediction:** SJ 162