**Cultivating Hope 培育希望**

March 24, 2019 ， 2019年3月24日

Luke 13: 6-9 路加福音13:6-9

**Text:**

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. 7 So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' 8 He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

**路加福音13:6-9**

**6**耶稣讲了这样一个比喻：“有一个人把一棵无花果树栽在自己的葡萄园里。他来到树那里找果子，却找不到。 **7**他对管园的说：‘你看，这三年，我来到这棵无花果树那里找果子，却找不到，把它砍了吧！何必白占地土呢？’ **8**管园的说：‘主人，今年且留着它，等我把周围的泥土挖松，加上肥料； **9**以后结果子就罢，不然，再把它砍了。’”

**Reflection反思:**

About two months ago Catherine Chu and I were on the way to an evening intercultural network meeting at Cloverdale United Church, Surrey, BC. I left home a bit early and picked Catherine up on the way and headed for the church. My GPS indicated we would be arriving at the church about 30 min before the meeting. The driving was good, even though we had expected late afternoon traffic jam. We were glad to see the church from the road about 20 min before the meeting was to start, but there was a problem; we couldn’t access the church from the road, Road 15 was divided by a median strip so I couldn’t drive over it to enter the church; I had to drive beyond it. Have you had this kind of experience? You know you are going in the wrong direction but you can’t find a way to reverse your direction? While I was driving further up the road beyond the church, I saw the most beautiful and transformational sign I had seen in a long time; it read, “U-turns are Permitted!”

大约两个月前，我和Catherine Chu去参加位于Surrey的Cloverdale联合教会的一个融合文

化的交流会，我提前离开家去接Catherine，然后一起前往。我的GPS显示我们将在会议前30分钟到达教堂。尽管我们预料到下午晚些时候会有交通堵塞，但路况还是不错。我们很高兴在会议开始前20分钟的时候，我们就能在马路上看到那间教会，但有个问题，我们不能从路上进入教堂，15号公路被中间带隔开，所以我不能开车穿过它进入教会；我必须要开到那边去。你有过这种经历吗？你知道你走错了方向，但你不能找到一种方法来改变你的方向？当我继续往前开车到教堂那边的时候，我看到了我在很长一段时间里所见过的最美丽和转换的标志，上面写着：“允许的掉头！”

We are heading to the midpoint of the season of Lent. I think it is good time to check where we are and where we are heading. We need to check our speed and direction. If we find ourselves heading in a wrong direction we need to make u-turns. In this Lenten season we are invited to reflect on u-turns. In other words, we are invited to a season of contemplation and reflection. No matter how far down the road of life we travel, whether the road be personal, communal, or even an ill-advised path, u-turns are permitted. This is good news!

四旬斋节的季节过去了一半的时间。我认为现在是时候检查一下我们的时候了，我们要去哪里。我们需要检查速度和方向。如果我们发现自己走错了方向，我们需要掉头。在四旬斋节，我们被邀请去反思一下你掉头的方向。换句话说，我们被邀请到一个沉思和反思的季节。无论我们在人生的道路上走多远，无论道路是个人的还是社区的，甚至是一条错误的道路，允许掉头的。这是好消息！

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) it taking place during the service and we may not have time for a reflection/sermon. Let us return to today’s scripture reading. In the parable recorded in today’s scripture, the vineyard owner has fig trees on the farm. In the cultural history of Israel, the fig tree had always been a symbol of blessing. The fig tree is the only tree mentioned by name in the garden of paradise. The fig tree also was part of the vision of Israel’s future blessing associated with the restoration of the Davidic kingdom. So the fig tree is a vivid symbol of hope and blessing.

年度大会(AGM)将在周日的崇拜中举行，我们可能没有时间进行反思/布道。让我们回到今天的经文。今天的经文中讲述的是一个比喻 - 葡萄园的主人在农场上拥有无花果树。在以色列的文化史上，无花果树一直是祝福的象征。无花果树是天堂花园里唯一棵有名字的树。无花果树也是对以色列未来祝福的一部分 – 大卫国度的复兴。所以无花果树是希望和祝福的生动象征。

The owner of the fig tree wants to see fruit, but there is no fruit. The owner is so disappointed. The owner says to the gardener, “See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?” The owner can no longer hold out any hope for the fig tree. But the gardener still has hope, so he replies “Give me one more year.” Give me one more year. I will dig around it and put manure on it. I will take good care of it with the hope that it will bear fruit next year.”

无花果树的主人来到无花果树那里找果子，却找不到。 他对管园的说：‘你看，这三年，我来到这棵无花果树那里找果子，却找不到，把它砍了吧！何必白占地土呢？’ 主人再也不能对无花果树抱有任何希望了。但是园丁还有希望，所以他回答说：‘再给我多一年的时间，等我把周围的泥土挖松，加上肥料； 我会好好照顾它，希望它明年能结出果实。“

The gardener continues in this vein, “If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down” (9). I want to direct your attention here. The gardener is just a hired man. His duty is simply to follow the owner’s orders. And the gardener knows if he does not follow orders he will be fired; the gardener is taking a risk in rejecting the owner’s order but he does not give up his hope. He doesn’t know what the future will bring, but he still sticks to his hope: he is cultivating the future with his hope. What a wonderful hope is this!

管园继续这样说，“以后结果子就罢，不然，你再把它砍了。’”（路加福音13:9）我想在这里引起你的注意。管园的园丁只是个雇工。他的职责就是服从主人的命令。他知道如果他不服从命令，他就会被解雇；园丁冒着拒绝主人的命令的风险，但他没有放弃他的希望。他不知道未来会带来什么，但他仍然坚持自己的希望：他正在用他的希望来培育未来。这是多么美好的希望啊！

In this parable, the owner’s judgement is based on past performance. It may be our contemporary conventional wisdom that we are valued for our achievement. But, the gardener changes the criterion by which we value our lives from past achievement to future hope. He directs the story toward the future. Our lives are not valued by past achievement, but by cultivating our future with our dreams. The fig tree is in a vulnerable situation: As Christians we are yearning for God’s kin-dom where everyone is valued equally as God’s children and everyone will be healed.

在这个比喻中，园主的判断是基于过去的表现。也许现代的传统智慧是以所取得的成就来评估我们。但是，园丁改变了我们对生活的评估标准：把传统的以过去的成就为标准变成要看到未来的希望。他把故事引向未来。我们的生命价值不在于过去的成就，而在于用梦想培育我们的未来。无花果树处于不结果子的状态：作为基督徒，我们渴望在上帝的家族每个人都被同等的重视，就像上帝的孩子一样，每个人都会被治愈。

In this time of Lent God calls us to change our direction if necessary and turn around and journey toward God with an open heart. Like the gardener we would not easily give up our hope for our future with God. As individuals and communities, what are we hoping for? What is our hope for the future? As we identify our hopes we also find ourselves busy working to fulfil this hope. We dig around our understanding of faith and nourishing it. We do this by our practice of prayer, meditation, action and taking good care of our hope, hope for a more just and compassionate world, hope for the wholeness and healing of our families and our faith community. May the God of hope, wholeness and healing go with us as we turn to God with an open heart on our Lenten Journey. On this journey, remember always, “U-turns are permitted!” Thanks be to God for the grace, encouragement and hope of Lent. Amen.

在这个四旬斋节期间，神呼召我们在必要的时候改变方向，转过来，带着开放的心向神走去。就像管园一样，我们不会轻易放弃对上帝未来的希望。作为个人和社区，我们所希望的是什么？我们对未来的希望是什么？当我们确定我们的希望时，我们也发现自己正忙于实现这一希望。我们挖掘我们对信仰的理解并滋养它。我们通过祈祷、冥想、行动和照顾好我们的希望、希望建立一个更加公正和富有同情心的世界、希望我们的家庭和信仰团体的完整和愈合。就像我们在四旬斋节之旅中以一颗开放的心转向上帝的时候，愿希望的神、完整的神和治愈的神与我们同在。在这段旅程中，请永远记住，“允许掉头！”感谢上帝赐予四旬斋节的恩典、鼓励和希望。阿门。.

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