

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [May 16 Worship Service Video](#)

- Join **HeBrews eCafé on Zoom** Sunday at 10am:
<https://zoom.us/j/4639675160?pwd=V090UmV0VFpMVGJLTWhueGpSekkwZz09>
Meeting ID: 463 967 5160
Passcode: 4F7iE2
Phone option: 1 204 272 7920
- Our music staff and online choir present the cantata **Love Divine**. View it here: https://youtu.be/wA1oqiZj_w
- **Offering Information at:** www.charleswoodunited.org/donate Thank you for your generous support.

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, May 16, 2021.

It is far too soon to say that there are leaves on the trees but I was looking at a tall tree this morning and it looks like it is just about ready to burst. You can see a green outline around the still visible upper branches. The trees are testifying. Growth is going to come and it is going to come soon.

You will find that the service this week has a lot to do about growth. When I was out at The Healing Farm last week on the day that they began planting potatoes and onions, Ishmael, one of the men from the Yazidi community who works so hard to make this project a success, told me to go have a look at a field over to my right. He said that they had planted garlic there last spring and that it was already coming up. Sure enough, and you had to look closely, what I thought was an empty field was already showing its promise, already sprouting green in neatly formed rows. This is important, especially if you're about to drive a tractor over it!!

The trees and the garlic remind us that while the season of rest is necessary, the season of growth invariably follows it. It starts out slow and then, as if in an instant, it emerges and takes off.

Our friend Bruce Berven came by the church earlier this week to record the lesson for the service today. He had his grandson with him and in the service you can see the two of them together as I did the other day. What you don't know is that Bruce and his wife Barbara made a decision earlier this year to 'bubble' and isolate with their son's family so that they could share in the tutoring of their grandson who is being home-schooled this year. They are an example that growth isn't only reserved for the trees and the plants; growth is what happens when we are cared for and nurtured. They are gardening. Their grandson is growing.

The reading this week is from the creation narrative in the book of Genesis. Not from the familiar seven days story found in Genesis 1 but the Garden of Eden story in Genesis 2. I will admit that the Eden story has had a lot of baggage connected to it over the centuries and it takes some effort to do the disconnecting work and find inspiration in it. But it is poetic. If Genesis 1 tells us that creation is 'good', Genesis 2 tells us that creation is 'beautiful'. In Genesis 2 God *breathes life into the nostrils* of the human being, God *plants a garden*, God makes trees that are *pleasing to the eye and good for food*. In Genesis 1 God makes things to exist but in Genesis 2 God makes things to grow.

We are one with creation and we have been made to grow. We grow in knowledge. We grow in wisdom. We grow in understanding. Above all, we grow in love as we learn to love everything beautiful that surrounds us. Like a tree in spring, like autumn planted garlic, like a grandchild, we are ready to bloom and grow and become more than we ever have been before.

Grace and peace

Michael

- Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The link for sharing is: <https://youtu.be/m2q0BQHtpyw>
- For news and events please have a look at **Life & Work**: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- Read the scripture lesson for today by clicking here: [Genesis 2:4-10](#)