



COLLINSVILLE – TROY
CHURCH OF CHRIST
Focus. Find. Follow.

The Correspondent



SUNDAY

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study (Adult) 1:30 PM

Bible Study (All Ages) 7:00 PM

www.collinsvillecoc.org

(618) 667-6708

For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth... in every place. (1 Thessalonians 1:8)

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How Does Your Garden Grow?

I have to admit, I have missed my garden since moving to Highland. When we first moved to Troy, there were several “professional” gardeners in the church family. I relied a lot upon their advice as I began gardening like I had never done before. Just about every week “garden talk” was heard when we assembled. “How is your garden growing” was frequently heard.

Thinking of growing a garden makes me think of our Christian lives. We should all be just as concerned about growth in God’s kingdom as some of are about their gardens.

As the weather began to warm, I started becoming anxious to get out and get started with planting. As I reflect, we should all be anxious to plant the seed, the word of God (Luke 8:11). We should all want to see the kingdom of God grow and produce more fruit. The desire to plant the seed will manifest itself in doing what we can to teach others. We are to go into all the world planting God’s seed (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). That includes inviting friends and neighbors to Bible classes and worship services once we are able to do so. It includes talking to people about the Bible and their spiritual needs. It includes introducing them to the preacher or others who might develop a desire to study the Bible together. Let us work on creating the desire to plant.

Once the garden is pretty much in, I enjoyed seeing it grow. It required work, however, due to the weeds that keep trying to take over. As Christians, we enjoy seeing those who are young in the faith grow spiritually, regardless of their physical age. However, just with the garden, those young Christians will not grow and produce without some work on our part. As we must weed, fertilize, and administer proper care in the garden, we must do so in the lives of young

Christians. We need to encourage them and help them develop. We need to exhort them daily lest they be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and choked out by the cares of this world (Hebrews 3:13; Luke 8:14). We should nourish them through edification and teaching, helping them to bear their infirmities until such time as they can bear them alone (Romans 14:1-2). You can do this by keeping in touch with those who are young in the faith and growing. Encourage them when you see them in services. Visit with them in their home or have them in your home once we are able to do so. Offer to study with them and answer questions they have about the Bible and their Christian lives. Call them on the phone to encourage them and strengthen them.

Finally, do not be satisfied that they are beginning to grow. My garden would not become complete until it began to bear fruit. We must help those who are young in the faith develop to the point of bearing fruit for God. Let us help them develop proper attitudes as a Christian (Galatians 5:22-23). Let us set an example and show them the way in bearing the fruit of good works (Colossians 1:10). Let us encourage them and teach them to bear the fruit of edification and exhortation (Romans 1:13). Let us show them the way in bearing fruit in support of the Great Commission through our sacrificial contribution (Philippians 4:14-17). Let us teach them so that they might bear fruit in teaching and converting others (1 Corinthians 16:15). How does your garden grow? Whether or not you have a physical garden, you are a servant in the vineyard of God. How does His garden grow, and what are you doing to help? Do all things to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31 and Ephesians 3:20-21).

Terry Mabery