

Growing Grapes

Years ago, I decided that I wanted to grow grapes. I ordered the grape vines and put-up trellises and waited for grapes. Unfortunately, after doing the work I read the material. I would not have grapes for three years. Three years to grow an edible grape. I was disappointed but willing to wait and to tend the vines while I waited. I thought I may not have a grape, but I will have a lovely vine. I was thinking about my experience with grapes as I sat in a meeting this week that is primarily about growing our church. We are seeking ways to do more outreach and more tending to new people. It is a slow process and one that requires patience for the process to reap rewards. It's hard to remain patient when you are hungry for a grape! We are a "I want it and I want it right now.!" Society. Personally, I wouldn't be surprised if in years to come our time of living is analyzed and it is said, "It all began with instant coffee and television and movies on tape and slowly turned into computer games and instant messaging." What did we do when we were growing up for entertainment? We gathered a group and went to a Saturday Matinee and ate way too much popcorn and candy and then walked home around 3 miles because we spent our bus fare on candy. But we got out of the house and mingled with others. We laughed together at the funny parts and some of us had tears if it was sad. Now we watch our programs and movies on the "idiot box." Most of you probably won't remember when the TV was referred to as the "idiot box." I am so glad my great grandchildren have limited TV time because they are busy being home schooled, helping in the kitchen (this week they learned how to make cranberry sauce from berries and how to make cinnamon roll ups from left over pie crust), going on hikes weekly as a family, taking lessons with groups such as ballet and Tae kwon do and playing. That is the two in Colorado, the one in Illinois goes to pre-K school and helps his Mother with the horses and helps her in the kitchen and plays outside a lot and he is getting a new puppy. Children grow best when they are in a loving and active home, so do churches. I have faith that we will with God at our side grow our church. Meanwhile ask yourself, "What can I do to meet the call of Jesus to lead others to him?"

Matthew 28:18-19 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Lord, we thank you for the days you have given us, for the sunny ones and even the cloudy and rainy ones. Both remind us of your love in the joy of sunshine on our good days and the shelter you provide when our days are stormy. Be with those going through the storms of life, guide and shelter them. Be with the sick and the grieving, may they be comforted. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry, give him blessings in all things. Be with our church may we reflect your love to others. Be with our staff and leaders guide and protect them. Be with those that are the victims of war in Ukraine and be with those in Haiti who are suffering. We thank you for our blessings always. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

