

March 24th in Worship: *Letting go of neglect and cultivating restoration* The Gardener: Luke 13:1-9

I'm taken aback that the landowner said the tree was *wasting* soil, when in fact the gardener suggested using waste to heal its' roots and give it a chance at life.

Discipleship is not a one and done kind of thing. We are a faith body committed to the constant spiritual disciplines of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. There is no person beyond repair, no wound too broken for God's healing. Often, churches are the place people go with their waste looking for healing. While, regrettably, we lack gardeners.

We need a chance to heal, to be nourished so that repentance is possible, and then so is restoration possible. Rev. Kae Evenson writes, "God takes on our limits and all the things that dog us—all the sin, death, rivalries, violence, prejudice, not to mention our bloated or enervated sense of self. God invites us to the other side of 'repent or perish,' which is 'forgiveness and life,' Because of Christ, we find that in letting go we are taken into this larger story of freedom."

The landowner looks at the fig tree and sees the most obvious death and demise. The gardener looks at the same fig tree and sees an opportunity to provide care in hope that it may bear fruit. When do we as church 'cut our losses' and move along in ministry? When should we take care of something neglected and give our ministries and our people healing time?

Come and worship with us March 24 as we evaluate our spiritual practices of care, repentance, and healing.

(*Featured Disney film: Moana)