



a gift from Grandma

Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 27

Title: A Gift from Grandma
Author: Charlotte Martens
Church: Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB.
Text: Luke 20: 27-38
(focusing on verses 36-38)
Theme: God is a God of the living.

Needed:

A sample of three tulip bulbs to examine.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder how there can be life inside of a dry and dead looking bulb.
- I wonder how the life inside of a tulip bulb can help us think and talk about God.
- I wonder what other ways we can see that God is a life-giving God.
- I wonder what signs of God's activity are coming to life among us.

Gathering Activity:

As the children arrive, welcome them and show the tulip bulbs to them. Engage them in questions about these bulbs, based on their knowledge of tulip bulbs, such as what they think they are, what they might be for, what type of tulip might be hiding inside, and finally, do they think these bulbs are alive or dead. Then, open your Bible and show them Luke 20. Tell them that today's story has been written to help us understand what Jesus meant when he said that "God is a God of the living, and not of the dead." Encourage them to imagine themselves sitting on the lap of Jesus, and that Jesus is explaining this hard idea to them with a story. Give them a short time of silence to settle comfortably into a listening position.

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Story:

Julia was five years old and had just started kindergarten. Every Saturday morning she would go to her Grandma's house. Sometimes Julia and her Grandma baked cookies. Sometimes they built tall buildings with Grandma's old fashioned wooden blocks. On other visits they would read stories and sing songs. Julia and her Grandma both looked forward to their visits very much.

Julia knew that one of Grandma's favourite things for the two of them to do was sing together. Sometimes Julia would suggest singing a song just to see Grandma's eyes light up. Grandma had a favourite song. Perhaps you've heard it before- it goes like this: (ask the Grandmas in the congregation to help you sing it)

In the bulb there is a flower;
in the seed an apple tree;
in cocoons a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see."

Julia really liked the song, too, but the more she thought about it the more she realized that she just didn't understand what it was all about. So, Julia said to Grandma, "I like that song but I don't really understand it, what does 'unrevealed until its' season mean?" Grandma said, "God is a God of the living, of everything that's living. Even when we don't understand or can't see exactly what that life will be, the song says that God can see. Grandma could see that Julia still looked puzzled so she said, "Just a minute. I think I have something for you that will help you understand." Grandma rummaged around in her cupboard for a few minutes and came back with a small, shiny, silver bag. Julia excitedly looked inside the bag. Inside the bag were what looked like three small onions. They were brown and papery with little strings sticking out the bottom. Julia tried to hide her disappointment as she thanked Grandma for the gift. Grandma said, "I know they don't look like much now, but these are bulbs to plant in your garden. Right now, only God can see the life that is hiding inside them, but in the spring you'll be able to

see it, too. I hope these bulbs will remind you that God is a God of life."

Julia's Dad soon arrived to take her home. When Julia's Dad asked her what was in the bag she said, "Oh, just some bulbs. Grandma says there are flowers inside but I just can't believe there could be flowers inside something so ugly and dead looking." Julia's Dad said, "Why don't we plant them as soon as we get home. I don't think Grandma would have given you this gift if she didn't think it was special." Julia had to agree; Grandma had always given her wonderful gifts. So, Julia and her Dad dug some holes in the ground, put the bulbs inside and gently covered them with soil. Julia watered the bulbs with her very own watering can and then she looked at the ground to see if the bulbs were growing. Her parents reminded her that the bulbs would stay hidden until the spring.

Fall came and went. It began to snow. The snow covered Julia's bulbs with a fluffy, white blanket. And Julia, was busy with school, and then busy getting ready for Christmas, forgot about Grandma's gift. The months passed. Soon it was spring.

One day, Julia was practicing for her very first soccer game out in her yard. She kicked the ball as hard as she could. The ball bounced off the fence and landed right in the flower bed. Julia went to the flower bed to pick up the ball. As she leaned down to get it, she saw some little green shoots sticking out of the ground where she had planted her bulbs. Julia started to get excited. Maybe flowers had been hiding inside her bulbs after all. Julia checked her flowers every day until they began to bloom. They were beautiful tulips, a red one, a white one, and a yellow one! Julia called her Grandma to tell her the good news. She said, "Grandma, Grandma you were right! There was life hiding inside those bulbs. Today my tulips started blooming. I guess you and God were right. There was life inside of them." Grandma started singing "In the bulb there is a flower." Julia felt very warm inside and hummed along.

Prayer:

Thank you, God, for the life that hides inside of things that seem dead. Thank you for the beautiful surprise of the tulips. Help us watch for the signs of life that are around us, and in us. Amen.