

A letter from the project director:

I'd love to tell you the story of how The Soil and The Seed Project came to be, and how God has been working through it the last few years.

In March of 1995, I was eight years old and growing up in western PA. Every Saturday evening, my family gathered to read Scripture, ask questions, and talk about our faith. We lit candles, sang the same songs, and talked about what it meant to follow Jesus.

The important role of the family for forming faith isn't a new idea. In Deut.

6:4-9, God's people are instructed to love God with their whole beings, keeping God's commandments and diligently teaching them to their children. The instruction describes families keeping and remembering God's commands as they come and go, when lying down and getting up, and by placing visible reminders. Later on in Deuteronomy 6:20-21, a parent in the future is asked by their child, "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?" (Deut. 6:20 NIV). The parent is told to answer by telling what God has done, saving them. Deut. 6 teaches the church that: 1) forming faith must take place throughout people's whole lives; 2) questions are important, especially children's questions; and 3) parents and caregivers have an incredibly important role to play.

In March of 2020, 25 years later, those weekly rhythms from my childhood helped anchor our family even as many of the normal patterns for church and life were disrupted. At the time, my wife Theresa and I were working for Virginia Mennonite Missions (VMMissions), helping churches develop and launch "Kids Clubs"



across the Shenandoah Valley. Around that time, a local Mennonite church—Early Church—released “Behold and Become,” a collection of songs written within their community. I wondered: what kind of intergenerational resources would be helpful for people as they follow Jesus, read scripture, and talk about their faith together? The answer became The Soil and The Seed Project.

When I presented the proposal to VM Missions, my hope was to connect with 300 households. Since the project launched in 2021, the project has grown to connect with over 4,000 households in 35+ states, 140+ countries and people in 25+ denominations to cultivate faith in Jesus Christ. God is good!

The project has grown in ways we couldn’t have imagined over the last few years. We know that its success hasn’t been because we’ve worked really hard or because we’ve been exceptionally clever. It has been because this is God’s work and what God has been doing in little ordinary moments in people’s lives. Along the way, God has used a huge community of artists, musicians, writers, congregations, and individuals to carry this work forward with their time, talents, and financial support.

We have some pretty big and exciting ideas about what the work might be in the coming years, but if we’ve learned anything from the last few years, it’s been that what God is up to is far bigger and more beautiful than anything we can imagine.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

In Christ,

Seth