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**Sunday, July 16, 2023**  
**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost\***

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Service Theme  
**THE CHRISTIAN LIVES AS WHEAT AMONG WEEDS**

The wheat that grows in the Middle East is a variety that looks much like wild grass or weeds. It is difficult to tell wheat and weeds apart until shortly before harvest time, when the wheat stalks develop a head containing the kernels of grain. Try and pull the weeds out of a wheat field and you will likely pull up a fair amount of wheat accidentally. So you need to wait for the harvest to separate wheat from weeds. This week Jesus uses that image to illustrate life this side of heaven. Christians are pictured as wheat planted by the Lord. Evil and unbelieving evildoers are pictured as weeds. We might want God to take care of evil now—to pull up all the weeds. But he tells us to wait for the harvest. God is going to fix the problem of evil in this world, but it might not be today or even tomorrow. What does God want us to do while we wait? He wants us to live like wheat among weeds, serving the purpose for which he planted us. That means being faithful, fruitful, and mindful of the coming harvest.

# Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray



1 Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; From your sleep a -  
 2 Watch! Let not the wick - ed world With its lies de -  
 3 Watch a - gainst your - self, my soul, Lest with grace you  
 4 But while watch - ing al - so pray To the Lord un -



wak - en! Be not by the e - vil day Un - a -  
 feat you Lest with bold de - cep - tions hurled It be -  
 tri - fle; Let not self your thoughts con - trol Nor God's  
 ceas - ing, God pro - tects you day by day, Strength and



wares o'er - tak - en. For the foe, Well we know, Is a  
 tray and cheat you. Watch and see Lest there be Faith - less  
 mer - cy sti - fle. Pride and sin Lurk with - in, All your  
 faith in - creas - ing, So that still Mind and will Shall u -



har - vest reap - ing While the saints are sleep - ing.  
 friends to charm you Who but seek to harm you.  
 hopes to shat - ter; Heed not when they flat - ter.  
 nite to serve him And for - ev - er love him.

## Opening Prayer

M: In the name of Jesus our Lord and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we call on you, dear heavenly Father:

C: **Hear us for Your name's sake.**

M: We approach you confidently at the beginning of this day, for we rely on Jesus, our Redeemer, for the full forgiveness of sins:

C: **Receive our thankful worship for His sake.**

M: By the Holy Spirit increase our knowledge of You and of Your will for our lives. Fill our hearts with joy and peace into eternity:

C: **In You, O Lord, have we taken refuge; never let us be ashamed.**

M: O Lord, our Rock and our Fortress, assure us that because you live, we shall live also:

**C: In You we hope: Our praise is for You. Amen**

M: Let us pray:

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with you in perfect joy hereafter; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

Old Testament Lesson  
Isaiah 44:6-11 (EHV)

*Like wheat among weeds, Christians live surrounded by evil in this world. But God promises that the presence of evil in this world does not mean that God doesn't care for us.*

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD, the King of Israel, Israel's Redeemer, the LORD of Armies, says.

I am the first, and I am the last.

Except for me, there is no god.

<sup>7</sup>For who is like me? Let him declare it.

Let him recite in order for me the things that took place since the time I established an ancient people.

Or let them declare what is yet to come, and what is going to take place.

<sup>8</sup>Do not tremble, and do not be frightened.

Did I not announce this to you, and declare it already long ago?

You are my witnesses.

Is there any god except me?

There is no other Rock. I am not aware of any other.

<sup>9</sup>All those who form an idol are good for nothing.

All the things which delight them provide no benefit.

As for their witnesses—they do not see.

They know nothing, so they will be ashamed.

<sup>10</sup>Who is this who forms a god or casts a metal image that can provide no profit?

<sup>11</sup>Look at him! All his associates will be ashamed. The craftsmen are merely men. Let them all gather themselves and take a stand. They will be terrified and ashamed together.

Psalm 19  
(page 70)

*Refrain*

Lord, you have the words of  
ev - er - last - ing life.

*Psalm tone*

The heavens declare the glory of God;\*

The heavens declare the glory of God;\*  
the skies proclaim the work of his  
hands.

Their voice goes out into all the earth,\*  
their words to the ends of the world.

**Refrain**

The law of the LORD is perfect,\*  
giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are radiant,\*  
giving light to the eyes.

They are more precious than gold;\*  
they are sweeter than honey.

By them is your servant taught;\*  
in keeping them there is great reward.

**Refrain**

May the words of my mouth and the  
meditation of my heart\*  
be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my  
Redeemer.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son\*  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Refrain**

Epistle

Romans 1:18-25 (EHV)

*Jesus' parable about the wheat and weeds could give the impression that God is ambivalent about evil. But God's wrath is real and will be fully revealed at the harvest.*

<sup>18</sup>Indeed, God's wrath is being revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who try to suppress the truth by unrighteousness. <sup>19</sup>This happens because what can be known about God is evident among them, because God made it evident among them. <sup>20</sup>In fact, his invisible characteristics—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, because they are understood from the things he made. As a result, people are without excuse, <sup>21</sup>because, even though they knew God, they did not honor him or give him thanks as God. Instead, their thinking became nonsense, and their senseless heart was darkened.

<sup>22</sup>Although they claim to be wise, they have become fools <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human, or like birds, four-footed animals, and crawling things. <sup>24</sup>So, as they followed the sinful desires of their hearts, God handed them over to the impurity of degrading their own bodies among themselves. <sup>25</sup>Such people have traded the truth about God for the lie, worshipping and serving the creation rather than the Creator, who is worthy of praise forever. Amen.

### Verse of the Day

Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Alleluia!  
(Romans 11:33)

**Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!**  
**These words are writ-ten that we may be-lieve**  
**that Je-sus is the Christ, the Son of God.**  
**Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!**

### Gospel

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (EHV)

*The Lord has a plan to separate wheat and weeds. Christians will be perfectly separated from every evil at the final harvest*

<sup>24</sup>He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup>But while people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. <sup>26</sup>When the plants sprouted and produced heads of grain, the weeds also appeared. <sup>27</sup>The servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did the weeds come from?’ <sup>28</sup>He said to them, ‘An enemy did this.’ The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather up the weeds?’ <sup>29</sup>‘No,’ he answered, ‘because when you gather up the weeds, you might pull up the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, “First, gather up the weeds, bind them in bundles, and burn them. Then, gather the wheat into my barn.” ’ ”

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus sent the people away and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered them, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world. The good seeds are the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the Evil One. <sup>39</sup>The enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the world. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will pull out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and those who continue to break the law. <sup>42</sup>The angels will throw them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## Come, You Thankful People, Come



1 Come, you thank - ful peo - ple, come; Raise the song of  
 2 All the world is God's own field, Fruit un - to his  
 3 For the Lord our God shall come And shall take his  
 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come To your fi - nal



har - vest - home. All be safe - ly gath - ered in  
 praise to yield; Wheat and weeds to - geth - er sown,  
 har - vest home, From his field shall in that day  
 har - vest - home; Gath - er all your peo - ple in,



Ere the win - ter storms be - gin. God our mak - er  
 Un - to joy or sor - row grown. First the blade and  
 All of - fens - es purge a - way, Give his an - gels  
 Free from sor - row, free from sin, There, for - ev - er



shall pro - vide For our wants to be sup - plied. Come to  
 then the ear, Then the full corn shall ap - pear. Lord of  
 charge at last In the fire the weeds to cast, But the  
 pu - ri - fied, In your gar - ner to a - bide. Come with



God's own tem - ple, come; Raise the song of har - vest - home.  
 har - vest, grant that we Whole - some grain and pure may be.  
 fruit - ful ears to store In his gar - ner ev - er - more,  
 all your an - gels, come; Raise the glo - rious har - vest - home.

Sermon Text & Theme**Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 ... What Should We Do About the Weeds?**

- 1) Recognize their source.
- 2) Accept their presence.
- 3) Be sure of their destiny.

## The Apostles' Creed

(Melody: CW 365 "Love Divine, All Love Excelling")

**I believe in God the Father, Maker of the heav'n and earth. And in Jesus Christ, our Savior, God's own Son, of human birth. Virgin born, the Lord incarnate, whom the Spirit did conceive, suffered under Pontius Pilate; He's the God whom I believe.**

**Crucified, was dead and buried; Down to hell in victory; From the dead He rose the third day; Up to heaven triumphantly. There at God's right hand He's ruling, by his will the world is led. He will come to judge the nations, both the living and the dead.**

**I believe in God the Spirit; in His Church, His chosen band. They are joined in sweet communion; Holy in his sight they stand. I believe in sins forgiven; I believe I'll rise again; I believe in life eternal. Amen! Amen! Amen!**

## Offertory Prayer

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

*(Please stand)*

M: My fellow disciples, in the Lord's Supper, Jesus is coming to us in a very special way: as we receive the bread and the wine of communion, Jesus is present to give us his actual body and blood, and to personally pronounce forgiveness to each one of us. Because of the Lord's presence and his forgiveness in communion, the Apostle Paul wrote, "*A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*" (1 Corinthians 11:28) Therefore, before the Lord comes to meet with us, let us honestly ask ourselves before God who knows our hearts:

1) Do you confess that you have sinned against God and deserve his anger and punishment? If so, then answer, "I do confess!"

**C: I do confess!**

M: It is good for you to confess, because God's word says, "*When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.*" (Psalm 32:3)

2) Are you sorry for the sins you have committed against God by things you have done, said and thought, and by the things you have failed to do? If so then answer, "I do repent!"

**C: I do repent!**

M: It is right for you to repent, because God's Word says, "*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not within us.*" (1 John 1:8)

3) Do you now believe that God will forgive you and save you for the sake of Jesus' perfect life and redeeming death? If so then answer, "I do believe!"

**C: I do believe!**

M: It is right for you to believe because Jesus himself says, "*God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*" (John 3:16)

4) Do you now promise by the power of the Holy Spirit to make every effort to turn away from sin and live for your Lord? If so then answer, "I do so promise!"

**C: I do so promise!**

M: It is right for you to promise, because God's Word says, "*Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.*" (Matthew 3:8)

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: As repentant and forgiven sinners, we now come to meet with our Lord.



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



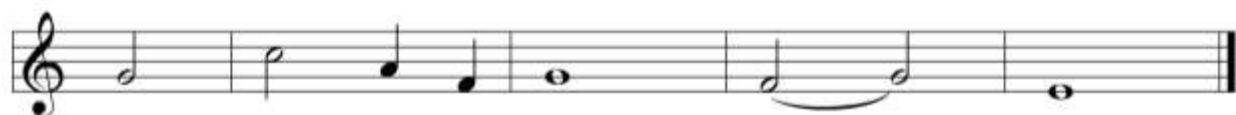
world; have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you



take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; grant us your peace. A - men.



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## Feed Your Children, God Most Holy

Feed your chil - dren, God most ho - ly; Com - fort  
sin - ners poor and low - ly. Je - sus, bread of life from  
heav - en, Bless the food you here have giv - en.  
As these gifts the bod - y nour - ish, May our souls  
in gra - ces flour - ish Till with saints in heav'n - ly  
splen - dor At your feast due thanks we ren - der.

### THANKSGIVING

M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: **And his mercy endures forever.**

### Prayer of the Church

M: Eternal God and Father, we give you thanks for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, for fellowship with believers in our congregation and in our synod.

C: **Help us to rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and to use them faithfully.**

M: Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us. In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, O Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.

**C: Awaken us to the opportunities you give to proclaim your message of love.**

M: Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.

**C: Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, an acquaintance, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

*Silent prayer.*

M: Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care, and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.

**C: Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow.*

M: Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.

**C: Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.**

### Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.**

**Amen.**

### BLESSING

M: The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: Amen.**

## From All that Dwell below the Skies



1 From all that dwell be - low the skies Let the Cre - a - tor's  
2 E - ter - nal are your mer - cies, Lord; E - ter - nal is your



praise a - rise. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!  
glo - rious Word. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!



Let the Re - deem - er's name be sung Through  
Your praise shall sound from shore to shore Till



ev - 'ry land, by ev - 'ry tongue. Al - le - lu - ia!  
suns shall rise and set no more. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -  
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -



lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!  
lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

## Announcements

***Pastor will be on Vacation from June 17-27.***

### ***Church Cleaners:***

July 23 – Mark // July 23 – Thomas

### DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

<b>Su (16)</b>	<b>9:30 am</b> 11:45 am <b>10:45 am</b> <b>3:00 pm</b>	<b>Worship with Communion</b> Coffee Hour <b>Bible Class</b> <b>Worship with Holy Communion in Poltimore</b>
<b>Su (23)</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>Worship</b> <i>(No Communion)</i>
<b>Su (30)</b>	<b>9:30 am</b> 11:45 am <b>10:45 am</b> <b>3:00 pm</b>	<b>Worship with Communion</b> Coffee Hour <b>Bible Class</b> <b>Worship with Holy Communion in Poltimore</b>



## **Divine Word**

### **Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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