

July 23, 2023  
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Wheat and Tares



**Thought:** Don't be quick to judge the "weeds" of this world; they could be wheat in disguise.

"Develop your sense of perspective. When everything around you looks like weeds, remember: From the heavens, all is a garden."

–Philip Toshio Sudo

Weeds and Wheat growing together because they cannot be told apart in the beginning. Is this truly about recognition or possible redemption? Are we simply waiting for the sheep to be separated from the goats? Lord, when did we see you?

**Prelude** – Jill Rimington

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Prayer Concerns**

**Sharing of the Peace**

**Call to Worship**

A: Rejoice, people of God! The Lord knows you completely.

**C: You know when we sit down and when we rise up.**

A: Rejoice, people of God! The Lord knows you completely.

**C: Where can we go from God's spirit?**

A: Rejoice, people of God! The Lord knows you completely.

**C: God's hand leads us no matter where we go, near or far.**

A: Rejoice, people of God! The Lord knows you completely.

**C: Search us, God. Know our hearts.**

-adapted from Psalm 139

**Gathering Hymn** – “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness” ELW #843

<https://youtu.be/5VwjcpXJVb8>

by Koine

### **Invocation**

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

### **Confession and forgiveness**

P: From the Word which God has sown, a harvest will be gathered in.

**C: Among the wheat, weeds appear, sown by the enemy.**

P: “My Word shall not return to me empty,” says the Lord. “it shall accomplish the thing for which I sent it.”

**C: If we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

P: So let the seed be sown.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

P: Lord of the living harvest:

**C: we confess that we have sinned. In our thinking, speaking, doing-proper fruit has not been borne.**

P: “My Word shall not return to me empty,” says the Lord.

**C: For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive our sins, remove our guilt, and inspire our hearts-that we may be gathered with the righteous.**

P: “My Word shall accomplish the thing for which I sent it,” says the Lord. Like a grain of wheat buried in the earth, Jesus Christ was given into death for you.

**C: And he has borne abundant fruit!**

P: In him there is forgiveness, life, and resurrection from the dead. By him we are redeemed and set at liberty.

**C: How great the harvest God provides! Amen.**

### **Greeting**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

### **Kyrie**

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen and Amen.**

**Hymn of Praise** – “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” ELW #815

[https://youtu.be/sDzcZWa\\_YqQ](https://youtu.be/sDzcZWa_YqQ)

by Chris Brunelle

### **Prayer of the Day**

A: Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion.

**C: By our Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## The Word

Old Testament reading – Isaiah 44:6-8

*There is no other God than the Lord*

<sup>6</sup>Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.<sup>7</sup>Who is like me? Let them proclaim it, let them declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be.<sup>8</sup>Do not fear, or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 86:11-17

*Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth*

<sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

<sup>12</sup>**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name forevermore.**

<sup>13</sup>For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the pit of death.

<sup>14</sup>**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes.**

<sup>15</sup>But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

<sup>16</sup>**Turn to me and have mercy on me; give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**

<sup>17</sup>Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame; because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

## Epistle reading - Romans 8:12-25

*I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.*

<sup>12</sup>So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—<sup>13</sup>for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup>For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup>For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” <sup>16</sup>it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. <sup>18</sup>I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup>for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; <sup>23</sup>and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

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The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel – Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=zSZ0yULTyks&feature=shareb>

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you O Lord.**

*Let them grow together until the harvest*

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;<sup>25</sup>but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup>And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ <sup>28</sup>He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup>But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would

uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” <sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup>the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup>and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, 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. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

### **Children of God time**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=80Afacva68k&feature=shareb>

### **Message – “I, the Weed”**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=WR9fr8ewY9s&feature=shareb>

**Hymn of the Day** – “Come, Ye Thankful People Come” ELW #693

<https://youtu.be/msOzJ6DY7EA>

by Tabernacle Choir

### **Apostles’ Creed**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead,  
on the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

P: Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

A: O God, you call your church to announce the gospel of reconciliation and truth both near and far. Guide your church as it seeks your wisdom and shares it, trusting your Spirit bearing witness among us. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You brought forth all creation and called it good. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields and protect areas impacted by natural disasters (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers and firefighters, and teach us to advocate for those who live in fear. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction (*especially*). Sustain your people living with HIV/ AIDS, provide shelter for all who are unhoused, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You name each of us as your children. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A: You send faithful people to proclaim freedom from bondage and to renew your church. Encourage us by the witness of the faithful departed (*including Birgitta of Sweden, whom the church commemorates today*), so that we live into that same hope. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

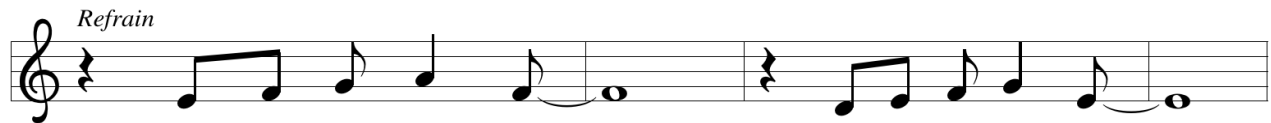
**Amen.**

**Offering**

**Offertory Music – “Change My Heart O God”**



# Change My Heart, O God



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953  
Music: CHANGE MY HEART, Eddie Espinosa  
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## Offertory Prayer

A: You have planted us, O God - you have given us life.

**C: You have transplanted us, O God - grafting your Word into our hearts.**

A: You have watered and fed us, strengthened and nourished us.

**C: We are growing, O God. We are bearing fruit.**

A: Accept our fruit, we pray. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **Preface**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Work take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

### **Consecration**

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

## **Distribution**

**Communion Music** – Jill Rimington

**Communion Blessing** – Pastor

## **Post Communion Prayer**

A: You came into this world's field, O Christ, to spread the seed of your Word.

**C: You lived among the weeds – weeds that choked you and put you to death.**

A: And yet you rose to conquer death forever.

**C: We remember your death, O Christ. We rejoice in your resurrection.**

A: We look toward the harvest. We bless you now and evermore.

**C: Amen.**

## **Benediction**

**C: Growing together until the harvest. May God reach our hearts.**

P: Numbers 6

**Sending Hymn** – “Be Thou My Vision” ELW #793

<https://youtu.be/ihJAJA4ibEs>

by Nathan Pacheco

## **Dismissal**

A: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude** – Jill Rimington

## The Difference Between Ripened Wheat & Tares

