



## St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

"A Legacy of Worship and Outreach in San Antonio since 1857"

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16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

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Welcome! It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the "Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds" Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. And with St. Paul, we also long for the day when all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from our worship today we go forth to bear the good fruit of justice and mercy.

### GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

#### Prelude and Bells

#### Welcome and Announcements

#### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the Holy Trinity: the Eternal One who dwells in light,  
the ✠ Son who calls us to new life, and the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*(Silence for personal reflection)*

God of overflowing grace:

**We come to you with repentant hearts.  
Forgive us for shallow thankfulness.  
Forgive us for passing by the ones in need.  
Forgive us for setting our hopes on fleeting treasures.  
Bring us home from the wilderness of sin,  
and strengthen us to serve you in all we do,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

By the grace of God in ✠ Christ Jesus, who gave himself up for us,  
your sins are forgiven and you are made free.  
Let us rejoice with one another, as we find our home in God's mercy. **Amen.**

#### Choir

**"Let the Whole Creation Cry"**

#### Greeting

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

#### Prayer of the Day

Faithful God, most merciful judge:  
You care for your children with firmness and compassion.  
By your 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.**

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## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture and preaching; we respond in profession of faith and prayer*

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### First Reading

**Romans 8:12-25**

*[Paul writes]* <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.

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

### The Holy Gospel

**Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

The good news of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew:  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<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.**

**Sermon**

**Pastor James Dew**

**Solo (Victor Mendez)**

**"Agnus Dei" by Bizet**

## Apostles' Creed

With the whole Church in heaven and on earth, we confess our faith...

**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

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, we pray for the Church, the world, and all who are in need:

God of heaven and earth, we pray for your Church, for this congregation, and for all our Christian communities, that your Spirit move among us, to build up, and to reach out, that we, your people, may indeed be the vessel through which you continue to touch, bless, and heal the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, O Lord, for the grace to be able to slow ourselves down, even in the very midst of our everyday routines, to become more aware of the gifts and graces which you constantly offer us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of promise, we continue to lift up to you our hurting world, shaken by anger, fear, and pandemic. Bring peace to our hearts and to our communities, strengthen our spirits, and restore our well-being. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Father God, we pray for all whose lives have been overshadowed by pain, or sickness, or grief. We lift up our prayers for *Bob Cauble, Chris Gates, Danny Myers, Janice Williams, Ralph Detwiler, Claudine Michalek, Kim Friesenhahn, Kenny Knippa, Bill Rickrim, Frances Franz, Alwin Schaefer, Bill Brewer, Paul Mason, Bonnie Eckhardt, Albert and Deleyce Tietze, Paul and Gloria Boenisch, Nat Castillo, Bill Witte, Beth Knox, Tom Bartholomew, the Torres Family, the Garcia family, Lauren Ottsmer, Dottie Bowles*, as well as those whom we name, that you would touch their lives with strength and love, and with healing and wholeness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your good hands, O God, we place ourselves and our prayers, trusting in your abundant mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

*(Please verbally greet those nearest you these or similar words: "Peace be with you.")*

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## MEAL

*We bring our "first fruit" offerings to the Table of the Lord  
where we are strengthened and nourished with the Body and Blood of Christ*

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### Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**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.**

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness, to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your Anointed One.

Praise to you for your Spirit, poured out upon all nations.

For in the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this to remember me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this, as often as you drink of it, to remember me.

In and through this Holy Sacrament, we participate in our Lord's Passover from death to life,  
and we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again.**

God of Promise, pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast,  
breathe new life into us, raise us up as the body of Christ, and send us forth for the sake of the world.

With your holy ones of all times and places, with earth and sea and all their creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Remember us, Lord, in your kingdom, and help us to pray:

**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.**

## **Agnus Dei**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Grant us peace. Amen.**

## **Holy Communion**

*We believe that Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine and we welcome all who wish to receive the Holy Sacrament. During this time of pandemic, individual servings of the Eucharist will be consumed in the pews at the direction of the Pastor.*

## **Communion Prayer**

Almighty God,  
Through this Holy Sacrament you have fed us  
with the very body and blood of Christ.  
Now send us out, to do the work you have given us to do,  
to live-out your love to a hurting world,  
and to be the hands and feet of Christ  
to all we encounter; in Jesus' Name. **Amen.**

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## **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us out in mission to the world*

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## **Benediction**

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you, protect you, and bring you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

## **Choir**

***"Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak"***

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ goes with you.  
**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

## **Postlude**

*Worship is central to who we are as a people of God. Every time we gather to hear and respond to the Word, to offer up our prayers for the needs of many, and to receive Christ's living presence in the consecrated bread and wine, we seek to "become what we receive", namely, the Body of Christ for the sake of the life of the world. As we are gathered, fed, and then sent back out in mission, God empowers us to be bearers of blessing and vessels of grace, commissioning us to intentionally live out the reign of God throughout the course of our weekly living.*

