

"Dream of Jacob" by John August Swanson.

Christ Church **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Rev. Dan Stark, pastor
and Pam Kothrade, musician

www.uccmke.org

In this seventh week after the Pentecost event, we continue our exploration of the saga of Jacob, the younger grandson of Abraham and Sarah and youngest of the twins of Rebekah and Isaac. In this week's story, Jacob flees his home to get away from his brother Esau after tricking him out of his birthright. In our Gospel lesson from Matthew, Jesus compares the kin-dom of God to a plant bed where both good seeds and bad weeds are scattered. Jesus essentially says that we have the potential for good and evil within us, so we must learn to exist together. This is an important reminder for us today as emotions about wedge and cultural issues continue to swirl in our national conversations. How will we coexist as wheat among weeds? When are we more wheat-like or weed-like? The truth is, we are all wheat and weeds, and God works to separate out sin and the effects of sin in this world.

Words of Welcome

A Song for Today

Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

Musician, Pam Kothrade

Opening Litany

UCC Worship Ways

We come to celebrate God's blessings to us.

Surely God is in this place!

We come to open ourselves to God's guidance and love.

Surely God is in this place!

We come to see more clearly God's presence in our lives.

Surely God is in this place!

We come to see God in this community of seekers.

Surely God is in this place!

We come to pray, praise, and offer ourselves to God.

Surely God is in this place! Let us worship!

Prayer for Today

*Holy One, who calls us into community,
and invites us to welcome your prophets and messengers,
let us experience your welcome to us
gathered in various places but joined in this moment.
Show us that we are beloved
and honored in your presence and in this community.
Show us how to put our resources at the service of all,
help us know that the cup of water given in your name
nourishes the one who gives and the one who receives.
Satisfy our thirst to know your presence here and now.*

Amen.

Old Testament

[Genesis 28:10-19a](#)

This week's reading from Genesis once again follows the saga of several ancestors of our faith. Today we continue with the story of Jacob and Esau. After tricking his older twin brother, Esau, Jacob, flees home to get away from him. On the way to his uncle Laban's home, Jacob rests upon a rock and has a



Rev. Ruth Garwood



"Jacob's Dream" by Ferdinand Bol.

dream of a ladder with angels ascending and descending from it. God tells Jacob in the dream that his ancestors will be as numerous as the dust of the earth and they will inherit a promised land. Jacob erects an altar on the place where he had the dream and names it “Beth-el” (House of God).

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Ruth Garwood

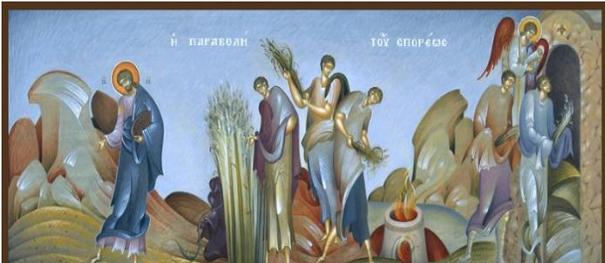
*Gracious God,
in the fields of our lives, we strive to be fruitful, but we fall short.
We get so comfortable
that we sleep when we need to be vigilant
about the errors in our own lives
and the injustices around us.
We are so casual about wrongdoing that it creeps into our lives
and threatens to overwhelm the good we do.
We do not pay attention to the unjust systems which shape our lives,
that we must work to transform
so that your Beloved Community may come to be.
Forgive us.
Keep us awake so that we can produce the lives you call us to live.
Amen.*

Words of Assurance (Romans 8:15)

*You are not God’s tenants or employees; you are God’s precious family.
In the words of the apostle Paul, “You did not receive a spirit of servitude to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption.” As God’s children, in God’s embrace, you are forgiven and free.*

New Testament

[Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43](#)



“Parable of the Sower” by artist unknown, late 20th CE.

In this Gospel lesson from Matthew, Jesus tells another parable to his disciples and the crowds. This is the only other parable Jesus explains to his disciples aside from the Parable of the Sower. Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is compared to someone who sowed good seeds in their soil, but while everyone was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. The weeds cannot be easily removed – to remove the weeds would upend the wheat. Jesus says that he sows good seeds but the Adversary sows the bad ones. Jesus says the weeds and wheat grow together, so rather than thinking we are good or bad seeds, we ought to remember we have the potential for both good and evil within us.

Homily

UNordinary Times: Wheat and Weeds

Rev. Dan Stark

Prayers of the People The Lord’s Prayer

Passing the Peace

Although we cannot be physically close to one another at this time, we can be relationally close. This Sunday morning, you are invited to pass the peace with your church family and loved ones by taking

a moment to text, write, call, or message the people in your church family to let them know you are thinking of them. May the peace of Christ be with you.

**Closing Song
Sending**

Surely the Presence of the Lord

Musician, Pam Kothrade

God's spirit is always with you.
Wherever we go, God is there!
If you ascend to heaven,
God is there.
If you settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
God is there.
In all places, God holds you fast.
May you know deeply the presence of God:
Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit.
Go with God.
Surely God is in this place.

--

If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email pastor@uccmke.org.
Christ Church UCC, 915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

Please be advised that we will gather in person on July 26th for worship with safety and sanitation protocols in place. Learn more here. <https://www.uccmke.org/covid-19>

You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](#) or by mailing a check to Christ Church,
915 East Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53207.

