

PENTECOST 7 2020

Summer In-Person Outdoor Worship Schedule:

We are pleased to announce that FAITH Lutheran will gather for "**Outdoor Worship**" **this Sunday, July 19th** in our park near the Rose Garden at our **Summer worship time of 9:30am**. We will continue to practice the CDC requirements with social distancing and face coverings. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be shared this Sunday, again while observing distance and health.

Devotional

Isaiah 44:6-8 Romans 8:12-25 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Welcome to our worship this day!

Let us pray,
God beyond all our gods,
Lord of Lord
You offer us life's blessings
In the seed that is blown by the wind
In the spirit that gives us life, so precious, so amazing
You come to us today in the power of your word
Thrown like a seed, cast into our heart
Ready to take root, to grow and to become.

And Lord you call us to become...more than what we are.
Great as your eternal desire,
Come Lord Jesus and call us to ourselves,
To the gifts within and without
To the hopes and the dreams of what it is to be
Into your kingdom...now...and in the forever. Amen

It is an age-old question: Why is there evil in the world? From Matthew's gospel, in the sharing of the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul in the second lesson we long for the day when all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Our Old Testament lesson from Isaiah will raise up the hope we have in the promises of God for justice and mercy.

Once more: What is there evil in the world?

The Coronavirus is not good, call it evil if you want. It has taken over so many good things, intertwined our lives and complicated our living, our ministry and even our relationships. Call it a great testing time. A sorting out process.

Jesus in the parable of the Wheat and Weeds, suggests that we give the process some time and some patience. We do not know how all of this is going to turn out, this pandemic. Rest assured our God has not thrown us to winds of time, for us to be consumed and pillaged of our hopes and dreams. But, for such a time as this God has called us to be witnesses to something else. Call it our hope in the process of growth, even and especially even as we live with both the good and bad stuff of this life.

The parable of the Wheat and Weeds is a story of good and evil existing together. We could dwell on the evil, or we can enliven our hopes for the good, that will come out of this great evil. That is what I am hoping for. A little growth through the process, a deeper understanding of what it means to be a person of faith, and what it means to be filled with the love of God, reaching out in new ways to those who are confused, and lost and uncertain about this thing called life. Yes, I believe in the Sovereignty of God, and of the redemption that God gives through Jesus Christ, and I am every desiring to listen, if I have the ears to hear, to the great promises of God.

Why is there evil in the world? Maybe it is in the scandal of the evil, that I will be able to see the great good that we can be about, ultimately, along with the very Spirit of God, to conquer it by making wise choices and living into the promises of God.

Maybe the better question is: "Why is there good in the world?"

In God's grace and mercy,

Pastor Dave Beard

