

7th Sunday after Pentecost, July 23, 2017

6th Sunday after Trinity, Proper 11(16)

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

Available on line at:

www.bethlehmlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies

or

**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

July 20, 2017 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44130

*Presented as a part of the bible study/worship weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church
setting, bi-weekly at an assisted living site and used by Lutherans in Africa.*

E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.

Matthew 13:24-30



<https://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/wheattares.htm>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 772 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not Listed

“In holy conversation”

“The hymn of the day is based on a Swedish tune, Bred Dina Vida Vingar, “spread your wide wings”. It was introduced in the Lutheran supplemental hymnal, With One Voice. The Lutheran Service Book, LSB is the only hymnal to use these words written by Dr. Gregory J. Wismar” *Adapted from Living the Lutheran Lectionary, July 20, 2014 with information from a Wikipedia article that is no longer available.* “After 40 years of ordained service to the Lutheran church, including just over 24 years as the spiritual leader of Christ the King in Newtown, Connecticut. Pastor Greg Wismar retired on Sunday, June 12, 2011.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Akm4aJUyWwQ> was made on the occasion of his retirement.

A devotion based on this hymn was written by Pastor Wismar.

https://www.cuchicago.edu/globalassets/documents/center-for-church-music/devotions/hymn-of-the-day-devotion---proper-11_2.pdf

The hymn can also be found through a website by an Australian pastor, Rev. Clyde McLennan, Small Church Music, linked through hymnary.org . <http://hymnary.org/hymnal/SCM?page=19>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x4XpRGDwEc> “Sung by the Weaverville United Methodist choir, Weaverville NC, on November 14, 2010. We weren't quite sure how this would sound until we got the instruments involved that Sunday morning, and even then it took some faith... Very nice! This was my aunt and uncle's church in Weaverville, NC. Who knew Methodists could sing Swedish Lutheran music so well! LOL”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQvYte54EOQ> “Försvarsmakten, föreställande begravningen av Lt Gunnar Andersson.” A Swedish site that is playing at a state funeral for (Lt ?) Gunnar Andersson. “Ver dagen slut” means “at the end of the day”.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

Isaiah 44:6-8; RCL, Genesis 28:10-19a and Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 (Next Week: Deuteronomy 7:6-9; RCL, Genesis 29:15-28, Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128)

“Isaiah 44:6-8 is a short, defensible unit, marked off from the unit that follows (verses 9-20) which shifts to prose in the NRSV (contrast NIV and TNK), but most commentators consider verses 6-8 to belong to a larger unit, whether that includes preceding verses, verses that follow (e.g., verses 21-22), or even both. So, if this short unit is adopted as the preached text, preachers may need to expand their view and consider a wider selection of verses. This is not to say there is not enough here to preach on its own--there certainly is!--but preachers will have to linger over the words and, in so doing, teach their congregations to do the same... ”*

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=990 **Brent A. Strawn**
Professor of Old Testament, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

*“...Jewish people call their Bible the Tanakh. Tanakh is an acronym based upon the 3 divisions of the Hebrew Bible -- the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Hebrew words for these are, **Torah** (the Law) **Nebi 'im** (the Prophets) **Kethubim** (the Writings)

The first letters of these 3 words are T-N-K, which come together in the word TaNaKh..."
<http://www.biblebell.org/bible/HebOT.html>

Besides Me There Is No God

⁶ 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.

⁷ Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.^[a]
 Let him declare and set it before me,
 since I appointed an ancient people.

Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.

⁸ Fear not, nor be afraid;
 have I not told you from of old and declared it?
 And you are my witnesses!
 Is there a God besides me?
 There is no Rock; I know not any."

a. [Isaiah 44:7](#) Or *Who like me can proclaim it?*

"The prophet's preaching is focused on God's being.

Who is this Yhwh in a world whose horizon is filled with so many possible objects of worship -- so many other gods? There are two complementary bits of this little text: the prophet's witness (verse 6a) and Yhwh's self-revelation (verses 6b-8).

The prophet introduces the divine utterance by drawing attention to who the speaker really is: "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts" (Isaiah 44:6a). The speaker being introduced is not playing second fiddle in the cosmic orchestra. Rather, Yhwh is introduced as both first chair and conductor -- the one and only. Yhwh is King, Redeemer, and Lord of hosts...

Of the many directions that this text could take the preacher and her hearers, two stand out. The **first** relates the question that begins this commentary: Who is this Yhwh in a world whose horizon is filled with so many possible objects of worship -- so many gods? This question is as contemporary as ever. The world in which we live is wrought with objects demanding our devotion. These other objects, which we can all name and find in relation to ourselves and those whom we are called to serve, inspire fear ... fears of death, inadequacy, alienation, being in control, being out of control, etc ...

...These fears, often awakened and fueled by strong messages from outside of ourselves, demand devotion. Yet, Yhwh -- King, Redeemer, and Lord of hosts -- the beginning and the end - - directs our attention and our devotion away from these empty things, away from these empty pursuits back toward the only one who saves, back toward the only source of life. ..

A **second** and related direction that this text might take the preacher is toward the particularly Christian incarnation of this "first-ness" and "last-ness." Within the horizon of Isaiah 44:6 is the witness to the Jesus Christ's first-ness and last-ness in Revelation, in particular the

declaration of crucified and risen Lord: “Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2111 **Samuel Giere**
Associate Professor of Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
Yod (Y)	Tet (T)	Chet (Ch)	Zayin (Z)	Vav (V)	He (H)	Dalet (D)	Gimel (G)	Bet (B/V)	Alef (silent)
ע	ס	נ	נ	מ	מ	ל	ך	כ	
Ayin (silent)	Samech (S)	Nun (N)	Nun (N)	Mem (M)	Mem (M)	Lamed (L)	Khaf (Kh)	Kaf (K/Kh)	
ת	ש	ר	ק	ץ	צ	ף	פ		
Tav (T)	Shin (Sh/S)	Resh (R)	Qof (Q)	Tzadeh (Ts)	Tzadeh (Ts)	Feh (F)	Peh (P/F)		

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-hebrew-alphabet-aleph-bet>

Psalm 119:57-64; RCL, Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 or Isaiah 44:6-8 and Psalm 86:11-17 (Psalm 125; RCL, 1 Kings 3:5-12, Psalm 119:129-136)

“..In this section the Psalmist seems to take firm hold upon God himself; appropriating him (57), crying out for him (58), returning to him (59), solacing himself in him (61, 62), associating with his people (63), and sighing for his personal instruction (64). Note how the first verse of this octave is linked to the last of the former one, of which indeed it is an expansion. “This I had because I kept thy precepts. Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.” Being many, these verses are still but one bread...”

“...The first verse of this eight is fragrant with full assurance and strong resolve, and this last verse overflows with a sense of the divine fullness, and of the Psalmist’s personal dependence...”

<https://www.eternallifeministries.org/psalm119h.htm>, Charles Spurgeon

Heth (also spelled Khet, Kheth, Chet, Cheth, Het or Heth)

- ⁵⁷ The LORD is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
- ⁵⁸ I entreat your favor with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.
- ⁵⁹ When I think on my ways,
I turn my feet to your testimonies;
- ⁶⁰ I hasten and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
- ⁶¹ Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
- ⁶² At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous rules.
- ⁶³ I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.
- ⁶⁴ The earth, O LORD, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes!

“...As we read these eight verses I want us to see an underlying current in the attitude and mindset of the psalmist. Now understand that this theme or undercurrent does not simply appear in these 8 verses, but it has been constant throughout the chapter... I am simply pointing it out once again to you...

Look at the END of each of these 8 verses... let's read what it says:

- 57 - ...promise to keep YOUR WORDS – Hebrew – Dabar - utterances
- 58 - ...according to YOUR PROMISE – Hebrew – Im-rah' – Word of God
- 59 - ...to YOUR TESTIMONIES – Hebrew – Eh-dah' – God's divine law
- 60 - ...keep YOUR COMMANDMENTS – Hebrew – Mitz-vah – general command from God
- 61 - ...not forget YOUR LAW – Hebrew – Tor-ah – Divine instruction
- 62 - ...because of YOUR RIGHTEOUS RULES – Hebrew – Divine procedure
- 63 - ...keep YOUR PRECEPTS – Hebrew – Pick-ood – God's statutes/Law
- 64 - ...teach me YOUR STATUTES – Hebrew -- khome' – prescribed by God

In everyone of these verses the psalmist prefaces the law or commandment or instruction with an owner... the owner and administrator of this law or instruction is described with the personal pronoun of YOUR... with every word that describes these prescriptions for the people, the originator is God.

This reveals to us two very important basics when reading this chapter...

The psalmist understood from WHOM the Law comes... the originator of the Law he revered was the Creator God of the Universe.

The psalmist reveals in his understanding of this law that he held a personal relationship with the creator of these laws... who is the Creator of all things... this was personal for the psalmist!...” <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/heth-psalm-11957-64-bobby-stults-sermon-on-law-163021> Pastor **Bobby Stults**, Oak Park Baptist Church, New Orleans, Louisiana

Romans 8:18-27; RCL, Romans 8:12-25 (*Romans 8:28-39; RCL, Romans 8: 26-39*)
The reading from Romans will continue through September 17.

“Mom, why are there mosquitoes that give people malaria? Why are there germs that make us sick?”

“Mom, I saw on the news a bad flood that killed a lot of people. Why are there floods and earthquakes and hurricanes and tornadoes? Why are there famines where people starve to death?”

“Mom, why did my friend at school get cancer and die? Why did Grandma get sick and die?”

“Mom, why do people set off bombs to blow up other people? Why do people do bad things to hurt each other?”

Maybe your kids have asked you questions like these. Probably you’ve wrestled with them yourself. Some become agnostics or atheists because they cannot come up with satisfactory answers to the question of how a loving, all-powerful God can allow the terrible suffering that is in the world. Since none of us are exempt from suffering and death, it’s important that we understand what the Bible teaches on this difficult topic.

Philosophers, theologians, pastors, and others have written scores of books on the subject. Some of these books are helpful, while some are heretical. Job, the oldest book on the Bible, is devoted to this problem. And in our text, Paul gives part of the biblical perspective that we need to persevere through the suffering that we surely will encounter. It’s not comprehensive, but it is helpful and practical if we will struggle to understand and practice what the apostle teaches us here...”

<https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-49-present-suffering-future-glory-romans-818-25>

Steve (J. Cole) has been the pastor of Flagstaff Christian Fellowship since May, 1992...He graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M., 1976 in Bible exposition) and California State University, Long Beach (B.A., philosophy, 1968 [back in the middle ages!]).

Future Glory

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for

words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because^[g] the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

“In exploring our lectionary text, it is helpful to review briefly the argument Paul has made leading up to it.

Having described the conflict we experience as those enslaved to sin and death (Romans 7:14-25), Paul presents our only hope of deliverance. God sent his Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh" to deal with sin (8:3) and has given us his Spirit to dwell within us, so that we are now led by the Spirit of God (8:9-14).

The Spirit bears witness that we have been adopted as God's children and have become joint heirs with Christ (8:15-17). Because we are joint heirs with Christ, we can expect to share in both his sufferings and his glory (8:17).

Paul is confident that "the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us" (8:18), yet he does not gloss over the present reality of suffering. The suffering to which Paul refers is not limited to persecution for the sake of following Christ. Instead, Paul is speaking in general terms of the suffering we all experience in "this present time," since we are part of a world in bondage to sin, death, and decay...

...We are not left alone in our waiting and struggle, for "the Spirit helps us in our weakness" (8:26). Even though we don't know how or what to pray, the Spirit intercedes for us with "inarticulate groans (*stenagmois*)" (8:26). The NRSV translation, "with sighs too deep for words," obscures the parallel between our "groaning" and that of the Spirit. Just as we groan together with the whole creation (8:22-23), the Spirit groans together with and for us, interceding for us according to the will of God (8:27).

Our grasp of God's will and the future God has in store for creation is limited at best. How can we pray for what we have not seen and have difficulty imagining? The Spirit gives voice to what we cannot articulate but hope and long for in our inmost selves..."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=319 [Elisabeth Johnson](#)
Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Meiganga, Cameroon

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13th Chapter”

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 13:44-52; RCL, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52)

“I had a bush that was trying to grow in my yard and went to pull it out, but in doing so, found that it's roots were tangled up with a peony that I wanted to save, so I had to leave it and just keep it cut short. Everything looked ok above ground, but beneath...In trying to uproot the "weeds" we see around us, we find that the roots of evil wrap around our hearts as well. Our Lutheran take is that being sinner and saint at the same time, we know the need for the eschatological patience Jesus counsels. I also am intrigued by the words, "Let them grow

together." I think we can learn from the "other" even as we try to guide them in righteousness."
https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=120 A Working Preacher User (July 16, 2008 at 12:42 PM)

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵ but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds^[c] among the wheat and went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷ And the servants^[d] of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, "Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

³¹ He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³ He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

Prophecy and Parables

³⁴ All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. ³⁵ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet:^[a]

*"I will open my mouth in parables;
I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."*

a. [Matthew 13:35](#) Some manuscripts Isaiah the prophet

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ"

“Jesus tells a second parable about sowing seeds, this time about two sowers -- one who sows good seed to grow wheat, and the enemy who sows weeds among the wheat. For this parable too, Jesus offers an allegorical interpretation to his disciples in private. Like the parable of the sower, the parable of the wheat and weeds offers a perspective on opposition to Jesus, and also speaks more generally to the persistence of evil in the world.

Wheat and Weeds

The sower has sown good seed in his field for a healthy wheat harvest. But in the dark of night an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. "So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well" (13:24-26).

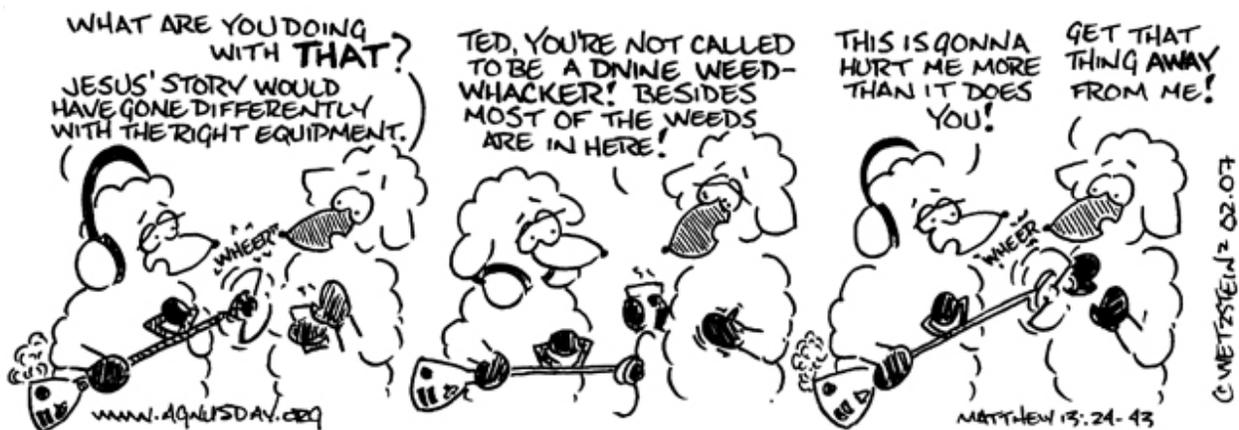
A bit of botany is helpful in understanding this parable. Matthew uses the Greek term *zizania*, which in modern botanical terms refers to the genus of wild rice grasses. What Matthew most likely refers to, however, is darnel or cockle, a noxious weed that closely resembles wheat and is plentiful in Israel. The difference between darnel and real wheat is evident only when the plants mature and the ears appear. The ears of the real wheat are heavy and will droop, while the ears of the darnel stand up straight...

In the clearest of terms, Jesus tells his disciples what almost every element of the parable represents ...(13:37-39). Jesus does not, however, say whom the slaves represent... Jesus says that the reapers -- not the slaves -- will take care of this at harvest time. "The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (13:41-43). It is the angels -- not any human beings -- who are authorized to pluck out the weeds from the wheat...

God's Job -- Not Ours

...Jesus makes clear that we simply cannot be certain who is "in" or who is "out." In fact, God's judgment about these matters will take many by surprise (7:21-23; 8:11-12; 21:31-32; 25:31-46). Thank God it is not up to us! We can leave the weeding to the angels, and get on with the mission Jesus has given us -- proclaiming the *good* news of the kingdom of God drawing near."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=979 [Elisabeth Johnson](#)
Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Meiganga, Cameroon. [Read more about Elisabeth at https://camerooniangrace.wordpress.com/](https://camerooniangrace.wordpress.com/)



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Use this web site to look ahead. <https://www.lcms.org/worship/lectionary-summaries>

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Proper 12
(30 July 2017)

Deuteronomy 7:6–9
Romans 8:28–39
Matthew 13:44–52

The Son of God Has Redeemed Us for Himself with His Holy and Precious Blood

The Lord our God has chosen us to be “*his treasured possession,*” not because of any strength in us, but solely “*because the LORD loves*” us (Deut. 7:6–8). He is faithful, and He “*keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments*” (Deut. 7:9). He has searched for us and found us in love, and He has bestowed on us “*great value*” by the great price that He has paid on the cross (Matt. 13:45–46). In His joy, He has redeemed us by His cross and gathered us into His Kingdom by the Gospel. Now we are “*hidden in a field,*” covered by the cross and subject to the persecution of the world (Matt. 13:44), not for destruction, but “*to be conformed to the image of his Son*” (Rom. 8:29). Since we “*are called according to his purpose*” (Rom. 8:28), and because Christ Jesus died, rose again and lives to intercede for us “*at the right hand of God*” (Rom. 8:34), there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from “*the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Rom. 8:39).

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Proper 13
(6 August 2017)

Isaiah 55:1–5
Romans 9:1–5 (6–13)
Matthew 14:13–21

Christ Jesus, the Living Bread from Heaven, Feeds the Children of God

By the Gospel of “*the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever*” (Rom. 9:5), we are “*the children of God*” (Rom. 9:8), “*not because of works but because of him who calls*” (Rom. 9:11). Therefore, “*listen diligently*” and “*hear, that your soul may live.*” By His sacrificial death in His flesh and blood, He has made “*an everlasting covenant*” for us. Since He now calls us to Himself, we come to Him “*and eat what is good, and delight ... in rich food*” (Is. 55:2–3). He has come with divine compassion to save us from sin and death and to feed us with Himself. As our Lord Jesus once took bread, “*said a blessing,*” broke the loaves “*and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds*” (Matt. 14:18–19), He also now takes bread, blesses it by His Word to be His very body, and distributes it to His Church by the hand of His called and ordained servants. Just as “*they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces,*” there is more than enough for His whole Church to eat and to be satisfied (Matt. 14:20).