



***This Sunday at St. Luke's***  
**February 9, 2025**

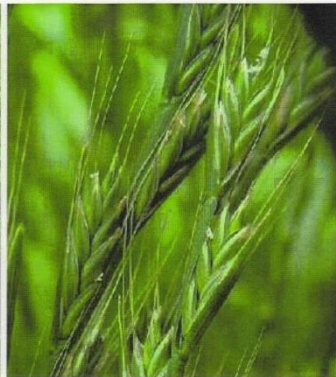
**8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)**  
**10:15 a.m. – Morning Prayer and Sermon together with**  
**Shortened Holy Communion**  
**Steven Cagle, Organist**

## **The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**TARES Look IDENTICAL To WHEAT**



WHEAT: before it is fully ripe.



TARES: Lolium Temulentum

**Living in the Light – Good and Evil**

This Sunday's Gospel contains the parable of the tares and the wheat. It points to the hopeless mix-up of good and bad in individual people, in the Church and in society generally.

Daniel Defoe wrote:

*Wherever God erects a house of prayer, / The Devil alwys build a chapel there; / And, 'twill be found, upon examination, / the latter has the largest congregation.*

There is more than a little truth in his words, as illustrated in the parable of the wheat and tares. The good and the bad are always present in any earthly organization or assembly in this present age.

Evil is there amongst us through the action of an enemy – whether this be a personal Devil or our perversion of a God-given liberty. God puts up with it patiently, but it is only for a time; the final separation and destruction of evil is certain.

This is of concern to everyone, but most of all to the family of God – God's household, the Church. How the Church needs to be "kept continually in true religion"! (Collect) It can so easily grow proud, careless and indifferent.

While then we recognize that evil is present, and that the final judgment is in God's



hands, not ours, we also remember that “sowing” and “growing” are a continuous process; good and evil are coming and going all the time. It is our business to regard evil as an hostile growth and to be resolved to be rid of it – “leaning” of course exclusively “upon the hope of God’s heavenly grace”. The only way to achieve success in this conflict is never to walk alone but always with Him.

\* \* \* \* \*

This Sunday’s Epistle sets out true religion in practice. It prompts the question “Can I measure up to this test? Can ‘God’s picked representatives’ – the church family to which I belong – measure up to it also? If not, why not?”

### COLLECT FOR EPIPHANY 5

O LORD, we beseech thee to keep thy church and household continually in thy true religion; that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by thy mighty power; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### THE EPISTLE – Colossians 3:12-17 (J.B. Phillips)

*The expression of the new life in Christ*

<sup>12-14</sup> As, therefore, God’s picked representatives of the new humanity, purified and beloved of God himself, be merciful in action, kindly in heart, humble in mind. Accept life, and be most patient and tolerant with one another, always ready to forgive if you have a difference with anyone. Forgive as freely as the Lord has forgiven you. And, above everything else, be truly loving, for love is the golden chain of all the virtues.

<sup>15</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, remembering that as members of the same body you are called to live in harmony, and never forget to be thankful for what God has done for you.

<sup>16-17</sup> Let Christ’s teaching live in your hearts, making you rich in the true wisdom. Teach and help one another along the right road with your psalms and hymns and Christian songs, singing God’s praises with joyful hearts. And whatever you may have to do, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, thanking God the Father through him.

NOTE: This is the way those men are exhorted to live who rely on the hope of God's heavenly grace. These are the elect of God, His good harvest. (William Sydnor)

## **THE GOSPEL – St. Matthew 13:24-30 (J.B. Phillips)**

*Good and evil grow side by side in this present world*

<sup>24-30</sup> Then he put another parable before them. "The kingdom of Heaven," he said, "is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the crop came up and ripened, the weeds appeared as well. Then the owner's servants came up to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where did all these weeds come from?' 'Some blackguard has done this to spite me,' he replied. 'Do you want us then to go out and pull them all up?' said the servants. 'No,' he returned, 'if you pull up the weeds now, you would pull up the wheat with them. Let them both grow together till the harvest. And at harvest-time I shall tell the reapers, 'Collect all the weeds first and tie them up in bundles ready to burn, but collect the wheat and store it in my barn.'"

NOTE: In this parable God is the harvester and that men, depending on what they have done with their lives and ultimately their response to God's call, are wheat or tares (weeds). (William Sydnor)

## **LECTIONARY READING**

### **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Joel 3:9-17 (RSV)**

*The nations are summoned to the Valley of Decision where the last  
'harvest' takes place*

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim this among the nations:

Prepare war,

    stir up the mighty men.

Let all the men of war draw near,

    let them come up.

<sup>10</sup> Beat your plowshares into swords,  
    and your pruning hooks into spears;

    let the weak say, "I am a warrior."

<sup>11</sup> Hasten and come,

    all you nations round about,

    gather yourselves there.

Bring down thy warriors, O LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Let the nations bestir themselves,

    and come up to the valley of Jehosh'aphat;

for there I will sit to judge

    all the nations round about.

<sup>13</sup> Put in the sickle,  
for the harvest is ripe.  
Go in, tread,  
for the wine press is full.  
The vats overflow,  
for their wickedness is great.  
<sup>14</sup> Multitudes, multitudes,  
in the valley of decision!  
For the day of the LORD is near  
in the valley of decision.  
<sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon are darkened,  
and the stars withdraw their shining.  
<sup>16</sup> And the LORD roars from Zion,  
and utters his voice from Jerusalem,  
and the heavens and the earth shake.  
But the LORD is a refuge to his people,  
a stronghold to the people of Israel.  
*Vindication of God's people assured*  
<sup>17</sup> "So you shall know that I am the LORD your God,  
who dwell in Zion, my holy mountain.  
And Jerusalem shall be holy  
and strangers shall never again pass through it.

NOTE: The Book of Joel is in two parts: the first is about a present plague and drought; the second, beginning with 2:28 is about the future blessings of Israel and judgment of nations. Here the nations are summoned to the Valley of Decision where the last 'harvest' takes place. (William Sydnor)

## **THIS SUNDAY**

**Preacher: The Rector**

### **Options**

**In-church.**

**Online.** Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on You

Tube. To access both put “Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga.” In the search bar.



**Tip of the Canterbury Cap** to Neil McDonald for assuming the duties of Junior Warden as Jennifer Higdon recovers.



**JOIN THE CHOIR!**

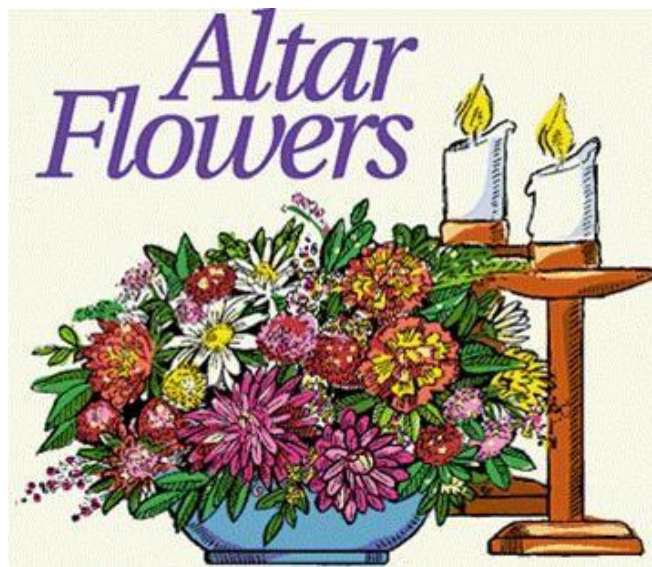


For information, contact, Diana Burden at 678-852-6907 or email  
dburden6907@gmail.com.



### OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.



### SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2025.

Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

Flowers are needed throughout the end of the year. Please email  
or call Kathryn Noblett at the church office to sign up.

## Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2025

*As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to  
the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2025*

Name

Address

Amount

\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; (706) 632-8245;  
[www.stlukesblueridge.org](http://www.stlukesblueridge.org); [stlukes@tds.net](mailto:stlukes@tds.net).