

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
April 12, 2026

"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." – John 5:28-29



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“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Daniel 12:1-3

Leader: Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people,

People: Will arise.

Leader: And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred

People: Since there was a nation until that time;

Leader: And at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book,

People: Will be rescued.

Leader: Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life,

People: But the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

Leader: Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness,

People: Like the stars forever and ever.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Colossians 1:12-14

***Hymn #357** – “*Let Our Choir New Anthems Raise*”

Scripture Reading – Revelation 14:14-20

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – Apostles Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #72B** – “*Nomads Will Bow*”

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins)

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Westminster Confession of Faith, 33.3.

Leader: *As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded* 2Pet 3:11,14
that there shall be a day of judgment, 2Cor 5:10-11

People: **Both to deter all men from sin;** 2Thess 1:5-7

Leader: *And for the greater consolation of the godly* Luke 21:27-28

People: **In their adversity;** Rom 8:23-25

Leader: *So will He have that day unknown to men,*

People: **That they may shake off all carnal security,**

Leader: *And be always watchful,* Matt 24:36,42-44

People: **Because they know not at what hour the Lord will come;** Mark 13:35-37

Leader: *And may be ever prepared to say,* Luke 12:35-36

People: **Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.** Rev 22:20

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “Tares Among Wheat”

A Sermon Series on Parables

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

TRC practices guarded open communion. All who profess faith in Christ, have been baptized, have a basic understanding of this sacrament, and are in good standing with a biblical local church are welcome to the Lord's Table. If you are uncertain whether you should partake, it is wise to abstain and speak with the pastor afterward.

Prayer

Words of Institution – Matthew 26:26-28 + Luke 22:19-20; 1Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:26

“While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.’ . . . Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.”

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #32** – “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

Announcements

- **Warning:** Fake emails/texts have been going out in the name of various members of the church including Pastor Doug and David Mattson. Do NOT trust, or even reply, if anyone asks you to reply, call, or send things. When in doubt – do not reply, if you have questions call the person.

Upcoming Events

- **April 24th**, Friday, there will be a **Pot-Luck Game Night** starting at 6:30 PM at the Aldrich's.
- The next in-person **Elder-Deacon meeting** is on Saturday, **May 16th**, from 8:00-10:00ish AM, at the Aldrich's.
- **June 6th**, (Note: THIS DATE IS A CHANGE) Saturday, there will be a **Pot-Luck Picnic** starting at noon at the Ensminger's (100 Hallow Rd, Winchester, CT). If possible, please bring a side, drink or a dessert. Hot dogs & hamburgers will be provided. (RAIN DATE: June 27th)
- **July 18th**, Saturday, there will be a **Pool Party / Picnic Pot-Luck** starting at noon at the Gabelmann's. Sandwich platters, beverages and an ice cream bar will be provided. If possible, please bring a pot-luck food item. (We will gather rain or shine.)
- **October 10th**, Saturday, there will our annual **Oktoberfest** at the Aldrich's. If possible, please bring a food item. (Rain Date: October 17th)
- *Regular Studies & Gatherings:*
 - Sunday School** for all ages (9:00 AM) at the Grange.
 - Tuesday Study** (10:30 AM – noon) – Augustine's Sermons, at Pastor Doug's house.
 - Wednesday Study** (6:30 – 8:00 PM) – On 2nd & 4th: Thessalonians. On other: Free discussion.
 - Gen-Alpha Club** 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, at Pastor Doug's house.
 - Friday Young Adult Discussion Group** (6:30 PM) meets on 1st & 3rd Friday, at Pastor Doug's house.
 - Saturday Morning Prayer Group** at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

<i>TRC's Webpage:</i>	TrinityReformedCT.org
<i>TRC's Facebook Page:</i>	facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
<i>TRC's Youtube Channel:</i>	youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT
<i>Pastor Doug's</i>	youtube.com/simplyreformed
<i>Youtube Channels:</i>	youtube.com/@PilgrimsOfPlunder

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com
Deacons:	David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters		
Sunday School:	Verna Aldrich	Music Coordinator:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	Treasurer:	Cindy Rines

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)

Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 – Phone: (860) 238-7399

Webpage: trinityreformedct.org – Email: trinityreformedct@gmail.com

Sermon Notes

Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

“Tares Among Wheat”

A Sermon Series on Parables

April 12, 2026

Introduction

- 1) The beginning of today’s sermon text reads: “*Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared . . .’*” – Matthew 13:24
- 2) Parables are brief fictional analogies drawn from ordinary life that usually convey a single central universal truth.
 - a) The Gospel parables are found mostly during the middle part of Jesus’ earthly ministry, when He is up north around the Sea of Galilee. Matt **13**; 18; 20-22; 24-25
Mark 4
Luke 10; 12; 14; **15**; 16; 18
 - b) In particular, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark & Luke.
- 3) The vast majority of the parables are about Christ and His Kingdom.
 - a) As we hear in today’s parable.
 - b) “*The kingdom of heaven may be compared . . .*”
- 4) Clearly the Kingdom is important, however, it raises many questions:
 - a) When is the Kingdom?
 - b) How does it work out? Function?
- 5) Let’s ponder this today.

The Kingdom of Heaven / The Kingdom of God

- 1) First, the “Kingdom of Heaven” and “Kingdom of God” are the same thing. Matt 5:3; Luke 6:20
- 2) The Kingdom is where the King directly reigns. Luke 17:20-37
 - a) Which is already because Christ is physically present before His disciples during His earthly ministry and after the cross with His reign in heaven and the sending of His Spirit. Ps 2:6-8; 110:1-2; Dan 2:44
Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7;12:28
Luke 17:20-21; Acts 2:32-36
Eph 1:20-23; Col 1:13-14; 2:15
 - b) And not yet because the consummation of the Kingdom will come at the end of the age when Christ returns in power and glory to establish the new heavens and the new earth. Matt 24:30-31; 25:31-34
Luke 17:22-37; Acts 1:11
1Cor 15:24-28; 2Tim 4:1
Rev 1:7; 20:11-15; 21:1-4
- 3) The Kingdom is one of the most important themes in the Synoptic Gospels. (Matthew, Mark & Luke)
- 4) Matthew 13, in particular, is all about the Kingdom of Heaven / God.

Overview of Kingdom Parables in Matthew 13

- 1) We learn from the **Parable of the Sower**, in **Matthew 13:1-9**, that the Kingdom is received differently according to the condition of the heart (i.e. the inner man, especially the mind), and only the good soil—those who truly hear, understand, and persevere in the word—bears lasting fruit, and are truly in the Kingdom.
- 2) Yet Gospel parables are *not* meant to teach in a simple way that everyone can understand.
 - a) Quite the opposite.

- b) His disciples ask for an explanation of why Jesus teaches in these hard sayings in **Matthew 13:10-17**.
- c) The Lord explains Gospel parables reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom of God to believers while at the same time concealing them from the hard-hearted and unbelieving, thereby both instructing and judging according to God's sovereign purpose. Is 6:9-10
Matt 13:10-17
Mark 4:11-12
Luke 8:10
- d) After this, the meaning of the Sower is explained only to the disciples in **Matthew 13:18-23**.
- 3) Next comes today's sermon text, the **Parable of the Tares**, in **Matthew 13:24-30**, which teaches that in this present age the kingdom exists in a mixed condition, with the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the devil growing together until Christ separates them at the final judgment.
- 4) Like with the Sower, before we get the explanation there is a section in-between.
- a) In-between the Parable of the Tares, and its explanation, are two short, very similar, parables: the **Mustard Seed** (v.31-32) and the **Leaven** (v.33-35).
- b) It might be tempting to think that after the Sower (where 3/4 of the soils/hearts fail), and the Tares (where Satan seems to do some real damage), that the Kingdom of God is quite weak and feeble.
- c) So, we get the **Parable of the Mustard Seed**, in **Matthew 13:31-32**, which teaches that the Kingdom of God begins in a small and seemingly insignificant form, yet by God's sovereign power it grows into a great and universal kingdom that extends its blessing to the nations.
- d) Then we get the **Parable of the Leaven**, in **Matthew 13:33-35**, which teaches that the Kingdom of God works inwardly and often imperceptibly, yet it powerfully and most certainly spreads until its transforming influence permeates the whole.
- 5) With that reminder/correction, in **Matthew 13:36-43**, we then get the explanation of the **Parable of the Tares**, which we will turn to in detail for the rest of this morning.

The Landowner & His Land

- 1) A Landowner goes and sows good seed in His field. Matt 13:24
- a) The Landowner / Sower is Jesus Christ, the Son of Man. Matt 13:36
- b) The Good Seed are the Sons of the Kingdom. Matt 13:38
- i) These are those who have true faith, the elect.
- ii) They are the wheat, later mentioned in the parable. Matt 13:25-26
- iii) Because those who have true faith will produce much fruit, i.e. godly good works.
- iv) Only good works done in faith are pleasing to God. Rom 8:8; 14:23; Heb 11:6
- c) The Landowner's field is the world. Matt 13:38
- i) This is the big word for "world"; "*kosmos*".
- It means all the land, not just ancient Israel in the Middle East.
 - It implies the Gospel will affect all the created order.
- ii) Also note, it is "His" field, because all of creation, is His.
- The Triune God has created everything and everyone. John 1:1-3; Col 1:16
 - Humans are not autonomous, self-actuating entities. John 15:5; Heb 1:3

- We are creatures, who are made in the image of God, however, the Creator can do with His creation, and His creatures, as He so pleases.

Gen 1:26-27; Job 9:12
Is 45:9; Jer 18:1-6
Rom 9:20-21; Rev 4:11

- 2) The Landowner's men/slaves got to sleep. Matt 13:25,27
- We are not directly told who these men are.
 - The traditional interpretation, which I think is correct, is that these slaves are church leaders, first the Apostles, and then those ordinary officers that follow after the Apostles: Pastors, elders, deacons, evangelists, etc.
 - And in the context of today's text, this sleeping is viewed as bad but a normal daily function.

The Tares

- 1) Then the enemy of the Landowner sows tares among the wheat and goes away. Matt 13:25
- The enemy is the devil. Matt 13:39
 - Again, the wheat are the Sons of the Kingdom. Matt 13:38
 - The tares are the sons of the devil. Matt 13:38
 - Note, there are only two categories of humans:
 - The righteous and the wicked.
 - This is *NOT* defined by whether a person is nice to you or not. (Though friendly family and neighbors are a blessing from God.)
 - Righteousness and wickedness are defined by whether one's heart has been transformed by the Spirit through the Word, or not. 2Cor 5:17
1John 3:7-10
 - Tares are probably the darnel weed (*Lolium temulentum*), often called bearded darnel.
 - It grows among cereal crops, especially wheat and barley.
 - It resembles wheat in the early stages of growth.
 - Only when it matures does the difference become clearly visible.
 - Its roots can become intertwined with the wheat, so pulling it too soon may damage the good crop.
 - The darnel is not just a harmless weed, however, its seeds can be poisonous, especially when infected with a fungus, and such infections could be common.
 - Thus, ancient farmers hated the darnel weed.
- 2) When the wheat sprouts it bears grain. Matt 13:26
- And then the tares become evident.
 - Because they are clearly different when they mature.

What To Do With the Tares

- 1) The slaves of the Landowner go to Him and say, "*Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?*" – Matthew 13:27
- As the sons of the Kingdom and the sons of the devil grow the difference becomes obvious.
 - A critical question not to ask is: When does this happen?

- i) Since the end of the age is clearly mentioned in the explanation in Matthew 13:49, the answer has to be: This current age.
 - Between the 1st Advent (Christ's birth) and His 2nd Advent (end of the age).
 - The time we are in now.
 - ii) So, the world is full of the sons of the Kingdom and the sons of the devil.
 - iii) These two groups of men will, for this age, live side by side.
- c) The slaves' question is understandable.
- i) Why is there evil in God's good creation?
 - ii) If God is good, and all powerful, why is there evil?
 - iii) Several answers are given in the Bible.
 - This is part of God's plan – That should be enough! Acts 2:23; 4:27-28
 - To make such things as His holiness and justice, Ex 33:19; 34:6-7
and His grace and love more clear. Rom 3:5-6; 9:22-23; 11:32
Merely preserving the creation is one thing.
Redemption is extraordinary, miraculous, and divine.
 - It brings God more glory. Gen 50:20; Ps 76:10
Because He is good and just, He must glorify Himself, Is 42:8; 43:7; 48:11
because He is the Creator of all things. Rom 11:36; Col 1:16
 - iv) A particular answer is given in this parable; however.
- 2) The Landowner says to His slaves, that the devil, the "*enemy has done this!*" – Matthew 13:28a
- a) The fall of creation began with Satan's rebellion against God. Gen 3:1ff; Ezek 28:12-17
 - b) Followed by Satan's temptation of Adam & Eve which leads to their fall Gen 3:1-6; Ps 51:5
and the corruption of all their children. (i.e. all of us humans.) 1Cor 15:21-22
 - c) But this parable is focused on this age, and those who are hardened to the Word.
 - i) Remember the 1st Soil, the hardened road, from the Parable Matt 13:4,19
of the Sower.
 - ii) Those who are so hardened against the Word "*the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.*" – Matthew 13:19b
 - d) Yes, with the cross of Christ Satan suffers a great defeat and His doom is assured.
 - e) However, the devil is very much active in this age: Eph 6:11-12; 1Pet 5:8-9
 - i) He blinds "*the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*" – 2Corinthians 4:4b
 - ii) He is currently working "*in the sons of disobedience.*" – Ephesians 2:2b
 - iii) And "*the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*" – 1John 5:19
 - f) This is a very serious matter.
 - i) Tares can do some real damage.
 - ii) It deserves our life long attention.
 - iii) It should cause us to fear God and turn to Him more.

What To Do With the Tares?

- 1) The slaves then respond to the Landowner with a question: "*Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?*" – Matthew 13:28b
 - a) What does this question mean?
 - b) If the tares are so dangerous shouldn't the church get aggressive?
 - i) Should the church go and try to purge all evil from the world?
 - Such as the military crusades of the Middle Ages.
 - Or the witch hunts in the early modern period.
 - Or the anti-slavery, or temperance, movements of the 19th century.
 - Or the pro-life movement in the 20th century.
 - Or any noble political agenda?
 - As if Christ's Kingdom is of this world?
 - ii) Or, should the church try to become as perfect as possible in this age?
 - That only the truly regenerate are allowed in the church.
 - That the church should try to discern who is truly "born again" or not?
 - Our early Congregational Puritan forefathers clearly bought into this and it would later cause problems. (See the Half-Way Covenant.)
 - As if final judgment belongs to man and not to God.
 - c) Don't mishear what I just said.
 - i) Individual Christians can be active in politics.
 - ii) There are noble political movements, such as ending abortion.
 - iii) The church must teach and enforce God's moral law within the church. (Such as abortion is evil.)
 - iv) There are standards in the church?
 - Church discipline is required. Gal 6:1; 2Thes 3:6,14-15
 - Excommunication is a real thing. Matt 18:15-17; 1Cor 5:4-5,11-13
 - There are higher standards for those who lead and teach. James 3:1; 1Pet 5:2-3
 - d) However, should the church aggressively purge the wicked?
- 2) Hear the answer given by the Lord: "*No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them.*" – Matthew 13:29
 - a) The church will be in the world until our Lord's return.
 - b) But we should never be of the world.
 - c) But why not purge the wicked?
 - i) Because: "*You may uproot the wheat with them.*"
 - ii) To try to purify the world, by worldly means, will be a bad witness for the church. (How many times do the wicked use the crusades or the witch trials as an excuse?)
 - iii) Also, we might harm those who will become Christians, or those who really believe but are weak in faith.

- d) Even those with a mustard seed of faith are welcome in the church. Matt 13:31; 17:20; Mark 4:31
Luke 13:19; 17:6
- e) The Messiah will be gentle with the lowest of believers. Matt 12:20
Isaiah 42:3 – *“A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.”*
- f) And the church is commanded to be gentle and understanding with those who are new, or weak, in the faith. Matt 18:5-6; Rom 14:1; 15:1
Gal 6:1; 1Thes 5:14
2Tim 2:24-25
- 3) Our Lord concludes with this command: *“Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.’”* – Matthew 13:30
- a) The harvest, we are told, *“is the end of the age”*. – Matthew 13:39b
- b) The reapers are *“the reapers are angels.”* – Matthew 13:39c

The End of the Age

- 1) There will be a time for justice. Matt 13:40-43
- a) But it is by God’s doing, according to His plan, at His timing. Matt 24:36; Acts 1:7
- b) Christ, at the end of the age, will send forth His angels. Matt 24:31; 25:31
- c) All the tares, the sons of the Devil, will be cast into the fires of hell. John 8:44; 2Thes 1:8-9
- d) Note in particular the sins the Lord Jesus highlights that the wicked have:
- i) Those who are stumbling blocks to His Kingdom, i.e. the church.
- ii) Those “who commit lawlessness”, i.e. those who break God’s law.
- 2) Hell is described as a place of “weeping and gnashing of the teeth.” Matt 13:42
- a) It is a place of indescribable anguish, torment, hatred, and rage. Matt 8:12; Rev 14:10-11
- b) Where the wicked are consumed for their hatred of God and His Word for all eternity.

Conclusion

- 1) *“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”* – Matthew 13:43a
- a) They will be openly acknowledged as God’s own before all creation. Matt 10:32; 25:34; Luke 12:8
Rom 8:19; Rev 3:5; 21:7
- b) That saints will have full vindication after suffering in this age. Rom 8:17-18; 1Pet 5:10
- c) They will have perfect holiness without sin. Eph 5:27; Phil 3:20-21
- d) They will have a new perfect resurrected body in the new heavens and new earth. Is 65:17; John 5:28-29; 1Cor 15:42-44,52-53
Phil 3:20-21; 2Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1-4
- 2) Christ does not leave us alone as we wait and remain faithful. John 14:16-18; 14:26; 15:26
- a) We have His Spirit. John 14:16-17; Rom 8:9-11
- b) And He feeds us grace in His Supper. 1Cor 10:16-17; 11:23-26; 12:13
- 3) *“He who has ears, let him hear.”* – Matthew 13:43b