

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 19, 2026

Introduction to the day

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44:6-8

A reading from Isaiah.

There are no other gods besides God: the word of the LORD does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.

PSALM: Psalm 86:11-17

Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth. (Ps. 86:11)

SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-25

A reading from Romans.

For Paul, true spirituality means that we experience the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - Deep-Seated Grace

The things we learn early on in life matter. Maybe the first time you rode a bike taught you about a deep sense of fulfillment. The first time your heart swooned with romance taught you about a whole new dimension of love. Painfully, we find out the stove is hot by that first, uninformed touch, and we learn to watch for the flame. That first heartbreak sows some mistrust in future relationships.

These core memories inform how we see and interact with the world, shaping our expectations and actions. They are like seeds planted deep that grow and grow within. As Jesus speaks in this parable of weeds among the wheat, we are reminded that within us are both good seeds and invasive plants that get in the way. As our early memories remind us, people can sow both good and evil. There is fulfillment and romance, and there is pain and mistrust—good seeds and pesky weeds.

In a radical move, God the gardener has planted the deepest seed, a seed of grace. And herein lies the promise of this story from Jesus: Though we may try to uproot the sin—the weeds—separating us from God and each other, only God can make this grace come to life. With dusty overalls and a warm smile, God, the greatest gardener, removes the weeds of pain and mistrust. In Jesus, all that separates us from one another

and from God is no more. The earliest seed planted deep within (even before we can remember) is the seed of grace that cultivates the deepest connection to God.

How have you seen God's grace at work in you, and how has the Spirit sown trust and connection in your life?

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God our source, protect your church from those who sow weeds among the wheat. Where we trade grace for judgment, restore us, and where we get lost among the complexities of life, guide us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our creator, sustain creation in places not easily seen; the depths of oceans, microscopic plants and animals, galaxies beyond our own. May we share earth's dedication to hope for what we do not yet see. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our soil, we yearn to live on your lands and waters with justice and in righteousness. Renew the hearts of all in authority, that our leaders guide wisely toward the flourishing of all. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our rock, be a source of constancy for those whose lives have been uprooted by war, eviction, global climate change, unemployment, harassment, false witness to their character, or illness or injury. We pray especially for Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Donna L. Hoffman, Claude Jeannotte, Lillian Jeannotte, Glenda Panke, Adam Schroeder, Carolyn Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell, Roy Zadow, those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our teacher, guide and provide for all summer camp staff and campers, daycare professionals, librarians, summer school educators and coaches, teachers preparing for the coming academic year, and youth becoming first-time babysitters. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our hope, the message of your salvation is planted among us in all times and places. We give you thanks for the witness of all the saints who shine like the sun in your presence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

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Announcements:

Sunday July 19th - Pentecost 8

9:00 AM – Grace – Service of the Word

Grace – Helpers – Lay Leader: Elaine Drefke

Greeter: Sharon Byers

Reader: John Yakabuski

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Service of the Word

Monday, July 20th

9: 00 AM to 3:00 PM - Grace Quilters

Tuesday, July 21st

10:00 AM – Bible Study

Saturday, July 25

1:00 PM – Worship at Fairfields

Sunday July 26th - Pentecost 9

9:00 AM – Grace – Holy Communion

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: Maureen Springer

Reader: Haylee Felhaber

Communion Assistants: Karen Sell and Ellen Weigold

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Holy Communion