

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 12, 2026

Introduction to the day

God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 55:10-13

A reading from Isaiah.

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

PSALM: Psalm 65:[1-8] 9-13

Your paths overflow with plenty. (Ps. 65:11)

SECOND LESSON: Romans 8:1-11

A reading from Romans.

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - The Generous Gardener

In this parable, Jesus tells the disciples a story of a gardener. While many people carefully plan where to plant seeds (with some modern farmers using technology to map out, down to the millimeter, where each seed will grow best), the gardener in Jesus' story scatters seed generously, almost carelessly.

As the disciples, familiar with farming and fishing, would have known deep within themselves, things don't come easy in this life. Faith is the same. Like seeds that take their time, when the conditions are right to grow and bear fruit, faith isn't always a steady path. There are seasons of cold isolation—times when prayer and devotions don't warm the heart as they once did. There are seasons of scorching busyness—times when endless distractions overwork the head enough to overheat. Faith might look different at these times, but no matter the season, faith is never gone.

Ultimately, faith isn't measured down to the millimeter. Instead, this haphazardly generous gardener extends faith into the impossible places. And when rocks, sun, or thorns from this world and within choke this faith that God has given us, the impossible becomes possible. In every season, God comes again and again to sprinkle more and more seed and to reach out to us before we can even try to grow on our own. And with time and divine Presence, that seed of faith starts to sprout.

Because of this never-ending abundance, every season is an opportunity to engage with God the generous gardener, whose nearness is always available and who gives the gift of faith, no matter the conditions. Today, let the summer breeze remind you of how close God's Spirit is, always nurturing and providing the abundance that is the essence of faith.

THE PRAYERS

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 gardener, you scatter grace like seed across the world. Continue to cultivate the garden of your church with your abundant Spirit. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our joy, your bountiful creation reflects your commitment to life despite our actions disregarding its wonder. We look toward Isaiah's vision, when all creation rejoices, and the trees will clap for joy at your salvation. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our life, you give us the same Spirit by which you raised Christ from the dead. Set our minds on that Spirit whenever fear or condemnation overwhelm throughout the world. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our host and table, we pray for children who hunger and rely on school meals, for all who toil under the hot sun without refreshment, for the chronically ill who have exhausted their resources, and for local concerns especially Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Glenda Panke, Marilyn Schneider, Adam Schroeder, Carolyn Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell, Roy Zadow, those in long term care facilities and senior residences. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God our source, tend this assembly with your grace throughout this summer season. May those who travel for work or recreation do so safely, and may visitors find refreshment among us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We give you thanks that the roots of your goodness run deep throughout history. We remember those saints who have gone before us in faith. 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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

BLESSING

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

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Announcements:

Sunday, July 12th – 7th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Grace – Service of the Word

Grace – Helpers – Worship Leader: Ron Schauer

Greeter: Joan Schroeder

Reader: Peggy Verch

Monday, July 13th

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

Tuesday, July 14th

10:00 AM – Bible Study

Wednesday, July 15th

9: 00 AM to 3:00 PM - Cuddles and Hugs Quilting

Sunday July 19th - Pentecost 8

9:00 AM – Grace – Service of the Word

Grace – Helpers – Worship Leader: Elaine Drefke

Greeter: Sharon Byers

Reader: John Yakabuski

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Service of the Word