

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 23, 2023

9:00 am

Prelude

Welcome

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.

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Merciful God, **we confess that we have sinned. We have hurt our community. We have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

Righteous God, **we confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of ✙ Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: ELW #842 "Oh, Worship the King"

- 1. Oh, worship the King, all glorious above. Oh, gratefully sing God's power and love; our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.**
- 2. The earth with its store of wonders untold. Almighty, your pow'r has founded of old; established it fast by a changeless decree, and round it has cast, like a mantle, the sea.**
- 3. Your bountiful care what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light, it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.**

4. **Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, in you do we trust, nor find you to fail; your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end, our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.**
5. **O measureless might, ineffable love, while angels delight to hymn you above, the humbler creation, though feeble their lays, with true adoration shall sing to your praise.**

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Prayer of the Day

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.

Readings and Psalm

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8

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.

⁶Thus 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.

⁷Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

⁸Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

Psalm: Psalm 86:11-17

¹¹Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

¹²**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name forevermore.**

¹³For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the pit of death.

¹⁴**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes.**

¹⁵But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

¹⁶**Turn to me and have mercy on me; give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**

¹⁷Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame; because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Second Reading: Romans 8:12-25

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.

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. My word shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. *Alleluia.* (Isa. 55:11).

The Holy Gospel according to the book of Matthew, beginning with the thirteenth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather

the wheat into my barn.' ”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day ELW #550 “On What Has Now Been Sown”

- 1. On what has now been sown your blessing Lord, bestow; the pow’r is yours alone to make it sprout and grow. O Lord, in grace the harvest raise, and yours alone shall be the praise!**
- 2. To you our wants are known, from you are all our pow’rs; accept what is your own and pardon what is ours. Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive and to your word a blessing give.**
- 3. Oh, grant that each of us, now met before you here, may meet together thus when you and yours appear, and follow you to heav’n, our home. E’en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!**

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Apostle’s Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.***

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

Offering Hymn: ELW #686 "We Give Thee But Thine Own" (vs 1)

- 1. We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.**

Offering Prayer

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

Lord's Prayer

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

The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed ✝ bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn ELW# 638 "Blessed Assurance"

- 1. Blessed assurance, Jesus in mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.**

Refrain: **This is my story, this is my son, praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.**

- 2. Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight; angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. (Refrain)**

**3. Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his
love. (Refrain)**

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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