

**Worship**  
**The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**  
**July 19, 2020**

**Introduction**

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.

**Gathering/Announcements**

I would like to thank Pastor James Dollhopf for leading our congregation in worship this morning while I am away on vacation.

. . . Pastor Kirk Bish

**P.** = Pastor

**W.** = Worship Assistant

**A.** = All in attendance

**Prelude:** "Elevation I in E Minor

*Marcel Dupre*

**Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness**

**P.** In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**A. Amen.**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

**P.** Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A. Amen.**

**P.** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

**P.** Most merciful God,

**A. we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

**P.** In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**A. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn:** #597 "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less"

*Melita*

1. My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
No merit of my own I claim,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.  
On Christ, the solid rock I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand.
  
4. When he shall come with trumpet sound,  
Oh, may I then in him be found,  
Clothed in his righteousness alone,  
Redeemed to stand before the throne!  
On Christ, the solid rock I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand.

**P.** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**A. And also with you.**

**KYRIE** (said)

**W.** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**A. Lord, have mercy.**

**W.** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**A. Lord, have mercy.**

**W.** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**A. Lord, have mercy.**

**W.** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**A. Lord, have mercy.**

**W.** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**A. Amen.**

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE** (said)

**A.** Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.  
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:  
we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.  
Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;  
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.  
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;  
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:  
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.  
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

**P.** Let us pray:

**Prayer of the Day**

**P.** 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.

**A. Amen.**

**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.*

**W.** <sup>6</sup>Thus 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.  
<sup>7</sup>Who 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.  
<sup>8</sup>Do 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.

**W.** The Word of the Lord.

**A. Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm: Psalm 86:11-17

- W.** <sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk | in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart to re- | vere your name.
- A.** <sup>12</sup>**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with | all my heart,  
and glorify your name for- | evermore. R**
- W.** <sup>13</sup>For great is your | love toward me;  
you have delivered me from the | pit of death.
- A.** <sup>14</sup>**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent  
people | seeks my life; they have not set you be- | fore their eyes.**
- W.** <sup>15</sup>But you, O Lord, are gracious and full | of compassion,  
slow to anger, and full of kind- | ness and truth.
- A.** <sup>16</sup>**Turn to me and have mer- | cy on me;  
give your strength to your servant, and save the child | of your  
handmaid.**
- W.** <sup>17</sup>Show 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 com- | forted  
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.*

- W.** <sup>12</sup>So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—<sup>13</sup>for 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. <sup>14</sup>For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup>For 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!" <sup>16</sup>it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and 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.

<sup>18</sup>I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup>for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that 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.

<sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; <sup>23</sup>and 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.

<sup>24</sup>For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

**W.** The Word of the Lord.

**A. Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**A. *Alleluia.* My word shall accomplish that | which I purpose,\* and succeed in the thing for | which I sent it. *Alleluia.***

### **The Gospel**

**P.** The holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**A. 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.*

**W.** <sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;<sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

<sup>27</sup>And 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?' <sup>28</sup>He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' <sup>29</sup>But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let 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.'"

<sup>36</sup>Then 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." <sup>37</sup>He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup>the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

<sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup>and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

**P.** The Gospel of the Lord:

**A. Praise to you, O Christ.**

**The Sermon:**

The Rev. James Dollhopf

Oh, isn't life beautiful! In the past few weeks we see flowers blooming and, at night, the beautiful stars in the sky. Oh, how our feelings sore! Then we remember the disasters of the day and the hurts people encounter and wonder where it will all end. It's a good thing none of us live in turmoil. Or do we?

If some of us have no weeds in our lives, I want to know where you live. Plenty of weeds surround me! Every day I see or read of hurt and hurtful actions that are thrust upon others. It seems never to end.

It is sort of like my garden. The soil is worked up, fertilized, and planted with good seed. Then the weeds sprout around my precious plants. There was a time when I just pulled them up as soon as I saw them. I lost a lot of plants that way. I learned to wait until the plants are well rooted, and then I gently remove the weeds.

So how does my garden reflect the world? Well, our world is filled with contempt. Our world is filled with people who push others aside because of who they are or they see life differently than we do. But if we wait and listen we usually discover a deeper appreciation of life.

That is how Jesus did it. Jesus would talk to those he encountered and showed mercy, not threats. That is how Jesus showed compassion. And many, even those who were suspicious of him, discovered new life.

That is something I experienced as a pastor. Sometimes someone would tell me of things they did or thought that were horrifying. I was tempted to tell them how wrong they were. Instead, I listened and, when they stopped, I showed them compassion and understanding. I let them know that God did love them, and I would do my best to help them feel that love and find peace. That is what Jesus did, and it gives many new lives, as it does for us.

Oh, I know, life can be harsh and, at times, seems beyond our grasp. At times, we just want to curl up and ignore life. And yet, God's love is always with us and ready to lead us.

Amen.

**The Hymn of the Day:** # 689 "Praise and Thanksgiving"

*Bunessan*

1. Praise and thanksgiving, God, we would offer  
For all things living, you have made good:  
Harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,  
Hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.
  
4. Then will your blessing reach ev'ry people,  
Freely confessing your gracious hand.  
Where you are reigning, no one will hunger;  
Your love sustaining showers the land.

## **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**W.** Let us now confess our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**A. 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 into hell,  
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.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

**W.** Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

**W.** God of the harvest, you sow the good seed of the gospel of Jesus Christ into your field. Help your church throughout the world to be both diligent and patient, full of resolve and gentleness, that our witness may be faithful to your intentions. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** God of all space and time, your whole creation groans in labor pains, awaiting the gift of new birth. Renew the earth, sky, and sea, so that all your creation experiences freedom from the bondage of decay. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** God of the nations, teach us your ways, that we may walk in your truth. Mend the fabric of the human family, now torn apart by our fearful and warring ways Guide us by your mercy, grace, and steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** God of hope, you accompany those who suffer and are near to the brokenhearted. Open our hearts to your children who are lonely and abandoned, who are ill or hospitalized, who feel trapped by despair, and all who suffer in any way *especially **Kiersten Zomolsky, Richard DelPercio, Kenny Shoemaker, Richard and Kathy Hefflin, Pastor Cyril Hurnyak, Pat Brick, Greg Waldfogle, those suffering from the coronavirus, and those whom we now name in our hearts before You*** . Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** Caring God, be with us as we continue to live through this coronavirus pandemic. Grant us the grace to look to You, who turns all things to the good for them that love You. Grant the necessary wisdom and success to our scientists and doctors who strive to find the cures and vaccines so that this pandemic may be overcome and that we may return to a more normal life. May we show Christian compassion as we reach out to those experiencing grief and need during this time. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** God of the seasons, in the midst of summer, give us refreshment, renewal, and new opportunities. We pray for the safety of those who travel. We pray for those who cannot take the rest they need. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

**W.** God of life, those who have died in you shine like the sun in your endless kingdom. We remember with thanksgiving the saints of all times and places and saints close to us. Gather us with them on the day of salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

**A. hear our prayer.**

