



Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 19, 2026

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA

Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope, and Love

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.

PRELUDE

BELL

WELCOME

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Please stand as you are able

*CALL TO WORSHIP:

P: How lovely is your dwelling place, O God!

C: **Happy are those whose strength is in you, O God.**

P: My soul longs for the courts of God.

C: **Happy are those whose strength is in you, O God.**

P: Even the sparrow finds a home at your altar.

C: **Happy are those whose strength is in you, O God.**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C: **Amen.**

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

P: Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: **We confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

P: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

C: **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" (ELW 693)**

- 1 **Come, ye thankful people, come;
raise the song of harvest home.
All be safely gathered in
ere the winter storms begin.
God, our maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied.
Come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.**
- 2 **All the world is God's own field,
fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade, and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear.
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.**
- 3 **For the Lord our God shall come
and shall take his harvest home;**

from his field shall in that day
all offenses purge away;
give his angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his garner evermore.

- 4 Even so, Lord, quickly come
to thy final harvest home.
Gather then thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there, forever purified,
in thy garner to abide.
Come, with all thine angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest home!

Text: Henry Alford, 1810-1871, alt.

***GREETING:**

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

***KYRIE: Congregation sings response (ELW pg. 138)**

- P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
C: **Lord, have mercy.**
P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
C: **Lord, have mercy.**
P: 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.
C: **Lord, have mercy.**
P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let
us pray to the Lord.
C: **Lord, have mercy.**
P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C: **Amen.**

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE: “*This is the Feast*” (ELW pg. 140)**

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

- 1 Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

- 2 Power, riches, wisdom and strength,
and honor, blessing and glory are his.
This is the feast of vict'ry for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

- 3 Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

This is the feast of vict'ry for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

- 4 For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.**

This is the feast of vict'ry for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: Faithful God, most merciful judge,

**C: 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.**

Please be seated

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

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. Here ends the first reading.

PSALM: 86:11-17 ~ Congregation reads the *bold*

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

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

¹²I 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.

¹⁴The 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.

¹⁶Turn 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 obligated, 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 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 we in fact 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 enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, 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 one already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Here ends the second reading.

Please stand as you are able

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *sung* (ELW pg. 142)

Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia. Alleluia

GOSPEL READING: 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 the Lord...
Thanks be to God!

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S TIME & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "We Plow the Fields and Scatter" (ELW 681)

- 1 We plow the fields and scatter
 the good seed on the land,
 but it is fed and watered
 by God's almighty hand,
 who sends the snow in winter,
 the warmth to swell the grain,
 the breezes and the sunshine,
 and soft refreshing rain.**

Refrain

All good gifts around us
are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord,
we thank you, Lord,
for all your love.

- 2 You only are the maker
of all things near and far.
You paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star.
The winds and waves obey you,
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give our daily bread.

Refrain

All good gifts around us
are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord,
we thank you, Lord,
for all your love.

- 3 We thank you, our creator,
for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer
for all your love imparts,
but what you most would treasure—
our humble, thankful hearts.

Refrain

All good gifts around us
are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord,
we thank you, Lord,

for all your love.

Text: Matthias Claudius, 1740-1815; tr. Jane M. Campbell, 1817-1878, alt.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

Last petition sing: “O Lord, Hear My Prayer” (ELW 751)

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

A brief silence.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: God our rock, be a source of constancy for those whose lives have been uprooted by war, unemployment, harassment, false witness to their character, or illness or injury. We pray especially for Jerry, Bruce, Cheryl, Chris, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Dale, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Allison, Becky, Kim, Cadence, Sara, Marg, Leroy, Karen, Pete, Margaret, and Lynnsy. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

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

O Lord, hear my prayer,

O Lord, hear my prayer:

when I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer,

O Lord, hear my prayer:

come and listen to me. Amen.

Please stand as you are able

***APOSTLES' CREED: (ELW pg. 105)**

**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:**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Please be seated

OFFERING

We thank you for our gifts of time, talent, and treasure that help this congregation, to continue our ministry together, and to make Christ known in our communities and the world.

OFFERING HYMN: "Beautiful Savior" vs. 4 (ELW 838)

**4 Beautiful Savior,
 Lord of the nations,
 Son of God and Son of Man!
 Glory and honor,
 praise, adoration,
 now and forevermore be thine!**

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Münster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823-1904

Please stand as you are able

***OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P: Loving God,

C: We offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING: *sung* (ELW pg. 107)**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift our hearts to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise!**

***THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION: *sung* “Remember Now My Children”**

The night of His betrayal, our Lord took bread.

He broke it and he blessed it, and then he said,

“My body given for you is what this means,
remember now my children what you have seen.”

And then He took the chalice, and raised it high.

“My body broken for you, a full supply...

a covenant, a promise, a cleansing stream.

Remember now, my children, what you have seen.”

We share this food together, remembering Christ;

we share a common treasure and know the price

we share it without measure, a gift of love;

we share our life forever, with God above.

*** THE LORD’S PRAYER: *spoken***

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.

***EUCCHARISTIC INVITATION:**

P: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

Please be seated

COMMUNION

The acolytes, ushers, organist and those assisting with communion should come forward at this time and receive around the rail. Following the assistants, we celebrate Holy Communion around the altar. The ushers will direct you. We welcome all to the Lord's Table where we experience the unity that God intends for all people. Gluten-free wafers and apple juice is available.

COMMUNION HYMN: "Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken" (ACS 966)

- 1 **Loaves were broken, words were spoken
by the Galilean shore.
Jesus, Bread of life from heaven,
was their food forevermore.**

Refrain

**By your body broken for us,
by your wine of life outpoured,
Jesus, feed again your people.
Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.**

- 2 **Loaves were broken, words were spoken
in a quiet room one night.
In the bread and wine you gave them,
Christ, you came as Light from Light.**

Refrain

**By your body broken for us,
by your wine of life outpoured,
Jesus, feed again your people.
Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.**

- 3 **Loaves are broken, words are spoken,
as in faith we gather here.**

**Jesus speaks across the ages:
"I am with you; do not fear!"**

Refrain

**By your body broken for us,
by your wine of life outpoured,
Jesus, feed again your people.
Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.**

- 4 By the loaves you break and give us,
send us in your name to share
bread for which the millions hunger,
words that tell your love and care.**

Refrain

**By your body broken for us,
by your wine of life outpoured,
Jesus, feed again your people.
Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.**

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007 Text © 2006 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE # A-704206. All rights reserved.

COMMUNION HYMN: “*Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*” (ELW 779)

- 1 Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.**
- 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!**
- 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.**

- 4 The Lord has promised good to me;
 his word my hope secures;
 he will my shield and portion be
 as long as life endures.
- 5 When we've been there ten thousand years,
 bright shining as the sun,
 we've no less days to sing God's praise
 than when we'd first begun.

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt., sts. 1-4; anonymous, st. 5

Please stand as you are able

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:**

P: Compassionate God,

C: Through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the
 abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal,
 may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the
 name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

***BLESSING:**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,

✙ one God,

bles, heal, and hold you

today and always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

***SENDING SONG: "Praise and Thanksgiving" (ELW 689)**

- 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.

- 2 God, bless the labor we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbor we may be fed.
Sowing or tilling, we would work with you,
harvesting, milling for daily bread.**
- 3 Father, providing food for your children,
by Wisdom's guiding teach us to share
one with another, so that, rejoicing
with us, all others may know your care.**
- 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.**

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984, alt.
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***DISMISSAL:**

P: Go now to love and serve the Lord.
C: **Thanks be to God!**

IN OUR PRAYERS

Jerry Anderson	Kristy Fyhrie
Larry Sather	Joan Burquest
Dennis Rosenquist	Lois Rosenquist
Ricky Hart	Sara Skoglund
Margaret Wehking	
Leroy Olson – father of Becky Arvidson	
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser	
Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner	
Marg Peterson -friend of the Thoms	
Dale Flemming – father of Laurie Ratajesak	
Gary Borst – friend of the Andersons	
Shirley Nesges – friend of the Thoms	
Bev Lorine – mother of Mandy Arvidson	
Joyce Muyres – friend of the Thoms	

Bev Guse-Ohlrech – friend of the Pedersons
Allison Dotzler – friend of Kathy Mittag
Cadence Smith – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends
Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Karen Schlosser – mother of Justin Schlosser
Pete Baugh – brother-in-law of Pr. Ken Bowman
Chris Clapshaw – step-brother of Mark Ratajesak
Family and Friends of: Sarah Pomeranz, David Anderson, Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug Tvedt, Alma Robinson, Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, Wayne Lund, Bruce Carter, Inez Nelson, Gary Willie, Connie Pesta, Kathy Wilkins, Ivy Christensen, and Jim Schlosser

THIS WEEK AT ESTHER

Friday, July 17th

4:30-7:30 pm- Joint Pork Chop Feed with Faith in Miltona

Sunday, July 19th – Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship

10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by SAM Jewel Townsend

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

Monday, July 20th

6 pm - Christian Education Planning Meeting

Sunday, July 26th- Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

10 am – Worship led by Megan Townsend

11-3 pm – Ice Cream Social & Country Store

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

SERVING IN JULY

Pastor: July 19- SAM Jewel Townsend, July 26 – Megan Townsend

Organist: Marcia Guenther

Altar Care: Deb Koep

Usher: NEED VOLUNTEER

Acolyte: NEED VOLUNTEER

Lay Reader: Deb Koep

Communion Assistant: Deb Koep & Amy Stanley
Birthday Card Sender: Jewel Townsend

NEWS AND NOTES

The Pork Chop Feed is Friday, July 17th 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm at Faith in Miliona. Sign-up is on the Narthex table for workers and for making pans of bars for the event.

Bridal Shower for Susan Hart on Saturday, July 18th at 9 am - 12 pm at Sacred Heart Parish Hall in Urbank, MN. Please bring a recipe card to add to Susan's collection.

Christian Education Planning Meeting- Join us on **Monday, July 20, at 6:00 pm at Esther** for our Christian Education Planning Meeting! Whether you are currently involved or interested in helping with **Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, Youth Group, or Adult Education**, we would love for you to be part of the conversation. Please come with **open hearts, open minds, and your ideas** as we collaborate, dream, and plan for the upcoming school year. Your gifts, insights, and enthusiasm can help us create meaningful opportunities for learning and growing in faith for all ages. We hope you'll join us as we work together to strengthen our Christian education ministry!

Ice Cream Social Sunday, July 26th! Worship will be at 10 am with the Ice Cream Social and Country Store from 11-3pm. Please help spread the word by sharing posts about the Ice Cream Social on Facebook.

- **Naomi Circle will make ice cream**
- **Martha Circle will serve**
- **Ruth Circle will do the advertising**



Vanco online giving platform is a great way to set up a scheduled giving plan for even when you cannot make it to church. Scan the QR code, go online to estherlutheran.com, go to the tab "ways to support Esther Lutheran Church" and click on the link <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R> or download the app Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement. Any questions please ask Mandy Arvidson.

Check out the Esther Calendar on our website to stay up to date on everything happening! Go to estherlutheran.com and click on “Esther Calendar.”

You belong here. We believe that each person has unique gifts, are created in God's image, and is a beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us each week to share in the community of faith at Esther - “Knowing Christ - making Christ known through faith, hope and love”. If you would like to become a member of Esther, please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or secretary@estherlutheran.net or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503 or jewellht17@gmail.com.

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