

Worship Plan for Sunday, July 19, 2020

Lectionary 16

Proper 11

7th Sunday after Pentecost

ELW Holy Communion Setting Four

Sunday, July 19, 2020

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.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

July 19, 2020

LECTIONARY 16

Impossible Purity

Maybe you have bought or been offered bottled water recently. Did it say "purified" on it? Did you assume that meant the water was totally pure? What if you learned that bottled water, even purified, always has some contaminants in it? Would you still drink it? You probably did.

Jesus' parable of the weeds among the wheat reminds us of our desire for purity. It is tempting on first reading the parable to immediately ask ourselves, *So, who is a weed and who is wheat?* We might wonder if the people we don't like much are weeds. We might also be anxious to know whether *we* are wheat, children of the kingdom. Sorting it all out now and purifying the field would make things simpler.

Except everything in the parable says we don't get to sort things out! Surprisingly, Jesus lowers our sense of urgency to sort out good from bad in life. Jesus says it is better to live with ambiguity, better to accept impurity, than to try so hard to clean everything up now. Why? Because we risk great harm to others in trying to obtain a level of purity we can never have in this life.

The desire for purity, especially among religious persons, can be strong. For some, this means getting rid of people who fail to live up to certain moral standards. For others, it means judging people based on who we label them to be. But total purity never exists in nature, nor in humanity as a whole, nor in any single person.

Rather than worrying about whom to get rid of, with Jesus' help we trust that we are children of the kingdom by God's grace. We are included. When we know we are included and loved, we don't need to worry about another's status. That's for God to worry about. We are free to love others and ourselves, and to let God sort out the rest.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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.

Amen.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

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.

WORD

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

FIRST READING:

A reading from Isaiah.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING:

A reading from Romans.

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL:

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

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.**

*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

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,

hear our prayer.

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,

hear our prayer.

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 (*regions and nations in conflict may be named*). Guide us by your mercy, grace, and steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

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 feel trapped by despair, and all who suffer in any way (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

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,

hear our prayer.

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 (*especially*).

Gather us with them on the day of salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

INSTRUCTING OF COMMUNION AT HOME

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care:

As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,

be present with those who partake and share your word and sacrament

at home. We remember you in the celebration of the sacrament and remember that you unite us as the body of Christ whether we are together in-person or together while apart.

In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

At this point in the service, please bring bread and drink for communion, preferably wine or grape juice but it can also be water. During our time of worshiping apart, we will be instituting communion at home. These Words of Institution bless the eucharistic elements where you are, trusting in the all-reaching power and grace of God to provide the complete and total sacrament to us in these extraordinary times where we are unable to come to Christ's table together in-person. Once you have your eucharistic elements of bread and drink, and after the words of institution, you may commune yourself along with anyone else in your household saying:

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

And so,

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.