



# Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

**July 23, 2023 A.D.      The 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

*This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the psalm and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.*

*The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

## **Invocation**

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Psalm**

*(From Psalm 86)*

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;

**listen to my plea for grace.**

Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth;

**unite my heart to fear your name.**

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,

**and I will glorify your name forever.**

For great is your steadfast love toward me;

**you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.**

O God, insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seek my life,

**and they do not set you before them.**

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,

**slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website ([www.bethanycr.org](http://www.bethanycr.org)) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....*

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## **Scripture Lesson**

*(Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)*

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, <sup>25</sup>but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. <sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. <sup>27</sup>And the servants of the master of the house came and said

to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ <sup>28</sup>He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup>But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather 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 came to 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 is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, <sup>42</sup>and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place 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. He who has ears, let him hear.”

**Sermon** – † *The Parable of the Weeds* † (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

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### **Apostles’ Creed**

**☩ I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life † everlasting. Amen.**

### **The 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.**

## **Bethany's Prayer List**

### **Entrusting into God's Care**

- Those in nursing homes/care centers
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after storms and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

### **Healing**

- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Gail (relative of Faye Sieck) - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Marlen (friend of Ken Zenor) - health issues
- Joe (brother of Mary Vezina) - cancer
- Prudy Petersen - recovering at home
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

### **Homebound**

- Chuck Stoelting - Garnet Place

### **Mourning, friends and family of**

- Raymond (father of Lora Raymon) - died 7/11
- Obie (brother of Ben Mims) - died 7/4
- Larry Easler (husband of Sharon) - died 6/24
- Karen Schaub (wife of John) - died 6/22

### **Serving Our Country**

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - Army, deployed to Poland
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX

## **Collect of the Day**

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of Your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with You in perfect joy hereafter; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



✠ *The Parable of the Weeds* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sometimes when we are reading the Bible we come across passages that are hard to understand. When this happens we might ask our fellow Christians what God is trying to say in these verses or perhaps we will do a little reading to see what Christians throughout the ages have taken them to mean. But every so often, when we come to a difficult passage of Scripture, God blesses us even more by giving us the meaning Himself in Scripture. This is the case with our Scripture lesson today.

Jesus is teaching the crowd that had been following Him around with a parable or a short story from every day life that tells us how the eternal Kingdom of God works. He says the kingdom of heaven is like a man who plants good seed in his field to grow wheat. But at night his enemy comes along and plants weeds among his good seed. When the servants of the man realize what had happened they want to go out into the field and pull out all of the weeds from among the wheat. But the master will not let them, because the servants might pull up some of the wheat as they are trying to get the weeds out. The master says when harvest time comes, the reapers will go into the field, gather the weeds first to be burned and then bring the wheat into his barn.

Jesus disciples, or followers, ask Him what this parable means. And thankfully for them and for us today, He explains it all pretty clearly. Jesus says the man who planted the wheat, or the master is the Son of Man, or Himself. The field where all this is taking place is the world. His enemy is the Devil, with the good seed being those who believe in God and the bad seed being those who follow the Devil. Harvest time is the close of the age, or what we might today call the end of the world, that is whenever Jesus comes back. And finally the reapers who will sort out the weeds from the wheat are the angels. And so, when Jesus returns to this earth as He has promised,

He will send His angels to sort out those who do evil from those who believe in Him. The evil ones will be thrown into a fiery furnace and the righteous believers will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of God. Amen.

Now today we might be tempted to hear Jesus' explanation to this parable and move on. In addition, and more importantly, even though I like to think of myself as a pastor with average intelligence, I realize that it would be foolish of me to believe that I could add anything to the explanation that Jesus Himself has given! But before we move on, just take another minute or two and think about what this parable really means for us today.

Think about the fact that in the field, or in the world that we live in today, the good seed and the bad seed are planted so close together. Jesus says the weeds are planted among the wheat. They are planted so close together that if the servants were to pull the weeds up, they might also pull out some of the good plants. This is something to remember as we encounter evil and trouble in our lives today. For instance, we should not be surprised about the war in Ukraine, because right alongside all of the perfectly wonderful people in that country and in Russia, there are a lot of weeds. Likewise, I was recently read that a serial killer was caught out on Long Island in New York. Apparently his wife, who had no idea what her husband had been doing, is cooperating with the police in the investigation. As I read that, I couldn't help but to think of the wheat and weeds growing so close together. As close as a husband and wife.

Our parable today tells us however that we should not be surprised nor discouraged when we see evil mixed in with the good of the world, the good of our communities, the good of our church, or even the good of our own families. It is true that we are children of God's Kingdom – this is what He has made through our Baptism and through our faith – but it is also true that bad seed has been sown all around us. So don't be discouraged. When problems arise in our families, it is not always because we have failed as parents or grandparents. When friendships are broken or we can't get along with our neighbors, we may have done nothing wrong. It's just that weeds are in the field.

But have hope and don't be discouraged, because the Master says the harvest is coming. The time is coming when Jesus will send His angels to sort out the weeds from the wheat. And while it may be slow according to our timetables and schedules, it will happen at just the right time because God is never late.

This parable is not Jesus challenging us to ask ourselves if we are good seed or bad seed. You are the good seed! It is true that there may be times when our sin causes us to behave more like weeds. But when we do, repent and remember you have been baptized and made into good seed. We should remember that whenever we confess our sin or our weedlike behavior, our sins are always forgiven through Jesus' death on the cross and His glorious resurrection.

But Jesus did teach this parable to His disciples back then as well as to us today, so that Christians might be encouraged when we see the weeds all around us. Don't think that God doesn't know about this or that He doesn't care about you. Like the master in the parable, God has a plan and a reason for letting weeds grow in His field that the servants may not see. But like the parable says, the harvest is coming. Jesus will return and His angels will do their work of sorting things out. This day may seem like it is slow in coming to many people, especially as we see the weeds growing. But God is not slow, but rather patient. Patient with us. So, we can be sure that Harvest Day, the day of Jesus's return will come right on time for all of us. Amen.

