

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 11) – July 19, 2026

[Jesus] put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So, when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. 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?' 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?' But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.'"

- Matthew 13:24-29 -

Ever notice how when weeds first begin to grow, they have little flowers that can mimic existing plants making it hard to decide if it's a weed or not? Then, after awhile the weeds are exposed and wildly out of control. (Seems like weeds grow faster too!) It's perfectly natural to want to pull weeds out of the garden or landscape before they take over, especially when they are surrounding your choice plants in your vegetable garden, so we set our minds on the tedious pulling of weeds which is a daunting task that can seem endless during summer months. But if we want that perfect garden, we'll have to keep weeding!

Sometimes in our families and communities of faith, we can get caught up in wanting to make things perfect there too. We end up judging others with a sense of "weeding" out those who are not similar to us. In the *Parable of the Weeds* we learn that the weeds came up alongside the wheat, yet the master tells the servants not to pull the weeds, but instead, "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.'" (Matthew 13:30) Maybe that's because we cannot trust ourselves to see clearly what is weed and what is not - that is up to the Creator who knows the hearts of all people.

"Let both grow together until the harvest" is a powerful reminder that we need to leave the judging or "weeding" to God. We are to learn and grow together as the church here on earth until the day of the harvest! Our task is not to pull weeds but to share the Good News of Jesus Christ who is the One that changes hearts and lives while we rest in his grace. Amen.