

## Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

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.

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 75. **Tuesday** Zephaniah 3:1-13. **Wednesday** (Mary Magdalene, Apostle) John 20:1-2, 11-18. **Thursday** (commemoration of Birgitta of Sweden, renewer of the church, died 1373) Psalm 119:129-136. **Friday** Acts 7:44-53. **Saturday** (James, Apostle) Mark 10:35-45. **Ninth Sunday after Pentecost** 1 Kings 3:5-12; Psalm 119:129-136; Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52.

CELEBRATE July 19, 2026 (Lectionary 16)

Volume 57, Number 3

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-3242, USPS 763-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid in St. Paul, MN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Celebrate, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1553. Printed in U.S.A. Price per weekly part \$5.79 per 100 copies; price in Canada subject to exchange rates. Minimum order 50 copies of each issue; all orders must be in multiples of 50. Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Prayer of the day, psalm, and readings during the week from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Mark Sedio. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year A* (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our website at [augsburgfortress.org](http://augsburgfortress.org). Lectionary year A. 10 of 14  
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God our rock, be a source of constancy for those whose lives have been uprooted by war, eviction, global climate change, unemployment, harassment, false witness to their character, or illness or injury. (We pray especially for . . .) God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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, **hear our prayer.**

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



# Celebrate

Sunday, July 19, 2026  
8th Sunday after Pentecost

*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 when 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.*

## Prayer of the Day

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.**

## 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.*

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.

or Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 [not printed]

*God's deeds of forgiveness and gift of hope indicate that God's faithful people must also show kindness. No other god cares for all people.*





Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth.

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

<sup>12</sup>**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,  
and glorify your name forever. R**

<sup>13</sup>For great is your love toward me;  
you have delivered me from the pit of death.

<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 before their eyes.**

<sup>15</sup>But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion,  
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

<sup>16</sup>**Turn to me and have mercy on me;  
give your strength to your servant,  
and save the child of your handmaid.**

<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 comforted me. **R**

## 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.*

So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, 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 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 we in fact 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

*continued*

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 enslavement 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 together as it

suffers together the pains of labor, <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 one already sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

## 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.*

[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!"