

Wheat and Weeds Together

Wheat and weeds growing together! Yikes! This is a disaster! What are we to do?

So would have been the reaction of farmers when discovering weeds swaying in the wind alongside their cash crop of wheat.

Jesus knew the two together was not a good thing. He also knew that this was a perfect illustration to pose a more pressing question: How to deal with the good and evil mingling in the world?

And so, our Savior and Friend tells the parable about the wheat and weeds, pointing out that there's no way to prevent the "weeds" in life from coming into our fields. But be of good cheer. In God's time, the weeds will be separated and burned. Of course, Jesus is speaking of the time of judgement.

As it was with the actual weeds in the field, we must wait and let them grow, for if they are ripped out too early, precious wheat stalks might be taken as well. How many innocents have been hurt by our own exuberant weeding?

Jesus' parable makes better sense when we turn to the earlier use of the word "tares" rather the contemporary use of "weeds." Tares are referring to darnel which is a poisonous weed that looks just like wheat.

This agricultural insight gave me pause, and the more I thought on it, the more I kept coming back to how quick we are to judge others before discerning their true motives or seeing deeply into their hearts. It seems increasingly that we label others as evil, wicked, no good, etc. Yet could it be that those we are labeling too quickly really are the wheat in the field?

I'm not saying that there isn't evil mingling with good in our world. Evil does a good job mimicking good. We need to be able to call it out when identified. But in a world so raw with distrust, we also need to stop before we speak and think before we label.

We also need to be aware of the wheat and tares in our own spiritual fields. St. Catherine of Siena, for example, heard this parable as one pointing to the presence of virtue and vice in her own heart.

There is a field of wheat and weeds in all our lives. And while we try our best to nurture the good and weed out the bad, it is not always easy to discern which is which. But God knows and God will step in and sort it out. Not sure how I wanted that to sound — hopeful or ominous? I guess it all depends how you, my dear reader, heard it.

All-knowing God, You are aware of the good grain we are growing as well as the weeds of division and contempt that are thriving. We want only our best selves to flourish, so be merciful to us when You sort out our own fields. May Your grace be abundant as it is amazing. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)





1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501

701-223-2915 www.uccbismarck.org

July 19, 2026 at 10 AM Worship

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Rev. Gretchen Deeg | Liturgist: Pat Grossman

Music: Connie Sjostrom | Video: Jordan VanBerkum

NO MATTER

Sing! 35

No matter who, no matter what
No matter where you are on the journey of life;
You're welcome, welcome in this place.
Accepted and welcomed by God's grace.

*CALL TO WORSHIP¹

All: Search me, O God.

*OPENING PRAYER²

*HYMN Nearer, My God, to You

NCH 606

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Children are invited to remain in worship Sunday School will resume in the fall.

OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, our heavenly host;
Creator, Savior, Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION³

Great Creator, you know us better than we know ourselves.
And you love us still. Forgive us when we don't believe such
love is true or possible; when we wonder how you could love
us just as we are. Forgive us when we forget our intricate
construction—fearfully and wonderfully made in your image.
Remove from our minds every thought which keeps us from
you and help us to trust anew. You know our hearts and you
love us still. Amen.

*GLORIA

Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Wis. 12:13, 16-19 & Gen. 28:10-19

SERMON

HYMN Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary Sing! 187

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*HYMN This Is the Day NCH 84

CARRY GOD'S LOVE

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from [ONE LICENSE](#), License #732302-A.

¹ Adapted. Presbyterian Church USA. ² Based on Psalm 139. re: Worship.

³ Adapted. Susan A. Blain & Scott Ressman. "All Things New."



Thank You for Worshiping with Us!

Your offerings are essential for the ongoing
ministry of this congregation. Donations can be
made using this QR code, online at
www.uccbismarck.org/donate, mailed to the
church, or placed in the offering box.

Outdoor Worship - July 26 @ 10am

We'll gather beneath the canopy of trees on the
Bismarck UCC grounds for a relaxed, spirit-filled time
of prayer, music, and community. Bring a **lawn chair or blanket.**



Sponsored in Memory of Irene Roth's Birthday



My mother, Irene Roth, worked in the Hebron Drug Store for 35 years. People started calling her "The Drug Store Lady." My mother also baked bread. I would take her a 50 lb bag of Dakota Maid Flour to bake bread and she would use 4 bags in a year. The funny thing is that she ate very little bread. She would give it all away. I was the recipient of many loaves of that wonderful bread. Then people also started calling her "The Bread Lady."

Sponsored by Duane Roth

August 16, 23, and 30 are available. If you would like to sponsor a future Sunday, contact the church office at 223-2915 or visit uccbismarck.org/donate. Sponsorships are \$500.

Bismarck Interfaith Potluck - Aug. 8, 11:30am-1pm

Join us at Sertoma Park shelter 9. If you are able, bring a dish to share, your own reusable tableware (to reduce waste), and donations of school supplies for area students.



Vacation Bible School - Aug. 9-11, 5:30-7:30pm

"A True Northern Adventure" held at Lutheran Church of the Cross, 1004 E Highland Acres Rd.

Three evenings of stories, songs, crafts, games, and faith-filled fun for kids ages 4-9 inspired by the beauty and wonder of the Alaskan wilderness. Please register below the bulletin board or online at <https://shorturl.at/aPAwD>.



Block Party & Quilt Raffle - Aug. 12, 5:30pm

Save the date for our annual block party. Hotdogs and chips are provided. You can bring a dish to share if you wish. At 7pm we will move to Lutheran Church of the Cross where we will have dessert and games. We are also having a quilt raffle. The \$10 raffle tickets are available to purchase or check out if you would like to take some to sell. Contact the church office for tickets!



THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES: July 19 - 26

Sunday:	11 AM Fellowship 11:15 AM Christian Education (in-person & online) 12 Noon Online Fellowship
Monday:	7 PM League of Women Readers
Tuesday:	1 PM Quilting/Knitting
Wednesday:	1:30 PM Edgewood Ministries
Friday:	9 AM Bible Study (in-person & online)
Sunday:	10 AM Outdoor Sunday Worship 11 AM Fellowship & 12 Noon Online Fellowship

Jam-boree - Aug. 29, 8:30am - 12 Noon

Participate by making jam at church on Aug. 29 or by donating need items ahead of time: 4oz (1/4 pint) jam jars, sugar (need 20lbs), powered Sure-Jell (need 8).



NPC Annual Meeting - Sept. 25-26

The Northern Plains Conference (NPC) is the regional body of the UCC which ties together our churches in North Dakota and Winnipeg. This year's Annual Meeting is in Valley City. Contact Pastor Gretchen with interest in attending this year's annual meeting!

NPC Food Collection for 250th Anniversary

NPC invites us to celebrate independence by donating to our local food pantries during July. We consistently fill the cart and send it to Adopt-a-Block. Let's go above and beyond this month and send even more food than we usually do!



OUR PRAYER LIST

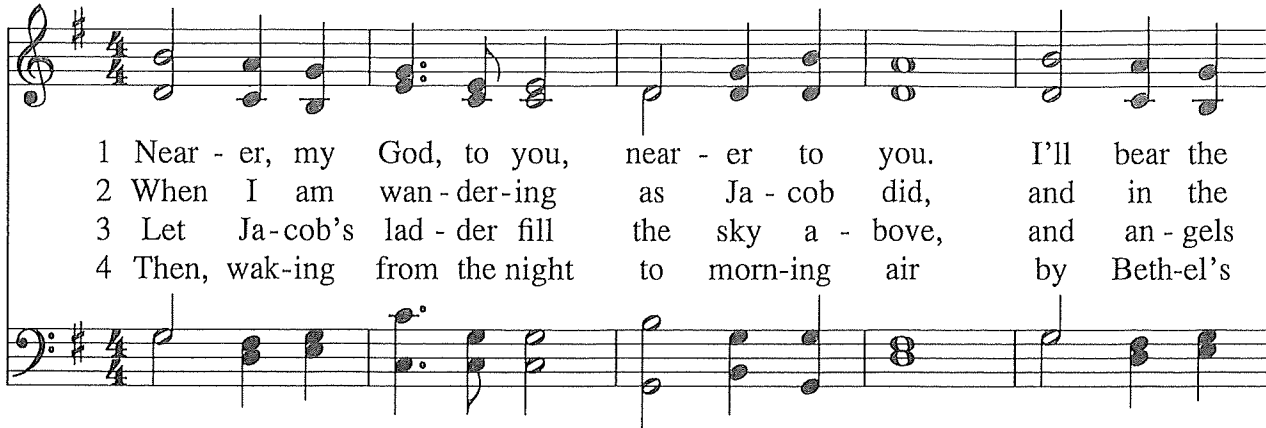
Laura (Louise Zuern's daughter-in-law), Family of Camille Grothier, Oliver Gagner, Louise Zuern, Ivan Sadlier (Autum's uncle), Jody Miller, Kayla Bruning, Bella Bruning, Gellsia (Oliver Gagner's daughter), Matthew Nitschke, Cooper (Brandon & Tasha Domagala's son), Amanda Wilson, Frank Picard, Carla Christenson (Monica Klein's mother), Fredrick Krause (Kerri Kraft's grandfather), Robyn Richter (Kyle Eisenbraun's aunt), Doretta Reule, Howard Etson, East Timor, Refugees

*Contact the church office to be added to our weekly prayer list.

Nearer, My God, to You

Gen. 28:10–22; Matt. 16:24

Sarah Flower Adams, 1841
Adapt. Thomas H. Troeger



1 Near - er, my God, to you, near - er to you. I'll bear the
2 When I am wan - der - ing as Ja - cob did, and in the
3 Let Ja - cob's lad - der fill the sky a - bove, and an - gels
4 Then, wak - ing from the night to morn - ing air by Beth - el's



cross as Christ calls me to do and pray each day a - new:
deep - est night the path is hid, my dreams will bring me, too,
car - ry down the faith and love to keep this goal in view:
stone, I'll know you heard my prayer, and how my yearn - ing grew:



1-4 Near - er my God, to you, near - er my God, to you, near - er to you.

Sarah Flower Adams, daughter of a well-known English editor, was a successful actress in London. During her short life she wrote prose and poetry for religious publications, a five-act drama, and a children's catechism.

Tune: BETHANY 6.4.6.4.6.6.6.4.
Lowell Mason, 1856

RESPOND

187 Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary

$\text{♩} = 60$

D/A Em/A D

1. Lord pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, — pure and
 - pow'r me to be a wit - ness for you, — act - ing

G Em7 D/A A A7

ho - ly, tried and true; — with thanks -
 bold - ly, in your name; — seek - ing.

D A

-giv - ing, I'll be a liv - ing — sanc - tu -
 jus - tice, where there is hurt - ing — off - 'ring

G Em7 A7 D D/A Em/A D

- ar - y for — you. 2. God em -
 hope where there is — pain.

This Is the Day

Ps. 118:24; Luke 24:1-7; Acts 2:1-4

St. 1 paraphr. by Les Garrett, 1967; alt.

St. 2-3, traditional; alt.

Unison



1 This is the day, this is the day that our God has made, that our
 2 This is the day, this is the day Je - sus rose a - gain, Je - sus
 3 This is the day, this is the day when the Spir - it came, when the



God has made; we will re-joice, we will re-joice and be glad in it, and be
 rose a - gain; we will re-joice, we will re-joice and be glad in it, and be
 Spir - it came; we will re-joice, we will re-joice and be glad in it, and be



glad in it. This is the day that our God has made, we will re-joice and be
 glad in it. This is the day Je - sus rose a - gain, we will re-joice and be
 glad in it. This is the day when the Spir - it came, we will re-joice and be



glad in it; This is the day, this is the day that our God has made.
 glad in it; This is the day, this is the day Je - sus rose a - gain.
 glad in it; This is the day, this is the day when the Spir - it came.

The first stanza of this hymn was written by Leslie Garrett, who was born in New Zealand and served as pastor of a church in western Australia. The other two stanzas are anonymous.

Tune: THIS IS THE DAY Irr.
Les Garrett, 1967