

JULY 12TH, 2026
7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST READING ISAIAH 55:10-13

In this reading from Isaiah, we learn that God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands. Here is the reading:

- ¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
¹² For you shall go out in joy
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle,
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

PSALM 65:1-13

- ¹ You are to be praised, O ^l God, in Zion;
to you shall vows ^l be fulfilled.
² **To you, the one ^l who answers prayer,**
to you all ^l flesh shall come.
³ Our sins are strong- ^l er than we are,
but you blot out ^l our transgressions.
⁴ **Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your ^l courts to dwell there!**
They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness ^l of your
temple.
⁵ Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of ^l our salvation,
O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans ^l far away.
⁶ **You make firm the mountains ^l by your power;**
you are girded a- ^l bout with might.
⁷ You still the roaring ^l of the seas,
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor ^l of the peoples.

⁸ **Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your¹ marvelous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to¹ sing for joy.** ⁹ You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is¹ full of water.
You prepare the grain, for so you provide¹ for the earth.
¹⁰ **You drench the furrows and smooth¹ out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and¹ bless its increase.**
¹¹ You crown the year¹ with your goodness, and your paths over-¹ flow with plenty.
¹² **May the fields of the wilderness be¹ rich for grazing, and the hills be¹ clothed with joy.**
¹³ May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak them-¹ selves with grain;
let them shout for¹ joy and sing.

SECOND READING: ROMANS 8:1-11

In this reading we learn there is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life. Here is the reading:

¹ Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending God's own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, God condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ If the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 13:1-9, 18-23

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were

scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!”

¹⁸ “Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Prayers of the People

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world saying God of grace and responding hear our prayer.

A brief silence.

God our gardener, you scatter grace like seed across the world. Continue to cultivate the garden of your church with your abundant Spirit. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our joy, your bountiful creation reflects your commitment to life despite our actions disregarding its wonder. We look toward Isaiah's vision, when all creation rejoices, and the trees will clap for joy at your salvation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life, you give us the same Spirit by which you raised Christ from the dead. Set our minds on that Spirit whenever fear or condemnation overwhelm throughout the world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our comfort, be with those at the Urban. May they find relief from the heat, water to drink, and safety in their communities. Remind us of those in our city who feel abandoned on rocky soil. Bless those who serve this ministry and empower us with your Spirit to create safe fertile soil for all those in need this summer. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our host and table, we pray for children who hunger and rely on school meals, for all who toil under the hot sun without refreshment, for the chronically ill who have exhausted their resources, and for local concerns We pray especially for Jose, Joan, Terri, Martha, Tim, Roxie, Alfred, Terry, Eleanor, Abdulaziz, Meryem, Aysa, Hasan, Alma, Sylvia, George, Harold, Orville, Byron, Keith, friends and family of Yoneko and all those we carry in our hearts and minds this day, silently or named aloud at this time... (brief pause). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that the roots of your goodness run deep throughout history. We remember those saints who have gone before us in faith. 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.**