



PROJECT RECONNECT

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH GOD, EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY

PROJECT RECONNECT

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Pentecost 8 Year A, July 19th 2026

Presenter: Rev Josh McPaul

Focus Reading: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Message: 7 minutes 43 seconds

"Hands off the Weeds"

Discussion Starters

1. Jesus says 'hands off the weeds' in this passage. What do you think he means by this? What are the risks when we don't deal with 'weeds' quickly? What are the risks of acting too quickly?
2. The idea of 'letting the weeds grow' is similar to forgiveness. Where in your life do you need to let things go?
3. Churches can be pretty good at weeding – pushing out people who don't fit in. How can your church make sure that they are caring for the people who don't fit in?
4. Community change often feels top-down and impatient. How can we make sure that we allow the potential strengths in our communities to really take hold?

Readings for this day

Isaiah 44:6-8 The people are told by the Lord Almighty that there is no other God but he. They are not to be afraid – from ancient times what has happened has been predicted.

Psalms 139: 1-12 The psalmist articulates his confidence in the omnipresence and grace of God in the midst of life that enables him to open his life freely for God's investigation.

Romans 8:12-25 Paul reminds us that as Christians we are led by the Holy Spirit, and our life in Christ gives hope and patience to withstand and overcome the suffering that results from vagaries of life.

Abingdon Theological Companion to the Lectionary, Year A. Copyright c2013 by Abingdon Press, an imprint of the United Methodist Publishing House. (Used by permission. All rights reserved.)

Intergenerational Talk Rev Josh McPaul

"Wait! Hold On"

Length: 2 minutes 48 seconds

Precis of IT: In this parable the farmer needs to be patient. Pulling weeds can disturb what is growing so weeding is not always a great idea. We need patience to arrive at the right time. God longs to see our full potential, is patient and wants us to develop our full potential despite there being a few weeds to deal with along the way.

Uniting in Worship (Blue Book). Psalm 139:1-12, – pages 348-349

Rev Josh McPaul

I'm the minister at Northern Illawarra Uniting Church, just north of Wollongong. I am married to Robin, a teacher who comes from California, USA. I spent most of my working life in the US, helping to start a church in Oakland, California, focussed on racial reconciliation. I love living near Wollongong, close to family – swimming, kayaking and camping up and down the coast.