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Weekly Letter – 19 July 2026

Matthew 13.24-30

God's world and God's ways will prevail

I hope you will take time to sit quietly with this parable, and let it affect you inwardly. Why? Well, Jesus' parables are essentially stories given to us by God's Son to help us in our desire to be transformed, and changed. If this parable of the wheat and weeds doesn't do that, well, it just ends up as another do or don't story, which can be disheartening! And of course, Jesus is not out to make us 'feel bad'. Rather, he hopes we will find the precious jewel in this parable so that we are encouraged to think again, and yes, to seek genuine conversion to see what is possible for us in God's Kingdom.

Here are a few thoughts about this dynamic and thoroughly engaging parable.

Christ is reminding us that in our homes, in our work, within our family and the Church, we live in a world where grace and brokenness coexist. Our lives are not given to expect perfection in others, but rather to take the log out of our eye. That is, spiritual growth does not come about by pointing out other people's failings, rather it comes, by you and I having an honesty and an awareness of where we can grow, accepting with patience that transformation in our own lives takes time.

So, Jesus does not deny sin – our failings, but wants us to focus on God's mercy and God's desire for us to repent. God's mercy for us, and his desire that we seek repentance reveals God's respect for the freedom we have, and so we can choose his path, or our path. This also points to two wonderful truths. God gives people time to convert and grow and evil (weeds) will never ultimately triumph.

Then we come to the end of this fascinating parable – the harvest, i.e. the return of Christ, and God's final victory and what ruins human lives – evil. This focus on the harvest is once again reminding you and I of God's mercy, and the seriousness of our accountability for all that has been revealed to us.

Stephen

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am led by Rev Simon Walkling.

Bible Readings: Matthew 13.24-30: Genesis 28.10-22.

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Tabernacle, Mumbles

Prayers for every household – St John's Road nos. 23-43, 66-92

Tuesday, 21st July – Tea and Chat – 2-4pm – Quiz - From 'Days gone by' newspapers

Where are all the butterflies?

We are in a butterfly emergency and we need your help more than ever before. By taking part in Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count - a UK wide survey, you can help assess the health of our environment simply by counting butterflies. If you would be happy to take part in this survey please visit: <https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/> and follow the instructions as mentioned on the web page.

If you take part in the Count, please let any member of the Eco Church team know the results of your count. It would be good to produce a church summary of our involvement in the Big Butterfly Count.

KNOWN AND NURTURED

(Lectionary Readings: Genesis 28.10-19a and Psalm 139.1-12, 23-24: Isaiah 44.6-8: Mathew 13.2430)

Thanks to God for the gift of identity.

We are not helpless atoms, wandering in space, nor orphans, lost in the crowd.

But we are known, visible and understood in the heart and wisdom of God.

We count and we matter to a God of grace and goodness.

Thanks be to God for the gift of company.

Wherever we go, God is there, hemming us in, holding us firm, handing us a way forward.

Even in dismal places, distant places and dark places, God is there, with hope and reach and light.

Thanks be to God for the gift of scrutiny: for the eye that searches and sees us,
the purpose that sifts and sorts, the mind that measures and mentors, and love that leads.

Thanks be to the God of knowledge and presence, in whom we are never alone.

John Proctor (URC Prayer Handbook 2026)