

July 16, 2026
Meet Paul: The Apostle Who Knew Love

By Pr. Beate Chun

A Quick Recap

Grace to you and peace
from the one who is
and the one who was
and the one who is to come.

During the past several weeks
we have been reading a part of Scripture called “*Romans*.”

“Romans” is a shortcut.
It stands for Paul’s letter
to the congregation in Rome.

So, this is a real letter,
a letter that begins with a greeting
and ends with a very heartfelt final blessing.

It is a letter that was written to a specific group of people,
namely a small community of Christians
meeting in each other’s homes in the great city of Rome...
A city built on seven hills.
A city of enormous wealth...
and grinding poverty.
A city of political power...

and constant pressure.

A city where it wasn't always easy to follow Christ.

...perhaps not entirely unlike another city built on hills.

Paul wrote this letter to encourage them.

To strengthen them.

To remind them that,

whatever happened, they belonged to God.

And what he wrote to them

became one of the richest Christian testimonies ever written.

The Heart of Paul / the heart of God

Now we have already been spending
some time with this letter.

We have journeyed through this letter
chapter by chapter,
and today we have arrived at chapter 8,
what many have called
the heart of Paul's gospel.

And from this heart,
a great bell has been ringing for almost two thousand years.
Its sound has comforted Christians in every generation.
It has comforted me.

There are passages of Scripture
that become lifelong companions.
Passages that save us,
again and again.
This is one of mine.

And so, today,
I will let Paul do most of the preaching.
Here is what Paul has to say:

Romans 8:26-39

The Spirit helps us in our weakness,
for we do not know
how to pray
as we ought,

(neither do I.)

but that very Spirit intercedes
with sighs
too deep for words.

And God, who searches the heart,
knows what is the mind of the Spirit,
because the Spirit intercedes for us
according to the will of God.

We know that all things
work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to his purpose.

(Listen to that again.

We know that all things
work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to his purpose.)

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined
to be conformed to the image of his Son,

in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.
And those whom he predestined he also called,
and those whom he called he also justified,
and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things?
If God is for us, who is against us?

If God is for us, who is against us?

I still need to hear this!

He who did not withhold his own Son
but gave him up for all of us,
how will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will bring any charge against God's elect?

It is God who justifies.
Who is to condemn?

It is Christ who died,
yes, who was raised,
who is also at the right hand of God,
who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will affliction
or distress
or persecution
or famine
or nakedness
or peril or sword?
As it is written,
"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things
we are more than conquerors

(- more than conquerors!)

through him who loved us.

For I am convinced
that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers,
nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation

will be able to separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Sermon for Sunday, July 26, 2026 - Pentecost 8

Presented at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church San Francisco

The eights in a series of Sermons on the Letter to the Romans.

Text: [Romans 8:26-39 NRSVue - Likewise the Spirit helps us in our - Bible Gateway](#)

Tags: Romans 8:26-39 | God's unfailing Love | The Spirit Helps Us | More than conquerors | All Things for good