

14940 62nd St. N - Stillwater, MN 55082

651-439-7831

[www.salemlutheran.org](http://www.salemlutheran.org)



## Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

*Define Christian—  
The Christian lives as wheat among weeds*

**W**elcome! Thank you for joining us for worship today. In our services we gather before our almighty God to receive his gifts and to offer him our worship and praise. Through God's powerful Word and sacraments he renews our faith and strengthens us to serve in joy.

**PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP:** Savior Jesus, thank you for bringing me once again to this house of peace and rest. Bless me through your word and fill my heart with joyful praise at the good news of forgiveness. Amen.

**THEME OF THE DAY:** The variety of wheat grown in the Middle East is difficult to distinguish from some wild grasses and weeds. Try and pull the weeds out of a wheat field and you will likely pull up a fair amount of wheat accidentally. So 1st century farmers had to wait for the harvest when the heads of wheat were filled with grain to separate the wheat from the weeds.

Jesus uses that image to illustrate life this side of heaven. Christians are pictured as wheat planted by the Lord. Unbelievers, and evil itself, are pictured as weeds. We might want God to take care of evil now—to pull up the weeds. He tells us instead to wait for the harvest. God will bring justice but we don't know when. What does God want us to do while we wait? To live like wheat among weeds, serving the purpose for which he planted us. That means being faithful, fruitful, and mindful of the coming harvest.

**WORSHIP SERIES:** "What is a Christian?" Human answers may vary, but in this series we see Christ himself define who Christians are and what they do. We are reminded that people could sometimes look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Throughout this series though, Jesus shows us that ultimately a Christian is not a sinless person of good, but rather a sinner who runs to the perfect Christ for forgiveness. But in a mystery of grace, as we receive the mercy of Christ it moves us to work toward a life that better fits Christ's beautiful definition. God blesses us faith in Christ for heaven, and faithfulness to Christ on earth.

**A WORD ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION:** Our church observes the biblical practice of member communion (also called close communion). In Holy Communion we not only receive forgiveness from God, but we also express the unique relationship our members have with each other. If you are not a member of our congregation, we kindly ask that you not take communion today, but speak with our pastor after the service. We would love to share the sacrament with you in the future.

# Order of Worship



## HYMN: Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

CW 873, sts 1-3



1 Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; from your sleep a -  
2 Watch a - gainst the dev - il's snares lest a - sleep he  
3 Watch! Let not the wick - ed world with its lies de -



wak - en! Be not by the e - vil day un - a -  
find you; for in - deed no pains he spares to de -  
feat you lest with bold de - cep - tions hurled it be -



wares o'er - tak - en; for the foe, well we know, is a  
ceive and blind you. Sa - tan's prey oft are they who se -  
tray and cheat you. Watch and see lest there be faith - less



har - vest reap - ing while the saints are sleep - ing.  
cure are sleep - ing and no watch are keep - ing.  
friends to charm you who but seek to harm you.

*Please stand.*

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

## CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

**C:** Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unending love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

**M:** God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

**C:** Amen.

### **HYMN: From All that Dwell Below the Skies**

CW 605



1 From all that dwell be - low the skies let the Cre -  
2 E - ter - nal are your mer - cies, Lord; e - ter - nal



a - tor's praise a - rise. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
truth at - tends your Word. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Let the Re - deem - er's name be sung through ev - 'ry  
Your praise shall sound from shore to shore till suns shall



land, by ev - 'ry tongue. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
rise and set no more. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

## THE WORD OF GOD

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

M: Let us pray.

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with you in perfect joy hereafter; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

*Be seated.*

### **First Reading**

*Isaiah 44:6-11*

*Like wheat among weeds, Christians live surrounded by evil in this world. The presence of evil in this world does not mean that God doesn't care for us though.*

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the LORD says—

Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:

I am the first and I am the last;

apart from me there is no God.

<sup>7</sup>Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.

Let him declare and lay out before me

what has happened since I established my ancient people,

and what is yet to come—yes, let them foretell what will come.

<sup>8</sup>Do not tremble, do not be afraid.

Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?

You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?

No, there is no other Rock; I know not one."

<sup>9</sup>All who make idols are nothing,

and the things they treasure are worthless.

Those who would speak up for them are blind;

they are ignorant, to their own shame.

<sup>10</sup>Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit nothing?

<sup>11</sup>People who do that will be put to shame;

such craftsmen are only human beings.

Let them all come together and take their stand;

they will be brought down to terror and shame.

M: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading

Romans 1:18-25

*Jesus' parable could give the impression that God is ambivalent about evil. But God's wrath is real and will be fully revealed at the harvest.*

<sup>18</sup>The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup>since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup>For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

<sup>21</sup>For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup>Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

<sup>24</sup>Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup>They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

M: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

## Gospel

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

*The Lord has a plan to separate wheat and weeds. Christians will be perfectly separated from every evil at the final harvest.*

<sup>24</sup>Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup>But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. <sup>26</sup>When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

<sup>27</sup>"The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

<sup>28</sup>" 'An enemy did this,' he replied.

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

<sup>29</sup>“No,” he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’ ”

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

<sup>40</sup>“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. <sup>42</sup>They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

*Be seated.*

## Children’s Devotion

### Hymn of the Day: Come, You Thankful People, Come

CW 491



1 Come, you thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har-vest home.  
2 All the world is God’s own field, fruit un - to his praise to yield;  
3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har-vest home,  
4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to your fi - nal har-vest home;



All be safe - ly gath - ered in ere the win - ter storms be - gin.  
wheat and weeds to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.  
from his field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way,  
gath - er all your peo - ple in, free from sor-row, free from sin,



God, our mak - er, shall pro-vide for our wants to be sup-plied.  
 First the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.  
 give his an - gels charge at last in the fire the weeds to cast,  
 there, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in your gar - ner to a - bide.



Come to God's own tem - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.  
 Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.  
 but the fruit - ful ears to store in his gar - ner ev - er - more.  
 Come with all your an - gels, come; raise the glo - rious har - vest home.

## Sermon

Based on Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

*"The Christian Life: Don't get lost in the weeds!"*

Please stand after the sermon.

# THANKSGIVING

## Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
 maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
 eternally begotten of the Father,  
 God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
 begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
 was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
 and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
 and his kingdom will have no end.**



**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Be seated.*

## Offering



Connect Card

Our members give offerings to support God's work in our church. Offerings can be put in the basket or made online by scanning the code. Visitors may give, but aren't expected to.

We ask members and visitors alike to fill out the connection card and place it in the basket now or as you leave. Please share your prayer requests that we can pray for you.



Give Online

## (8:00am) Adult Confirmation

After instruction with our pastor, we welcome Ryan Falch, Linda Simonet, and Fred Stoller into our church family through adult confirmation. While the practice of confirmation is never mentioned or commanded in Scripture, it is a valuable tradition as new members confess their shared faith with us and as they vow before God, each other, and all of us to remain faithful to him.

*Please stand.*

## Prayer of the Church

### Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Our Lord Jesus has given us a holy supper in which we receive his true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. The meal also bears witness to the unity and fellowship we share with each other. Therefore, we invite to communion all those who share in our confession by virtue of their membership here or in a sister WELS or ELS congregation. We ask visitors to speak to the pastor before communing.*

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of might.



Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -



na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -

na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

## Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

## O Christ, Lamb of God

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.  
 O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sin of the world; grant us your peace.  
 A - men. A - men.

Be seated.

## Communion Distribution

*For those who cannot have any alcohol for personal or medical reasons we offer white grape juice. You will find cups of white grape juice in the center of each communion tray. Gluten-free wafers are available by request for those medically unable to tolerate gluten.*

*Communicants may choose to receive the wine by individual or common cup. If you choose the common cup, please allow the individual tray to pass and then assist the minister by helping to tip the common cup.*



After the distribution please stand at the pastor's direction.

## Response of Thanksgiving

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: **His mercy endures forever.**

*Psalm 118:1*

M: Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

C: **We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

*1 Corinthians 11:26*

## Closing Prayer & Blessing

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

## Blessing

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

C: Amen.

*Be seated.*

## Hymn: Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

CW 873 sts. 4-5



4 Watch a - gainst your - self, my soul, lest with grace you  
5 But while watch - ing al - so pray to the Lord un -



tri - fle; let not self your thoughts con - trol nor God's  
ceas - ing. God pro - tects you day by day, strength and



mer - cy sti - fle. Pride and sin lurk with - in, all your  
faith in - creas - ing, so that still mind and will shall u -



hopes to shat - ter; heed not when they flat - ter.  
nite to serve him and for - ev - er love him.

## Silent Prayer and Announcements

## Acknowledgments

Setting Four from Christian Worship

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### ***SERVING GOD, SERVING US:***

Worship Leader: Pastor Ryan Wolfe

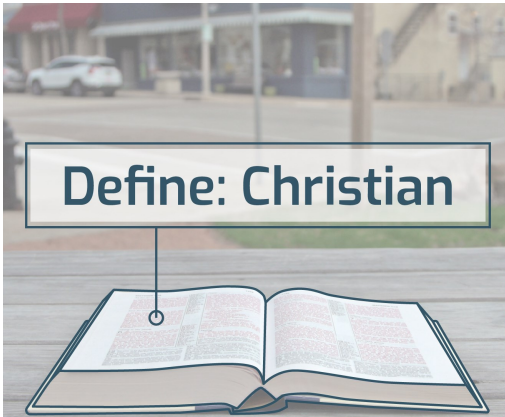
Organ: Robyn Stoller

### **For Worship Next Week**

Worship theme: Define Christian: The Christian seeks spiritual wealth

Bible Readings: 1 Kings 3:5-12; 1 Timothy 6:6-10,17; Matthew 13:44-52

Hymns: 620, 859, 539, 929



**Join us for the rest of this worship series!**

**July 30th – The Christian Seeks Spiritual Wealth**

**August 6th – The Christian Trusts God to Provide**

**August 13th – The Christian Answers Doubt with Faith**

## **PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION**

(Also printed in the hymnal)

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: *He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.*

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: *I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?*

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: *I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.*

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: *His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.*

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: *In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.*

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: *I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."*

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: *I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.*

Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.

# *Welcome to worship!*

## FOR OUR GUESTS

We are glad that you joined us to worship our Savior today. If you have questions about our church or service simply ask an usher or someone near you. We're happy to help. Please take note of a few helpful things:

- † **Restrooms** are located straight down the hall opposite the sanctuary entrance. Both men's and women's restrooms are equipped with **diaper changing tables** for your convenience.
- † Our sanctuary is equipped with an amplified "loop" system for **hearing assistance**. Please set hearing aids to the "T" position.
- † You will find a **connection card** in your pew. We ask members and guests to share their names and contact info, and invite you to share requests for contact or prayers.
- † Salem members give an **offering** to support the work we do for the Lord. Guests are not expected to give anything, but if you wish to make a donation you can place it in a basket as it's passed during the service or give online.

## FOR THOSE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

We love to see families worship together and we welcome children to sing and pray and grow with us in our services. Please note these special worship aids and helps for families:

- † Children's bulletins & "*quiet bags*" for your child's use in worship are available in the entry, just to the left of the office hallway. Ask an usher if you need help finding them.
- † If your child needs to be nursed or quieted for a few moments you can use our "*cry room*" down the hallway across from the restrooms. The service is shown live on a TV in the room.
- † Sunday mornings, before the hymn of the day and sermon, children of all ages are invited to come to the front of church for a short devotion on God's Word. Parents may accompany their children as they wish.

Salem Lutheran Church exists to glorify God  
by teaching his timeless Truth, that all may  
grow in grace and faith to share tomorrow's eternity.

