

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 9-10, 2023



14940 62nd St. N - Stillwater, MN 55082

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www.salemlutheran.org



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

*The Church God Wants—
A Church Willing to Say Hard Things*

Welcome! 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.

THEME OF THE DAY: Christian love compels us to speak even when it is difficult. In compassion, we speak to warn a person of dangerous choices or harmful habits that could destroy their health or body. God wants the people of his church to be ready to say hard things to people to save them from an even worse danger—the eternal consequences of sin.

Warning against sin is not easy. It upsets and offends people. It lives in direct contradiction to our culture's ideal of personal choice. But saying hard things is the loving thing to do when it is a matter of eternal life and death.

OUR WORSHIP SERIES: "I want a church that..." Every individual would complete that sentence with their own interests, priorities, and preferences. From the size of the building to the style of worship to the color of the carpet! What do you want in a church? In this worship series, we see the error in that question. Jesus bought the Church with his blood - it belongs to Him. So the right question then is "what does God want in a church?" In these five weeks we see that what God wants in a healthy church might be a little different than many manmade lists. It's not about the outside or the activities - it's about the heart and about the Word. The rest is just details.

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.

SERVING GOD, SERVING US:

Worship Leader: Pastor Ryan Wolfe

Keyboard: Paige Reiners

Order of Worship



HYMN: Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

CW 839



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring, sim - ply to thy cross I cling;
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
na - ked, come to thee for dress, help - less, look to thee for grace;
when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure: cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save and thou a - lone.
foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

Please stand.

Minister: The grace of our Lord (+) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS

M: God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

O Lord, Our Lord

C: O Lord, our Lord, how glo - rious is your name in

all the earth. Al - might - y God, mer - ci - ful Fa - ther,

you crown our life with your love. You take a - way our sin;

you com - fort our spir - it; you make us pure and

ho - ly in your sight. You did not spare your on - ly Son,

but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord,



how glo - rious is your name in all the earth.



O Son of God, e - ter - nal Word of the Fa - ther,



you came to live with us; you made your Fa - ther known;



you washed us from our sins in your own blood. You are the



King of glo - ry; you are the Lord! O Lord, our Lord,



how glo - rious is your name in all the earth.

THE WORD OF GOD

M: The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.
O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C: **Amen.**

Be seated.

First Reading

Ezekiel 33:7-11

The LORD told the prophet Ezekiel that if he didn't warn the Israelites about their sin, he was going to hold Ezekiel accountable for their blood.

⁷"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ⁸When I say to the wicked, 'You wicked person, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade them from their ways, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. ⁹But if you do warn the wicked person to turn from their ways and they do not do so, they will die for their sin, though you yourself will be saved.

¹⁰"Son of man, say to the Israelites, 'This is what you are saying: "Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?"' ¹¹Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?'

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Galatians 2:11-16

Paul is put in the uncomfortable position of having to confront Cephas (also known as Peter). In doing so, Paul wins Peter over to the truth of the gospel.

¹¹When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

¹⁴When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

¹⁵"We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles ¹⁶know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too,

have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

Gospel

Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus teaches us how to lovingly practice Christian discipline as we seek to win our straying brother and sister over.

¹⁵“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

¹⁸“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated.

Children’s Devotion

Hymn of the Day: Jesus Sinners Does Receive CW 654 sts. 1-2, 5, 7



1 Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive; oh, may all this
2 We de - serve but grief and shame, yet his words, rich
5 Oh, how blest it is to know, were as scar - let
7 Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive, e - ven I have



say - ing pon - der who in sin's de - lu - sions live
grace re - veal - ing, par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;
my trans - gres - sion, it shall be as white as snow
been for - giv - en. And when I this earth must leave,



and from God and heav - en wan - der. Here is hope for
here their ills have per - fect heal - ing who with hum - ble
by your blood and bit - ter pas - sion, for these words I
I shall find an o - pen heav - en. Dy - ing, still to



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.
hearts be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.
do be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.
him I cleave: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.

Sermon

Based on Matthew 18:15-20

*“The Church God Wants:
A Church of Tough & Tender Love For Sinners”*

Please stand after the sermon.

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

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. 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: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He sends the Holy Spirit to testify that we are his children and to strengthen us when we are weak. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever:



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.



You are my God, and I will ex - alt you.



I will give you thanks, for you have be - come my sal -



va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

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 \dagger 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 \dagger 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



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



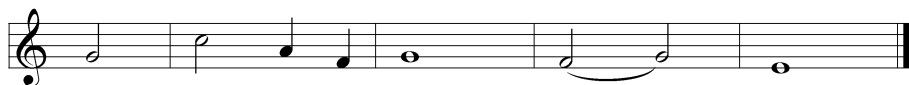
world; have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you



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.

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.

HYMN: If Your Beloved Son, O God

CW 559



1 If your be - lov - ed Son, O God, had not to earth de -
2 But now I find sweet peace and rest; de - spair no more reigns
3 I trust in him with all my heart; now all my sor - row
4 All right - eous - ness by works is vain; the law brings con - dem -
5 My guilt, O Fa - ther, you have laid on Christ, your Son, my



scend - ed and in our mor - tal flesh and blood had not sin's
o'er me. No more am I by sin op - pressed, for Christ has
ceas - es. His words a - bid - ing peace im - part; his blood from
na - tion. True right - eous - ness by faith I gain; Christ's work is
Sav - ior. Lord Je - sus, you my debt have paid and gained for



pow - er end - ed, then this poor, wretch - ed soul of mine in
borne sin for me. Up - on the cross for me he died that,
guilt re - leas - es. Free grace thro' him I now ob - tain; he
my sal - va - tion. His death, that per - fect sac - ri - fice, has
me God's fa - vor. O Ho - ly Spir - it, fount of grace, the



hell e - ter - nal - ly would pine be - cause of my trans - gres - sion.
rec - on - ciled, I might a - bide with you, my God, for - ev - er.
wash - es me from ev - 'ry stain, and pure I stand be - fore him.
paid the all - suf - fi - cient price; in him my hope is an - chored.
good in me to you I trace; in faith and hope pre - serve me.

Please stand at the pastor's direction after the Supper.

THANKSGIVING

THANK THE LORD



C: Thank the Lord and sing his praise. Tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-news his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

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: A - men. A - men. A - men.

Hymn: Sent Forth by God's Blessing

CW 932 st. 1

1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,
the peo - ple of God from his dwell - ing take leave.
The sup - per is end - ed; O be now ex - tend - ed
the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
The seed of his teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls reach - ing,
shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.
His grace did in - vite us; his love shall u - nite us
to work for God's king - dom and an - swer his call.

Silent Prayer and Announcements

Acknowledgments

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Fellowship & Spiritual Growth

Sunday morning after services, all are invited to enjoy fellowship in the entry between services. During our regular Bible study hour today all are invited to enjoy Salem's Ministry Fair. Check out the tables and booths to learn more about the many ways that members serve in our church and community. Celebrate their service to God and perhaps find a way you can serve as well!

Next Sunday join us at JAM (Jesus and Me) for children ages 3yrs to 6th grade starts at 9:15am in the sanctuary. Adult Bible study will begin at 9:15.

For Worship Next Week

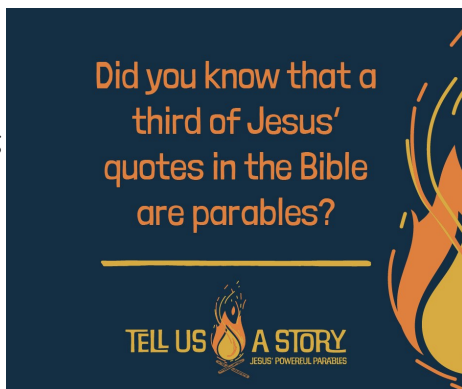
Worship theme: The Church God Wants—A Church that's Quick to Forgive

Bible Readings: Genesis 50:15-21; Ephesians 4:29-5:2, Matthew 18: 21-35

Hymns: 579, 733, 731

Upcoming Worship Series

Much of what Jesus has to say to you and me is contained within his parables. Parables are simple stories that contain profound truths about life and eternity. For the believer, a parable takes a challenging spiritual fact and makes it clear. However, since the parable conveys spiritual truth, for someone without faith, the story remains only that—a story. Our prayer for this worship series is that Christ would send us his Holy Spirit so that we might receive the peace and power Jesus offers us in his parables. Tell us a story, Jesus!



Our worship follows this path:

Sept. 24th – A Story of Perplexing Generosity

Oct. 1st – A Story of Spiritual Insincerity

Oct. 8th – A Story of Reckless Patience

Oct. 15th – Mission Festival with Pastor Mark Parsons (Truth in Love Ministries)

Presentation during Bible Hour and potluck dinner following late service.

Watch the series intro video at www.salemlutheran.org/preview.

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.

