

# *Salem Lutheran Church*

115 N. Washington Ave., Albert Lea

## *25th Sunday of Pentecost*

*November 19, 2023*

*Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ’s coming among us.*

*\*Congregation: please stand. If standing is difficult for you, please feel free to remain seated.*

## *Gathering*

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### **Prelude**

### **Announcements**

### **\*Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
in whose image we are made,  
who claims us and calls us beloved.

**Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One,  
**we confess that we are not awake for you.**  
**We are not faithful in using your gifts.**  
**We forget the least of our siblings.**  
**We do not see your beautiful image in one another.**  
**We are infected by sin**  
**that divides your beloved community.**  
**Open our hearts to your coming,**  
**open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,**  
**open our hands to serve your creation.**  
**Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children,  
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.  
Through † Jesus you are forgiven,  
by Jesus you are welcome,  
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!  
Let us live in the promises prepared for us  
from the foundation of the world.  
**Amen.**

**\*HYMN**

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

#632

**\*Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

**\*Canticle of Praise**

"Worthy is Christ"

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**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us  
all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the  
joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **Word**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18**

*Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of  
the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament  
include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.*

<sup>7</sup>Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is at hand;  
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,  
he has consecrated his guests.

<sup>12</sup>At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the people  
who rest complacently on their dregs,  
those who say in their hearts,  
"The LORD will not do good,  
nor will he do harm."

<sup>13</sup>Their wealth shall be plundered,  
and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses,

they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.

<sup>14</sup>The great day of the LORD is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.

<sup>15</sup>That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,  
<sup>16</sup>a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.

<sup>17</sup>I will bring such distress upon people  
that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD,  
their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
and their flesh like dung.

<sup>18</sup>Neither their silver nor their gold  
will be able to save them  
on the day of the LORD's wrath;  
in the fire of his passion  
the whole earth shall be consumed;  
for a full, a terrible end  
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 90:1-8 (9-11) 12**

*So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. (Ps. 90:12)*

<sup>1</sup>Lord, you have | been our refuge  
from one generation | to another.

<sup>2</sup>**Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the | earth were born,  
from age to age | you are God.**

<sup>3</sup>You turn us back to the | dust and say,  
"Turn back, O child- | ren of earth."

<sup>4</sup>**For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when | it is past  
and like a watch | in the night; R**

<sup>5</sup>you sweep them away | like a dream,  
they fade away suddenly | like the grass:

<sup>6</sup>**in the morning it is | green and flourishes;**

**in the evening it is dried | up and withered.**

<sup>7</sup>For we are consumed | by your anger;  
we are afraid because | of your wrath.

**<sup>8</sup>Our iniquities you have | set before you,  
and our secret sins in the light | of your countenance. R**

[ <sup>9</sup>When you are angry, all our | days are gone;  
we bring our years to an end | like a sigh.

**<sup>10</sup>The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength | even eighty;  
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and | we  
are gone.**

<sup>11</sup>Who regards the power | of your wrath?  
Who rightly fears your | indignation?

] **<sup>12</sup>So teach us to num- | ber our days  
that we may apply our | hearts to wisdom. R**

## **SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

*Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup>For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup>When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! <sup>4</sup>But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; <sup>5</sup>for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. <sup>6</sup>So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; <sup>7</sup>for those who sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup>But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup>For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup>who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. <sup>11</sup>Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **\*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:14-30**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>14</sup>“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup>to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup>But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. <sup>19</sup>After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ <sup>21</sup>His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ <sup>22</sup>And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ <sup>23</sup>His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ <sup>24</sup>Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ <sup>26</sup>But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup>As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

The gospel of the Lord,  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**Pastor Mark Boorsma**

**\*HYMN**

Lord of Light

#688

**\*APOSTLE’S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

Gracious God, you give talents and gifts to all your people, and you equip the church to serve. Turn us from fear and self-serving ways, that we use our talents to glorify you and encourage our neighbor.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You have been our dwelling place from one generation to another. Sustain the life of the planet; protect farmlands and harvests. Direct all people in wise stewardship of all the earth's resources.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You call us to honesty and integrity. Instill these values in the hearts of all nations and their leaders. Free any who are oppressed, expose all corruption, and bring redemption to victims of injustice.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart. Where there is sickness or sorrow, bring healing, and where there is loneliness, reveal your love in community. We remember before you especially Woody, Larry, Shirley, Marianne, Dean, Tom, Leland and all others on our hearts and minds this day.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the faith formation ministries of our church. Give to all children, youth, and adults who study your word the breastplate of faith and love. Shape us by your love and show us how to encourage one another. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, you are faithful in all generations. For the promise of life and rest and for the witness of those who have died in faith we praise your goodness.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## *Meal*

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**OFFERING**

*We very much appreciate your continued giving and generosity at this time.*

*Offering can be placed in the offering plate at the door.*

**OFFERTORY**

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

#184

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name,**

**thy kingdom come,**

**thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,**

**and the power, and the glory,**

**forever and ever. Amen.**

Lord Jesus,

in this simple meal you have set a banquet.

Sustain us on the journey,

strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,

and give us glad and generous hearts

as we meet you on the way.

**Amen.**

## *Sending*

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**\*Blessing**

May the God of all creation,  
in whose image we are made,  
who claims us and calls us beloved,  
who strengthens us for service,  
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!  
The blessing of God,  
Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit,  
be with you today and always.  
**Amen.**

\*HYMN I Want to Walk as A Child of the Light #815

\*DISMISSAL  
Beloved of God,  
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*\*Communion this morning will be received by coming forward.*

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**Assisting in Worship**

Worship Assistant: Patti Cotton  
Ushers: Mark & Marcia Gayken

**Thank you** to Bev Lombardi for the beautiful organ music this morning.

**The flowers** near the altar are given by Pat Mangskau in memory of Dale Mangskau and Mark Brech.

**This Week at Salem**

Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>: 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting  
Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>: 5:30 p.m. Thanksgiving Eve Worship (at First Presbyterian)  
Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>: Church Offices closed for Thanksgiving  
Friday, November 24<sup>th</sup>: 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study  
Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>: 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

**Thanksgiving Eve Service:** Please join us on Wednesday, Nov. 22 at 5:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church. Gifts to the local food shelves would be welcomed.

**SOS (Salem Over Sixty) Christmas Party** is scheduled for Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. Dessert and coffee will be furnished. Please bring a dish to pass and a \$5 wrapped gift. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to attend. Sign up sheet is in the Gathering Space.