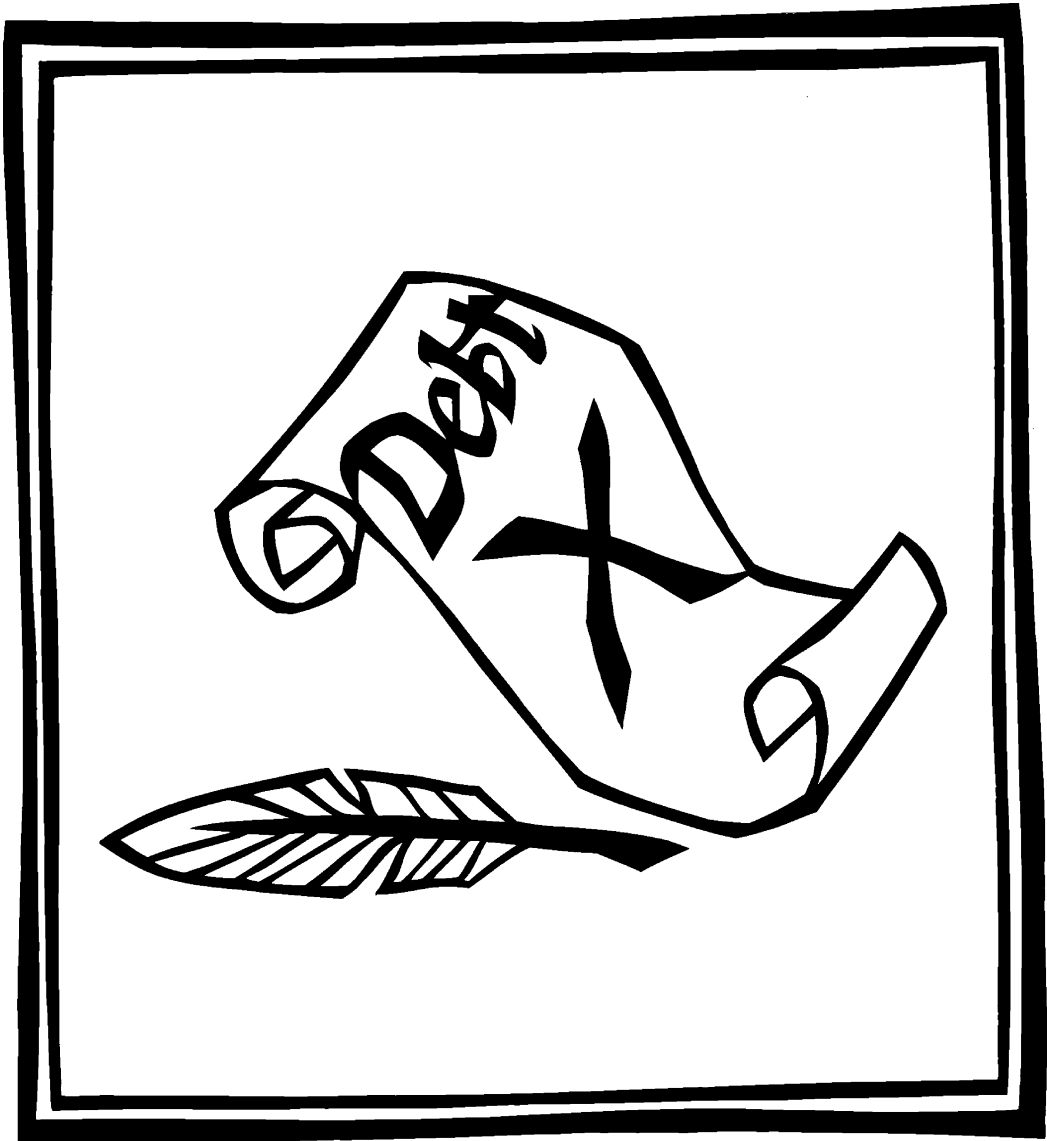




Salem Lutheran Church
401 S. Lake St. Lake Mills IA 50450

Welcome to the House of the Lord

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost
September 17, 2023 – 9:00am



OUR MISSION: We are God forgiven and mission driven.

OUR VISION: To be that Lake Mills Place where belonging, healing, growing, serving and believing are open to all, regardless of background, experience or aptitude. Central to this is that we are a -forgiving, mission-driven community, which means we all want to have an impact, shaped by the love of Christ to serve all others.

Sunday—9:00am Worship Service

Preaching: Pastor Steve Smith

Organist: Ruth Sheldon

Reader: Wayne VanVeldhuizen

Sound: Al Skellenger

Live Stream: Brad Evenson

Acolytes:

Liturgical Choir:

Communion Servers: Kathy Chose, Bruce Adams, Heather Mannes, Jon & Becky Helgeson, Dianne Gardner

Ushers: Margaret Okland, Dolly Gregor, Gary Heimdal

Altar Guild for September: Linda Helgeson, Rhonda Schriever

Worship Coordinator: Shannon Bruhns

**The Live Stream Broadcast is Given In Honor
of Loved Ones From Jon & Becky Helgeson**

Salem Contact Information:

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INTRODUCTION

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

BELLS

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 God, the one who forms us, †Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,

you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven ELW #865



1 Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en; to his feet your trib - ute bring.
2 Praise him for his grace and fa - vor to our fore - bears in dis - tress.
3 Tend - er - ly he shields and spares us; well our fee - ble frame he knows.
4 An - gels help us to a - dore him, who be - hold him face to face.



Ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more his prais - es sing.
Praise him, still the same for - ev - er, slow to chide and swift to bless.
In his hands he gent - ly bears us, res - cues us from all our foes.
Sun and moon bow down be - fore him; all who dwell in time and space.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in his faith - ful - ness!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly as his mer - cy flows.
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

BLESSING OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Teachers and students come forward

Let us pray for all who are beginning another year of faith formation, that both students and teachers will be blessed in their time together growing, serving and believing; to be shaped by the love of Christ to serve all others.

Teachers place hands on the heads or shoulders of students for the blessing

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not forbid them, for such is the kingdom of heaven," Lord, bless your children who now stand before you in prayer. Help them to understand the depth of your love. Fill them with your grace and wisdom, let their lights shine, so that they may grow to be confident in their faith, loving God and their neighbors. **Amen.**

Students place hands on the heads or shoulders of teachers for the blessing

God of wisdom, your Son came among us as a teacher. Send your blessing on all who are engaged in the work of education: give them clearness of vision and freshness of thought, and enable them so to train the hearts and minds of their students that they may grow in wisdom and be prepared to face the challenges of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 103:[1-7]8-13

We will speak today's psalm responsively beginning with the lector.

[¹Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

²Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—

³who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

⁴**who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;** ⁵**who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.**

⁶O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. ⁷You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.

⁸**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;** ⁹**you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.**

¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

¹¹**For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**

¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

¹³**As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.**

SECOND READING

Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables.

³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he

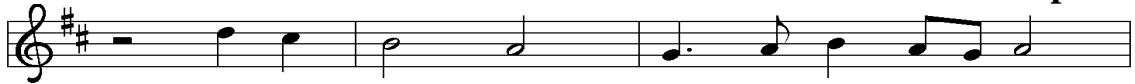
might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.” ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p.151



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21-35

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’

²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they

were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace* ELW #716



1 Lord of all na - tions, grant me grace to love all
 2 Break down the wall that would di - vide thy chil - dren,
 3 For - give me, Lord, where I have erred by love - less
 4 Give me thy cour - age, Lord, to speak when - ev - er
 5 With thine own love may I be filled and by thy



peo - ple, ev - 'ry race; and in each per - son may I
 Lord, on ev - 'ry side. My neigh - bor's good let me pur -
 act and thought - less word. Make me to see the wrong I
 strong op - press the weak. Should I my - self the vic - tim
 Ho - ly Spir - it willed, that all I touch, wher - e'er I



see my kin - dred, loved, re - deemed by thee.
 sue; let Chris - tian love bind warm and true.
 do will cru - ci - fy my Lord a - new.
 be, help me for - give, re - mem - b'ring thee.
 be, may be di - vine - ly touched by thee.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' 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

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world (like Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, whom we commemorate today). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

Amen

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always

And also with you.

MEAL

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you.

We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed.

Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples,

saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.

Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

The God of glory, † Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

Amen.



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
 2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
 3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
 one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
 lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
 by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
 Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
 firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
 ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE