

**BULLETIN TEMPLATE: Minnesota Valley  
Church Association of Free Lutheran  
Congregations Date: Sunday, August 28, 2022  
Church Year Date: 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after  
Pentecost**

Prelude: Rebekah Olson

Hymn #575 "Count Your Blessings"

Responsive Reading from Psalm 131:

**PASTOR:** My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty.

**ALL:** I do not concern myself with great matters.

**PASTOR:** O Israel, put your hope in the Lord.

**ALL:** Both now and forevermore.

Children's Sermon: BAPTISM DAY! Jesus-"Let the children come to me." (For me: Parents-I want my child to belong to God; God-I want that child to be in my family, clean and pure; Sponsors-I want to be faithful in prayer and a good example of faith; Congregation-we love our children and ministering to them is a priority, like VBS and Sunday School and Confirmation)

Reader: Glenn Gustafson

Old Testament Lesson: *Proverbs 25:2-13 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings. 3 As the heavens are high and the earth is deep, so the hearts of kings are unsearchable. 4 Remove the dross from the silver, and out comes material for the silversmith; 5 remove the wicked from the king's presence, and his throne will be established through righteousness. 6 Do not exalt yourself in the king's presence, and do not claim a place among great men; 7 it is better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than for him to humiliate you before a nobleman. What you have seen with your eyes 8 do not bring hastily to court, for what will you do in the end if your neighbor puts you to shame? 9 If you argue your case with a neighbor, do not betray another man's confidence, 10 or he who hears it may shame you and you will never lose your bad*

*reputation. 11 A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. 12 Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear. 13 Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes the spirit of his masters.*

Epistle Lesson: *Hebrews 13:1-17 Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. 3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. 4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. 5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." 6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" 7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them. 10 We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat. 11 The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. 12 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. 13 Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. 14 For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. 15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise-the fruit of lips that confess his name. 16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. 17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

**READER: Here ends the reading of God's Word.**

**CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!**

**CONFESSION OF FAITH:** Apostles' Creed- *I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; born of the virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From where He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church; the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen*

Gloria Patri: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)  
*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

Baptismal Hymn #274 "Dearest Jesus, We Are Here"

Baptism of Tirzah Jeannene Pillman; Parents: Justo and Patricia Pillman; Sponsors: David and Carolyn Pillman

Announcements and Prayer Concerns

PRAISE AND WORSHIP: Songs to be chosen by Hannah Carrizales

**"FAMILY FOUNDATION STONES"  
Hebrews 13:1-17; Pastor Tom Olson;  
September 28, 2022**

*Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen*

The true Christian faith from the beginning has had several hallmarks. These things distinguish it from secularism. One hallmark is the LOVE. John says that we know we have passed from

death to life by our *"love for our fellow believers."* Another mark is VALUING CHILDREN. The early church in Rome was known for going to the garbage dumps and gathering up all the unwanted babies that the Romans had left there to die, and raising them up with love. This was the early pro-life movement. True Christianity has been pro-life from the beginning. These are FOUNDATION STONES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

Today, on this VBS weekend and baptismal Sunday we will take a pause from our Life of Christ Series and focus on the Epistle lesson which outlines eight FAMILY FOUNDATION STONES in Hebrews 13:1-17. Let's look at them.

## **I. LOVE & HOSPITALITY**

***Hebrews 13:1-2 Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.***

STONE 1. ENDURING LOVING: The initial contact with a new believer or a new church is often fun and exciting. The closer we get to other believers, the more their faults will show up. At that point love becomes a challenge. The Spirit in us will KEEP LOVING, even when fellow believers start to show their shortcomings and annoying behaviors. That is why the Apostle Paul urges us in Ephesians 4:2 to bear with one another: Ephesians 4:1&2 to bear with one another: ***"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE.*** That deep, committed, sustaining AGAPE LOVE IS A MAJOR FOUNDATION STONE.

STONE 2. HOSPITALITY: LOVE is an action word. To love people, we need to connect with them. Verse 2 says that we should even ***"entertain strangers"*** and that some of them might even be angels. One of the best ways to get to know people is to eat together. Our homes can be ministry centers through hospitality. The meal doesn't have to be fancy or expensive, it can

be a frozen pizza. One of the great traditions of the Mennonite Churches in Northwestern Wisconsin is that if you visit their church, you will receive several invitations to come home with any number of families and join them for Sunday dinner after church. They **literally** practice this verse of entertaining strangers. They make extra food on Sunday in hopes that they can invited someone for a delicious home-made dinner. Being hospitable is a great way to teach your children to love and enjoy people. HOSPITALITY IS A FOUNDATION STONE.

## II. PURITY & CONTENTMENT

**Hebrews 13:4-5 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. 5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."**

The second pair of foundations stones for the family is PURITY & CONTENTMENT. These are two very difficult areas to maintain today. The internet makes purity hard and advertising makes contentment difficult.

STONE 3. PURITY: Trying to stay morally pure is difficult. Images, immodest dress, TV shows and movies make it hard. Unrealistic images are designed to make us long for someone other than our spouse. Idleness can lead to impurity. A good way to stay pure is to stay so busy with good things that we don't have time for impurity. Occupation with hard work and healthy hobbies help us stay pure. Free time is dangerous. Impurity will lead a person into ruin.

STONE 4. CONTENTMENT: I am at the age where I get inundated with advertising about accumulating wealth for retirement. Most of those ads now seem to say that you need about a million dollars in savings in order to retire comfortably. But that is not true. You can have a million dollars of net worth and feel poor. You can have a fraction of that and feel wealthy. The secret is CONTENTMENT with what you have. Contentment does not mean that you won't try to save money for the future. But contentment

means that at any moment you are happy with what you have. We all have to face the fact that age will take EVERYTHING we have away from us before you know it, so why fret about the future. Enjoy what you have NOW rather than being unhappy with what you don't have.

DRIVE: On Friday I was heading to Perkins for a visit over a 7 AM breakfast. There was a beautiful foggy layer of mist over the farm fields. The morning sun was beaming, and it was a beautiful day. The thought came to my mind that I am so wealthy, I can see the view, I can drive a car, I can have breakfast with a Christian friend, I still have good health, I am mentally alert, all this is true wealth...my life is VERY good. I felt content and that makes me wealthy, in spite of the rust on my car. If you are content with what you have, you are wealthy. This is a foundation stone for a happy life.

Family Foundation stones, PURITY and CONTENTMENT are spoken of in *1 Timothy 6:6* where it says ***"Godliness with contentment is great gain."***

## III. HONOR & GRACE

***Hebrews 13:7-9 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9b ...It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them.***

STONE 5. HONOR: One of the most important values we can teach our children is to honor those in authority. My dad was a WW II veteran and he and his generation had great respect for those in authority. I remember one parent in Thief River Falls who needed to say something critical about our senior pastor to me so he had his children leave the room because he didn't want them to learn to complain about those in authority. He raised two very honorable children who are serving the Lord today.

STONE 6. GRACE: The author of Hebrews here also reminds his hearers that an important

foundation of their faith is grace. He encouraged them not to be involved with teachings about what ceremonial foods you can and can't eat. The ceremonial law of the Old Testament is for the Jews and fulfilled in Christ and we no longer have to try to determine if foods are ceremonially "clean" or "unclean." In Romans 14:13 Paul says that ***"no food is to be considered unclean"*** and summarizes this in verse 17 ***For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."*** What we eat is not an issue of salvation. We are saved by grace. Those who emphasize HONOR AND GRACE in their homes and lives have a good foundation. Finally...

#### IV. SALVATION & GRATITUDE

***Hebrews 13:11-15 The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. 12 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood...15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise-the fruit of lips that confess his name.***

STONE 7. SALVATION: Salvation is such an important issue for the home and family. Jesus died on the cross outside the city gate for our salvation. He fulfilled the sacrificial system. When mom and dad get saved, the whole family is affected. In the Bester family, it was son Gary who got saved and he led his mom and dad to Christ! That profoundly affected their children. Salvation seriously changes priorities and gives a joy and a peace to a family. It is foundational.

STONE 8. GRATITUDE: Our last family foundation stone is what I call the most powerful weapon of spiritual warfare we have. It is GRATITUDE, to ***"continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise."*** Negativism and complaining weakens many lives. Those who discover the "power of praise" can transform their lives. Satan flees from us when our tongues are filled with praise and thanksgiving. We are so blessed and have so much to be thankful for. Even if we ended up like Job of old with all possessions lost and health gone, we have a home in heaven, a new body waiting for us, perfect

peace and love for all eternity. Gratitude affects those around us so that, as it says in verse 17, ***"their work will be a joy and not a burden."*** Every person from every era in history in the world could find something to complain about. That is easy. But the one who is filled with thanksgiving, already has a foot in heaven and brings heaven to others. Gratitude literally transforms prayer and releases the power of God.

These are Family Foundations Stones:

1. LOVE AND HOSPITALITY,
2. PURITY AND CONTENTMENT,
3. HONOR AND GRACE,
4. SALVATION AND GRATITUDE.

May we all build our homes upon this good foundation. If we do, the storms of life will never overwhelm us. Amen

***Now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen***

Hymn #326 "O Give Us Homes Built Firm Upon the Savior"

Lord's Prayer & Benediction

Doxology (AH #390) ***Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below, Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men. A-men. A---men.***

Postlude: Rebekah Olson