

**MINNESOTA VALLEY CHURCH; August 13, 2023**  
**Tenth Sunday after Trinity; Singers: "youth" praise team**  
**Pianist: Rebekah**  
**Praise Songs: Hannah Carrizales**

**PRELUDE:** Rebekah Olson

**CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 92**

**P: It is good to praise the LORD**  
**C: And make music to your name, O Most High,**  
**P: To proclaim your love in the morning**  
**C: And your faithfulness at night,**  
**P: To the music of the ten-stringed lyre**  
**C: And the melody of the harp.**  
**P: For you make me glad by your deeds, O LORD;**  
**C: I sing for joy at the works of your hands.**  
**P: How great are your works, O LORD,**  
**C: How profound your thoughts!**

**HYMN #510 "How Great Thou Art"**

**PASTOR ONLY:** *Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

**PASTOR & CONGREGATION:** *We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:**

**READER:** Becky Kruse

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON:** *Jeremiah 7:1-11 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2 "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message: "Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. 3 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. 4 Do not trust in deceptive words and say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!" 5 If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, 7 then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever and ever. 8 But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless. 9 "Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe"--safe to do all these detestable things? 11 Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.*

**GOSPEL LESSON** *Luke 19:41-48 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-but now it is hidden from your eyes. 43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you." 45 Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. 46 "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be a house of prayer"; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" 47 Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. 48 Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.*

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

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

**CONFESSION OF FAITH:** 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:** *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is not, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.*

**GIDEON BIBLE SOCIETY: JON MONSON**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER**

**PRAISE SONGS: 1 or 2** praise songs chosen by HANNAH C.

**SERMON: “REST FOR YOUR SOUL” Matthew 11:28-30; Pastor Tom Olson**

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

*Matthew 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

EXCEPTION: I normally choose one of our lectionary texts to preach on or do a series. But today, I just chose this familiar text because of my experience last weekend. You may be aware that I attended my 45<sup>th</sup> class reunion and operated a steam tractor at the Antique Engine Show near Westby, Wisconsin where I went to High School. My encounters with old classmates from school and friends from the tractor club had an impact upon me.

WEARY: I talked to so many people who are “weary and heavy laden.” They are carrying old burdens and they don’t have the joy of the Lord. One man was bitter about someone because he outbid him on an item at an auction and felt his opposing bidder and the auctioneer were in

cahoots, which I doubt. I talked to a man who told me about his bankruptcy and losing his home and business. It was many years ago, but it still brought pain to his heart. I talked to a man who was holding petty grudges against someone to the point he refused to talk to that person about important business matters. I noticed that a couple of my dear old friends from high school were very cold to me. I know it is because I am conservative, and they are into the woke agenda and very liberal. I tried to say “hello” to them, but it wasn’t easy. They carry a heavy burden because it forces them to dislike 50 percent of the people in America.

LOAD: It reminds me of the trucker who picked up a hitchhiker carrying a heavy load on his back. The trucker was surprised that he kept the load on his back, even when he sat in the truck. He invited him to put it down on the floor of the truck. The man replied, “No, it was kind enough of you to give me a ride. I can’t expect you to also carry my burden as well.” Many people are looking to the Lord for forgiveness and eternal life, but they continue to carry a burden that Jesus wants to carry for us. I think we all do that to a degree. In today’s text, Jesus invites us to give him our burden to carry for us, and He promises to fit us with his yoke, his harness, which fits well and is light to carry.

Jesus today, invites you to find, “REST FOR YOUR SOUL.” Let’s talk about it.

**I. JESUS INVITES US INTO HIS REST**

*Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

UNIVERSAL: The invitation that God gives to the whole world is summarized by one word, “COME.” Jesus wants us to fall into His embrace and He promises to give us rest. When I got saved at age 14, I could really rest for the first time in years. My mind, my will and my emotions got a wonderful respite when I came to faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. God called “Come” to me through pastors, through Sunday school teachers, through singers on Lutheran Evangelistic Movement youth gospel teams and through evangelists at Bible camp. After much confusion, I responded and came to Him and He received me with arms wide open.

SONG: The song puts it well, “I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad. I found in Him a resting place and He has made me glad.”

SOLOMON: We read a beautiful invitation in our Song of Solomon Bible study this week in chapter 2:10-13 that truly reflects the heart of God:

*10 My beloved spoke and said to me,  
“Arise, my darling,  
my beautiful one, come with me.*

*11 See! The winter is past;  
the rains are over and gone.*

*12 Flowers appear on the earth;  
the season of singing has come,  
the cooing of doves  
is heard in our land.*

*13 The fig tree forms its early fruit;  
the blossoming vines spread their fragrance.  
Arise, come, my darling;  
my beautiful one, come with me.”*

*Revelation 3:20 Behold! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*

*Revelation 22:16&17 “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.” 17 The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.*

Come to Jesus with your sins, come with your bitterness, come with your failures, come with your burdens, come with your anger, come with your questions... JESUS INVITES US INTO HIS REST.

## II. JESUS SHOWS US HOW TO EXPERIENCE HIS REST

*Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

EXCHANGE: Jesus invites us to exchange our yoke for his yoke. He wants us to give him our sin-stained clothes and to put on his “robe of righteousness.” He wants us to let go of our exhausting, driven agendas and embrace his liberating and peaceful lifestyle. But people are afraid to trust God. They have a false view of God. They think that He is mean and wants to punish them. What they don’t realize is that **letting God have control is the beginning of true freedom.** I like the way the song puts it, “Make me a captive, Lord and then I shall be free. Force me to render up my sword and I shall conqueror be!”

SATAN: So why don’t people take God’s yoke of joy and peace? The reason is that it is a spiritual battle. Satan fights hard to hang on to those under his control. Satan fights hard to keep people in bondage to the flesh or controlled by chemicals or fear or pride or anger.

ANGER: I talked the other day with a professing Christian man and said something very true and important, something that needed to be said, but he didn’t like it. It made him angry. He raised his voice. The next day he admitted to me that he should not have gotten angry. But it revealed that He is a time-bomb that is waiting to explode. I feel sorry for him and his family. He needs to let go of his anger and take Christ’s yoke of peace, patience and kindness. He is getting older and trying to stay in control, but it can’t be done. The older we get the more we lose control.

APPLICATION: So how about willingly letting go and taking on Jesus’ yoke? God’s plan for our lives fits much better than any plan we can come up with on our own. The secret is to know God’s trustworthy character and to trust in Him. Proverbs 3:5&6 from the New Living Translation, “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.*”

JESUS SHOWS US HOW TO EXPERIENCE HIS REST.

## III. JESUS’ REST SETS YOU FREE TO LIVE ABUNDANTLY

*Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

KUHL: The other day I went to the area pastors’ prayer meeting at Berean Baptist Church. One of the men there was wearing an interesting pair of jeans. I could tell that it had cuts and seams in it that were not

normal and made them fit his legs much better than average jeans. They looked comfortable. I asked him about them, and they were called Kuhl (K-U-H-L) pants that his wife bought him at REI. They are designed especially for hiking. He uses them as work pants and absolutely loves them. That is because they fit well and don't make you hot. They block the sun's heat in the summer and can be worn with long underwear in the winter and fit well in either season.

FITS: I thought that those pants were a good picture of this verse, "my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Greek scholars tell us that the word here for "easy" means that "my yoke FITS WELL." It is like Kuhl pants. They fit well.

OXEN: (Show photo) We had pair of oxen at our antique tractor show this past weekend. To get them to work happily, they needed a wooden yoke that fit them well. If it didn't fit well, they would get sore around their neck and they would want to give up and quit pulling. But their yoke fit well and a young lady led them around all day pulling a cart and they were calm and content.

FAMILY: Does your yoke fit well? Are you wearing the one Christ has for you? Or are you trying to do things you are not meant to do? Are you trying to control things that you are not meant to control? If I wanted to fix something in our grandchildren, I would get stressed out. That is not my job. That is their parents' job. They are younger and have more energy. They have the yoke of God to guide their children and can do it most effectively. My job is to just be a good example to my grandchildren and to enjoy them in the same way my parents enjoyed our children, without stress...praying for God to guide their parents.

CAREER: Some people have a career that doesn't fit well, but they keep on with it because they make good money. Some people take on tasks in the community or church or family that don't fit well, but they do it out of guilt or the desire for power. And they are stressed out. If I were the church treasurer, I would be all stressed out trying to use the computer software, but Brenda does it with ease. It is a yoke that fits her well. For me it would be a hard and painful yoke.

MILLER: All of us have a yoke that fits well if we put it on. That yoke is time with God in His Word and prayer. Someday I would like to spend an entire day with God, not just morning coffee with God. I found

this quote this week and I think it is a part of the secret of our relationship with God and the healing of our frayed emotions. It is a quote by and English writer named Henry Miller from a book he wrote about respite in the country of Greece during World War 2. Here is the quote, which describes a Biblical concept of "coming apart to rest a while:" **"To be silent a whole day, see no newspaper, hear no radio, listen to no gossip, be thoroughly and completely lazy, thoroughly and completely indifferent to the fate of the world is the finest medicine man can give himself."**

RECAP: Or as Jesus put it: *Matthew 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

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

**HYMN #581 "Like a River Glorious"**

**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 that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen*

**BENEDICTION:** The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and grant you peace. Amen

**DOXOLOGY AND THREE-FOLD AMEN**

**POSTLUDE:** Rebekah Olson