

**MINNESOTA VALLEY CHURCH; August 17, 2025**  
**10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; Singers: Osthus.Reynolds**

**PRELUDE:** Carol Gustafson

**CALL TO WORSHIP: From Psalm 119**

**PASTOR: My soul faints with longing for your salvation,**

**ALL: But I have put my hope in your word.**

**PASTOR: My eyes fail, looking for your promise;**

**ALL: I say, "When will you comfort me?"**

**PASTOR: How long must your servant wait?**

**ALL: When will you punish my persecutors?**

**PASTOR: Preserve my life according to your love,**

**ALL: And I will obey the statutes of your mouth.**

**HYMN #520 "Jesus Saves"**

**CONFESSION OF SIN: *Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy and ask You for Christ's sake, grant us forgiveness of all our sins, and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.***

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:**

**READER: Glenn Gustafson**

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Jeremiah 23:16-29 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. 17 They keep saying to those who despise me, 'The LORD says: You***

*will have peace. 'And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts they say, 'No harm will come to you.' 18 But which of them has stood in the council of the LORD to see or to hear his word? Who has listened and heard his word? 19 See, the storm of the LORD will burst out in wrath, a whirlwind swirling down on the heads of the wicked. 20 The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart. In days to come you will understand it clearly. 21 I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied. 22 But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds. 23 "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? 24 Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD. 25 "I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy lies in my name. They say, 'I had a dream! I had a dream!' 26 How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds? 27 They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their fathers forgot my name through Baal worship. 28 Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?" declares the LORD. 29 "Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?*

**EPISTLE LESSON: *Hebrews 11:17-31 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, 18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." 19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. 20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.***

22 *By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.*  
23 *By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.* 24 *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*  
25 *He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.* 26 *He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.*  
27 *By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.* 28 *By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.*  
29 *By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.*  
30 *By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.* 31 *By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.*

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

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

**CONFESSION OF FAITH: Psalm 23**

The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside the still waters.  
3 He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name's sake.  
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
For You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.  
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
My cup runs over.  
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life;  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
Forever.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER**

**Worship Songs: Chosen by Carol**

**SERMON: "JESUS BRINGS DIVISION," Luke 12:49-53,  
Pastor Tom Olson**

OLD NEWS: Division is nothing new. There have been divisions on earth ever since Cain killed Abel almost 6,000 years ago. Since then we have had 6,000 years of wars.

MYSTERY: One would think that Jesus would bring unity on earth. Jesus is kind, compassionate, he never owned anything, he never started a war, he gave himself on the cross for us, he is in heaven preparing a place for us, he is coming back to give us a new body and a home in his eternal kingdom with no sickness, death or pain. But Jesus brings division as well. We need to dig in and see what is the reason for this division and what to do about it.

SERMON: I would rather preach on the topic, JESUS BRINGS UNITY, but if I am going to be true to the Word of God, I can't skip over today's gospel text, JESUS BRINGS DIVISION from Luke 12:49-53. Hopefully it will help us better understand what is going on in the world today....

### **I. THE REASON FOR THE DIVISION:**

*Luke 12:49-51 "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to undergo,*

*and how distressed I am until it is completed! 51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.*

COMPLETION: This whole passionate statement is pointing to the intense spiritual battle that Jesus is plunging into as he faces up to the cross of Calvary. Jesus said he has **“a baptism to complete.”** It started in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve chose to side with the devil and rebel against God. They brought a curse, sin, death and division into the world. In Genesis 3:15 God promised that He would make a way to redeem us through the **“SEED OF THE WOMAN CRUSHING THE SERPANT’S HEAD AND BRUISING HIS HEEL.”**

BATTLE: After 4,000 years of painful human history, now the time had come for the Son of God and Satan to go to battle. Little did Satan know that when he orchestrated Jesus’ death on the cross that the innocent blood of Christ would reverse the curse, atone for sin, open up the doors of heaven to anyone who will come through the cross...His head was crushed by Jesus. But Jesus’ heel was bruised, He had to endure the spiritual and physical pain of being nailed to the cross.

AFTERMATH: Satan will not be eliminated until the end of this age, so He **“prowls around like a roaring lion” (1 Peter 5:8)** seeking to devour anyone he can. He works day and night trying to get people to rebel against God. That is why there is division on earth. Satan starts the division. The demons feed on division, war and fighting.

OUR SOULS: Jesus does everything he can to save, heal, redeem and restore lost souls. But the devil deceives people and convinces them, like he did Adam and Eve, that God’s ways are bad and his ways are good. People eventually find out how wrong the devil is and come to regret their sinful live.

FIVE EXAMPLES: Here are five divisions we have today:

1. BABIES: Jesus wants us to love and treasure babies and Satan tries to convince people that babies are a burden and that they should be killed.
2. FAMILY: Jesus wants us to follow his good plan for the family of a mom and dad who are committed for life and the devil is doing everything he can to destroy the family and have fatherless children who grow up all empty inside.
3. TIME: Jesus wants us to take time for what is really important such as faith, family, neighbors, honest labor. The devil tries to distract us away from these relationships.
4. SALVATION: Jesus wants to give us the free gift of forgiveness and eternal life, paid in full by his holy and precious blood and his innocent sufferings and death. The devil wants us to get involved with the occult or religions that try to make people consumed with trying to earn their way to heaven.
5. LIFE: Jesus wants us to live an abundant life of love and peace and joy. The devil wants to get people filled with fear, irritability, anger and hatred.

LINE: These are some of the divisions that we see in the world today. Jesus draws a line in the sand and says come over to me and I will save you and give you a new life. The devil draws a line in the sand and lures us over with sinful pleasures and once we are in his hands he destroys our souls.

UNSEEN FORCES: Jesus does not bring peace on earth at this time because he is in a battle with the devil for your eternal soul. These are the reasons for the division we see today. It is spiritual in nature. Remember that every war, or fight in your home, or division in our society is caused by unseen spiritual forces fighting against Jesus and His kingdom of love, mercy and grace.

## II. THE RESULT OF THE DIVISION:

*Luke 12:52-53 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."*

FAMILIES: Jesus tells us that these divisions will even come between parents and children and other family members. People are choosing sides today on many issues and it is even tearing families apart. I have old friends who call me names and are angry at me because I stand for morality, marriage, pro-life, hard work and thrift, personal responsibility and other values that were once embraced by most of our nation. People are insulted when they find out I believe that the cross of Christ is our only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God.

THRIVENT: Even Evangelical churches are taking down the cross. Thrivent has removed the cross from its logo.

BRIDGE: I have a photo under that glass on my office desk. It is the heavenly city on one side, the world on the other side and a fiery hellish canyon between the two. The only bridge from earth to heaven is the cross which is the road that a few people are walking on. Others are plunging into the fire since they refuse to trust in the cross.

COLOSSIANS: Here are some powerful CROSSS VERSES from our recent sermons in Colossians. *Colossians 2:13-15 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and*

*authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

PRIDE: Some people don't want the gift of eternal life. One person said, "If I can't earn it, I don't want it." It is humbling to admit that we need the Savior. We have to surrender our pride to receive the gift of salvation. That is why people divide with Jesus. Their pride in their own righteousness prevents them from receiving His righteousness.

TRUMPET: One day, perhaps soon, maybe even in the next month or two, the trumpet of God will sound, the dead in Christ will rise first. *1 Thessalonians 4:17 "We who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them and meet the Lord in the air..."* Dear friends, are you ready for that day? It could happen at any moment.

SOCIAL SECURITY: I met with my financial planner this week to prepare for getting social security and we went over the tax laws of getting it before my age 67 full retirement age. When we were done, I asked the Ben and Jennifer at Beacon Pointe this question: **"If the rapture of the church comes, who will get all of my retirement savings?"**

CLUELESS: They apparently had not heard of the rapture and even didn't know about the second coming of Christ at all. I quit taking notes and they started taking notes. Jennifer asked if I expected to go? I said "yes." What about your wife? I said, "yes." She asked, "Won't God take everyone?" I said, "No, only true believers."

UNPREPARED: I gave them some information about how they could find out more about the last days and the end of the age. These nice and highly educated people spend their careers helping people prepare for retirement and don't have a clue about eternity, salvation and the return of Jesus. I bet many people in your world

need to hear about it too. I was terrified about the return of Jesus until I got saved.

*1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.*

CONCLUSION: This world is dividing over Jesus, the cross, the Ten Commandments and the Word of God. But we are united. We believe the Bible. We are thrilled to share the good news of salvation with others before it is too late. Let's get out there, be bold and unashamed and tell people about our crucified, risen and soon-coming Savior, Jesus Christ. If you are lost, the future is terrifying, but if you are saved, all will be well. Amen

*Prayer: Father in heaven. If anyone in church today or listening on YouTube is unsaved, I pray you will bring them to faith and save their lost souls. I pray they will all be ready for your return. We pray in Jesus' Name. Amen*

### **HYMN #598 "Through the Love of God Our Father"**

**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, The power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen*

### **BENEDICTION**

**CLOSING SONG:** **Chosen by Carol.**

**POSTLUDE:** Carol Gustafson