

God's Word Divides

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 17, 2025



"Winning souls for Christ. Coaching Christians for life."

4651 Kernan Blvd S, Jacksonville, FL 32224 • (904) 642-8900

A Place to Call Home: Victory Lutheran

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, welcome home. We especially welcome to our house of worship our guests who have joined us today. We pray you will be strengthened by the good news about God's grace, love, and forgiveness to us through Jesus. We say with the Psalmist, whether here on campus or viewing online, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalm 122:1). May the Lord continue to help us grow in His grace and knowledge as we hear, speak, and sing His holy Word.

Please sign the Connection Card inside the worship folder and return it in the basket on the worship table. Members, please update your contact info if there is a change.

Restrooms are located in the hallway to the left as you exit the sanctuary. Changing tables are available in both restrooms.

A **Quiet Room** for children who need a moment to get settled with a parent or guardian is located on the right before entering the sanctuary.

Visit our website: www.victorylutheran.org or find us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube!



Worship Series Focus: **WOUNDS THAT HEAL**

Not all wounds are bad. A skilled surgeon takes a deadly sharp scalpel and cuts through flesh and muscle. The result of that wound: not harm, but healing. In the same way, we often say that words cut us to the heart. Words can wound. Sometimes, however, those painful words provide the very healing we need.

"Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem" (Luke 13:22). Jesus knows that when he gets to Jerusalem, he is going to die. So, with a sense of extreme urgency, Jesus shares truths we need to hear, even though it hurts to hear them. In this series, we might not like everything that Jesus says. Yet, to ignore what Jesus teaches is to court eternal death. Hard as it may be, let us listen and take all that Jesus says to heart. For while Jesus speaks words that wound us, his intent is to heal our very soul.

Today's Worship: God's Word Divides

We often divide humanity into groupings that are not really significant: this ethnic group versus that one, men versus women, wealthy versus poor. Yet, every ethnic group is under God's law. That law equally convicts men and women of sin. Because of sin, both the wealthy and poor will die. Only through faith in Christ is sin forgiven and the sting of death removed. God's Word creates that saving faith, but not in everyone who hears it. Fallen mankind retains the awful power to reject the Word and God's gift of faith. Therefore, God's Word produces the only people distinction that matters—believers and unbelievers. We desire to live in peace with other people. But Jesus teaches, this side of heaven, that desire is a pipe dream. Those who embrace the gospel in faith will inevitably face hostility. Following Jesus will come at a price. Yet he promises that our perseverance will be rewarded.

The Service: Setting Three

Our Path for Worship

Minister: The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of
God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.



Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

Psalm 100

Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.
Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Opening Hymn

CW630 vs. 1, 3-5 | Thy Strong Word

We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. Jesus has said, as recorded in Matthew 22:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:

Love your neighbor as yourself.”

But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

All: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

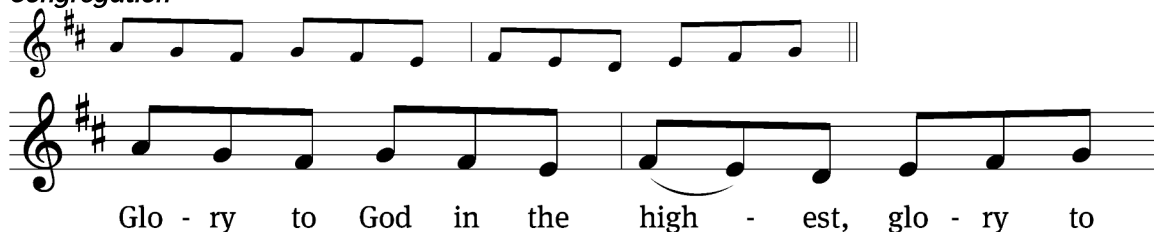
Amen. Thanks be to God.

In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis

Congregation





God, and peace to his peo - ple on earth,



and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - mighty - y God and



Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we



praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly



Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on



us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the



Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer. For

you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the

Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus

Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the

glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, glo - ry to

God, and peace to his peo - ple on earth,

and peace to his peo - ple on earth.

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Let us pray. Almighty and merciful God, it is only by your gift of grace that we come into your presence and offer true and faithful service. Grant that our worship on earth may always be pleasing to you, and in the life to come give us the fulfillment of what you have promised;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading

Jeremiah 23:23–29

The Word of the Lord divides what is true from what is false

²³“Am I only a God nearby,” declares the LORD,
“and not a God far away?”

²⁴Who can hide in secret places
so that I cannot see them?” 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!’ ²⁶How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds? ²⁷They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their ancestors forgot my name through Baal worship. ²⁸Let the prophet who has a dream recount the 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?”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

CW633 v. 2 | *Speak, O Lord*

Second Reading

Hebrews 12:1–13

The Hebrew converts to Christianity faced division, but they persevered by focusing on Jesus

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

⁴In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”

⁷Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? ⁸If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. ⁹Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! ¹⁰They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

¹²Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³“Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn

CW633 v. 3 | *Speak, O Lord*

Gospel Reading

Luke 12:49–53

Jesus was fully aware that his work would cause division that would often cut close to home

⁴⁹“I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. ⁵²From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. ⁵³They 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.”

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

10:30 Service

Children's Church

Children ages 3–5 can be dismissed to the kitchen classroom for Children's Church. Children will return from Children's Church to the sanctuary after the conclusion of the sermon.



Hymn of the Day

CW590 | O Holy Spirit, Enter In

Sermon

Pastor Jonathan Kolander

“Keep Your Eyes Fixed on Jesus”

Hebrews 12:1–13

Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed

*The Minister and the **Congregation** speak responsively:*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

10:30 Service

Early Childhood Ministry Director Installation

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said to his church: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The Savior loves children and desires to share all his promises with them. Our early childhood ministry provides believers with a unique opportunity to reach out to families in our community and nourish the faith of children that they may walk with Christ throughout their lives.

Dear Katie Seelman,

Victory Lutheran Church has called you to serve as Director in the Public Ministry of the Gospel.

As a servant of Christ, you are to carry out all your activities in the light of God's Word and lead our students to know God's holy Law and saving Gospel. You are to keep them in your prayers and guide and guard their spiritual growth.

You are to set aside time for personal study of the Scriptures so that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are to strive to be an example of Christian faith and life so that others may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

You are to be a witness of Christ to the parents of these children, to set an example on to correctly handle God's message of Law and Gospel; you are to serve alongside the other workers in this Ministry with love, patience, and respect.

In all your tasks and responsibilities, our Lord Jesus equips you with the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins, the gift that makes you truly competent as a servant of Christ. St.

Paul wrote: “Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.”

In keeping with the Word and will of the Lord, I ask you before God and his people:
Do you believe that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the only source of truth for faith and ministry?
I do.

Do you solemnly promise that all your service in its various forms will conform to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions?
I do.

Will you endeavor to live a life that reflects the love God has for you so that all may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven?
I will, and I ask God to help me.

Are you willing to carry out this work according to the grace that God gives?
I am, and I ask God to help me.

Members of Victory,

You have heard the promises spoken by the one you have called. I encourage you to receive her with joy and remember what the Word of God calls you to do.

Work together with her for the benefit of the Lord’s kingdom, so that your shared service may bring spiritual blessings to the Savior’s people.

Keep Katie and her work in your prayers, so that her ministry may be blessed and that she might carry out her work with joy.

Provide for her physical needs, for the Savior says, “The worker deserves his wages.”

Honor and love her, as St. Peter urges: “All of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.”

I now ask you in the presence of God:

If this you are willing to do, then answer: We will, and we ask God to help us.

We will, and we ask God to help us.

The almighty and merciful God strengthen you to do what you have promised.

Katie Seelman, I install you as Director at Victory Lutheran Preschool in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord pour out on you his Holy Spirit for the work you have been called to do that you may faithfully carry out all your duties and responsibilities with the Word of God as your confidence and guide.

Let us pray. Almighty God, source of all wisdom, we thank you for the opportunity we have to reach out in our community with our early childhood ministry. May your life-giving Word be the center of all teaching and every activity so that little children and their families may come to know and believe your holy Law and saving Gospel. Equip our new Director with spiritual wisdom that she may faithfully carry out the duties of her Call. Give us zeal to add our own efforts to the goals of this ministry so that many more may come to serve you throughout their lives and finally inherit eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Katie, the Lord bless you and make your ministry a blessing to others.

Thank Offering

To show our thanks to God for his generosity toward us, we gather this thank offering to support our Gospel-focused ministry in the Jacksonville area and beyond. See our website for other ways to support Victory's ministry and mission. If you want to give your thank offering online, you may use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code.



Please also fill out the Connection Card found inside your worship folder and drop it in the basket on the back (blue) table. You can also scan the QR code on the left to fill out an online Connection Card.

Prayer of the Church

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

May the Spirit strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Refresh us each day with your grace.

Spare us and Christians around the world, along with people from all walks of life, from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death.

Brief intercessory prayers may be added

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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.

The Sacrament

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Distribution

Guests: *Scripture teaches that when Christians partake of the Lord’s Supper together, they are expressing their unity of faith. Through this act they are confessing that they agree on all the teachings of Scripture. We do not wish to put our guests in the position of making such a confession without knowing our teachings. Therefore, we ask that only those who are members of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to receive communion at this time. If you desire communion fellowship with us, please speak to our pastor. We are eager to help anyone take this step.*

Distribution Hymn

CW665 | *What Is This Bread*

Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

8:00 am Service – Early Childhood Ministry Director Installation (see page 10)

Closing Hymn

CW876 | *Fight the Good Fight*



Serving in Worship

Pastor

Rev. Jonathan Kolander

Accompanist

Mrs. Anne Grotefend

For reflection based on today's Scripture readings...

- 1st: What is God emphasizing with the opening remarks about 'a God nearby'? Think of some examples of how people use a reference to God's Word to suit their own desires or gain. What is the way to know if someone truly has had a vision from God or claims to speak for God? See 1 John 4.
- 2nd: What do our eyes tend to get fixed on which makes this encouragement a good one for us to practice? Discuss the various ways the word 'discipline' has a positive connotation. What can you count on when discipline comes from God? See John 15.
- 3rd: What is the peace that Jesus has brought to this world? Why is this peace a source of conflict in the world? How has this conflict impacted your life? See Matthew 10:28–39.

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Sunday Service Times

8:00am Worship

9:15am Bible Class and Sunday School

10:30am Worship with Livestream

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Victory is a member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), headquartered in Waukesha, Wisconsin.



WELS
Christ's Love, Our Calling.