

RESTING • RENEWED • RESPONDING

RIVERVIEW

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

WELCOME TO RIVERWOOD

We are glad you are here! Finding a church home can be a daunting process, so we want to help you by telling you who we are up front. We are first and foremost a people **resting** in God's grace offered to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ, being progressively **renewed** by the Holy Spirit, and **responding** in faith, repentance, and obedience.

We are also a reformed, confessional church. That means that we trace our roots back to the Protestant Reformation, and we view the historic confessions, catechisms, and creeds as being invaluable and immensely relevant, because they were derived from our ultimate authority: God's word.

No matter where you are in your understanding of the Christian faith, we hope you find Riverwood to be a place where you can build relationships, ask questions, and grow in your knowledge of Jesus.

We would love to connect with you today before you leave! You can help us with that by scanning the QR code on the back page of this bulletin and filling out the linked *Information Connection* page. Our elders will also be in the foyer after the service to meet you and answer any questions you may have.

Now receive this welcome into worship from the risen, reigning Christ:

**"To all who are weary and need rest; to all who mourn and need comfort;
to all who fail and need forgiveness; to all who struggle and need strength;
to all who sin and need a savior: this church opens wide her doors
in the name of Jesus, the friend of sinners."**



Infinite and infant. Eternal, and yet born of a woman. Almighty, and yet hanging on a woman's breast. Supporting the universe, and yet needing to be carried in a mother's arms. King of angels, and yet the reputed son of Joseph. Heir of all things, and yet the carpenter's despised son. Oh, the wonder of Christmas.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The angel who announced His advent, was sent to an obscure town of Galilee, named Nazareth. The woman who was honored to be our Lord's mother, was evidently in a humble position of life. Both in her station and her dwelling-place, there was an utter absence of what the world calls 'greatness'...[Still,] we must in fairness admit, that no woman was ever so highly honored as the mother of our Lord. It is evident that one woman only out of the countless millions of the human race, could be the means whereby God could be 'manifest in the flesh,' and the Virgin Mary had the mighty privilege of being that one.

J. C. Ryle

Welcome, all wonders in one sight! Eternity shut in a span!
Summer in winter, day in night! Heaven in earth, and God in man!
Great little One! whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

Richard Crashaw, 1613-1649



December 17, 2023

10:30 Worship Service

Leaders In Worship: Pastor, *Jeph Guinan*

Assisting Elder, *Gene Martin*

Song Leader, *Todd Quinn*; Piano, *Ginny Coleman*

WELCOME and PRELUDE

Program all communication devices to be in silent mode. Thank you.

ADVENT READING

Joy: Zephaniah 3:14-20

PRAISE

CALL TO WORSHIP: *based on Luke 2*

Pastor: Like the shepherds, we too have heard the announcement of the birth of our Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

All: Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us!

Pastor: God invites us to gather and hear the good news concerning this child and wonder at God's glorious gift.

All: Together, we will glorify and praise God for all we hear and see as it has been declared to us in His Word.

Pastor: Come, let us worship!

HYMN: 208

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND THE 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN

SCRIPTURE READING: *Deuteronomy 5:16*

16 “Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. Please have mercy on us for the ways we have dishonored our parents and refused to submit to people you have placed in positions of authority over us. Forgive us for failing to serve others because we are consumed with our own interests. Holy Spirit, form in us the mind of Christ who fully submitted to His Father’s will and took the form of a servant for our sake. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *based on Matthew 1:20-23*

Leader: Hear the good news! As the angel told Joseph, do not fear! By the power of the Holy Spirit, the virgin conceived and the son she bore was named Jesus, because He would save His people from their sins. This child was also called Immanuel, which means God with us. Through faith in Jesus, God the Son, who came as a servant, died as a substitute, and rose as a conqueror, your sins have been forgiven. May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

HYMN: 213

"What Child Is This"

OFFERTORY PRAYER

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

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. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q&A 21, 22*

Leader: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

All: The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever.

Leader: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

All: Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

RESPONSE: "Gloria Patri"

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, amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

HYMN: 200

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

RECEIVING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: *Luke 1:46-55*

- 46 And Mary said,
 “My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.
 For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name.
50 And his mercy is for those who fear him
 from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
 he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
 and exalted those of humble estate;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he has sent away empty.
54 He has helped his servant Israel,
 in remembrance of his mercy,
55 as he spoke to our fathers,
 to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Pastor: The grass withers, the flower fades,

All: **but the Word of our God will stand forever.**

SERMON: “Replacing Worry with Worship through Wonder” *Rev. Jeph Guinan*

COMMUNION & BENEDICTION

HYMN: 216

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

RESPONSIVE READING & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

Pastor: With joy we praise you, gracious God, for you created heaven and earth, made us in your image, and kept covenant with us — even when we fell into sin.

All: We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, who by his life, death, and resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Pastor: Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name.

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

HYMN: 195

"Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come"

BENEDICTION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSING HYMN: #263

"Lift High the Cross"

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim, till all the
world adore his sacred name.

Thy kingdom come, that earth's despair may cease beneath
the shadow of its healing peace.

(Refrain)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Christmas Party

The Youth Christmas party will be tonight at the Parker's house (2502 20th St., Northport 35476) from 5:30-7:00pm. Bring a gift for a kids'-toy-themed Secret Santa gift exchange! Girls - please bring a sweet snack, and guys - please bring a salty snack. Seniors will provide the drinks.

Covenant Kids Christmas Party

The Covenant Kids Christmas party is tonight at 5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. Families are welcome to attend!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

On Sunday, December 24, at 6:00pm, Riverwood will conduct a Christmas Eve candlelight Communion Service. It is a beautiful time in which we gather as the people of God to consider again the wonder of Advent and the beauty of our Savior. Please plan to join us with your family for this special time of praise and worship.

2023 Contributions

If you are planning to give before the end of the calendar year, please ensure that your gifts make it into the offering plate by Sunday, December 31 or are postmarked by Saturday, December 30. Any contributions received after that date will be posted to 2024.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Birthday

December 22 Gabe Henson

December 22 Eric Williams

Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed the week of December 25. Regular office hours will begin again on January 3.

No Sunday School

Due to the Christmas holidays, Sunday School classes will not meet for the next two Sundays (December 24 and 31).

Mark Your Calendars

- Sunday, December 24, 6:00pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Sunday, December 24 & 31: No Sunday School
- Week of December 25: Church Office closed

Financials through November

Operating Income:	\$372,566.49
Operating Expense*:	\$387,317.39
Net Income:	(\$14,750.90)
Designated gifts:	\$30,655.00
Building loan balance:	\$534,870.71



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