

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."**



When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas begins: to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace...to make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981)
American author, civil rights leader,
and theologian

We are not to be a terminus point for the gospel, but rather a way station in its progress to the ends of the earth. God intends that everyone who has embraced the gospel become a part of the great enterprise of spreading the gospel.

Jerry Bridges

No man is interested in a piece of good news unless he has the consciousness of needing it; no man is interested in an offer of salvation unless he knows that there is something from which he needs to be saved. It is quite useless to ask a man to adopt the Christian view of the gospel unless he first has the Christian view of sin.

Gresham Machen

I am seeing more and more that we begin to learn what it is to walk by faith when we learn to spread out all that is against us: all our physical weakness, loss of mental power, spiritual inability – all that is against us inwardly and outwardly – as sails to the wind and expect them to be vehicles for the power of Christ to rest upon us. It is so simple and self evident – but so long in the learning!

Lilias Trotter



December 31, 2023

10:30 Worship Service

Leaders In Worship: Pastor, *Jeff Pate*

Assisting Elder, *Gene Martin*

Piano, *Mrs. John Graham*

WELCOME

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

PRELUDE

PRAISE

CALL TO WORSHIP: *based on Psalm 96:7-10*

Pastor: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

**All: We ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
we bring an offering, and come into his courts!**

Pastor: Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!

All: We will say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!"

Pastor: Come, let us worship.

HYMN: 224

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

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: *Matthew 28:16-20*

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. **17** And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. **18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Lord Jesus, you came to this world, took on our flesh and suffered in our place to purchase our salvation. We profess you as our Savior and our Lord but we confess that we are reluctant to obey your command to "go and make disciples." When we have opportunities to be your witnesses but are instead silent, please forgive us for not loving our neighbors who desperately need to hear the gospel. Holy Spirit, give us an ever-growing love for Christ and joy in our salvation that overflows into worship and evangelism. Forgive us for our fear of man and help us to speak the truth in love. In Jesus's name, Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *from Hebrews 7*

Pastor: Hear the assurance of salvation that is ours in Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord! Jesus is the guarantor of a better covenant. The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. As you draw near to God through faith in Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

HYMN: "How Deep the Father's Love for Us"

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure,
that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss; the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the Chosen One bring many sons to glory.

Behold the Man upon the cross, my sin upon His shoulders;
ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life, I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom;
but I will boast in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ransom.

Words and Music: Stuart Townend, 1995
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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: *Nicene Creed*

Christian, what do you believe?

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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: 341

"O Breath of Life, Come Sweeping through Us"

SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 43:8-44:8*

8 Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears! **9** All the nations gather together, and the peoples assemble. Who among them can declare this, and show us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right, and let them hear and say, It is true. **10** "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. **11** I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. **12** I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and I am God. **13** Also henceforth I am he; there is none who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?" **14** Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "For your sake I send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they rejoice. **15** I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King." **16** Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, **17** who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: **18** "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. **19** Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. **20** The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, **21** the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise. **22** Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob; but you have been weary of me, O Israel! **23** You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings, or honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings, or wearied you with frankincense. **24** You have not bought me sweet cane with money, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins; you have wearied me with your iniquities. **25** I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. **26** Put me in remembrance; let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right. **27** Your first father sinned, and your mediators transgressed against me. **28** Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and deliver Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to reviling. **1** But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen! **2** Thus says the Lord who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen. **3** For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. **4** They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams. **5** This one will say, 'I am the Lord's,' another will call on the name of Jacob, and another will write on his hand, 'The Lord's,' and name himself by the name of Israel."

6 Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. **7** Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. **8** Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any."

Pastor: The grass withers, the flower fades,
All: **but the Word of our God will stand forever.**

SERMON: "Witnesses for the One and Only God"

Rev. Jeff Pate

COMMUNION & BENEDICTION

HYMN: 469

"How Sweet and Awesome Is the Place"

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: 447

"Christ for the World We Sing"

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

Happy Birthday

January 3 Ken Gilbert
January 4 Sophie Chandler
January 4 Clara Parker
January 6 Vetta Lavender

Church Office Closed

Regular church office hours will begin again this Wednesday, January 3.

Covenant Kids Club & Youth Group

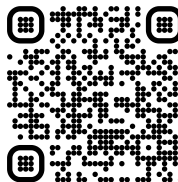
Covenant Kids Club and Youth Group will each resume next week Sunday, January 7 at 5:30pm.

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 this morning. Any contributions received after today will be posted to 2024.

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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