

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

April 19, 2020 • 10:30am • Rev. Jeff Pate, pastor

Second Sunday of Easter

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Robert Thornton

Joann Williams, piano

REFLECTIONS:

Holiness provokes hatred. The greater the holiness, the greater the human hostility toward it. It seems insane. No man was ever more loving than Jesus Christ. Yet even His love made people angry. His love was a perfect love, a transcendent and holy love, but His very love brought trauma to people. This kind of love is so majestic we can't stand it.

R. C. Sproul

The Holiness of God

All experiences of suffering in the path of Christian obedience, whether from persecution or sickness or accident, have this in common: they all threaten our faith in the goodness of God and tempt us to leave the path of obedience. Therefore, every triumph of faith and all perseverance in obedience are testimonies to the goodness of God and the preciousness of Christ—whether the enemy is sickness, Satan, sin, or sabotage.

John Piper

Desiring God

The greatest test of whether the holiness we profess to seek or to attain is truth and life will be whether it produces an increasing humility in us. In man, humility is the one thing needed to allow God's holiness to dwell in him and shine through him. The chief mark of counterfeit holiness is lack of humility. The holiest will be the humblest.

Andrew Murray

CALL TO WORSHIP: *from Psalm 97*

Pastor: The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

**All: Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.**

Pastor: O you who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the lives of his saints;
he delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

All: Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

Pastor: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name.

1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

3. Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

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.*

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 1:13-21

¹³Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Heavenly Father, you have called us to set our minds fully on the grace that we will receive at the revelation of Jesus Christ. We confess that our focus is quickly drawn away by the things of this world and the passions that once enslaved us. Please forgive us. Have mercy on us for placing our hope in our comfort, our peace, our health, our pleasure, and even our emotions. Help us, Holy Spirit, to place our faith and hope fully in God. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ as we trust in Him alone for the forgiveness our sins. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *from 1 Peter 2:22-24*

Pastor: Christ suffered for you. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. Because Jesus Christ gave His sinless life for us, we are forgiven. Because He was raised for our justification, we are declared righteous before God. Thanks be to God! Now, may the peace and love of our Savior be with you all.

HYMN: 247 "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"

1. O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down;
now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.
2. What thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain:
mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve thy place;
look on me with thy favor, vouchsafe to me thy grace.
3. What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest Friend,
for this, thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end?
O make me thine forever; and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee.

OFFERING:

**Remember to worship through the giving of tithes and offerings using the link to online giving or sending checks to the church's mailing address.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *Colossians 1:15-20*

Leader: What do you believe concerning Jesus Christ?

All: I believe that: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

RESPONSE: 735 “Gloria Patri”

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

HYMN: “Speak, O Lord”

1. Speak, O Lord, as we come to You to receive the food of Your Holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us all Your purposes for Your glory.

2. Teach us, Lord, full obedience, holy reverence, true humility;
Test our thoughts and our attitudes in the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow’r that can never fail—let their truth prevail over unbelief.

3. Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds; help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us—
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time that will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we’ll stand on Your promises, and by faith we’ll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built and the earth is filled with Your glory.

SCRIPTURE: *Nehemiah 6:1-14*

¹Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), ²Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to do me harm. ³And I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?” ⁴And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. ⁵In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. ⁶In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Geshem also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king. ⁷And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, ‘There is a king in Judah.’ And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together.” ⁸Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind.” ⁹For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.” But now, O God, strengthen my hands. ¹⁰Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night.” ¹¹But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in.” ¹²And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me. ¹⁴Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

SERMON:

“When Things Get Personal”

Rev. Jeff Pate

HYMN: 689 “Be Still, My Soul”

1. Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side; bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide; in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.

Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly Friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

2. Be still, my soul: your God will undertake to guide the future as he has the past.

Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be bright at last.

Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

3. Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart, and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shall you better know his love, his heart, who comes to soothe your sorrow and your fears.

Be still, my soul: your Jesus can repay from his own fullness all he takes away.

4. Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.

Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

April 23 Mickey DeHaan

April 24 Jeff Pate

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

30 DAYS OF PRAYER

During the month of April, please consider participating in our denomination's 30 Days of Prayer. A prayer guide can be found online at pcaga.org/prayer/.

ONLINE GIVING

Please maintain your financial support of our church while we are unable to worship together in person. In order for you to worship through the giving of tithes and offerings, you may give to Riverwood online through the link on the church website. Please note:

1. You may give directly from your bank account or by credit card. There is no charge for bank account donations. The credit card option will charge Riverwood a 2.5-3.5% processing fee.
2. Donations are tax-deductible, and you will receive a giving statement directly from the PCA Foundation. Online donations will not appear on your year-end giving statement from Riverwood.
3. There is an optional place to leave a "note." You may use this box as you would the memo line of a check if you need to designate giving (deacon's fund, specific missionary, etc.).

You may also mail a check to the church (501 Rice Valley Rd. North, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406). If you have any questions, please email Sarah Vander Wal (secretary@riverwoodchurch.org).

PLEASE REACH OUT WITH NEEDS

Romans 12:13 says this: "Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." These are extraordinary times. Hospitality may look different right now, but as the body of Christ, we at Riverwood are still called to love each other through service and attention to each other's needs. If you have a need, whether financial, physical, spiritual, or emotional, please reach out to your elder or a deacon. Elders will continue to reach out to their folds as well. In this way, we can continue to love each other and lift each other up. If you aren't sure who to contact, you can also email Jeff (jpate@riverwoodchurch.org) or Sarah (secretary@riverwoodchurch.org).

OFFICER NOMINATIONS

Over the coming weeks, communing members of Riverwood will have the opportunity to submit names of individuals to potentially serve as church officers. Prior to nominating someone to the officer of Ruling Elder or Deacon, take time to reflect on the qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and prayerfully consider if that person is a good candidate. Also, please share with the individual your desire to nominate him and ask if he would be willing to participate in the training and examination process that would follow this nomination.