

We need not wonder that so much importance is attached to our Lord's resurrection. It is the seal and headstone of the great work of redemption, which He came to do. It is the crowning proof that He has paid the debt which He undertook to pay on our behalf, won the battle which He fought to deliver us from hell, and is accepted as our Surety and our Substitute by our Father in heaven.

J. C. Ryle

What was it that within a few days transformed a band of mourners into the spiritual conquerors of the world? It was not the memory of Jesus' life; it was not the inspiration which came from past contact with Him. But it was the message, He is risen. That message alone gave to the disciples a living Savior; and it alone can give to us a living Savior today.

J. Gresham Machen

If a commission by an earthly king is considered an honor, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?

David Livingston

...left to ourselves we lapse into a kind of collusion with entropy, acquiescing in the general belief that things may be getting worse but that there's nothing much we can do about them. And we are wrong. Our task in the present...is to live as resurrection people in between Easter and the final day, with our Christian life, corporate and individual, in both worship and mission, as a sign of the first and a foretaste of the second.

N. T. Wright

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

T U S C A L O O S A , A L A B A M A

April 4, 2021 • 8:30 & 11:00 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

Easter Sunday

8:30am

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Robert Thornton
Joann Williams, piano

11:00am

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder John Kim
Linda Graham, piano

WELCOME

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

PRELUDE

In Christ Alone

Covenant Kids Choir

Please use this time for prayer and meditation as we prepare to go before the living God in worship.

PRAISE

CALL TO WORSHIP: *based on Malachi 4:2; 1 Corinthians 15:21; John 11:25*

Pastor: He is risen!

All: He is risen, indeed!

Pastor: Come and worship the God who promised, “for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.”

All: We gather to worship in the name of the One who has been raised from the dead!

Pastor: For as by a man came death, by a man has also come the resurrection of the dead and through him eternal life.

All: Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in him shall live.

Pastor: Come in faith and repentance before the one who has conquered death. Come, let us worship!

HYMN: 286 “Worship Christ, the Risen King!”

Rise, O church, and lift your voices, Christ has conquered death and hell.

Sing as all the earth rejoices; resurrection anthems swell.

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the risen King!

See the tomb where death had laid him, empty now, its mouth declares:

“Death and I could not contain him, for the throne of life he shares.”

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the risen King!

Hear the earth protest and tremble, see the stone removed with pow'r;

all hell's minions may assemble, but cannot withstand this hour.

He has conquered, he has conquered, Christ the Lord, the risen King!

Doubt may lift its head to murmur, scoffers mock and sinners jeer;

but the truth proclaims a wonder thoughtful hearts receive with cheer.

He is risen, he is risen, now receive the risen King!

We acclaim your life, O Jesus, now we sing your victory;

sin or hell may seek to seize us, but your conquest keeps us free.

Stand in triumph, stand in triumph, worship Christ, the risen King!

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

SCRIPTURE READING: *Isaiah 55:6-13*

⁶“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. ¹²For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. ¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN: *from Isaiah 30*

Pastor: In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

All: **Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our sinfulness, our shortcomings, and our offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love, all by neglecting your Word. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in your light and walk in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *Hebrews 7:24,25; Ephesians 1:7,19,20*

Pastor: Because our risen Savior lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore 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. Through faith in Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and you have been brought near to God.

All: In Jesus Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

Pastor: May you know what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.

The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

HYMN: 305 "Arise, My Soul, Arise"

Arise, my soul, arise, shake off your guilty fears;
the bleeding Sacrifice in my behalf appears:
before the throne my Surety stands, before the throne my Surety stands,
my name is written on his hands.

He ever lives above, for me to intercede,
his all-redeeming love, his precious blood to plead;
his blood atoned for ev'ry race, his blood atoned for ev'ry race,
and sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds he bears, received on Calvary;
they pour effectual prayers, they strongly plead for me.
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry, "forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
"nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

My God is reconciled; his pard'ning voice I hear;
he owns me for his child, I can no longer fear;
with confidence I now draw nigh, with confidence I now draw nigh,
and "Father, Abba, Father!" cry.

COMMITMENT

OFFERING

**Tithes and offerings will be collected by deacons following the morning service as congregants leave the sanctuary.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *Nicene Creed*

Leader: Christian, what do you believe?

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

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the 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 sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, 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 I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I 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: 457 “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Come, thou fount of ev'ry blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
hither by thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wand'ring from the fold of God:
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be;
let that grace now, like a fetter,
bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander – Lord, I feel it –
prone to leave the God I love:
here's my heart, O take and seal it,
seal it for thy courts above.

PREACHING OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 28:1-20*

¹Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” ⁸So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

¹¹While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹²And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers ¹³and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ¹⁴And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

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

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

SERMON:

“Witness Protection”

Rev. Jeff Pate

Two groups of witnesses: soldiers and disciples.

The “purchased and protected” soldiers were tasked with spreading a lie.

Redeemed and accompanied followers of Jesus are commissioned to spread a message of eternal life.

HYMN: "He Will Hold Me Fast"

When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold; He must hold me fast.

Chorus:

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so, He will hold me fast.

Those He saves are His delight, Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in His holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost; His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.

For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied, He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight, when he comes at last!

Words by Ada Habershon & Matt Merker; Music by Matt Merker
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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.**

BENEDICTION

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Riverwood Presbyterian uses wine in the celebration of Holy Communion. If you would prefer non-alcoholic grape juice, please take a cup from the inner circle of the tray.

HYMN: 277 “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”

“Christ the Lord is ris’n today,” *Alleluia!* sons of men and angels say; *Alleluia!*
raise your joys and triumphs high; *Alleluia!* sing ye heav’ns, and earth, reply. *Alleluia!*

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal; *Alleluia!* Christ has burst the gates of hell: *Alleluia!*
death in vain forbids his rise; *Alleluia!* Christ has opened paradise. *Alleluia!*

Lives again our glorious King; *Alleluia!* where, O death, is now thy sting? *Alleluia!*
Once he died, our souls to save; *Alleluia!* where thy victory, O grave? *Alleluia!*

Soar we now where Christ has led, *Alleluia!* foll’wing our exalted Head; *Alleluia!*
made like him, like him we rise; *Alleluia!* ours the cross, the grave, the skies, *Alleluia!*

Hail, the Lord of earth and heav’n! *Alleluia!* Praise to thee by both be giv’n; *Alleluia!*
thee we greet triumphant now; *Alleluia!* hail, the Resurrection, thou! *Alleluia!*

BENEDICTION

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 BIRTHDAYS

April 4 Lundy Arnold
April 7 April Henry
April 7 Tina Jones
April 9 Wayne Bell

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR EASTER SUNDAY

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

COVENANT KIDS CLUB & YOUTH GROUP

Due to the Easter holiday, Covenant Kids Club and Youth Group will not meet tonight.

WEEKLY EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Riverwood sends out an announcement email every Tuesday. If you are not currently receiving these emails and would like to, please email Sarah at the church office (secretary@riverwoodchurch.org) or fill out the information connection in your bulletin and drop it in the offering plate.

OTHER EVENTS COMING SOON

Wednesday, April 7, 3:30pm: Catechism
Sunday, April 11, 5:30pm: Covenant Kids Club
Sunday, April 11, 5:30pm: Youth Group
Wednesday, April 14, 6:30pm: Session & Diaconate Meeting

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through March 2021

Operating Income:	\$100,723.48
Operating Expense*:	\$102,640.39
Net Income:	(\$1,916.91)
Designated gifts:	\$6,498.00
Building loan balance:	\$692,979.19

**Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*