

REFLECTIONS

The Lord is the giver of our songs; he breathes the music into the hearts of his people; he is the creator of their joy.

Charles Spurgeon

There is no way that Christians, in a private capacity, can do so much to promote the work of God and advance the kingdom of Christ as by prayer.

Jonathan Edwards

from *Thoughts on Revival of Religion in New England*

Thanksgiving is the power that transforms desire and satisfaction, love and possession, into life, that fulfills everything in the world, given to us by God, into knowledge of God and communion with him.

Alexander Schmemmann

Anyway it brings me to thanksgiving, the third thing to include in prayer. When I think of all I have to be thankful for I wonder that You don't just kill me now because You've done so much for me already & I haven't been particularly grateful.

Flannery O'Connor

from *A Prayer Journal*

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

December 27, 2020 • 8:30 & 10:30 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

First Sunday after Christmas Day

8:30am

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Jimmy Hopper
Joann Williams, piano

10:30am

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

WELCOME

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

PRELUDE

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 Psalm 50*

Pastor: The mighty God summons the earth,
from the rising of the sun to where it sets.

People: **Our God comes and will not be silent.
God calls, and we respond to his love.**

Pastor: The heavens declare God's righteousness.

People: **We sing of God's glories!**

Pastor: Offer up to God your thanksgiving,
People: **and our God will hear us, save us, and be with us forever.**

Pastor: Come! Let us worship Him!

HYMN: 214 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echo back their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
which inspire your heav’nly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn 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: *Mark 7:14-16, 21-23*

¹⁴And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him...

²¹For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.

²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal, we know and confess that we were born into sin and corruption with hearts focused on evil, unable to follow your holy commandments. You have told us to love, to be humble, to be a peacemaker, to seek truth, to praise you in the wonderment of your glory. Instead, from our sinful hearts, we lie, we slander, we gossip, we belittle, we defame, we misrepresent, and we follow our evil words and thoughts to evil deeds.

O Lord, we know our sin and we confess it to you. We come again to you in repentance, praying that you, through the work of your Son, will heal us. Heal our sinful hearts. Cause us to grow in grace through the power of the Holy Spirit. Cause us more and more to walk in your ways and seek your paths. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *from Romans 5:6-8*

Pastor: While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. In Christ alone we have peace with God. May his peace be with you.

People: And also with you.

CONFESSION

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 a 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 by Stuart Townend
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COMMITMENT

OFFERING

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

COMMITMENT

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: 597 “Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire”

Though I may speak with bravest fire,
and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain,
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess,
and striving so my love profess,
but not be giv'n by love within,
the profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
by this we worship and are freed.

PREACHING OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

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

SERMON: “God’s Will for Your Mouth”

Rev. Jeff Pate

Writing His Word on our hearts: 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10

⁸“But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.”

COMMUNION

HYMN: 669 “Commit Now All Your Griefs” st. 1-2

Commit now all your griefs and ways into his hands;
to his sure truth and tender care, who earth and heav’n commands.
Who points the clouds their course, whom winds and seas obey,
he shall direct your wand’ring feet, he shall prepare your way.

Give to the winds your fears; hope, and be undismayed;
God hears your sighs and counts your tears, God shall lift up your head.
Through waves and clouds and storms he gently clears your way;
wait for his time, so shall the night soon end in joyous day.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

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

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.

BENEDICTION

HYMN: 669 “Commit Now All Your Griefs” st. 3-4

Still heavy is your heart? Still sink your spirits down?
Cast off the weight, let fear depart, and every care be gone.
He everywhere has sway, and all things serve his might;
his every act pure blessing is, his path unsullied light.

Far, far above your thought his counsel shall appear,
when fully he the work has wrought that caused your needless fear.
Leave to his sovereign will to choose and to command;
with wonder filled, you then shall own how wise, how strong his hand.

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

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

NO YOUTH GROUP OR COVENANT KIDS CLUB

Youth Group and Covenant Kids Club will NOT meet tonight. Activities resume Sunday, January 10, at 5:30pm.

2020 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 **today** or are postmarked by this Thursday, December 31. Any contributions received after that date will be posted to 2021.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed this week. If you need immediate assistance during this time, please feel free to contact your elder or deacon.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through November 2020:

Operating Income:	\$361,595.33
Operating Expense*:	\$374,148.47
Net Income:	(\$12,553.14)
Designated gifts:	\$88,349.43
Building loan balance:	\$746,149.12

**Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*