

No plan of God's can be thwarted; when He acts, no one can reverse it; no one can hold back His hand or bring Him to account for His actions. God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, and works out every event to bring about the accomplishment of His will. Such a bare unqualified statement of the sovereignty of God would terrify us if that were all we knew about God. But God is not only sovereign, He is perfect in love and infinite in wisdom.

Jerry Bridges

The goal of studying eschatology is not mere head knowledge or the disputes over the specific details. The goal is edification that promotes godly living. The goal is allowing the risen Lamb to live His victorious life through you. The goal is Gospel-centered, Holy Spirit-empowered transformation.

Randy Smith

The apostolic church thought more about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ than about death and heaven. The early Christians were looking, not for a cleft in the ground called a grave but for a cleavage in the sky called Glory.

Alexander MacLaren

# RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

March 7, 2021 • 8:30 & 10:30 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

### Third Sunday in Lent

8:30am

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

10:30am

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Allen Powers  
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

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### CALL TO WORSHIP: based on Psalm 103

Pastor: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

**All: For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;**

Pastor: as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our  
transgressions from us.

**All: As a father shows compassion to his children,  
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.**

Pastor: The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,  
and his kingdom rules over all. Come, let us worship.

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**HYMN: 75** “O Father, You Are Sovereign”

O Father, you are sovereign in all the worlds you made;  
your mighty word was spoken and light and life obeyed.  
Your voice commands the seasons and bounds the ocean's shore,  
sets stars within their courses and stills the tempest's roar.

O Father, you are sovereign in all affairs of man;  
no pow'rs of death or darkness can thwart your perfect plan.  
All chance and change transcending, supreme in time and space,  
you hold your trusting children secure in your embrace.

O Father, you are sovereign, the Lord of human pain,  
transmuting earthly sorrows to gold of heav'nly gain.  
All evil overruling, as none but Conqu'ror could,  
your love pursues its purpose – our souls' eternal good.

O Father, you are sovereign! We see you dimly now,  
but soon before your triumph earth's every knee shall bow.  
With this glad hope before us our faith springs up anew:  
our sovereign Lord and Savior, we trust and worship you!

**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

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## SCRIPTURE READING: *Deuteronomy 5:6-11*

<sup>6</sup>“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>7</sup>You shall have no other gods before me. <sup>8</sup>You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>9</sup>You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>10</sup>but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. <sup>11</sup>You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

## CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Almighty God, you alone are worthy of our worship, adoration, and obedience. You created all things by the word of your power and by your sovereign might all things are sustained. We confess that we are often sinful and rebellious people, all too easily tempted to worship your creation rather than you, the Creator. Please forgive us. We admit that we readily love the gifts you provide but fail to love you, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Please have mercy on us. We confess that we often use your name with little regard for the majesty and wonder of knowing and being in fellowship with you, the God of our salvation. We rely on your mercy and grace so we pray all of this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

## SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *from Colossians 2*

Pastor: Remember the gospel of Jesus Christ for all who believe in him. “You, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him,

All: **having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.**

Pastor: This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” By God's grace through your faith in Jesus Christ, your sins have all been forgiven. The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

# COMMITMENT

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**HYMN:** 577 “Stand Up, My Soul; Shake Off Your Fears”

Stand up, my soul; shake off your fears, and gird the gospel armor on;  
march to the gates of endless joy, where your great Captain Savior’s gone.

Hell and your sins resist your course; but hell and sin are vanquished foes:  
your Jesus nailed them to the cross, and sang the triumph when he rose.

Then let my soul march boldly on, press forward to the heav’nly gate;  
there peace and joy eternal reign, and glitt’ring robes for conqu’rors wait.

There shall I wear a starry crown, and triumph in almighty grace;  
while all the armies of the skies join in my glorious Leader’s praise.

## OFFERING

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

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** *from Philippians 2:6-11*

**Leader:** Whom do we worship as our Lord and King?

**People:** We worship Jesus Christ as our Lord and King, “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

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: 598 “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty; hold me with thy pow’ful hand;  
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more,  
feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through;  
strong Deliv’rer, strong Deliv’rer, be thou still my strength and shield,  
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death, and hell’s Destruction, land me safe on Canaan’s side;  
songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to thee,  
I will ever give to thee.

# PREACHING OF THE WORD

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**SCRIPTURE:** *2 Thessalonians 2:1-12*

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, <sup>2</sup>not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup>Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, <sup>4</sup>who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. <sup>5</sup>Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? <sup>6</sup>And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. <sup>7</sup>For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. <sup>8</sup>And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. <sup>9</sup>The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, <sup>10</sup>and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. <sup>11</sup>Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, <sup>12</sup>in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

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

SERMON:

“Heads Up!”

Rev. Jeff Pate

I. Believers can consider the return of Jesus without being shaken or alarmed.

*Their struggle and our struggle*

*Deception comes in many forms*

II. God has a plan that can't be altered or avoided.

*Two arrivals, one Victor*

III. There are those who should be shaken and alarmed.

*Presently, some "are perishing" and others are being saved.*

# COMMUNION

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**HYMN:** “Christ Is Mine Forevermore”

Mine are days that God has numbered, I was made to walk with Him.  
Yet I look for worldly treasure and forsake the King of kings.  
But mine is hope in my Redeemer, though I fall, his love is sure  
For Christ has paid for every failing, I am His forevermore.

Mine are tears in times of sorrow, darkness not yet understood.  
Through the valley I must travel, where I see no earthly good.  
But mine is peace that flows from heaven, and the strength in times of need  
I know my pain will not be wasted, Christ completes his work in me.

Mine are days here as a stranger, pilgrim on a narrow way  
One with Christ I will encounter harm and hatred for his name.  
But mine is armour for this battle, strong enough to last the war.  
And he has said he will deliver safely to the golden shore.

And mine are keys to Zion city, where beside the King I walk  
For there my heart has found its treasure, Christ is mine forevermore.

Words and music by Jonny Robinson and Rich Thompson  
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## **RESPONSIVE READING & WORDS OF INSTITUTION:**

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

**Pastor:** Lift up your hearts.

**People:** **We lift them up to the Lord.**

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

**People:** **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**Pastor:** Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**People:** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

**Pastor:** Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us.

**People:** **Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

**Pastor:** The gifts of God for the people of God.

## **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

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HYMN: 324 "Christ Is Coming!"

Christ is coming! Let creation from her groans and travail cease;  
let the glorious proclamation hope restore and faith increase:  
Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Come, thou blessed Prince of Peace.

Earth can now but tell the story of thy bitter cross and pain;  
she shall yet behold thy glory, when thou comest back to reign:  
Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Let each heart repeat the strain.

Long thine exiles have been pining, far from rest, and home, and thee:  
but, in heav'nly vestures shining, they their loving Lord shall see:  
Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Haste the joyous jubilee.

With that blessed hope before us, let no harp remain unstrung;  
let the mighty advent chorus onward roll from tongue to tongue:  
"Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

## 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

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

March 8 Katie Gill  
March 8 Tindol Pate  
March 12 Jake Sheppard

## LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

## COVENANT KIDS CLUB & YOUTH GROUP

Covenant Kids Club and Youth Group meet tonight from 5:30-7:00pm.

## OTHER EVENTS THIS WEEK

Wednesday, March 10, 10:00am: Women's Bible Study  
Wednesday, March 10, 3:30pm: Catechism

## SPRING BREAK

During spring break (March 14-20), there will be no Covenant Kids Club, Youth Group, or children's catechism classes. Church office hours will be intermittent. If needed, please feel free to contact church officers on their cell phones (numbers listed in the church directory)

## SUNDAY SCHOOL RELAUNCH CELEBRATION!

On Palm Sunday, March 28, everyone is invited to attend a church wide fellowship between the two morning services to celebrate the restart of Sunday School. We will begin the celebration at 10 a.m. and there will be food, drinks, time for visiting with one another and activities for the kids. Sunday School classes will begin the following week (Easter Sunday). Also, the second morning worship service will begin at 11 a.m. starting on March 28. Hope to see you all there!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT JUMPSTART

Riverwood has a great opportunity to support Jumpstart AL transitional ministry by providing workbooks for the 212 participants. Each workbook costs approximately \$11. Would you consider helping provide an inmate with this important resource? It will be a useful tool to assist him as he learns about living a new life in Christ in prison as he anticipates living life differently outside of prison.

## WINGS OF GRACE: FOOD DRIVE AND EASTER BASKETS

Riverwood's children will be filling Easter baskets for families at Wings of Grace. We have baskets, grass and toys from last year. We NEED bags of candy and other snacks to put in the baskets. Riverwood is also collecting food for Wings of Grace between now and Palm Sunday (March 28). Suggested items include: canned goods, crackers, peanut butter, pop tarts, oatmeal packets, pasta, spaghetti noodles, rice, and macaroni and cheese. A box will be in the narthex of the Sanctuary to collect Easter basket and food drive donations through Sunday, March 28. You may also bring donations to the church office.

## CHILDREN'S EASTER CELEBRATION

Children ages 4-12 are invited to join us on Saturday, April 3, from 1:00-3:00pm for an afternoon of crafts, music, the Easter story, an Egg Hunt and other fun. To help plan for supplies and helpers, please RSVP to Joann Williams (jwilliams@riverwoodchurch.org). We are asking each child to bring 12 candy-filled plastic eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Thursday, April 1, 6:00pm: Maundy Thursday service  
Sunday, April 4, 6:30am: Easter sunrise service  
July 5-8: Vacation Bible School

## FINANCIAL REPORT

*Through February 2021*

|                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Operating Income:      | \$62,057.71  |
| Operating Expense*:    | \$61,912.01  |
| Net Income:            | \$145.70     |
| Designated gifts:      | \$4,171.00   |
| Building loan balance: | \$698,342.70 |

*\*Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*