

God's best and most precious gift to us between the already and the not yet is the gift of himself. He doesn't promise us that we will not suffer. He doesn't promise that our sexuality will be free from distortion and temptation. No, he promises us that in all these situations he will be with us, in us, and for us. God is the grace he offers us.

Paul David Tripp
from *Sex in a Broken World*

But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way...

The Apostle Paul
Philippians 3:13-15

Being *for* the body means that what we do, in the body, matters. According to Paul, we're the people who are “always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies” (2 Cor. 4:10). The life of Jesus is supposed to be visible in our flesh. People who see us should be able to see the gospel of Jesus Christ. Given this, it shouldn't surprise us that the life of the body—including things like eating and sex—matters.

Beth Felker Jones
from *Faithful: A Theology of Sex*

For this reason, the Lord instituted for us his Supper, in order to sign and seal in our consciences the promises contained in his gospel concerning our being made partakers of his body and blood; and to give us certainty and assurance that in this consists our true spiritual nourishment; so that, having such an earnest, we might entertain a right assurance about salvation.

John Calvin

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

November 15, 2020 • 8:30 & 10:30 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

8:30am

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

10:30am

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Allen Powers
Dr. 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: *from Psalm 66*

Pastor: Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise! Say to God,

**All: “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies
come cringing to you. All the earth worships you and sings praises to you;
they sing praises to your name.”**

Pastor: Come and see what God has done; he is awesome in his deeds toward the
children of man. Come, let us worship.

HYMN: 119 “I Sing the Almighty Power of God”

I sing th’almighty pow’r of God that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;
the moon shines full at his command and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;
he formed the creatures with his word, and then pronounced them good.

Lord, how your wonders are displayed where’er I turn my eye,
if I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!

There’s not a plant or flow’r below but makes your glories known;
and clouds arise and tempests blow by order from your throne;
while all that borrows life from you is ever in your care,
and everywhere that man can be, you, God, are present there.

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: *Hosea 4:1-3*

¹Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; ²there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. ³Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION: *Hosea 6:1-3*

¹“Come, let us return to the Lord; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. ²After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. ³Let us know; let us press on to know the Lord; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.”

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

Almighty God, we sing of your mighty deeds but humbly confess our rebellious sins. You created the heavens and the earth and sustain them by the word of your power. You have created and sustain us, even now. You are faithful but we are faithless. We have used our bodies to pursue self-pleasure and self-glory. Please have mercy on us. In our lustfulness and pride we have worshiped and served the creature instead of you, our Creator. Please forgive us and enable us to die to sin more and more, as you enable us to live to righteousness. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *from Hebrews 2*

Pastor: Hear the good news! Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

All: Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make atonement for the sins of the people.

Pastor: Jesus Christ has given his own life for the sins of all who believe in him. Through faith in him, you are forgiven. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

CONFESSION

HYMN: “Before the Throne of God Above”

Before the throne of God above, I have a strong and perfect plea,
a great High Priest whose name is “Love,” who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on His hands, my name is written on His heart.
I know that while in Heav’n He stands,
No tongue can bid me thence depart, no tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within,
upward I look and see Him there, who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free;
for God, the just, is satisfied,
to look on Him and pardon me, to look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless righteousness,
the great unchangeable I AM, the King of Glory and of grace!
One with Himself I cannot die, my soul is purchased by His blood!
My life is hid with Christ on high,
with Christ my Savior and my God, with Christ my Savior and my God.

Words by Charitie Bancroft; Music by Vikki Cook
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COMMITMENT

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: 692 “To You, O Lord, I Fly”

To you, O Lord, I fly and on your help depend;
you are my Lord and King Most High; great God, my soul defend.
A heritage for me Jehovah will remain
my portion rich and full is he, my right he will maintain.

The lot to me that fell is beautiful and fair;
the heritage in which I dwell is good beyond compare.
I praise the Lord above whose counsel guides aright;
my heart instructs me in his love in seasons of the night.

I keep before me still the Lord whom I have proved;
at my right hand he guards from ill, and I shall not be moved.
Life’s pathway you will show, to your right hand will guide,
where streams of pleasure ever flow, and boundless joys abide.

PREACHING OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: *1 Thessalonians 4:1-8*

¹Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. ²For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.

⁸Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

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

SERMON: “Sanctification and Your Sex Life” 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.”

1. Sex was designed by God.

“The issue of sex is important and unavoidable because God, in wisdom and love, chose it to be. Because sex is the creation of God's hand and exists under the control of his sovereignty, we should approach it with reverence and awe, not with embarrassment and timidity. Sex came from him, belongs to him, and continues to exist through him—to him be the glory.”

Paul David Tripp

2. *Porneia* was a result of the fall of mankind.

"*Porneia* is visible, bodily behavior produced by hearts captive to sin...*Porneia* is sex that rejects the power and leading of the Holy Spirit. And *porneia* is sex that exploits."

Beth Felker Jones

3. God's will is for you (and your sex life!) to be set apart by holiness and honor.

4. Your sexual life matters to God.

"...in sex you are always worshiping something. Your sexual life is shaped by the worship of God, the worship of self, the worship of your sexual partner, or the worship of what you get out of sex. This means that in sex you and I surrender our hearts to something...In this most intimate of human activities, you reveal who God designed you to be – a worshiper."

Paul David Tripp

COMMUNION

HYMN: 681 “How Gentle God’s Commands”

How gentle God’s commands, how kind his precepts are!
Come, cast your burdens on the Lord, and trust his constant care.

While Providence supports, let saints securely dwell;
that hand, which bears all nature up, shall guide his children well.

Why should this anxious load press down your weary mind?
Haste to your heav’nly Father’s throne, and sweet refreshment find.

His goodness stands approved, down to the present day;
I’ll drop my burden at his feet, and bear a song away.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Pastor: The bread that we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

All: We who are many are one body, for we all share the same loaf.

Pastor: The cup for which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

All: The cup that we drink is our participation in the blood of Christ.

Pastor: Congregation of Jesus Christ, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and who desire to live in obedience to him are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord. 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

HYMN: 95 “Though Troubles Assail Us”

Though troubles assail us and dangers affright,
though friends should all fail us and foes all unite,
yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
the promise assures us, “The Lord will provide.”

The birds, without garner or storehouse, are fed;
from them let us learn to trust God for our bread.
His saints what is fitting shall ne'er be denied
so long as 'tis written, “The Lord will provide.”

When Satan assails us to stop up our path,
and courage all fails us, we triumph by faith.
He cannot take from us, though oft he has tried,
this heart-cheering promise, “The Lord will provide.”

No strength of our own and no goodness we claim;
yet, since we have known of the Savior's great name,
in this our strong tower for safety we hide:
the Lord is our power, “The Lord will provide.”

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

November 21 Jay Finch

November 21 Alan Manning

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

COVENANT KIDS CLUB AND YOUTH GROUP

Covenant Kids Club and Youth Group meet tonight. Covenant Kids Club meets from 5:30-6:30pm behind the Fellowship Hall, and Youth Group meets from 5:30-7:00pm behind the Administration Building.

YOUTH CAMP OUT

There will be a campout for all Riverwood youth on Friday, November 20. We will be spending that night and part of Saturday on the property of Jeremy and Tina Jones. If you are interested in participating, email Pastor Jeff at jpate@riverwoodchurch.org.

WE GIVE THANKS SERVICE

Traditionally, on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, Riverwood has gathered for lunch and a service of Scripture, song, and individual expressions of thanksgiving for God's blessings in our lives. This year, we will not meet for lunch but will still provide an opportunity for you to express your gratitude for God's goodness. Next Sunday morning, following the benediction and before we sing "Lift High the Cross" we will take a few minutes for you to share with the congregation your words of thanksgiving to God. If you prefer, you may write out your thoughts and we will have someone else read them for you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANGEL TREE

Angel Tree tags are available now in the narthex. What is Angel Tree? It is a ministry to children of incarcerated parents. Through this program, we as a church can embrace children in our community by providing them with a Christmas gift, given in love, on behalf of their parent. Each gift presents an opportunity to share the love and hope of Christ. Please prayerfully consider participating in this program by doing any of the following:

1. Purchasing presents (one clothing and one toy item) for a child from the tree.
2. Making a donation designated "Angel Tree Gift" and we will have a shopper purchase the gifts for you.
3. Providing non-perishable food items for food baskets for each family.
4. Help deliver the packages to the families on Dec. 21 or 22.

For more information, contact Joann Williams (jwilliams@riverwoodchurch.org).

CHRISTMAS CRAFT AND FUN DAY

Christmas Craft and Fun Day will be Saturday, December 12 from 1:00-3:00pm. This day is for children from 4 – 12 years old. We will have crafts, games, the Christmas story, music, and snacks. To assist in planning this year, please let Joann know that your child will be attending. Please prayerfully consider participating in this program by:

1. Providing snacks and drink boxes.
2. Assisting Joann in pre-packaging craft bags to be used that day.
3. Helping on December 12.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through October 2020:

Operating Income:	\$315,509.40
Operating Expense*:	\$337,086.19
Net Income:	(\$21,576.79)
Designated gifts:	\$86,674.43
Building loan balance:	\$731,523.45

**Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*