

We say, faith apprehends Jesus Christ. Christian faith is not an inactive quality in the heart. If it is true faith it will surely take Christ for its object. Christ, apprehended by faith and dwelling in the heart, constitutes Christian righteousness, for which God gives eternal life.

Martin Luther

The immense step from the Babe at Bethlehem to the living, reigning triumphant Lord Jesus, returning to earth for his own people—that is the glorious truth proclaimed throughout Scripture. As the bells ring out the joys of Christmas, may we also be alert for the final trumpet that will announce his return, when we shall always be with him.

Alan Redpath

Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that He gave His only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.

Corrie ten Boom

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

November 28, 2021 • 10:30 Worship Service • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

First Sunday of Advent

Leader In Worship: Assisting Elder Clay Staggs
Linda Graham, piano

WELCOME

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

SCRIPTURE READING & LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE: *Jeremiah 33:14-18*
The Canevaro family

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 80*

Pastor: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth...and come to save us!

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Pastor: O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Pastor: Let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself! Then we shall not turn back from you; give us life, and we will call upon your name!

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Pastor: Come, let us worship!

HYMN: 349 "O Thou Who the Shepherd of Israel Art"

O thou who the Shepherd of Israel art,
give ear to our prayer and thy favor impart;
thou leader of Joseph, thou guide of his way,
'mid cherubim dwelling, thy glory display.

In Ephraim's, Manasseh's, and Benjamin's sight,
O come thou and save us; awake in thy might,
O God, give us favor, restore to thy grace;
and then we shall live in the light of thy face.

From Egypt's dark border a vine thou didst take;
destroying the heathen didst room for it make.
Where planted it grew at thy sovereign command,
with roots deeply set and boughs filling the land.

The axe hews it down; it is burned in the fire;
they perish, rebuked in thy terrible ire.
O lay then thy hand on the Man of thy might,
the Son of Man made to stand strong in thy sight.

No more shall we wander, delighting in shame;
revive us, O Lord, we will call on thy name.
O Lord God of hosts, us restore to thy grace;
and then we shall live in the light of thy face.

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: *Micah 6:6-8*

⁶“With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
⁷Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
⁸He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God!

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

All: O Lord, great God, perfect in holiness and justice, we are embarrassed to come before you for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways. We have rebelled against your wisdom and we have pursued folly. We have rejected your fatherly guidance and have wandered from your righteous paths. To you belongs righteousness, O Lord, and to us open shame. Merciful Father, incline your ear to our cries for forgiveness. Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you. Forgive us, not on the ground of our own righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercy and love, mercy and love that was incarnate in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we pray, for he is our Savior and the Mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *based on Galatians 1:3-5; 2:20*

Pastor: For you who confess your sins and look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

All: **I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

HYMN: 196 “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
dear Desire of ev’ry nation, joy of ev’ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O’er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:
“Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth.”

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
by his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
this the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

OFFERTORY

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

DOXOLOGY (Hymnal, page 731)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host:
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *The Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

COMMITMENT

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.

MISSIONS MOMENT

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

HYMN: 689 “Be Still, My Soul”

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.

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.

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.

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.

COMMUNION

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: 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.**

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

BENEDICTION

HYMN: 635 “How Good It Is to Thank the Lord”

How good it is to thank the Lord, and praise to you, Most High, accord,
to show your love with morning light, and tell your faithfulness each night;
yea, good it is your praise to sing, and all our sweetest music bring.

O Lord, with joy my heart expands before the wonders of your hands;
great works, Jehovah, you have wrought, exceeding deep your ev’ry thought;
a foolish man knows not their worth, nor he whose mind is of the earth.

When as the grass the wicked grow, when sinners flourish here below,
then is there endless ruin nigh, but you, O Lord, are throned on high;
your foes shall fall before your might, the wicked shall be put to flight.

The righteous man shall flourish well, and in the house of God shall dwell;
he shall be like a goodly tree, and all his life shall fruitful be;
for righteous is the Lord and just, he is my rock, in him I trust.

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 BIRTHDAY

November 28 Bob Prince

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

YOUTH GROUP & COVENANT KIDS CLUB

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

ANGEL TREE

The Angel Tree is up in the foyer of the sanctuary. 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) providing non-perishable food items, and (3) helping deliver presents on December 20 or 21. Gifts and food donations are due on Wednesday, December 15. For more information, contact Joann Williams (jwilliams@riverwoodchurch.org).

HYGIENE PACKS FOR JUMPSTART MINISTRY

Due to gracious gifts from many of you, as well as Walmart in Centreville, this is all we have need of now: 110 white socks, 100 white washcloths, 210 full-size toothpaste, 50 full-size bars of soap, 150 gallon ziploc bags. What a blessing you all are! Questions? Contact Bruce or Mickey DeHaan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RIVERWOOD CHRISTMAS PARTY

It's Back!!! Come join us for the Riverwood Christmas Party this Friday, December 3 starting at 7:00pm in the fellowship hall. It will be an evening full of finger foods, fellowship, and dancing! Please see your weekly announcement email for a link to sign up for finger foods.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT & FUN DAY

Christmas Craft and Fun Day will be this Saturday, December 4 from 10:00am-1:00pm. This day is for children from 4 - 12 years old. We will have crafts, games, the Christmas story, music, and great food. Children, please invite a friend to spend the morning with us. Please prayerfully consider participating in this program by: (1) providing food, (2) helping with crafts, or (3) helping with any of the tasks that need to be completed prior to the 4th. For more information, contact Joann Williams (jwilliams@riverwoodchurch.org).

RCS: CALL FOR SUBSTITUTES

RCS is seeking substitute teachers for all grade levels. If you or someone you know might be interested, contact Addison Canevaro (mrcanevaro@riverwoodclassical.org).

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Wednesday, December 8, 6:30pm: Session & Diaconate Meeting
Friday, December 24, 6:00pm: Christmas Eve Communion Service

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through October 2021

Operating Income:	\$350,530.68
Operating Expense*:	\$390,261.90
Net Income:	(\$39,731.22)
Designated gifts:	\$69,028.15
Building loan balance:	\$654,773.53

**Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*