

REFLECTIONS

Jesus won for me the thrilling privilege of living in the presence of God. Moment by moment, day by day, year in and year out, God's people live in His presence. An understanding of God's covenant promise to be our God, and a realization that this does not depend on our performance but on His provision, ushers us into the glorious truth that we live in His presence. His presence gives us purpose. His presence makes us safe. His presence fills us with joy and love. His presence is our life.

Susan Hunt
Heirs of the Covenant

Covenant children have this advantage: all the means of grace are furnished to them. Our homes, churches, and Christian schools form a triangular community of faith committed to teaching and training these children, though this responsibility falls on parents first of all. All the parts of this triangle have a single purpose: to train children in the fear and admonition of God, while ever looking to Him to do what we cannot do, namely, regenerate them.

Joel Beeke
Parenting by God's Promises

By petitioning God for “our daily bread,” we are engaging in an act of worship. God is pleased to see us acknowledging what is true whether we acknowledge it or not: that apart from His fatherly goodness and care, which He owes to no one, neither spiritual nor physical life is possible. The irony is that even the most bitter atheist depends on God for the oxygen he uses to curse Him and requires divine provisions of food and drink to sustain his rebellious existence.

Michael Horton
Beyond Culture Wars

Again and again our Lord leads us into situations that are painful and difficult, and we pray—as Paul prayed regarding his thorn in the flesh—that the situation will change. We want a miracle! But instead the Lord chooses to leave things as they are and to strengthen us to cope with them, as he did with Paul, making his strength perfect in continuing human weakness.

J. I. Packer
Rediscovering Holiness

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

September 13, 2020 • 8:30 & 10:30 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

Fifteenth 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 102*

Pastor: Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you...
My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass.

All: **But you, O Lord, are enthroned forever;
you are remembered throughout all generations.**

Pastor: Of old you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

All: **They will perish, but you will remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.**

Pastor: You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away,
but you are the same, and your years have no end.

All: **The children of your servants shall dwell secure;
their offspring shall be established before you.**

Pastor: Come, let us worship!

HYMN: 97 “We Praise You, O God, Our Redeemer, Creator”

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
 in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
 We lay it before you, we kneel and adore you;
 we bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.

We worship you, God of our fathers, we bless you;
 through life’s storm and tempest our Guide you have been.
 When perils o’ertake us, escape you will make us,
 and with your help, O Lord, our battles we win.

With voices united our praises we offer,
 to you, great Jehovah, glad anthems we raise.
 Your strong arm will guide us, our God is beside us;
 to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise.

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: *Ephesians 6:1-4*

¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²“Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³“that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” ⁴Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

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

CONFESSION

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

All: Heavenly Father, we come before you with our heads and hearts bowed. You have commanded us to demonstrate our faith in you by obeying people in authority over us. Please forgive us for disobeying parents, employers, and leaders in our homes and community. Please forgive us for not honoring you by withholding honor from our parents.

(Pause)

Have mercy on us for our failure to disciple our children, and refusing to be disciplined by our parents.

(Pause)

In your great mercy, forgive us and help us. Restore our relationships, renew our strength, and redeem the lost. We pray all of this in Jesus's name, amen.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *based on John 3*

Pastor: Hear the good news! As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man was lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

All: For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Pastor: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: 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.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

The Heidelberg Catechism, Question and Answer #1

Leader: What is your only comfort in life and death?

People: That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

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: 86 “The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want”

The Lord’s my Shepherd, I’ll not want; he makes me down to lie
in pastures green; he leadeth me the quiet waters by.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me the quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again; and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness, e’en for his own name’s sake;
within the paths of righteousness, e’en for his own name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk in death’s dark vale, yet will I fear none ill,
for thou art with me; and thy rod and staff me comfort still;
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me comfort still.

My table thou has furnished in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows.
My head thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me:
and in God’s house forevermore my dwelling place shall be;
and in God’s house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

PREACHING OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: *Nehemiah 13:23-31*

²³In those days also I saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. ²⁴And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but only the language of each people. ²⁵And I confronted them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair. And I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, “You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. ²⁶Did not Solomon king of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. ²⁷Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?” ²⁸And one of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite. Therefore I chased him from me. ²⁹Remember them, O my God, because they have desecrated the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. ³⁰Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; ³¹and I provided for the wood offering at appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

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

SERMON:

“Holiness at Home”

Rev. Jeff Pate

Sermon: *Holiness at Home*
Text: Nehemiah 13:23-31

Not such “good ol’ days”

The situation and the real issue

“Who are you to tell me who I can marry!”

Marriage is intended to be the union of one woman and one man, but its impact not only ripples out into the community but down through generations.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

This is a problem with historical precedent

The Frustrated Governor

God's grace for you and your family

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Acts 2:37-39

"Christian families do not exist in isolation from one another. Each Christian family should be a snapshot of God's kingdom values, but the church is the mural. The church, the covenant community, is to be the compelling panorama of grace."

Susan Hunt, Heirs of the Covenant

HYMN: 719 “A Christian Home”

O give us homes built firm upon the Savior,
 where Christ is Head and Counselor and guide;
 where every child is taught his love and favor
 and gives his heart to Christ, the crucified:
 how sweet to know that though his footsteps waver,
 his faithful Lord is walking by his side!

O give us homes with godly fathers, mothers,
 who always place their hope and trust in him;
 whose tender patience turmoil never bothers,
 whose calm and courage trouble cannot dim:
 a home where each finds joy in serving others,
 and love still shines, tho’ days be dark and grim.

O Lord, our God, our homes are thine forever!
 We trust to thee their problems, toil, and care;
 their bonds of love no enemy can sever,
 if thou art always Lord and Master there:
 be thou the center of our least endeavor –
 be thou our guest, our hearts and homes to share.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Pastor: Hear the words of our Savior: “Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Come, then, for all is ready.

All: We come at our Savior's invitation, not because we are righteous, but because we are penitent, not because we are strong, but because we are weak, not because we are whole, but because we are broken.

Pastor: Come, then, for all is ready. Christ was raised to life, death is swallowed up, victory is won. Alleluia!

All: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

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: 32 “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Chorus:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
all I have needed thy hand hath provided –
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

(Chorus)

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

(Chorus)

BENEDICTION

DISMISSING HYMN: 263 “Lift High the Cross” v. 4

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,
till all the world adore his sacred name.

4. Thy kingdom come, that earth’s despair may cease
beneath the shadow of its healing peace.

(Refrain)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

September 13 Sandra Hanson
September 14 Kaitlin Jones
September 17 Dusty Sheppard

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

COVENANT KIDS CLUB

Covenant Kids Club meets from 5:30-6:30pm behind the Fellowship Hall.

YOUTH FALL KICKOFF

The Riverwood youth will kick off our fall semester with a pool party tonight at the Staggs' house (6139 Greystone Court, Tuscaloosa, 35406). The festivities will begin at 5:30 and wrap up at 7. Food will be served and fun will be had!

PIER GROUPS

We want everyone in the church to have the opportunity to be involved in the study and application of God's Word with a group of other believers. Small group bible studies (Pier Groups) are forming for this fall. Some groups will meet in person and others will be online. Please go to the church's website (riverwoodchurch.org) to sign up.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY OPTIONS @ RIVERWOOD

In addition to our worship service, the church has a couple ways for your children to grow in the knowledge of God's Word each week. Covenant Kids meet at the church on Sunday evenings from 5:30 until 6:30. Children's Catechism is also meeting again during the week on two different weekdays. If you are interested in your child attending Children's Catechism, please contact Joann Williams (jwilliams@riverwoodchurch.org) to discuss which day would work best.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through August 2020:

Operating Income:	\$252,590.76
Operating Expense*:	\$265,942.42
Net Income:	(\$13,351.66)
Designated gifts:	\$67,458.45
Building loan balance:	\$742,200.67

**Includes the minimum monthly building loan payment*