

REFLECTIONS

Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy—but the Father, for love.

Octavius Winslow (1808-1878), English Preacher
from *No Condemnation in Christ Jesus*

In the Christian theology of history, the death of Christ is the central point of history; here all the roads of the past converge; hence all the roads of the future diverge.

Stephen Neill
from *Truth of God Incarnate*

Christianity rests on the certainty of Jesus' resurrection as a space-time occurrence in history. All four Gospels highlight it, focusing on the empty tomb and resurrection appearances, and Acts insists on it. Paul regarded the Resurrection as indisputable proof that the message about Jesus as Judge and Savior is true. Jesus' resurrection demonstrated His victory over death, vindicated Him as righteous, and indicated His divine identity. It led on to His ascension and enthronement and His present heavenly reign. It guarantees the believer's present forgiveness and justification and is the basis of resurrection life in Christ for the believer here and now.

J. I. Packer

When the Bible says that Christ is God, it does not ask us to forget a single thing that it has said about the stupendous majesty of God. No, it asks us to remember every one of those things in order that we may apply them all to Jesus Christ.

Gresham Machen

I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.

H. G. Wells

RIVERWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

September 20, 2020 • 8:30 & 10:30 Services • Rev. Jeff Pate, Pastor

Sixteenth 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 Zephaniah 3*

Pastor: Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart!

The Lord has taken away the judgments against you.

People: He has cleared away your enemies.

You shall never again fear evil.

Pastor: On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

“Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save.

People: He will rejoice over you with gladness;

He will quiet you by his love;

He will exult over you with loud singing.

Pastor: The Lord our God has redeemed us!

Come, let us worship Him!

HYMN: 125 “Let All Things Now Living”

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God the Creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
who guides us and leads to the end of our days.
His banners are o’er us, his light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
’til shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.

His law he enforces; the stars in their courses,
the sun in its orbit, obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim him divine.
We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing,
with glad adoration a song let us raise,
’til all things now living unite in thanksgiving
to God in the highest, hosanna and 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: *Luke 15:11-20*

¹¹And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."²⁰ And he arose and came to his father.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

CONFESSION

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN:

All: Father, how many times have we, when confronted with our sin, considered you in your glory and holiness and have been forced to say, "I have sinned against heaven and against you, and are no longer worthy to be called your son?" How many times have we done the things we didn't wish or intend to do. How many times have not done the things we wanted and intended to do? How many times have our hearts, our minds, our passions, betrayed us? How many times have we found it difficult to even pray because of our shame and despair?

Here, now, at this time of corporate confession, cause us, in our guilt and desperation, to remember your grace and your plenteous mercy. Cause us to remember Jesus, our Lord, who came and willingly died so that we could come to the you and receive mercy and grace. In this hour, let us now arise and once again go to you, our Father, and confess and receive forgiveness.

SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PEACE OF GOD: *Luke 15:20-24*

²⁰"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²²But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate."

Pastor: People of God, our sins have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus. God calls us to come to Him as His beloved children, to come freely and with great joy. May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

CONFESSION

HYMN: 501 “Just As I Am, without One Plea” st. 1, 3, 5, 6

Just as I am, without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd’st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown has broken ev’ry barrier down;
now, to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

COMMITMENT

OFFERING

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

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: 538 “More about Jesus Would I Know”

More about Jesus would I know, more of his grace to others show;
more of his saving fullness see, more of his love who died for me.

Refrain:

More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,
more of his saving fullness see, more of his love who died for me.

More about Jesus let me learn, more of his holy will discern;
Spirit of God, my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me.

(Refrain)

More about Jesus: in his Word, holding communion with my Lord;
hearing his voice in ev’ry line, making each faithful saying mine.

(Refrain)

More about Jesus on his throne, riches in glory all his own;
more of his kingdom’s sure increase; more of his coming, Prince of Peace.

(Refrain)

PREACHING OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:1-9

¹Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ²And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.” ⁴And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ⁷and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.” ⁸And the people and the city authorities were disturbed when they heard these things. ⁹And when they had taken money as security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

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

SERMON: “Turning the World Right Side Up”

Rev. Jeff Pate

First things first: Who Is the Christ?

1. The Christ had to suffer and die.

A. Theologically

B. Experientially

C. Biblically

“The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isaiah 52:10).

And then this...

2. The Christ had to rise again.

King

Priest

3. The identity of the Christ.

4. This is the message that turns an upside-down world right side up.

COMMUNION

HYMN: 646 “Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts”

Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts, thou fount of life, thou light of men,
from the best bliss that earth imparts we turn unfilled to thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood; thou savest those that on thee call;
to them that seek thee thou art good, to them that find thee all in all.

We taste thee, O thou living bread, and long to feast upon thee still;
we drink of thee, the fountain-head, and thirst our souls from thee to fill.

Our restless spirits yearn for thee, where'er our changeful lot is cast;
glad when thy gracious smile we see, blest when our faith can hold thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay, make all our moments calm and bright;
chase the dark night of sin away, shed o'er the world thy holy light.

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: 468 “My Faith Has Found a Resting Place”

My faith has found a resting place, from guilt my soul is freed;
I trust the ever-living One, his wounds for me shall plead.

Refrain:

I need no other argument, I need no other plea,
it is enough that Jesus died, and that he died for me.

Enough for me that Jesus saves, this ends my fear and doubt;
a sinful soul I come to him, he'll never cast me out.

(Refrain)

My heart is leaning on the Word, the written Word of God:
salvation by my Savior's name, salvation thro' his blood.

(Refrain)

My great Physician heals the sick, the lost he came to save;
for me his precious blood he shed, for me his life he gave.

(Refrain)

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 20 Nancy Zheng
September 21 Steve Patridge
September 26 Asher Henry

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

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.

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*