



**RIVER CITY**  
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE LORD'S DAY  
MAY 2, AD 2021

"Behold, I am doing a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."  
Isaiah 43:19

## For Reflection

This vision discloses the tragic double irony of serving Satan. First, as the angel of the abyss, the fallen star releases these demonic hordes not to afflict his enemies, the servants of God, but rather to afflict his allies, "who dwell on the earth," who receive the beasts mark and worship his blasphemous image. The devil rewards his loyal subjects with cruel torture. Second, the relief that the tortured think they would attain through death is denied them, for the malevolent spirits that poison their minds are forbidden from taking their lives.

- *Dennis Johnson, The Triumph of the Lamb*

APOLLYON: So from this I conclude that you are one of my subjects since the whole of that region belongs to me; I am its prince and god! This being true, then how is it that you have run away from your king? Were it not for the fact that my plan is for you to serve me further, I would, right now, strike you to the ground with one smashing blow.

CHRISTIAN: It is true that I was born in your territories, but your employment was hard; and your wages were such that a man could not properly live on them since the wages of sin is death. Therefore when I came to adulthood, I did what other thoughtful people ought to do, and that is seek for better employment.

-- John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*.

### A FEW THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

- We believe that Christian Worship is a renewal of covenant vows between Christians and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit -- a gracious and thankful conversation between God and His people. Consequently, our worship contains lots of congregational participation. Your part is in bold, but don't worry if you get a little lost. Just keep your bulletin handy throughout the service.
- We are a family of families worshipping together. We are teaching our children to worship as they worship with us. If they cry or squirm, it's OK; God has ordained "praise" from our children and infants.
- Restrooms are located outside, near The Pavilion, toward the playground. Follow the signs or ask anyone for directions.

## Welcome and Preparation

Silent Prayer of Preparation: Gracious and merciful Father, quiet our hearts, our hands, our minds and our souls as we draw near to You. Give rest where there is weariness, peace where there is conflict, and assurance where there is anxiety. Grant us faith to believe that you speak, ears to hear what you say and a will to live as you desire. Prepare us now to delight in you, O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Preparation:  
In worship, God speaks. He is not merely spoken about. Listening and responding require our preparation. Take a moment to be still and know that He is God.

## God Calls Us to Worship

Psalm 95:1-5

Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!  
For the Lord is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.  
In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.  
The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.

Call to Worship:  
We need to be called to come and worship because we are prone to think we are at the center of all things. Or perhaps we struggle to believe that God wants us to draw near. So God takes the initiative and calls us to come and worship Christ who is the center.

## We Respond to God's Call

Psalm 95:6-8

Pastor: Oh come, let us worship and bow down;  
People: Let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!  
Pastor: For he is our God,  
People: And we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.  
Pastor: Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts

## Prayer of Adoration

Worship through singing.  
Worship is a gracious conversation between God and His people. He speaks grace through His Word and we respond together in gratitude through prayer and praise as a congregation. Singing is an important way we express our love for God and remind ourselves of our place in His redemptive story.

## Songs of Praise

### Before the Throne of God Above

Words: Charitie Bancroft, Music: Vikki Cook © 1997 Sovereign Grace Worship (ASCAP) CCL# 11359088

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 of 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

## Call to Confession

Hebrews 3:12-13

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

Confession of Sin. God calls us to draw near, but our sin is a barrier we cannot cross on our own. The good news is that God has provided a way of reconciliation through Jesus. Confession of sin both acknowledges our need for God's mercy and celebrates its abundance in Christ.

## Confession of Sin

from Psalm 51

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out our transgressions. Wash away all our iniquities and cleanse us from our sin. Create in us pure hearts, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and grant us willing spirits, to sustain us.

## Assurance of Pardon

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Assurance of Pardon: God declares in the gospel that everyone who repents and believes in Jesus Christ is forgiven and made clean.

## Confession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker 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, dead, and buried; he descended into hell.<sup>1</sup> The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into 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,<sup>2</sup> the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Confession of Faith.: Creeds, confessions and catechisms are summaries of what we believe the Bible teaches about the central truths of the Christian faith. We confess them together in worship as a way of professing our common faith.

<sup>1</sup> That is, He remained under power of death until the third day.

<sup>2</sup> "catholic" means "universal".

Pastor: Oh sing to the Lord a new song;

People: Sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Pastor: Sing to the Lord, bless his name;

People: Tell of his salvation from day to day.

Pastor: Declare his glory among the nations,

People: His marvelous works among all the peoples!

Pastor: For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

People: He is to be feared above all gods.

Pastor: For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

People: But the Lord made the heavens.

Pastor: Splendor and majesty are before him;

People: Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Pastor: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

People: Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

Pastor: Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

People: Bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Pastor: Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;

People: Tremble before him, all the earth!

Pastor: Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!

People: Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he  
will judge the peoples with equity.

## Songs of Praise

### O, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

Words: Samuel Trevor Francis, Music: Thomas John Williams, Public Domain, CCL# 11359088

1 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free;  
rolling as a mighty ocean  
in its fullness over me.  
Underneath me, all around me,  
is the current of thy love;  
leading onward, leading homeward,  
to thy glorious rest above.

2 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Spread his praise from shore to shore;  
how he loveth, ever loveth,  
changeth never, nevermore;  
how he watches o'er his loved ones,  
died to call them all his own;  
how for them he intercedeth,  
watcheth o'er them from the throne.

3 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Love of ev'ry love the best:  
'tis an ocean vast of blessing,  
'tis a haven sweet of rest.  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
'tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;  
and it lifts me up to glory,  
for it lifts me up to thee.

Sermon: Some view the sermon as a way to get principles for right living. Others see it as an interesting or inspirational talk.

In reality, as we open the Scriptures we encounter Jesus Christ. Therefore, as you listen, pray to be open to his leading, exhortation, encouragement and healing.

Scripture & Sermon:

"Sense of Urgency" Revelation 9

### Pastoral Prayer & 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. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever, Amen

## Songs of Parting

### On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand

©1997 Christopher Miner Music. Words: Samuel Stennett. Music: Christopher Miner CCL# 11359088

1. On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.

2. All o'er those wide extended plains,  
Shines one eternal day;  
There God the Son forever reigns,  
And scatters night away.

Chorus:

I am bound, I am bound  
I am bound for the promised land,  
I am bound, I am bound  
I am bound for the promised land.

3. No chilling winds nor poisonous breath  
Can reach that healthful shore;  
Sickness, sorrow, pain and death,  
Are felt and feared no more.  
(Repeat chorus)

4. When shall I reach that happy place,  
And be forever blessed?  
When shall I see my Father's face,  
And in His bosom rest?  
(Repeat chorus)

The Last Word:  
God always has  
the last word. A  
benediction is a  
“word of  
blessing.” God  
sends us out, but  
not before He  
reminds us that  
wherever the  
coming week  
may take us,  
physically,  
emotionally or  
spiritually, He  
goes with us.

## Benediction

Numbers 6:24-25

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

## Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## What Do You Believe?

An early Christian pastor once wrote, "in essential things, unity, in debated things, liberty, and in all things, charity." In regard to essential things we believe the basic tenets of the Christian faith as spelled out in the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed. In regards to debated things we hold many distinctive beliefs which define us as an Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

- We are a Biblical Church that believes in the inerrant and sufficient Scriptures as our only rule of faith and practice, able to make us wise unto salvation and useful for teaching, correcting, rebuking, and training us as disciples.
- We are a Reformed Church which believes that grace flows necessarily out of God's sovereignty. Grace is the work of God alone. Man's free-will is a faculty God employs, but saving grace depends upon the work of the Spirit powerfully renewing man's will to accept God's gracious offer of salvation.
- We are an Evangelical Church which believes that we are called to "preach the gospel to every creature under heaven" (Mark 16:15) as Christ's ambassadors as though God were making His appeal through us to implore men to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:19-20). God's sovereign choice is one of the "secret things" which we cannot know. Therefore, we preach the gospel earnestly and urgently.
- We are a Presbyterian Church which believes that God has called men to be Elders to provide spiritual oversight, instruction, counsel and encouragement to the Church. The word Presbyterian comes from the ancient Greek word for 'elder.' Our church's elders exercise care for the families in our congregation under the authority of other elders from several neighboring states. This larger group of elders is called a Presbytery.
- We are a Connectional Church. We are under the authority of the Mississippi Valley Presbytery and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod. Through these connections, we work with other churches in North America and across the world to spread the gospel to every creature under heaven.
- We are a Confessional Church. Our basic doctrines are expressed by the Westminster Confession of Faith and its Larger and Shorter Catechisms. This confession and its catechisms summarize what we believe the Bible teaches in regard to key doctrines. We do not hold them to be inerrant or infallible, but we do believe that they accurately express the central truths of the Christian faith.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please pray for St. Andrew's Church as they work to repair damage to the Sanctuary and the Commons resulting from weather related water damage.
- Supporting River City financially. Thank you for your faithful support. You can give to River City Reformed in the following ways.
  - You can use the collection box on the resource table for tithes & offerings, or,
  - Give online by going to [rivercityarp.org](http://rivercityarp.org) and click on the "Give" link on the main menu, or
  - Send your gift to: River City Reformed c/o Mr. Matt Wylie, P. O. Box 156, Pottsville, AR 72858

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