



Liturgy for Sunday, December 27, 2020

Welcome (Bart Box)

Building Notes:

- **Face Coverings:** After reviewing the state-wide mask order, **we have decided to continue requiring the wearing of facial coverings by all adults during entering and exiting the building and while singing. We also recommend the wearing of facial coverings during the entirety of the service.** The current statewide ordinance encourages masks for kids over six years old. We understand that this may be difficult for some kids, so we are leaving this up to each parent as to when to allow their own kids to remove their masks once they are seated. **We would recommend kids over six to wear masks during entrance, exit, singing, and any other time they are not in their seats.** This guidance will be reviewed as we have more information and direction from the governor or local officials.
- **Nursing Mothers:** We are now using the adjacent mothers' room for additional worship seating. There is still space for nursing mothers in the Nursery room on the Kids Hallway.
- The youth room is now (and again) serving as an overflow room. Additional seating is available in there, along with the service livestream.
- There is no Elementary Sunday School lesson today. All kids K-5<sup>th</sup> will remain in the service the entire time.
- We still have a "Wiggle Room" designated in the Kids Hallway for parents of younger kids who need a minute to calm down. You can find those to the left down the Kids Hallway.

Call to Worship

<sup>1</sup>*Why do the nations rage*

*and the peoples plot in vain?*

<sup>2</sup>*The kings of the earth set themselves,*

*and the rulers take counsel together,*

*against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,*

<sup>3</sup>*Let us burst their bonds apart*

*and cast away their cords from us."*

<sup>4</sup>*He who sits in the heavens laughs;*



the Lord holds them in derision.  
<sup>5</sup>Then he will speak to them in his wrath,  
and terrify them in his fury, saying,  
<sup>6</sup>"As for me, I have set my King  
on Zion, my holy hill."  
<sup>7</sup>I will tell of the decree:  
The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you.  
<sup>8</sup>Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.  
<sup>9</sup>You shall break them with a rod of iron  
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."  
<sup>10</sup>Now therefore, O kings, be wise;  
be warned, O rulers of the earth.  
<sup>11</sup>Serve the LORD with fear,  
and rejoice with trembling.  
<sup>12</sup>Kiss the Son,  
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,  
for his wrath is quickly kindled.  
Blessed are all who take refuge in him. (Psalm 2)

### Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

### God's Greeting and Mutual Greetings

Leader: "The Lord be with you!"

All: "And also with you!"

Leader: "Lift up your hearts."

All: "We lift them to the Lord."

Leader: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."

All: "It is right to give him thanks and praise."

### Songs

1) "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"



Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,  
Op'ning to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day!

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,  
Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,  
Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
Center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Singing bird and flowing fountain,  
Call us to rejoice in Thee!

Thou art giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Wellspring of the joy of living,  
Ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother—  
All who live in love are Thine;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
Lift us to the joy divine!

Mortals, join the happy chorus,  
Which the morning stars began;  
Father love is reigning o'er us,  
Brother love binds man to man  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us onward  
In the triumph song of life.

## 2) "All Glory Be to Christ"

Should nothing of our efforts stand  
No legacy survive  
Unless the Lord does raise the house



In vain its builders strive

To you who boast tomorrow's gain  
Tell me what is your life  
A mist that vanishes at dawn  
All glory be to Christ!

*All glory be to Christ our king!  
All glory be to Christ!  
His rule and reign we'll ever sing,  
All glory be to Christ!*

His will be done  
His kingdom come  
On earth as is above  
Who is Himself our daily bread  
Praise Him the Lord of love

Let living water satisfy  
The thirsty without price  
We'll take a cup of kindness yet  
All glory be to Christ!

*All glory be to Christ our king!  
All glory be to Christ!  
His rule and reign we'll ever sing,  
All glory be to Christ!*

When on the day the great I Am  
The faithful and the true  
The Lamb who was for sinners slain  
Is making all things new.

Behold our God shall live with us  
And be our steadfast light  
And we shall e'er his people be  
All glory be to Christ!

*All glory be to Christ our king!  
All glory be to Christ!  
His rule and reign we'll ever sing,  
All glory be to Christ!*



### Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Pardon (Nick Murray)

<sup>3</sup>Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?

<sup>4</sup>He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
who does not lift up his soul to what is false  
and does not swear deceitfully.

<sup>5</sup>He will receive blessing from the LORD  
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

<sup>6</sup>Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. (Psalm 24:3-6)

<sup>6</sup>On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,  
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

<sup>7</sup>And he will swallow up on this mountain  
the covering that is cast over all peoples,  
the veil that is spread over all nations.

<sup>8</sup> He will swallow up death forever;  
and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces,  
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup>It will be said on that day,  
"Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him,  
that he might save us.  
This is the LORD; we have waited for him;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation." (Isaiah 25:6-9)

### Songs

#### 3) "Jesus Is Better"

There is no other so sure and steady  
My hope is held in your hand  
When castles crumble and breath is fleeting  
Upon this rock I will stand  
Upon this rock I will stand

*Glory, glory, we have no other king  
But Jesus Lord of all*



*Raise the anthem, our loudest praises ring  
We crown Him Lord of all*

Your kindly rule has shattered and broken  
The curse of sin's tyranny  
My life is hidden 'neath Heaven's shadow  
Jesus, your blood covers me  
Jesus, your blood covers me

*Glory, glory, we have no other king  
But Jesus Lord of all  
Raise the anthem, our loudest praises ring  
We crown Him Lord of all*

In all my sorrows, Jesus is better – make my heart believe  
In every vict'ry, Jesus is better – make my heart believe  
Than any comfort, Jesus is better – make my heart believe  
More than all riches, Jesus is better – make my heart believe  
Our souls declaring, Jesus is better – make my heart believe  
Our song eternal, Jesus is better – make my heart believe

*Glory, glory, we have no other king  
But Jesus Lord of all  
Raise the anthem, our loudest praises ring  
We crown Him Lord of all*

#### 4) "Amazing Grace"

Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come  
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home



The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures

When we've been there ten thousand years  
Bright, shining as the sun  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow  
The sun forbear to shine  
But God who called me here below  
Will be forever mine

**Prayer of Illumination** (Will Mitchell)



**Better: A Better Kingdom**  
Hebrews 12:18-29

*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. (Matthew 13:44)*

*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup> who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matthew 13:45-46)*

- Some context...
  - Chapter 12 is the rhetorical climax of the book.
  - The Jewish background Christians in Hebrews were facing trials for following Jesus.
  - The temptation was (and still is) to turn back from following Jesus.
- The writer of Hebrews urges persevering faith by recounting new covenant blessings.
  - He says, “You haven’t come to Mount Sinai but to Mount Zion!”
    - The point is not that God was holy and scary back then but gracious and kind now.
    - The point is that Jesus is a better mediator than Moses—we have no reason to dread *because of Christ!*
    - Jesus brings a truly better kingdom.
  - If you are in Christ, you *have* come...
    - To Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.
    - To innumerable angels in festal gathering and to the assembly of the firstborn.

*Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:20)*

*Think about this the next time you sit down in church. Perhaps you will find yourself next to a weak, sinful Christian, perhaps one who has just about worn out your patience, has plumb dried your reservoir of Christian love. Think about this next time at Bible study when new believers come in, ignorant of the Bible and only two steps down the road of sanctification. They are, if they really have believed on Jesus Christ, destined not just for improvement, but for glory. If you could see them now—those people whom you require so much effort to live amongst in the church, who let you down, who struggle with sin—if you could see them now as they will certainly be in the city to which they now belong, you would marvel at the glory God has prepared for those who love him. They are destined for glory, to be perfected, conformed to the image of their*

*firstborn brother, Jesus Christ. They have become citizens of God's mountain city because they have come in faith to Christ. (Richard Phillips)*

- To God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.

- God is not a peripheral benefit of salvation.

*God is the gospel. (John Piper)*

- The Judge of all is the perfecter and preserver of the saints.

*What's the use of living forever if you're all alone on a Sunday? But what if forever weren't just an extension of a sad, solitary present but instead meant being welcomed home—to the place that made up for all those lonely Sundays that you hoped could be otherwise? What if it's not just that I live forever, but that we live forever? What if forever was meeting your mother, who could finally convince you that she doesn't see a failure but only a son, whom she loves? (James K.A. Smith)*

- To Jesus, the mediator of a better covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

*And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." (Genesis 4:10-12)*

*And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:9-10)*

- If all this is ours in the gospel, why would we turn back?

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

- Instead, let's persevere in the kingdom that cannot be shaken...

- With humble gratitude and...
- With unceasing worship.

## The Lord's Supper

<sup>26</sup>Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." <sup>27</sup>And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup>for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup>I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:26-29)

## Song

### 5) "We Will Feast in the House of Zion"

*We will feast in the house of Zion  
We will sing with our hearts restored  
He has done great things we will say together  
We will feast and weep no more*

We will not be burned by the fire  
He is the Lord our God  
We are not consumed by the flood  
Upheld, protected, gathered up

*We will feast in the house of Zion  
We will sing with our hearts restored  
He has done great things we will say together  
We will feast and weep no more*

In the dark of night before the dawn  
My soul be not afraid  
For the promised morning, Oh how long!  
O God of Jacob, be my strength!

*We will feast in the house of Zion  
We will sing with our hearts restored  
He has done great things we will say together  
We will feast and weep no more*

Every vow we've broken and betrayed  
You are the faithful One  
And from the garden to the grave  
Bind us together, bring shalom



*We will feast in the house of Zion  
We will sing with our hearts restored  
He has done great things we will say together  
We will feast and weep no more*

### Offering

*<sup>9</sup>For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. (2 Corinthians 8:9)*

*<sup>7</sup>Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:7-8)*

### Prayer of Intercession (Bart Box)

#### *For Our Church*

For our church, that we would maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3), that any cause for division amongst brothers and sisters in Christ would be addressed quickly and humbly, and that we would be united in mind and love for one another (1 Pet. 3:8).

#### *For Our City*

For Iron City Church, pastor Kam Pugh, their elders, staff and congregation.

#### *For Our Nation*

For those Americans living in poverty, that the church would open her eyes to see those around us living in crippling need, that God would give us—individually and corporately—ways to meet tangible needs of those we encounter, and that those in poverty would be treated with dignity and loving-compassion.

#### *For Our World*

For the persecuted church around the world, that they would know that even though they are persecuted, they are not forsaken; that though perplexed, they wouldn't be driven to despair; and that the life of Christ would be manifested even as they suffer for his sake (2 Cor. 4:8-11).



"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen."

### Benediction

*<sup>5</sup>To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom,  
priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.  
(Revelation 1:5b-6)*

### Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him, all creatures here below  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost



## What's Happening at Christ Fellowship...

### *Words of Life Sermon Series and Bible Reading Plan*

For 2021 and into 2022, we are planning a sermon series that walks through every book of the Bible. To go alongside this series, we are publishing a daily Bible reading plan so that you can better follow along and prepare for each week. We hope that this gives us the opportunity as a church to all study the same Scriptures on our own throughout the week. You can grab the first few months of bookmarks today at the bookstall on your way out! You can also access the entire reading plan at [cfcbermingham.org/wordsoflife](http://cfcbermingham.org/wordsoflife).

### *Year End Giving*

As we approach the end of the year, we want to begin by giving God thanks for the way he has provided for our church through your faithful giving. The Lord is good and kind whether we make budget or not, but we are grateful that we have been able to support church ministries, give to local initiatives, and provide for our global partners. If you would like to give in the year 2020, you can either: 1) deposit your gift in the offering boxes on a Sunday prior to December 27 (final Sunday of the year), 2) give [online](#) by December 31, or 3) mail a check to 76 Green Springs Hwy, Birmingham, AL 35209, postmarked by December 31.

