

CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

Liturgy for Sunday, August 22, 2021

Welcome (Bart Box)

Time of Silent Reflection

Call to Worship

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Ephesians 1:3-10)

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) "Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

2) "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Public Reading of Scripture – Proverbs 31:10-31 (Alicia Hunsberger)

Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Pardon (Nick Murray)

¹³*Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.* (Proverbs 28:13)

Merciful LORD,
Pardon all my sins of this day, week, year,
all the sins of my life,
sins of early, middle, and advanced years,
of omission and commission,
of moody, irritable, and angry tempers,
of lip, life, and walk,
of hard-heartedness, unbelief, presumption, pride,
of unfaithfulness to the souls of men,
of want of bold decision in the cause of Christ,
of deficiency in outspoken zeal for his glory,
of bringing dishonor upon Thy great name,
of deception, injustice, untruthfulness in my dealings with others,
of impurity in thought, word, and deed,
of covetousness, which is idolatry,
of substance unduly hoarded, carelessly squandered,
not consecrated to the glory of Thee, the great Giver;
sins in private and in the family,
in study and recreation, in the busy places of men,
in the study of Thy Word and in the neglect of it,
in prayer irreverently offered and coldly withheld,
in time misspent,
in yielding to Satan's wiles,
in opening my heart to his temptations,
in being unwatchful when I know him nigh,
in quenching the Holy Spirit;



sins against light and knowledge,
against conscience and the restraints of Thy Spirit,
against the law of eternal love.

**Pardon all my sins, known and unknown,
felt and unfelt,
confessed and not confessed,
remembered or forgotten.**

Good Lord, hear; and hearing, forgive. Amen.

(From the *Valley of Vision*, "Sins")

³*If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?*

⁴*But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared....*

⁷*O Israel, hope in the LORD!*

*For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption. (Psalm 130:3-4, 7)*

Songs

3) "Here Is Love Vast as the Ocean"

4) "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Prayer of Illumination (Will Mitchell)

Reading of the Preaching Passage (Alex LaGanke)



Words of Life: Kindness
Ruth

The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. (Psalm 145:9)

Tracing the story in the Bible

- A (near) total loss. (Ruth 1)
 - Naomi seems to understand her misery as a judgment from God.

She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?” (Ruth 1:20-21)
 - Naomi has yet to realize the kindness of the Lord standing right beside her.

Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” (Ruth 1:17)

Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. ²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. (Proverbs 31:25-26)
- A big gamble. (Ruth 2-3)
 - Both Ruth and Boaz were characterized by kindness. (2:13; 3:10)
 - Ruth is eager to work for her family.
 - Boaz is eager to protect the needy.
 - Both Ruth and Boaz were characterized by virtue. (2:1; 3:11)
 - The nobility of Ruth and Boaz should shape our understanding of the encounter at the threshing floor. (3:1-13)
 - Boaz could have interpreted it wrongly, but...
 - Boza responded to kindness with kindness. (3:10)
- A happy ending. (Ruth 4)
 - Boaz was willing to act of a redeemer for Ruth (and Naomi). (4:1-12)
 - A son is born to... Naomi! (3:17)

Tracing the meaning in our lives

- God is calling us to kingdom kindness.

- What friendship can we offer to those who are lonely or needy?

Is any pleasure on earth as great as a circle of Christian friends by a good fire? (C.S Lewis)

Without friends, no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods. (Augustine)

- What help can we offer to those who are poor and needy?
- God is showing us Christlike kindness.

Boaz is an instrument of the Lord's filling up what was empty. Each time the narrator reports Ruth returning home to Naomi, she has arms full of grain (2:17-18; 3:15-17). She shared in his bread and wine, ate until she was satisfied, and went home with leftovers (2:14, 18)... Boaz was an abundant provider. His actions in the story filled her arms and stomach, and later her womb and future.

In the Four Gospels, Jesus does not give the impression of being tightfisted with blessings. He is generous with provision to a scandalous degree. As Jesus ministered throughout Galilee, he proclaimed the gospel and healed "every disease and affliction among the people" (Matt 4:23). A paralytic once left Jesus not only walking home but forgiven of sin (9:1-8). When he fed a hungry crowd of ten thousand or more, they all left satisfied, and his disciples filled baskets with leftovers (14:19-21)—and later he performed the same astounding miracle again (15:35-38). At the Last Supper his disciples shared bread and wine with him, and he said the bread and cup foreshadowed the work of redemption he would soon accomplish (26:26-28). God's people in the Old Testament had witnessed their share of divine provision, to be sure, but never had a man claimed, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" (John 6:51). Jesus was an abundant provider. His grace was lavish, his mercy unmatched. (Mitchell Chase)

- Take heart in the lavishly merciful Christ.
- Take heart in the great promise of heaven.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:4-5)

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. (Job 19:25)

- God is inviting us to experience kindness.

- Jesus is gentle and lowly in heart.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

- Cast yourself upon the good mercies of God.

Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1)

The Lord's Supper

²⁶Now 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." ²⁷And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I 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) "There Is a Fountain"

Offering

⁹For 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)

⁷Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And 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 (Rebekah Rein)

For Our Church

For the women of CFC, that God would equip them and enable them to fulfill the duties of the unique ministries that God has given to each of them, that God would shape our congregation in important ways through the influences of the godly women of CFC, and that our church would be a place that all women in all stages of life would flourish.

For Our City

For Mountain Brook Community Church, pastor Tim Kallam, their elders, staff, and congregation.

For Our Nation



For President Joe Biden, that the Lord would give him the wisdom to lead our nation well, that God would keep him back from decisions that do not promote human flourishing, and that those around him would provide him with good counsel and sound advice.

For Our World

For the nation of Afghanistan, that God would preserve the church as it faces intense persecution at the hands of the Taliban, that Afghan Christians would trust and know that the LORD will not forsake his people or abandon his heritage (Ps. 94:14), and that God would either convert wipe out the wicked.

"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

²⁴*The LORD bless you and keep you;*

²⁵*the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;*

²⁶*the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

(Numbers 6:24-26)

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...

Promotion Sunday is Next Week!

Parents, we will be moving kids out of pods and back into age-graded classrooms next week, Lord willing! If you are a member or in the membership process, you should receive an email this week with all the details you need to know to start a new year of CFC Kids. Because that entails new classrooms and checking kids in again, you may want to try and arrive a few minutes early next week. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to Maggie Irby or Ryan Adams.

International Student Ministry Training – Today at 4:00pm

There are so many ways you can help reach international students in Birmingham, including offering rides, inviting them to a meal, and practicing English. To learn more about how you can serve internationals this school year, please join us for an informational meeting at CFC today from 4:00-5:30 p.m. Contact Dennis Schauer (schauer.dennis@gmail.com) or Melynda Schauer (melynda.schauer@gmail.com) with any questions.

Prayer and Fasting for Afghanistan – Tuesday, August 24th

In light of the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, we are asking our church to consider setting aside some time on Tuesday for prayer and fasting. Please pray for safety for troops and allies, for wisdom for all leaders, for peace in the country, for the protection of the vulnerable, for the conversion of the lost, and for persevering faith for our brothers and sisters in the country.

CFC Kids and Face-Coverings

We are now recommending that all teachers in CFC Kids (both preschool and elementary) and all kids in elementary classes wear a facial covering while they are in CFC Kids. We are recommending this up to September 5, at which point we will reevaluate these protocols. There are masks available in the hallway for any who need one.

Join the Communion Team

We are looking for volunteers to serve on the Sunday morning communion team. Responsibilities include helping fill cups and put out trays on Sundays prior to the service. If you would have any interest in helping, please email our deaconess of communion Rebecca Osteen at rebeccaosteen22@gmail.com.

Support Students at Glen Iris Elementary School

This fall, CFC will be collecting school supplies for students at Glen Iris Elementary School. Look for backpacks with supply lists in the commons space to see how you can contribute.

Women's Small Group Dinners

Around the Tables is a new opportunity for women to get to know each other through quarterly dinners with 5-7 other people. For more information, and to sign up to host a group



of women in your home or a restaurant during the month of October, please visit www.cfc Birmingham/women.

Service Opportunity for Men at Brother Bryan Mission

We are looking to add some more men to our preaching rotation at Brother Bryan Mission on Monday nights. Chapel is from 6:30–7:00pm every Monday, and we typically try to have men preaching once every 6-8 weeks. This is a great opportunity to speak God's Word to others. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Ryan Adams.

Social-Distanced Seating Option Available

For any who would like to make use of it, we have a social-distanced seating option available where the livestream is playing in the fellowship hall. Masks are required for all who choose to sit in that room.

