

# CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

Liturgy for Sunday, August 29, 2021

Welcome (Bart Box)

Time of Silent Reflection

Call to Worship

*<sup>14</sup>For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, <sup>16</sup>that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup>may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup>and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

*<sup>20</sup>Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, <sup>21</sup>to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21)*

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) "O Love that Will Not Let Me Go"

2) "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

## Public Reading of Scripture – Genesis 2:18-25

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

*<sup>4</sup>Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. (Hebrews 13:4)*

*<sup>9</sup>Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup>nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup>And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)*

## Songs

3) "O Praise the Name"

4) "Speak, O Lord"

### Prayer of Illumination (Will Mitchell)

## Reading of the Preaching Passage



**Words of Life: Love**

Song of Solomon

**Reading the Book**

- A metaphor or a drama?
  - Some have understood the book as allegorical, a metaphor showing God's love for His people.
  - The better interpretation is to understand this book as a story about the physical, romantic, covenant relationship of a wife and her husband.
- One song or lots of songs?
  - There are some who understand the book to have a definite plot, moving from courtship to marriage to life in love.
  - Others see the book as a collection of love songs put together to form an overall impression and teach a number of lessons about marital love.
- Remember that Song of Solomon is poetry, not prose—it's meant to be felt, not crudely dissected.

**Reveling in Love**

- "I Want to Hold Your Hand" - The Song of Solomon on love and desire.

- The Bible not only avoids ascetism; it condemns it.

*For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. (1 Timothy 4:4-5)*

- One of the chief lessons of Song of Solomon is that we should control our desires, not be controlled by them.
- The woman in Song of Solomon is both delighting and discipling. (2:6-7; 3:4-5; 8:3-4)

*When we Christians reflect that beauty by the way we think and act (or don't act) upon bodily passions, the world takes notice. That is, the single person who waits for marriage to express his or her passion promotes the gospel, as does the married couple who so passionately love each other. The world notices these things. The world notices the pure girl who won't. The world notices the Christian couple married for sixty years who still enjoy each other's friendship—the holding of hands, the tender surprising public kiss on the cheek. It's something strangely beautiful and alluring. Pure passion—held in check or rightly expressed—is a promotion of the Passion of Jesus Christ! I'll put it this boldly—it's the gospel in its most tangible, touchable, visible form. (Douglas O'Donnell)*

- "I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song" -Song of Solomon on love and words.

- The Song of Solomon is full of powerful words of affection and affirmation. (1:5-6, 9, 15)
- She sees herself as just another girl; he sees her as the only girl there is.

*What would happen if instead of seeing all the ways that women fail to measure up to some cultural standard of physical beauty that no one can meet anyway, men truly saw the total*

*beauty of the women in their lives and then built them up with words of praise? When men recognize the gifts of women, respect their intellect, admire their character, affirm the dignity of their unique design, and then express this verbally, their sisters are empowered to become more completely the women that God is calling them to become. (Philip Ryken)*

- “When a Man Loves a Woman” - Song of Solomon on love and commitment.
  - Notice the covenant, possessive (“my”) language. (4:1-5:1)
  - This exchange is not domination but mutual gift—the Bible says our bodies are given away in marriage, not taken away. (1 Corinthians 7:1-5)
  - This mutual giving and possession is the fruit of covenant, not the root of covenant.

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:24-25)*

*To have sex without being married is like moving into a house you have not purchased. There is a tentative, insecure quality to it—like trespassing—that does not match what God intends for sex: a deeply satisfying experience of physical and relational love. (Mark Dever)*

- “If We Make It through December” - Song of Solomon on love and renewal.

*Unmet expectations are our unexpected undoing. I thought he’d be this; I thought she’d be that. I thought we’d “live happily and effortlessly ever after.” The idol of the perfect marriage is as dangerous as the idol of [sex]. Love and marriage make wonderful bedfellows but terrible gods. (O’Donnell)*

- There will likely be episodes and seasons of disappointment, discouragement, and distance.
  - But this Song teaches us the vital importance of addressing that with haste and with humility.
- “You’re My Best Friend” - Song of Solomon on love and friendship.

*No need to talk. No need to make love. No needs at all except perhaps to stir the fire. (C.S. Lewis on love late in life)*

- The Song of Solomon is showing us physical love as fruit, not root.
- Jesus was never married and therefore celibate, and he was no less authentically human.
  - God forgive us for obsessing and idolizing the gift of sex.
  - God help to cultivate deep and meaningful friendship with our spouses.

- “We Will Feast in the House of Zion” - Song of Solomon on love and the Lord.

- Our lives are marked by unfaithfulness.
- Yet for all our unfaithfulness, He remains faithful and full of mercy!

*Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; <sup>8</sup> it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure. (Revelation 19:7-8)*

## 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"

## 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 (Billy Shepard)

### *For Our Church*

For our church, that as a people bought by the blood of Jesus Christ, we would live out our days on earth with Christlike integrity, that God would give us clean hands and pure hearts and clear consciences, and that individually and corporately our character would be a clear reflection of the God who has saved us and set his Holy Spirit upon us.

### *For Our City*

For Christ the King Anglican Church, pastor Michael Novotney, their elders, staff, and congregation.

### *For Our Nation*



For the men and women serving in the armed forces, that they would strive to maintain peace and order in the places they are serving, that the Lord would comfort and preserve the families of those who are deployed, and that we would faithfully give thanks to God for these men and women.

### *For Our World*

For the nation of Haiti as it recovers from the recent earthquake, that God would supply wise and godly leaders to help in the recovery effort, that supplies and resources would reach the places and people that need them most, and ultimately that Haitians would turn to Christ as the only solid rock upon which to entrust their lives.

**"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>20</sup>He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! <sup>21</sup>The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. (Revelation 22:20-21)*

### 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...

### ***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. If you would have any interest in helping, please email our deaconess of communion Rebecca Osteen at [rebeccaosteen22@gmail.com](mailto: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.cfcirmingham/women](http://www.cfcirmingham/women).

### ***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.

### ***College Ministry Cookout—September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00pm***

All college students are invited join us at 6:00pm for a cookout to kick off the fall semester at Jonathan and CharlieAnn Shepard's home (1525 Glenwood Road, Hoover, AL 35226). Invite a friend and meet us for a fun night of food and fellowship!

### ***College Women's Retreat—October 15-17***

All college age women are invited to join us for a mountain retreat weekend October 15-17 in Cashiers, NC. Throughout the weekend, we will dig into the book of James together, and it will be a great time of fellowship, getting to know one another, and spending time outdoors. The cost for the weekend is \$50. Scholarships are available as we do not want the cost to be the reason anyone doesn't go. Contact Rebecca Osteen with any questions or to sign up at [rebeccaosteen22@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccaosteen22@gmail.com).

### ***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.

