



NORTHMINSTER

Presbyterian Church

...making disciples, growing in faith together and serving others in Christ

May 11, 2025

4th Sunday of Easter

10:30am

Chimes

Welcome

Prelude

Opening Prayer

O Jesus, in your resurrection, the heavens and the earth rejoice.

Alleluia!

By your resurrection you broke open the gates of hell,
and destroyed sin and death.

Keep us victorious over sin.

By your resurrection you raised the dead, and brought us from death to life.

Guide us in the way of everlasting life.

By your resurrection you confounded your guards and executioners,
and filled the disciples with gladness.

Give us joy in your service.

By your resurrection you proclaimed good news to the women and apostles,
and brought salvation to the whole world.

Direct our lives as your new creation.

We join all of creation in singing your praise!

Alleluia and Amen!

*Hymn #20

All Things Bright and Beautiful

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors; God made their tiny wings.
All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky:
All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden, God made them every one.
All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well.
All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession

Glorious Lord of life,
by the mighty resurrection of your Son
you overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him.

**Grant that we who celebrate with joy
Christ's rising from the dead
may be raised from the death of sin
and from pasts we cannot change
to the new life of righteousness,
through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.**

In his name, hear our prayers ...

Assurance of Forgiveness

Scripture – Psalm 23

Remembering our Baptisms

Honoring our Graduates – Hannah Denny and Sam Alderman, IV

*Hymn #488

I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry

“I was there to hear your borning cry; I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child with a faith to suit you well;
in a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.”

“When you heard the wonder of the Word, I was there to cheer you on.
You were raised to praise the living Lord to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.”

“In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.”

“I was there to hear your borning cry; I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized to see your life unfold.”

*Passing the Peace

Announcements and Invitations

Gathering of our Offerings

Offertory Music

*Response #606

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

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.

Prayers of Intercession, Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowed by 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. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn #175 (remain seated)

Seek Ye First

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and you shall find;
knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

You shall not live by bread alone, but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of God. Allelu, alleluia!

Scripture – John 16:29-33

Sermon – My sheep hear my voice

*Hymn #39

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with thee.
Thou changest not; thy compassions they fail not. As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

[*Refrain*] Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning, new mercies I see.
All I have needed thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [*Refrain*]

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow: blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [*Refrain*]

*Charge and Benediction

*Sung Response

Northumbria Community

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you. May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm. May he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders he has shown you. May he bring you home rejoicing, once again into our doors.

Postlude



Information & Announcements

Welcome Friends and Guests!

Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information in the red book located in the pew so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship.

Prayer Concerns

If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office.

Ongoing Prayer Requests: Our Flint River Presbytery and campus ministries; *Current Member Concerns:*

Jane Prentice; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; Evelyn Clark; Annette Hutto; Jeff, Lynn, Josh and Hannah Denny -

Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Susan Garrett (colleague of Gregg Reed, cancer diagnosis); Cody Hynes; Tom Parsons (stomach cancer – friend of Jan Stocks) - *Military*

Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; Joshua Sulkers; Isaac Falkenstine (Bonnie Diboll's grandson); Nicholas Sanchez (Kathy McCord's godson); James Watwood; Carter Eddlemon (Doug & Carol Holt's grandson)

Sanctuary Flowers

Today's flowers have been given to the glory of God by Julie Reed in loving honor of all mothers on this Mother's Day.

If you would like to contribute to the weekly flower arrangements, whether in celebration of a special event or in memory of a loved one, please sign up on the board in the foyer. Arrangements are \$65 (payable to Northminster) and can be taken home with you or gifted to one of our homebound or sick members.

Congratulations, 2025 Graduates!

We are celebrating our high school graduates, Sam Alderman, IV and Hannah Denny, in worship today.



Sam will attend Wofford College in the fall, which is evidently the new Alderman tradition. Hopefully, he will follow Ella Cole's pathway more so than his father's at Wofford. He plans to major in finance and physics. Sam is an honors graduate of Mount de Sales Academy and is most proud of maintaining a 4.0 despite his medical challenges. Sam is the captain of our state-winning quiz bowl team and is a four-year varsity golf letterman. Sam is thankful to his Northminster family for loving and mentoring him and for being his rock his entire life.



Hannah is an honors graduate of Mount de Sales Academy and will attend Auburn University in the Fall. She plans to major in interior design. While at Mount de Sales, she was a member of the Mount de Sales Troubadours, Beta Club, National Honor Society, and the Page Break literary magazine.

She enjoys volunteering and teaching horseback riding lessons at Brave Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center and enjoys thrifting. She also enjoys keeping the nursery here at Northminster and is thankful for her Northminster Church family.

Adult Sunday School

April 27-May 18, Andrew Gardner from Mercer University, will lead "Confronting Christian Nationalism." We will then break for the summer.

Children's Sunday School – Summer Schedule

Although the school year is winding down, we are excited to continue children's Sunday school June 29th! We continue to meet downstairs in room 123 starting at 9:30^{AM} for lessons, crafts, and snacks. We will break for the month of July and return August 3rd.

Men's Breakfast

Wednesday, May 14th at 7^{AM}. Join us at H&H Soul Food Restaurant in downtown Macon for breakfast together and discussion of the life of Davis, beginning with, "Stories" – 1 Samuel 16-31. This is a dutch treat activity.

Summer Reading Group

All are invited to celebrate with us, the 100th birthday of Georgia's own legendary Catholic novelist, Flannery O'Connor. We'll read a half dozen of her wild and wonderful stories from *The Short Stories of Flannery O'Connor*, then take a field trip to explore her home in Milledgeville. Our reading group will meet every two weeks in the evening via ZOOM. Stay tuned for dates, times, and short story selections! Led by Pastor Ralph and Betty Lamb.

Fall Women's Retreat

Ladies, mark your calendars for October 24-25 for our annual women's retreat and start thinking about who you can invite to participate. This year's theme is "The Tree of Life: Israel's Sages on the Search for Wisdom" featuring Dr. Christine Roy Yoder, the Richards Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur.

Youth Car Wash – May 17

Be sure to come by Northminster Saturday, May 17th between 10am-Noon to get your car washed better than any automatic system ever could! Donations are encouraged and will go to help fund our youth as they go to the annual Montreat Youth Conference this June.

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News; SESSION of Ruling Elders: Mark Brown; Barbara Fatkin; Amy Maley; Nita McCord; Michael Napier; Renea Preyna; Gregg Reed; Jeanne Roddenberry; Amanda Smith; Gail Walker

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate

SAM ALDERMAN, III, Interim Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

Office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-1:00; Jennifer Cell: 478-318-7911

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In 1729, while John Wesley was a student at Oxford, he started a club with his brother Charles. It was soon mockingly dubbed "The Holy Club" by some of his fellow collegians. The club members rigorously self-examined themselves everyday by asking the these 22 questions:



1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to others what has been said to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give the Bible time to speak to me every day?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone else of my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
22. Is Christ real to me?

Monday Morning

At that time the Festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me, but you do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, in regard to what he has given me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

John 10:22-30

I told you, but you don't believe. Everything I have done has been authorized by my Father, actions that speak louder than words. You don't believe because you're not my sheep. My sheep recognize my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them real and eternal life. They are protected from the Destroyer for good. No one can steal them from out of my hand. The Father who put them under my care is so much greater than the Destroyer and Thief. No one could ever get them away from him. I and the Father are one heart and mind.

John 10:25-30, *The Message* paraphrase

Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, Late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you. Created things kept me from you; yet if they had not been in you they would have not been at all. You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.



St. Augustine (354–430)

bishop of Hippo Regius

in Roman province of Numidia

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.

Old Sarum Primer

Lord, quench the thirst not only of those who come to you. Whenever anyone seeks you may he freely be admitted to the presence of the Savior. The grace of the feast is not restricted to one occasion. Its rays of glory never set. It is always at hand to enlighten the mind of those who desire it. Its power is always there for those whose minds have been enlightened and who meditate day and night on the holy Scriptures, like the one who is called blessed in the holy psalm: Blessed is the man who has not followed the counsel of the wicked, or stood where sinners stand, or sat in the seat of the scornful, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.



St. Athanasius the Great (c. 296–373)
Archbishop of Alexandria

In meditative prayer the Bible ceases to be a quotation dictionary and becomes instead "wonderful words of life" that lead us to the Word of Life. It differs even from the study of Scripture. Whereas the study of Scripture centers on [study], the meditation upon Scripture centers on internalizing and personalizing the passage. The written Word becomes a living word addressed to us.

This is a time not for technical studies or analysis or even the gathering of material to share with others. We are to set aside all tendencies toward arrogance and with humble hearts receive the word addressed to us. Often I find kneeling especially appropriate for this particular time.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, "Just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all. That is meditation." When Bonhoeffer founded the seminary at Finkenwalde, everyone there practiced a daily half-hour silent meditation upon Scripture.

Richard J. Foster
Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home

Prayer is not to be made to God as if he were absent. He is here, present in us, and we in him, by the spirit.

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*
14th-century English Christian mystic



When good things can also be recognized as bad things, then you have the spiritual gift of discernment. This will also allow you to see that many things which are good for you are also bad things for other people, the animals, or the earth. It forces you beyond "either/or" thinking toward "both/and," or non-dual, thinking.

Once you have learned to discern the disguised nature of evil, you will be able to recognize that both perfection and imperfection are everywhere—everything is broken and fallen: weak and poor, you and me, your marriage, your children, and, yes, America and the Church, too. "Why do you call me good?" Jesus says. "God alone is good!" (Mark 10:18). If Jesus can say this about himself, then we can surely say it concerning just about everything. He might have given you the greatest recipe for happiness for the rest of your life in that statement. Now you can start accepting things in their broken, faulty state. You will not be so constantly disappointed, and think people have let you down because they are not perfect. Nor do you have to wait for things to be perfect to fall in love with them.

Richard Rohr, from *Spiral of Violence*

Discernment is more like sifting or panning for gold. We slowly sort through all the junk and false answers to discover God's answer at the center—the nugget of gold in the midst of worthless pebbles. Discernment requires faith, prayer, and patience. It calls individuals and groups to sit and wait for God's answer, even if it takes months to discern.

Discernment is not a quick process, and its slowness can frustrate those for whom haste is a constant imperative. God can take a while to provide an answer. It can take us a long time to sift through all the noise of the world and finally hear God's whisper. It requires letting go of not only the voices of convention, security, and stability, but also the voices of pride and fear that can scream out from within all of us.

Ruth Haley Barton
Pursuing God's Will Together