



Riverlawn Presbyterian Church
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“I’ve Got Jesus. Why Do I Need the Holy Spirit?”

“We may as well face it: the whole level of spirituality among us is low. We have measured ourselves by ourselves until the incentive to seek the higher things of the Spirit is all but gone. We have imitated the world, sought popular favor, manufactured delights to substitute for the joy of the Lord and produced a cheap and synthetic power to substitute for the power of the Holy Ghost.” (A.W. Tozer)

This year, we remember and celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all believers – also known as Pentecost – on Sunday, May 19. This got me thinking ... Why is it that so many churches tend to highlight the person and work of the Holy Spirit on this day, but not so much any other day? In fact, in some places, the Holy Spirit may even be forgotten on this day!

In *“Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit,”* Francis Chan has this to say: “While no evangelical would deny the Holy Spirit’s existence, I’m willing to bet there are millions of churchgoers across America who cannot confidently say they have experienced His presence or action in their lives over the past year. And many of them do not believe they can.

Perhaps we’re too familiar and comfortable with the current state of the church to feel the weight of the problem. But what if you grew up on a deserted island with nothing but the Bible to read? Imagine being rescued after 20 years and then attending a typical church. Chances are you’d be shocked. Having read the Scriptures, you would be convinced that the Holy Spirit is as essential to a believer’s existence as air is to staying alive. You would know that the Spirit led the first Christians to do unexplainable things, to live lives that didn’t make sense to the culture around them, and ultimately to spread the story of God’s grace around the world.

There is a big gap between what we read in Scripture about the Spirit and how many Christians operate today. We understand something important is missing. I believe that this missing *something* is actually a missing *Someone*—namely, the Holy Spirit. Without Him, people operate in their own strength and only accomplish human-size results. The world is not moved by love or actions that are of our own making. And the Church is not empowered to live differently from any other gathering of people without the Holy Spirit. But when believers live in the power of the Spirit, the evidence in their lives is supernatural. The Church cannot help but be different, and the world cannot help but notice.”

The Holy Spirit is absolutely vital to the life of the Church today. After all, if the Holy Spirit moves, nothing can stop Him. If He doesn't move, we will not produce genuine fruit—no matter how much effort we expend. The church becomes irrelevant when it becomes purely a human entity. We are not all we were made to be when everything in our lives can be explained apart from the work and presence of the Spirit of God. The Spirit is evident in places where people are desperate for Him, humbled before Him, and not distracted by the pursuit of worldly comforts (ever before us).

I pray we will go beyond our current understanding of the Holy Spirit ... that our experience with Him would be day by day, even moment by moment. That by keeping in step with the Spirit, we might regularly share what He's *doing* rather than what He *did* months or years ago. May we be reminded of the strength and wisdom available to us through the Spirit and earnestly pray for more. As we trust in the promises of the Spirit, we will be led away from discouragement and into lives marked by confidence, power in the midst of our weakness, and the fruit of the Spirit.

When I read Scripture, I see the truth and necessity of a life wholly surrendered to and dependent upon the Holy Spirit. Are we holding back from giving ourselves completely to Him? I want to see God move through me, through Riverlawn, and through the worldwide Body of Christ. May our desire be to experience more of the Holy Spirit. And may we open our hearts and lives to His presence and power more fully than we have ever done before.

Thanking God for the Holy Spirit,
Pastor Chris

BLUESTONE SUMMER CAMP 2024

June 16-23

June 23—30

June 30-July 7

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!

WE ARE LIVE ONLINE!!!

The above dates are the weeks we will be in session.

2-Day and 4-Day Weekend Family Camp Options Available

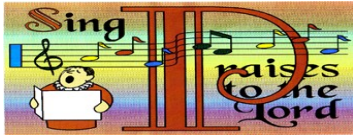
Read about the different Summer Camp offerings at

bluestonecamp.org

For more details and information email mark@bluestonecamp.org

or call (304)397-5050 and leave a voicemail.





MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS MAY 2024

Last month I shared information about some of the instrumentalists who played in our cantata on Palm Sunday. Here's the scope on the other members.....in the orchestra were two couples – Mary & Brian Ashton and Kaitlyn & Michael Wilcoxon. Mary is a clarinetist and teaches music at Duval (PreK – 8). Her name was given to me by another orchestra member when I was looking for someone to cover the clarinet part and I first met her in 2023 when she played on Palm Sunday. Her husband Brian plays trombone and is currently a graduate assistant at Marshall studying trombone performance. They live in Culloden. Kaitlyn & Michael have an interesting story. Although they were both violin majors at Marshall they became better acquainted when playing for a special program at Riverlawn. After that event they began dating and were married in 2018. Kaitlyn is the librarian for the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra and Michael is a part of the Bill Noe Flight School at Yeager Airport. Lastly is the percussionist – Dice Johnson. He was recommended to me by Aaron Statler who has been unavailable the last couple of years. Dice is from Dunbar and a graduate of SCHS. He is a percussion major at Marshall where he participates in several ensembles including the *Marching Thunder*. {Info about Anita Stonestreet, pianist, in June}

On Sunday afternoon, May 19, the choir along with a string ensemble will present a program of special anthems including *Lord Most High with Immortal, Invisible, Come to the Water & May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You*. The instrumentalists will be performing *Gabriel's Oboe* featuring Aaron Sowards and Molly Page, violin soloist, will play an arrangement of The Theme from *Schindler's List*. There will also be congregational hymns, reading of scripture selections and sharing of information about the various pieces. A little bit about why an extra program on a Sunday afternoon: When I accompanied Molly for her junior recital about 12 years ago one of her pieces was *Theme from Schindler's List*. This beautiful, yet haunting melody, was one I have thought of often. However, it was really not music to use in a regular worship service. I have wondered for some time how best to share this piece. Over the past few months the phrase from 'darkness to light' and the importance of 'light' to us as followers of Jesus has shown up in some music selections

as well as this year's Ladies' bible Study. It occurred to me that *Schindler's List* represented this idea — from darkness to light darkness to light and perhaps it would work in a special program. Oskar Schindler, a Nazi who had hired Jews to work in his factory, realized the brutality of the Holocaust was wrong and declared "to do everything in his power to defeat the system." Through the years he used his money to bribe the Nazi officials in order to prevent the slaughter of his employees. By mid-1945 he had spent his entire fortune to protect his Jewish workers. During this dark time Schindler was able to save over 1,000 Jews who otherwise would have become victims of the Holocaust.

The other selections mentioned previously will help us to look to the 'light' and remember that the darkness has been overcome. Jesus said: I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. John 8: 12

Mark your calendar – May 19 – and plan to join us that afternoon as we celebrate and lift our voices as children of the Light. The program begins at 4:30 with a reception following.

Pam

MAY FOR MISSY MONTH

Please consider helping us celebrate "*May for Missy Month*." During the month of May all loose offerings, aside from Sensibility Sunday, will be designated to help in the recovery of our amazing Missy Snead. As Barb Marcum has shared with us, Missy is making great strides towards her recovery. Barb has also expressed the financial difficulties of Missy's continuing care. As her church family, we would like to reach out to Missy and her family in love and support!! Please consider donating during May, either by mailing a check made payable to Riverlawn Presbyterian Church (with the memo "for Missy Sneed") or placing your gift in the offering plates on Sunday.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION

Sunday, May 26 is Graduate Recognition Sunday. Join us in celebrating Gavin Albert, Brynne Shamblin and Emily Wandling.

Men's Prayer Breakfast

Saturday, the June 1st at 8:30 a.m. at Dwight's in St. Albans.



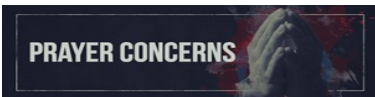
- 05 Jane Lothes
- 12 Beckie Croghan
- 19 Susan Bryan
- 26 Susan Bryan

CHOIR REHEARSAL

Thursdays at 7:00 pm.



- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Jane Lothes | 18 Kellen McClure |
| 5 Jim Recknagel | 19 Sequiera Willson |
| 9 Sara Davis | 25 Andy Roberts |
| 14 Janette Vickers | 27 Ernie Powell |
| 15 Alex Campbell Hudson | 30 Toni Sayre |



Linda Monday; Ashley Brown-McCoy (Rhonda Brown); Renee (Pastor Chris's niece); Lynn Priddy (Susan Bryan); David Poe (Wanda Smith); Brian Barton (Susan Bryan); Caroline Dodrill; Buddy O'Dell; Ernie Powell; John Mangus (Jennie Jividen); Travis Keller (Ray Keller); Abby Goff (Wanda Smith); Pam Mullins; Arlis Miller (Joe Lothes); Ted Mullins (Susan Bryan); Lori Goodwin (Brenda Petry); Linda Dunlap (Beckie Croghan); Betty McAdam; Sherry Ellis; Elizabeth Thompson (Bill Bryan); Laura Cottrill; Andre Felipe (Open Arms Foundation); Kathy Barnes; Elbert Taylor; Missy Sneed; Hannah Bowman; Beverly Day (Wanda Smith); Dave Ryan; JB Recknagel; Janet Young; Mick Hughes (Caroline Dodrill); and for the Global Church that we may embody the gospel to all.

We offer our sincere condolences to the family of our brother Bill Young. Bill passed away on Sunday, April 14.

We also offer condolences to the family of our dear sister, Casey Stribling who passed away Tuesday, April 16.

**Riverlawn Yard Sale/Fundraiser
Columbia Mission Trip**

May 18, 2024 8:00am until noon

This year's yard sale receipts will be used to support the cost of the June 2024 mission trip to Colombia. Funds will be used to reimburse any costs covered by the church for airfare/luggage/work supplies/team supplies/hygiene essentials and materials for Bible Study for the boys.

**A successful yard sale requires YOU!
We need YOUR HELP!**

We will accept the following gently used/clean donated items: Clothes/Toys/Shoes/Handbags/Kitchen/Seasonal items/home goods/dishes/cups/small appliances/indoor/outdoor furniture/books/DVDs/Tools

If unsure about your donated item, ask Barb or Jim. If you need help bringing your donations to the church, ask Barb or Jim. Please **NO** computers/printers/large exercise equipment.

The last day that we can accept donations will be Wednesday, May 15th.



Bible Study titled, "The bible study, "How to Pray," will start up on June 2. Led by

Pastor Chris's bible study, *The Road to Resurrection small group will wrap up this Wednesday, April 3 at 6:15 in the Cottage. On April 10 he will resume *The Book of Romans*.



Join us on Wednesday nights for Family Night, a time to enjoy friendships and our church family, with dinner at 5:30. Activities for the children and youth begin at 6:15. **On May 29 there will be a cookout celebrating the end of school for this year.**

Visitation Teams/Schedule

- Week of:
- 5th—Pastor Chris
 - 12th—Jason Barnes/Kathy Barnes
 - 19th—Mary Reppert/Jamie Albert
 - 26th—Mimi Albert/Jamie Albert

2024 Riverlawn Elders and Board of Deacons

Elders:

Kathy Barnes, Clerk of Session/Stewardship
304-444-3058; Kabgmrl@comcast.net

Parry Johnson, Building/Grounds/Security/Finance
304-926-4745; Parryjohnson1@gmail.com

Steve Wilson, Missions
304-741-7890; stevewillie@suddenlink.net

Paul Mullins, Worship/Fellowship
304-741-5914; nascarmemberswva@yahoo.com

Sharon Herndon, Christian Nurture
304-444-2071; Polecat818@hotmail.com

Jamie Albert, Evangelism/Family & Community
681-340-1128; James.macd.albert@gmail.com

Session meeting May 19 at 1:30 pm via Zoom.

Deacons:

Jason Barnes
304-205-3315; jasonbarnes@yahoo.com

Mary Reppert
304-419-2755; Reppert.mary@gmail.com

Mimi Albert
304-546-6547; Mimialbert72@yahoo.com

Linda Monday
304-541-4927; lindamonday@gmail.com

No Deacons' Meeting in May Next meeting will be in June.



Deadline for information for the June/July Newsletter is Monday, May 27.

BUILDING SECURITY

After church lock-up for May is Mary Reppert.

After hours security check for May:

- 05— Dennis Emmett
- 12— Larry Hyatt
- 19— Randy Dodrill
- 26— Brenda Petry and Rosie Rhodes

If you are unable to cover the security check on your scheduled week, please let Pat Croghan know (304) 989-1894. Thank you.



- 05/11 Stamp Out Hunger Post Office Food Drive
- 05-18 Yard sale-fund raiser for the Columbia Mission Trip
- 05/19 Session Meeting—1:30pm
- 05/19 Pentecost Sunday
- 05/26 Graduate Recognition Sunday
- 05/30 Last day of School for Kanawha Co.
- 06/01 Men's Prayer Breakfast. 8:30 at Dwight's in St. Albans

Riverlawn Strives To

Purge ourselves of pride by focusing on glorifying God

Teach the truth through fellowship & discipleship

Demonstrate a life of love through service to others

Share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those in need

Purge Pride, Teach Truth, Live Love