

A Time of Pestilence, a Time of Thanksgiving

Zachary Groff | excerpt taken from gospelreformation.net

When German Lutheran pastor, Martin Rinkart (1586–1649), penned the familiar hymn “Now Thank We All Our God” as a prayer to be offered before meals, he probably was not preoccupied with autumnal church decor and Thanksgiving fellowship meals. On the contrary, he was probably thinking about ministry in the context of his beleaguered Saxon city during Europe’s horrific Thirty Years’ War. As hymnologist Erik Routley has commented, “Its context is not really the country church decorated with corn and flowers and fruit. It is plague and bereavement and slaughter and famine.”

As the global church weathers today’s COVID-19 (novel Coronavirus) pandemic and braces itself for the continued spread of the contagion, it may be strange to suggest that a time of pestilence is, at once, a time of thanksgiving. On the contrary, there is never a time more spiritually profitable to express gratitude than times of societal crisis and widespread fear. While the world either denies the reality of danger or panics in the face of its imminent escalation, the church—gathered or scattered—must rest gratefully in Christ our hope.

Written as it was in a much darker and more frightful time than our own, Rinkart’s hymn is stunning in its frank articulation of the heart of Christian thankfulness. Consider the first two stanzas, found in the Trinity Psalter Hymnal (#181).

*Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom His world rejoices;*

*Who from our mothers’ arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.*

*O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.*

The resounding theme of this brief prayer-turned-hymn is one of trust, faith, and gratitude in all situations of life. It echoes Paul’s words to the Philippians, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God” (Phil. 4:4–6). Our lives must reflect the goodness of God, whatever the state of the times.

Whether the updates filling our newsfeeds and inboxes are good or bad, we are consciously to devote ourselves to thankfulness and praise. And what will be the result? “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7). We pray with thanksgiving, knowing and believing that God will “keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills in this world and the next.”

Announcements

- Prayer Meeting this Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.
- To volunteer to help clean the church property, please speak with Mr. Groff or Mrs. Pipa, or contact the church at info@antiochpca.com.

Vision

Our vision is to see the historic Antioch Presbyterian Church revitalized as a worshipping community to be a blessing to every man, woman, and child in the growing residential hub west of Woodruff and south of Reidville, to the glory of God.

Mission

Our mission as a parish church at the crossroads of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties is the gathering and perfecting of God’s people through biblical worship, evangelism, and pastoral care.

Areas of Ministry Focus

Expository Preaching

Biblical Worship

Parish Evangelism

Pastoral Care

Discipleship

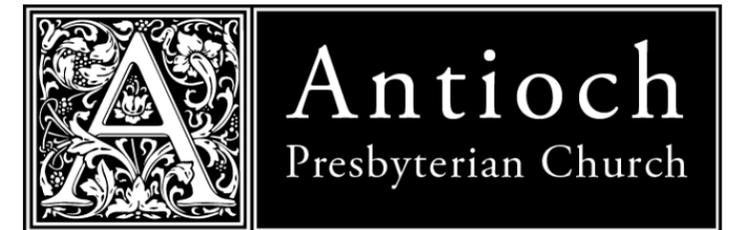
Leadership & Accountability

As a *mission work*, Antioch Presbyterian Church (PCA) is governed and overseen by a *provisional session* of elders serving as a *commission* of Calvary Presbytery. The six men appointed to the *provisional session* are active elders within the bounds of Calvary Presbytery, and they have graciously agreed to serve “above-and-beyond” to encourage the revitalization of Antioch. They include:

Dr. Chipley Bennett, Ph.D. – Ruling Elder, Providence Presbyterian Church
Dr. E. Todd Buchner, D.Min. – Pastor, Reidville Presbyterian Church
Mr. Richard Hollifield – Ruling Elder, Roebuck Presbyterian Church
Mr. William Johnson – Ruling Elder, Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Ph.D., D.D. – Professor of Systematic & Applied Theology, President Emeritus, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary;
Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church
Pastor Richard Thomas – Senior Pastor, Mount Calvary Presbyterian Church;
Clerk of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church

Church Staff

Mr. Zachary Groff – Ministerial Assistant
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. – Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session



The Lord’s Day
November 29, 2020

“Who Should Lead Worship?”

1 Timothy 2:8

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

Worship – Sunday, 5:00 p.m.

Prayer Meeting – Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.

3600 SC-417 | Woodruff, SC 29388

864.519.3604 | info@antiochpca.com | antiochpca.com

The Lord's Day

November 29, 2020

Meditation

Leviticus 10:3

By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.

*Call to Worship

*Congregational Commitment

Minister: Congregation, in whom is your confidence?

Congregation: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, Who made the heavens and earth.

*Salutation

*Hymn of Adoration

No. 18B

I Love You, LORD, My Strength
(stanzas 1-4)
MENDON

*Prayer of Adoration & Invocation

*Revelation of God's Will

Psalm 15

*Confession of Sin & Supplication for Grace

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have not obeyed Your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But You, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent according to Your promises declared unto us in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake, that we may live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of Your holy Name. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

Micah 7:18, 19

¹⁸Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. ¹⁹He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Offering

No. 553

Sing to the Lord of Harvest
WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN

*Prayer of Thanksgiving & Supplication

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 of Preparation

No. 119D

My Soul is Sinking Down to Dust
OLIVE'S BROW

*Prayer for Illumination

*Old Testament Reading

Ezra 7:1-10

*New Testament Reading

1 Timothy 2:8-15

*Congregational Response

Leader: Your Word is a lamp to my feet,
Congregation: And a light to my path!

Sermon

“Who Should Lead Worship?”
1 Timothy 2:8

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response

No. 134

Come, Bless the LORD with One Accord
GENEVAN 134 / OLD HUNDREDTH

*Benediction

*Doxology

No. 564

Now Blessed Be Jehovah God
CORONATION

*Silent Prayer

“Who Should Lead Worship?”

1 Timothy 2:8

Main Proposition

Christ has ordained that only qualified and appointed men should lead worship.

Outline

- I. Christ appoints men to lead worship
- II. Christ appoints qualified men to lead worship

**Congregation standing, unless physically hindered*