

The Worship of God

Ginter Park Baptist Church

Zoom Meeting ID: 804 359 2475 • 6100 Chamberlayne Road, Richmond VA • 804-359-2475 ,
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost • August 31, 2025 • 10:30 AM

GATHERING & REFLECTING (10:20 AM)

During this time of reflection, we invite you to take a few moments to prepare yourself for worship. Take a few deep breaths and settle into the quiet. Center yourself through art by coloring the attached picture. Slip off your shoes and remember that you are on holy ground. No matter what this time looks like for you, your whole self is welcome in this space.

CHIMING THE TRINITY

Lisa Horn

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sandra Polaski

*Responsive readings like this one are a part of worship. The congregation's part is in **bold**.*

One: Come all who are weary

Many: of wealth, of poverty, of power, of struggle, of division

One: Come all who are heavy-laden

Many: with too much, with too little, with anxiety, with fear, with anger

One: Come all who have hope

Many: for liberation, for peace, for freedom, for the kin-dom

One: Hear these words

Many: "See, I am making all things new."

INVOCATION PRAYER

HYMN NO. 234

"Crown Him with Many Crowns"

DIADEMATA

Some of us stand while singing, and others don't. Please join us in song in whatever way you are comfortable.

Revelation 21:1–6 and "I Can Only Imagine" both envision the awe and wonder of standing in God's eternal presence, which the hymn "Crown Him with Many Crowns" gives voice to by exalting Christ as the reigning King over the new creation.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

Sandra Polaski

Prayer requests are shared out loud with the gathered community. If you have a joy or a concern to share, please raise your hand to request the microphone

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (ALL)

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 No. 707

“Marching to Zion”

MARCHING TO ZION

Revelation 21:1–6 and “I Can Only Imagine” anticipate the joy of entering God’s new creation, which “We’re Marching to Zion” celebrates as the faithful journey toward the eternal city of God.

SCRIPTURE

[Revelation 21:1-6a](#)

Anita Laffoon

One: This is the Word of God, for the people of God

Many: Thanks be to God

SERMON

“I Can Only Imagine”

Anita Laffoon

TIME OF REFLECTION & RESPONSE

“I Can Only Imagine”

Millard

The Congregation

“I Can Only Imagine” is supported by Revelation 21:1–6 because the scripture promises the new heaven and new earth where God dwells with His people, wiping away every tear—an eternal reality the song longs to behold in awe and wonder.

I can only imagine what it will be like when I walk by Your side.
I can only imagine what my eyes would see when Your face is before me.
I can only imagine.

Surrounded by Your glory, what will my heart feel?
Will I dance for You Jesus, or in awe of You be still?
Will I stand in Your presence or to my knees, will I fall?
Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all?
I can only imagine, I can only imagine.

I can only imagine when that day comes and I find myself standing in the Son.
I can only imagine when all I will do is forever, forever worship You
I can only imagine, I can only imagine.

Surrounded by Your glory, what will my heart feel?
Will I dance for You Jesus, or in awe of You be still?
Will I stand in Your presence or to my knees, will I fall?
Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all?
I can only imagine, I can only imagine.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

HYMN No. 701

“Shall We Gather at the River”

HANSON PLACE

Shall We Gather at the River: Revelation 21:1–6 and “I Can Only Imagine” picture the hope of dwelling with God forever, which “Shall We Gather at the River” affirms in its vision of the saints assembled by the life-giving waters of heaven.

CLOSING COMMISSION

One: We have sung, we have prayed, we have worshiped together.

Many: Now we go back out into the world.

One: We came together to build relationships,

Many: Relationships with each other, and our relationship with Jesus.

One: We go out as people who are strengthened by our connections

Many: Ready to love and to serve. Ready to carry God's love to the world.

One: As you journey through the ups and the downs of the coming week,

Many: Let us remember that God, who has invited us into relationship, is always with us.

One: Go with God, as the people of God.

Many: So be it! Amen

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ is with you.

Many: And also with you.

****Our services are hybrid, meaning there are cameras in the worship space to allow those joining us via Zoom to fully participate. If you would rather not be on camera, we have marked the areas where our cameras can't see you.****



Are you visiting with us today? We'd love to get to know you better!

Scan the QR code to tell us more about you.

Announcements

Metro Richmond at Prayer

During the week of August 31, we pray for the workplaces and businesses of Metropolitan Richmond: For full employment opportunities for our young people and heads of families. For the long-term unemployed and for the under-employed.

Pray for our Ministry Partners

Richmond Hill - Founded in 1987, Richmond Hill is an ecumenical Christian fellowship and residential community who serve as stewards of an urban retreat center within the setting of a historic monastery. Their Mission is to seek God's healing of Metropolitan Richmond through prayer, hospitality, racial reconciliation and spiritual development.

Business Meeting

Our next business meeting will be on **Sept 7th**, immediately after worship. Please plan to attend either via Zoom or in person.

Page Turners' Book Club

The Page Turner's Book Club will be having their first meeting of the 2025/2026 season on Sunday **September 7th** at 4pm. Location TBA. We will be discussing all the books that members have read over the Summer. For information, please contact Kelly Schmitt.

The Blue Circle

In 2023 we made a circle map of our near and far neighbors, and in the blue circle were the people that we kind of knew were out there, but we didn't know much about them or have a lot of contact with them. With that in mind, we're beginning a series of conversations about "The Blue Circle." We'll be inviting guest speakers to teach us about the people we don't know yet, and challenging ourselves to get to know our neighbors. The first of these conversations will be on Saturday, **Sept 13th**, and the topic is "What is a Biblical Sexual Ethic?" This first conversation is both a way to look beyond "purity culture," and sets us up for other relationship based topics. Dr. Anna Sieges-Beal, professor at the Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity, will be joining us as our guest speaker. Sign up on Realm to let us know if you're coming!

VA Pride

We have a booth at Pride again this year! Mark your calendars for **Sept 27th**, 12pm-6pm. Sign-up using the link in Monday's announcements on Realm!

Backpack Update

Our 14th year of supplying 36 Weekend Backpacks of food for food insecure students at FMES begins soon! Dixie and Connie will continue as co-facilitators of the program. We will begin this year working from a new location a short distance from the King's Charter entrance off Sliding Hill Road. Dixie and Connie will be assembling a list of coordinators for October through May (November has already been taken!) Contact one of them to volunteer!

Worship isn't the same without you...

...and we'd love to have your help! We need volunteers to help on Sunday mornings by leading the Call to Worship and the Prayers of the People, and to facilitate the Zoom room. Contact Anita to sign up!

Hymn Texts

CCLI License # 21155203

Crown Him with Many Crowns

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee
and hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save;
his glories now we sing who died and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of peace, whose power a scepter sways
from pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise.

His reign shall no end, and round his pieced feet
fair flowers of paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown him the Lord of love; behold his hands and side,
those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified.
All hail, Redeemer, hail! for thou hast died for me;
thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

Marching to Zion

Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
join in a song with sweet accord, join in a song with sweet accord
and thus surround the throne, and thus surround the throne.
We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
we're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.

Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;
but children of the heavenly King, but children of the heavenly King
may speak their joys abroad, may speak their joys abroad.
We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
we're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.

The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
before we reach the heavenly fields, before we reach the heavenly fields,
or walk the golden streets, or walk the golden streets.
We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
we're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.

Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;
we're marching through Emmanuel's ground, we're marching through Emmanuel's ground,
to fairer worlds on high, to fairer worlds on high.
We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
we're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.

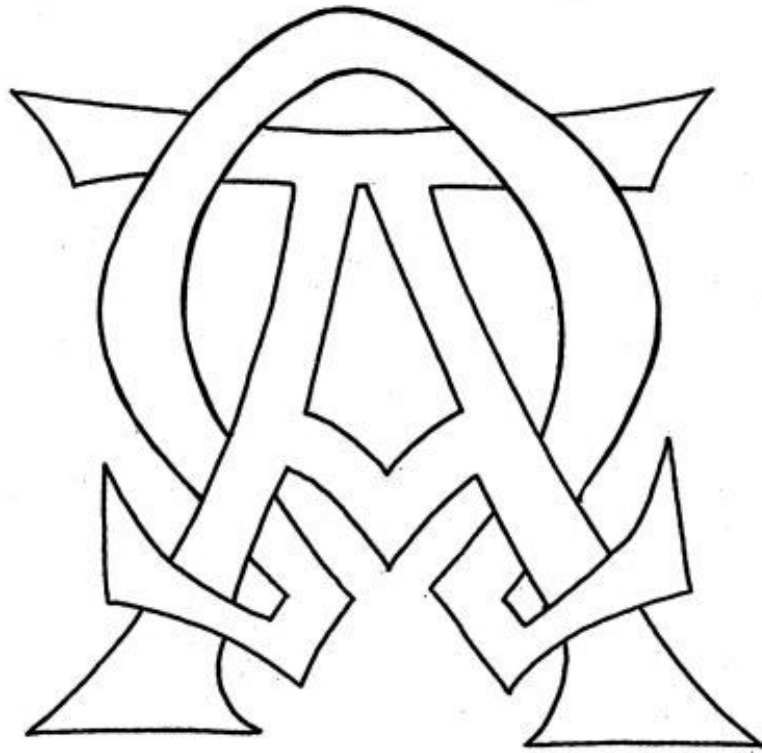
Shall We Gather at the River

Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod,
with its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

On the margin of the river, washing up its silver spray,
we will walk and worship ever, all the happy golden day.
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Ere we reach the shining river, lay we every burden down;
grace our spirits will deliver, and provide a robe and crown.
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;
soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace.
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.



"I AM *the* ALPHA
and the OMEGA, *the*
FIRST *and the* LAST,
the BEGINNING
AND THE END."

REV. 22:13