

# The Messenger

MICHAELMAS, 2022

## The Church of the Messiah

114 North Third Street at Madison

Pulaski, Tennessee 38478

The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop

*The mission of the Church of the Messiah is to be a growing witness of  
our Faith in Jesus Christ in the midst of the community  
through worship and sacrament in the Episcopal tradition.*

### Our leadership:

- ✠ The Rev. Jess Reeves, Priest-in-Charge
- ✠ Pat Woolard, Music Director
- ✠ Secretary to the Parish, Marqueda Forrester
- ✠ Senior Warden, Catherine Dunnivant ('22)
- ✠ Junior Warden, Dan Lavacot ('24)
- ✠ Clerk of the Vestry, Dr. Cathy Roberts ('23)
- ✠ Treasurer, Kristi Watson ('23)
- ✠ Vestry members: Donny Muth ('22), John Davis ('22), Mary Dubberley ('24)

## THE NEW RELIGION OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY

During the past few months, most Americans have begun to hear the term “Critical Race Theory.” Critical Race Theory, or CRT, is about “race, racism and power;” I will use “CRT” throughout this article. Though the roots of CRT go back to at least the 1970s, the theory has progressed beyond the halls of academia and has become a profound influence on modern society. The problem comes with the general misunderstanding of CRT as being solely about helping fight racism. CRT goes well beyond fighting racism: It not only demands a reordering of American society but acts as a replacement for the Christian worldview in America. Let me explain.

I have previously written about the ideas of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci; Gramsci relates directly to CRT. Gramsci wrote about the need to overturn the alleged “cultural hegemony” of a society with an alternative narrative as a necessary precursor to communist revolution. Gramsci’s ideas generated what has become known as “Cultural Marxism,” which infiltrated American academia starting as early as the 1940s. CRT was developed at the time many American socialist and/or Marxist academics were adapting Gramscian theory to American society. It was a way to help flip the alleged cultural hegemony through the rhetoric of racism, yet it goes well beyond individual racism. It was developed with a Marxist, therefore, materialist and atheist worldview, and it focuses on power relationships instead of actual racism.

Richard Delgado’s and Jean Stefancic’s book, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* provides the following insights: “The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power ... It not only tries to understand our social situation, but to change it; it sets out not only to ascertain how society organizes itself along racial lines and hierarchies, but to transform it for the better.”

Delgado and Stefancic write that CRT holds “racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society ... the individual racist need not exist (in order for) institutional racism [to be] pervasive in the dominant culture.” In other words, even if whites, as an alleged dominant group, are not individually racist, racism still exists and will exist due to whites being a dominant culture. The only seeming way to end racism is ending the alleged cultural hegemony, though CRT holds whites as irredeemably racist without means of redemption.

UCLA’s School of Public Affairs provides perhaps the iconic statement of CRT. The statement is rooted in Marxist understanding of materialism, power relationship and atheist worldview. According to the school of public affairs CRT is justified “based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color.”

Non-whites are alleged to be systematically oppressed by cultural hegemonic structures. Regardless of whether or not whites are racist and whether the system allows legal equal opportunity, white privilege and white supremacy is assumed to exist. CRT does not seek to fix individual acts of racism but is committed to transforming the hegemony. Ironically, whites can “never” question the basis of CRT: If you question it, you are proving your racism. Additionally, CRT holds that those in the alleged dominant group cannot know about racism, but those in the non-dominant group always understand racism. If one from the dominant group denies something had a racist intent, the non-dominant group is the final judge and only one to understand what is actually racism.

As nationally recognized theologian, pastor and author John F. MacArthur has noted about the threat of CRT to Christianity: “CRT (along with every other Marxist ideology) cannot be reconciled with what the Bible teaches about sin and salvation. First, to view all relationships in terms of power dynamics requires that people be seen in terms of the powerful (privileged, oppressors) and the powerless (marginalized, oppressed). Apart from striking out against God-ordained hierarchies and authority structures (by evaluating them as oppressive power structures), this way of viewing the world fails to evaluate people in their primary relationship, which is as creatures made in the image of their Creator. He who defines the problem gets to define the solution.

“If the main problem for ‘people of color’ is that they are inevitably oppressed by structures that are inherently oppressive, then the only solution is to tear down those structures in the pursuit of justice. This way of thinking at the very least clouds the fact revealed in the Bible that every person’s fundamental problem is that they have sinned against the holy God who created them. This is true for people in any and every category — whether oppressed or oppressor, victim, or victimizer, marginalized or privileged. The fundamental need, therefore, of every person is to be reconciled to God. This is exactly what has been provided through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In other words, mankind’s greatest need is met in the gospel.”

The Christian worldview has been the American worldview from the start of the nation. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of America a half century after its founding: “There is no country on Earth in which the Christian religion holds greater sway over the souls of men than in America.”

Part of that worldview is the acceptance of the equal sin condition of every man, regardless of race and the equal need for forgiveness and redemption through Jesus Christ. It is not a worldview of group power struggles and materialism, as with atheistic communism. As the Bible asserts about the focus on the importance of individual redemption and unity in Christ in Galatians 3:27-28, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

CRT is diametrically opposed to the Christian worldview. Marx held that “religion is the opiate of the people” and that his principal aim in life was to dethrone God and destroy capitalism. CRT has all the characteristics of a religion and acts as a competitor religion to Christianity in America. It even has a special, almost mystical, knowledge of racism by non-dominant groups that dominant groups cannot know. Unlike Christianity, CRT holds the alleged cultural hegemony (founded on the Christian worldview) is the root of all problems and must be overturned. The Christian focus on individual recognition of sin, regardless of place in any alleged power structure and the need for redemption through Christ is anathema to CRT. With this, CRT follows the Gramscian alternative narrative by holding that American history is that of an evil oppression of minority groups by a cultural hegemony that must be undermined and flipped. The next step is a communist revolution in following Gramsci to the end.

America is at a crossroads. Our future is in question. We can continue with the America envisioned by our founders and enjoy the greatest nation on earth, or we can follow ideas like CRT to see the end of the American experiment; the choice is ours.

Written by and reprinted with the permission of Bill Connor is a 1990 Citadel Graduate, 30-year Army infantry colonel and combat veteran. He is a writer and attorney and lives in the Charleston area.

## SPURGEON: RUIN, REDEMPTION, REGENERATION

An excellent and pithy approach to the Gospel, one that is fully biblical and establishes well both man's universal dilemma and God's antidote in Christ: Spurgeon's "Three R's," Ruin, Redemption and Regeneration. This clarifies and concisely expresses to people a help for them to understand the entire scope of the biblical story of God's redeeming love for sinners in Christ. It is a commendable encapsulation of the Gospel which may be especially helpful to explain its fundamentals to others not in the know.

Charles H. Spurgeon called them "three doctrines that must be preached above all else" and he drew as his text for them "Three third chapters (of Scripture) which deal with the things in the fullest manner:" Genesis 3:14-15 (Ruin), Romans 3:21-26 (Redemption), John 3:1-8 (Regeneration). Each of Spurgeon's three words begin with "R," making it easy to recall, and each text is a key chapter 3 in the Bible, making the references easy to remember, especially in the nerve-busting throes of personal, face-to-face evangelism. Spurgeon's three R's:

1. **Ruin** (Gen. 3:14-15). This is what man has done. "How did man get in this miserable condition?" Spurgeon asks. R.C. Sproul frames it another way, and his question is one I get often in Gospel conversations: "Saved from what?" In our post-postmodern culture, even (or perhaps especially) in the Bible Belt, we must begin here. Biblical illiteracy appears to be at an all-time high globally, thus many have never considered the obvious truth that there is something desperately wrong in our world, though most all agree with its truthfulness. Beginning here establishes the problem into which God has launched His rescue mission: Man has rebelled against his Maker, has broken His Law and lives under a curse that will one day experience the white-hot, unmediated wrath of God. But in the second half of verse 15, we hear the faint promise of God's solution, one that will grow louder and louder as history advances and as the redemption story of the Bible unfolds: The seed of the woman will crush the head of the seed of the serpent. The serpent will bruise the heel of the woman's offspring, but this promised one will deal the death blow to the snake, killing him as only one can a serpent: a smashed head. This leads naturally to the good news of God's rescue mission.
2. **Redemption** (Romans 3:21-26). This is what God has done. This is the good news that trumps the bad news. In the scope of five verses, Paul articulates what some

commentators have called the thesis of Romans or the magna carta of salvation. In these glorious verses, in a small section of this glorious epistle, Paul establishes: the demands of God's Law, the futility of works salvation, the Law's definition of sin, the righteousness of God received by faith in Christ, the reality of justification by faith that is through the redemption of Jesus Christ and His satisfaction of God's wrath against sin. This paragraph contains the entire matrix of the work of Christ which He accomplished on the cross which provided full pardon from the guilt of sin for every sinner who believes. It is perhaps the most glorious paragraph in human history.

3. **Regeneration** (*John 3:1-8*). This is what God must do in sinners to enable them to believe. It has the distinction of being perhaps one of the most under-taught doctrines in all of evangelicalism. This is the doctrine of the new birth and Spurgeon, as have Reformed evangelicals through the ages, taught that regeneration precedes faith. In other words, God changes the sinful human heart, sets it free from bondage to sin and enables it to believe that Jesus is indeed the way, the truth and the life. Regeneration, like the entire complex of salvation, is a unilateral work of grace. It was a central theme of Spurgeon's preaching and in his evangelism and it must be foundational to ours as well, particularly as we think through issues of "results" in evangelism. The reality of regeneration urges us to call sinners to repentance and faith while resting in the work of God who opens blind eyes and unstops deaf ears. It removes the pressure from us and frees us to boldly share the Gospel while knowing that the results are in the hands of a sovereign, benevolent God. Out of a biblical understanding of regeneration, we may call on sinners to repent and be reconciled to God while leaving the results to Him.

**C.H. Spurgeon**, in full **Charles Haddon Spurgeon**, (born June 19, 1834, Kelvedon, Essex, Eng.—died Jan. 31, 1892, Menton France), English fundamentalist Baptist minister and celebrated preacher whose sermons, which were often spiced with humor, were widely translated and extremely successful in sales, continuing today. Reared a Congregationalist, Spurgeon became a Baptist in 1850 and, the same year, at 16, preached his first sermon. In 1852 he became minister at Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, and in 1854 minister of New Park Street Chapel in Southwark, London. Within a year a new structure had to be built to accommodate his following, and almost immediately an even larger church was required. From the opening in 1861 of the tabernacle, which held 6,000, until his death, he continued to draw large congregations. The editor of a monthly magazine, Spurgeon also founded a ministerial college (in 1856) and an orphanage (1867). His sermons, which he published weekly, ultimately filled more than 50 volumes in the collected edition. An ardent Biblicist, he distrusted the scientific methods and philological approaches applied in modern biblical criticism and in 1887 left the increasingly liberal Baptist Union.

*MESSIAH MINISTRIES*

- *Morning Prayer, Monday – Saturday, 7 a.m.*
- *Sunday, Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m.*
- *Wednesday, 7 p.m., Holy Communion, Rite One*
- *Vestry Meeting, Second Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m.*

**The Vestry....**

requests that you keep your pledge payments up, especially now when our costs for minimal maintenance have increased noticeably, and our receipts are lagging behind. Please remember to give in gratitude to the Lord and in good time. Thank you in advance.

**Up & Coming:** Mark your calendars, please. Messiah Octoberfest, 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, October 9, luncheon after the service. Fried chicken and ham, potato salad, slaw, white beans, macaroni & cheese, beer, and iced tea, all provided by the Vestry. Parishioners are asked to bring themselves, their family and friends, and desserts. Oom pah-pah bands welcome!

**Parish Birthdays:**

**September**

11 Catherine Dunnavant  
 18 Solon Holt  
 20 Cathy Roberts  
 21 Gene Hines  
 30 Pat Dunnavant

**October**

11 Marqueda Forrester  
 12 Walker Hoover  
 15 Bella Muth  
 19 Dickey Watson

**November**

6 Andy Hoover  
 26 Van Hallmark

**Flowers on the altar:**

**September**

11 Kristi/Dickey Watson  
 25 Tabitha Lavacot

**October**

2 Cathy Roberts  
 9 Marqueda Forrester  
 30 Kristi/Dickey Watson

**November**

13 Bennita Rouleau  
 30 Pat/Catherine Dunnavant

**RFD Schedule:** **September 15**, Thursday, set-up; 5:30 p.m., packing food boxes, Sharp Annex; **September 17**, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, Giles County AG Park, Hwy 31 South; **October 20**, Thursday, set-up; 5:30 p.m., backing food boxes, Sharp Annex; **October 22**, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, Giles County AG Park; **November 17**, Thursday, set-up; 5:30 p.m., packing food boxes, Sharp Annex; **November 19**, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, Giles County AG Park.

## Serving our Worship ----- The Church of the Messiah

**NOTE: WE WOULD PREFER TO FIND SUBSTITUTES. PLEASE DO NOT MANAGE YOUR OWN REPLACEMENT.**



**September 4:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: John Davis.

**September 11:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Logan Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Rich Woolard; Altar Guild: Connie Baker; Greeter: Cathy Roberts.

**September 18:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: Tabitha/Dan Lavacot.

**September 25:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Bella Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley; Altar Guild: Marquenda Forrester; Greeter: Donny Muth.



**October 2:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cathy Roberts; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant.

**October 9:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Logan Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: Samantha/Donny Muth; Greeter: Mary Dubberley.

**October 16:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Teresa Hughes; Altar Guild: John Davis.

**October 23: Bishop's Visit:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Bella Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Lewis Foster; Altar Guild: Connie Baker; Greeter: Catherine Dunnivant.

**October 30:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: Tabitha/Dan Lavacot.



**November 6:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Logan Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley; Altar Guild: Marquenda Forrester; Greeter: Cathy Roberts.

**November 13:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Andy Hoover; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant.

**November 20: Christ the King:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Bella Muth; Chalice bearer/reader: Rich Woolard; Altar Guild: Samantha/Donny Muth; Greeter: Donny Muth.

**November 27: Advent I:** Organist: Pat Woolard; Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cynthia Low; Altar Guild: John Davis.

*Worship is our rehearsal for how to live today and how to glorify God in heaven. It is not merely a Sunday morning exercise meant to make us feel good... Rosaria Butterfield*