

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



May 17, 2020

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17, 2020

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the Sixth Sunday of Easter, a season in which we celebrate the good news of resurrection and reflect upon its meaning for our lives. We continue with readings from Acts and 1 Peter which provide insight into the ways early believers live out their faith in the Risen Christ, and we continue with Jesus' farewell discourse, recorded in John. The sermon is a first-person account from the Apostle Paul, rooted in the narrative of Acts 17, about how he had to adapt his teaching style in different contexts, especially as he taught among the city council in Athens. His experience provides insight into how we might adapt our witness and love in this very different time as well as guidance for our witness in an increasingly secular culture well past the time COVID-19 shapes so much of life. The sacred music in this service provides a deep assurance of God's gracious care and we lift up our prayers that all may recognize this care.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

The Prelude

"The Church's One Foundation"
Mary Alice Seals, piano

arr. Anna Laura Page

The Trinity Chimes

Three chimes are sounded, awakening us to the presence of God, alerting us to the voice of Christ, centering us in the embrace of the Spirit. As we gather, we present ourselves "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our spiritual worship."

The Call to Worship (responsive)

from Psalm 66

LEADER: Bless our God, O peoples, let the sound of God's praise be heard,

PEOPLE: **who has kept us among the living, and has not let our feet slip.**

LEADER: For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.

PEOPLE: **You brought us into the net; you laid burdens on our backs;**

LEADER: you let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water;

PEOPLE: **yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.**

LEADER: I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will pay you my vows,

PEOPLE: **those that my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.**

LEADER: Come and hear, all who fear God, and I will tell what the Lord has done for me.

PEOPLE: **I cried aloud to God, and the Lord was extolled with my tongue.**

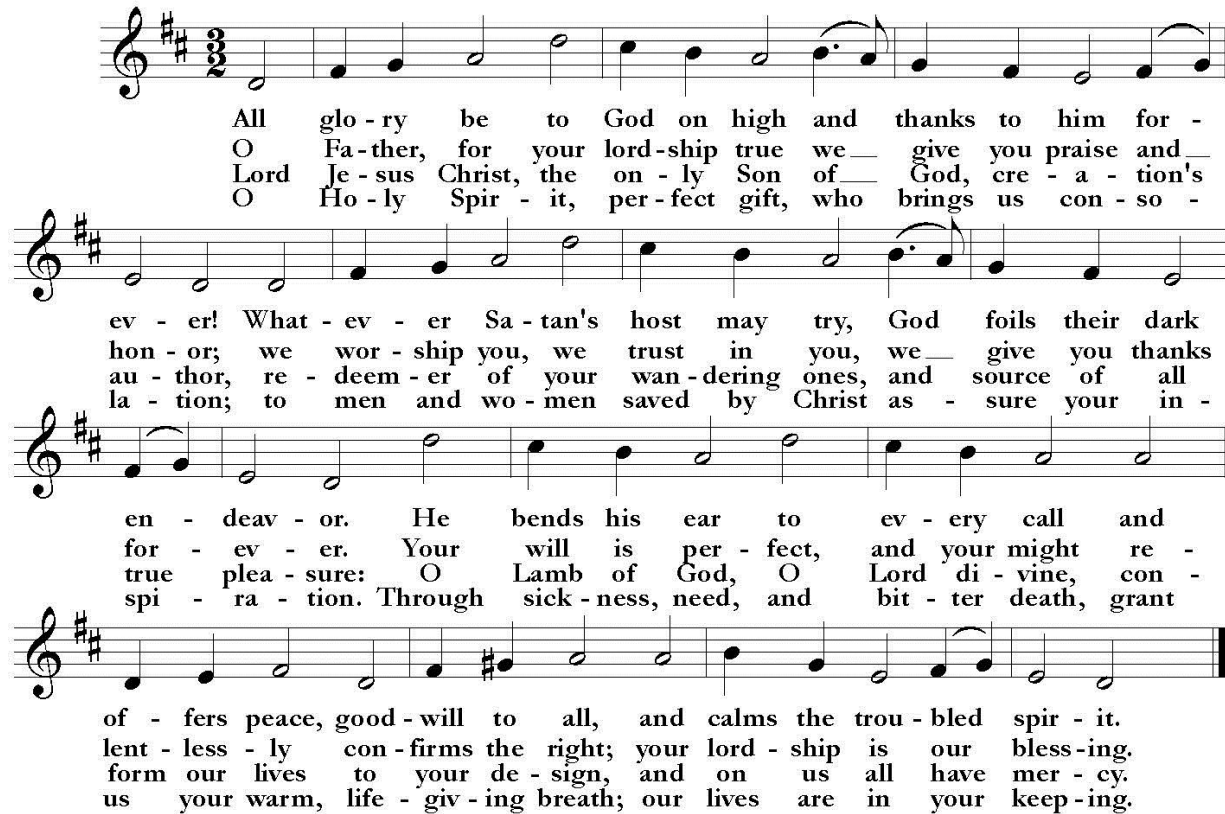
LEADER: If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

PEOPLE: **But truly God has listened; the Lord has given heed to the words of my prayer.**

ALL: **Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer or removed steadfast love from me.**

The Invocation

Lynn Lingafelt



All glo - ry be to God on high and thanks to him for -
 O Fa - ther, for your lord - ship true we give you praise and
 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
 O Ho - ly Spir - it, per - fect gift, who brings us con - so -
 ev - er! What - ev - er Sa - tan's host may try, God foils their dark
 hon - or; we wor - ship you, we trust in you, we give you thanks
 au - thor, re - deem - er of your wan - dering ones, and source of all
 la - tion; to men and wo - men saved by Christ as - sure your in -
 en - deav - or. He bends his ear to ev - ery call and
 for - ev - er. Your will is per - fect, and your might re -
 true plea - sure: O Lamb of God, O Lord di - vine, con -
 spi - ra - tion. Through sick - ness, need, and bit - ter death, grant
 of - fers peace, good - will to all, and calms the trou - bled spir - it.
 lent - less - ly con - firms the right; your lord - ship is our bless - ing.
 form our lives to your de - sign, and on us all have mer - cy.
 us your warm, life - giv - ing breath; our lives are in your keep - ing.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Prayer for Illumination (unison)²

Leah Reed

God our teacher, open to us the commandments Jesus gave; help us receive them with joy and turn them into acts of love. Guide us by your Spirit of truth that we may know you and abide in your love. In the name of Jesus, our friend. Amen.

²²Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ ²⁹Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

³²When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, “We will hear you again about this.” ³³At that point Paul left them. ³⁴But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

¹³Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you;

¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil.

¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The 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 trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 Lead us not into temptation
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory, forever. Amen.**

The Gospel

John 14:15–21

¹⁵If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

PEOPLE: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon

Christopher Chapman

“Some Guidance about Flexibility and Adaptation”

The Musical Response

“Be Not Afraid”

Craig Courtney

Mary Alice Seals, voice; Mark Hopper, piano; Jack Hopper, trombone

DEPARTING TO SERVE

The Benediction

The Chimes

Three chimes are sounded, sending us into the world with the love of God, the Good News of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit. As you go, remember, “you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people.”

The Postlude

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

arr. Anna Laura Page

Mary Alice Seals, piano

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²From *Season of Ash and Fire, Prayers and Liturgies for Lent and Easter*, by Blair Gilmore Meeks, © 2003 Abingdon Press. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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We welcome Mark Hopper and his son, Jack, as our musical guests today. Mark serves as the Minister of Music and organist for First Baptist Church of Henderson, NC. Jack recently completed his junior year at Oxford Preparatory School.

All church activities are cancelled until further notice.