

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



May 3, 2020

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2020

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the Fourth Sunday of Easter and the eighth Sunday we have not been able to gather together because of COVID-19. The last Sunday we were able to gather, March 8, was the date of our church's 208th anniversary. In this time of many challenges, we continue to find strength from our heritage of resilience, from the great assurances of our faith, and most of all, from the hope of Easter — God's ability to bring joy out of sorrow, hope out of despair, life out of death. There are many different stories and images that shape our understanding of this wondrous God we worship and serve, but one image that runs through today's texts is the image of shepherd. It is one of the most beloved of all images for God and Christ, and for good reason. It is an image that resonates with our experience with God. As we reflect upon that experience today through scripture, prayer, song, and proclamation, we sense the care of our Shepherd God and are moved to gratitude and praise.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

The Prelude "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" arr. Anita Burroughs-Price
"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"
Anita Burroughs-Price, harp

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)

Psalm 23

LEADER: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

PEOPLE: **He makes me lie down in green pastures;**

LEADER: He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

PEOPLE: **He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.**

LEADER: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

PEOPLE: **for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.**

LEADER: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

PEOPLE: **you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

LEADER: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

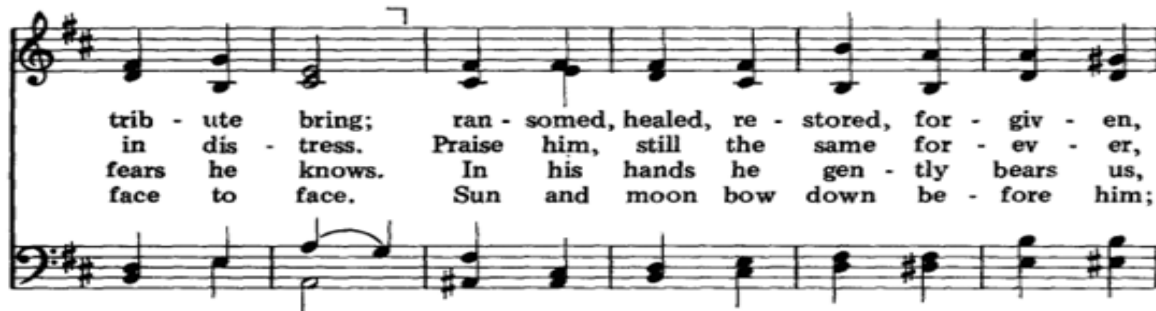
PEOPLE: **and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

The Invocation

Trey Davis



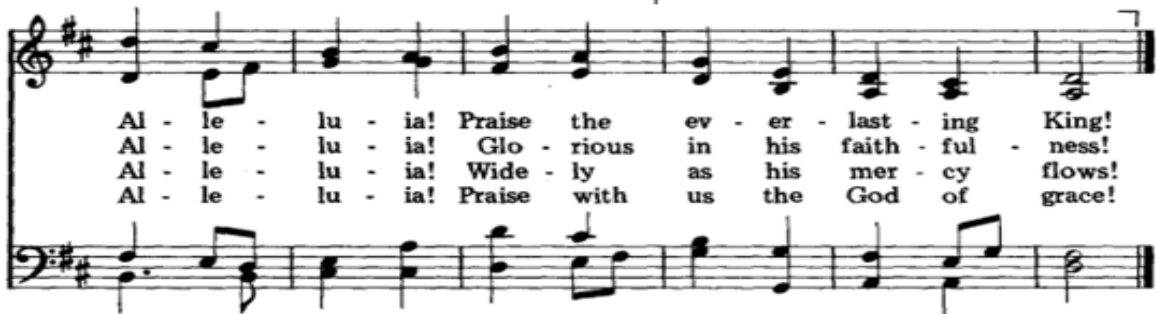
1. Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en, to his feet your
 2. Praise Him for his grace and fa - vor to all peo - ple
 3. Fa - ther - like, he tends and spares us; all our hopes and
 4. An - gels, help us to a - dore him, you be - hold him



trib - ute bring; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,
 in dis - tress. Praise him, still the same for - ev - er,
 fears he knows. In his hands he gen - tly bears us,
 face to face. Sun and moon bow down be - fore him;



ev - er - more his prais - es sing. Al - le - lu - ia!
 slow to chide and swift to bless. Al - le - lu - ia!
 res - cues us from all our foes. Al - le - lu - ia!
 all who dwell in time and space. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in his faith - ful - ness!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly as his mer - cy flows!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

WORDS: Henry F. Lyte, 1834, alt.; para. of Psalm 103
 MUSIC: John Goss, 1869

LAUDA ANIMA
 8.7.8.7.8.7.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Prayer for Illumination (unison) †

Lynn Lingafelt

Savior, lead us like a shepherd to quiet pastures where we can hear your voice. Show us where we can drink from deep pools and eat from your table. Revive us by your Spirit and come toward us with your goodness. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The First Reading

Acts 2:42-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Second Reading

1 Peter 2:19-25

¹⁹For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. ²²"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Morning Prayer

Leah Reed

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.**

¹“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

The Sermon

“A Beloved Image of a Wonderful God”

Christopher Chapman

The Prayer of Response (responsive)†

LEADER: God of love, you sent Jesus to be the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep: Keep us faithful in the name of your Son Jesus Christ.

PEOPLE: **God has given us the Spirit of truth: Help us to love one another as Jesus loves us.**

LEADER: You love us so perfectly that we need not fear: Give us courage to endure all hardship in remembrance of Christ’s suffering.

PEOPLE: **Our Shepherd cares for us with goodness and mercy: Teach us to respond with acts of charity and goodwill.**

LEADER: Your apostles lived with all things in common, breaking bread and praying together: Make us a community of love.

PEOPLE: **God’s love abides in us as it abides in Jesus: Teach us to show our love in truth and in action.**

LEADER: You gave your apostles power to heal in your name, that all may stand before you in good health: Help us to bring your healing power to all creation.

PEOPLE: **We are healed by our Savior’s wounds: Teach us to safeguard and enjoy our abundant life.**

LEADER: You sent Jesus to be the gate to your fold who keeps out evil and opens the way for us to go in: Protect us and welcome us home.

PEOPLE: **The Good Shepherd calls us by our name: Give us grace to follow and give thanks.**

LEADER: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom God raised from the dead.

ALL: **Amen.**

The Musical Response

“Do You Know Your Shepherd’s Voice?”

Suzanne Lord

Cady Mercer, soprano

Becky Mercer, flute

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

† From *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.

All scripture quotations contained herein are from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible*, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The tune and text to “Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven” are in the public domain.

All church activities are cancelled until further notice.

Global Missions Offering supports CBF personnel around the world as they spread the Gospel. Please prayerfully consider your support of these missionaries. We have received \$14,789 toward our goal of \$20,000.

An offering for the Mike Morris Fellowship Fund is received the first Sunday of each month. This fund helps people seeking emergency aid. You may either mail your contribution to the Financial Administrator or use any of our online giving options.