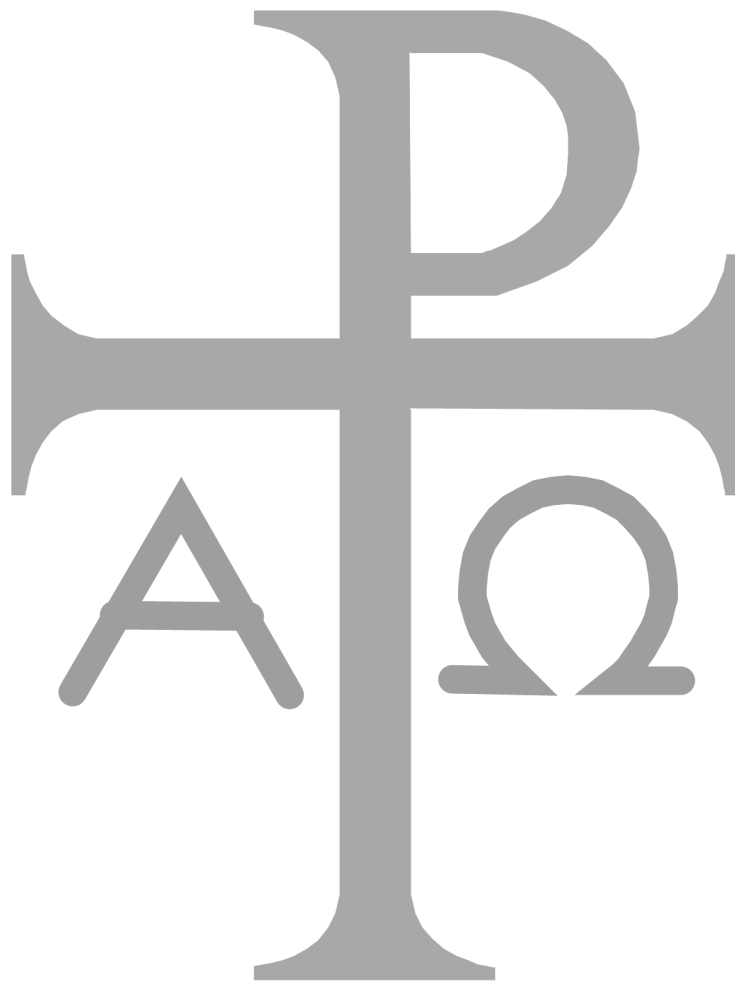


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



November 29, 2020

*"I am the Alpha and Omega," says the Lord God,
who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.*

Revelation 1:8

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 29, 2020

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the first Sunday of Advent, a four-week season of preparation for the coming of the Messiah and the beginning of a new Christian year. It is a season of penitence and reflection; thus, we wear purple stoles and include time for confession and assurance. But it is also a season of expectation and preparation, patient waiting for the wondrous new thing God might do among us. So, we light the first Advent candle and sing hymns of hope and fulfillment. All of the texts express a deep longing for something more, but the sermon focuses on the reading from Isaiah in which the people's longing is more than wishful thinking. It is based on God's goodness in the past and the reality that, despite all of the people's struggles and sin, they are still God's handiwork. Might we find hope for our current period of difficult waiting in this ancient story?

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

The Prelude

"Sleepers, Awake"
Sue Crocker, organ

J.S. Bach

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 Lighting of the Advent Candle

Jacob Poteat and Anne Tunstall

Reader 1: This is the first Sunday of Advent, the time of preparing for the coming of Christ our Savior. Today our word is *prepare*. There is much to do in the way of preparation. We prepare for Christmas with gift purchases, tree trimming, home decorating, card mailing. We prepare for Christ with prayer, quiet contemplation, acts of service and love, resolutions to become better people than we are now.

Reader 2: The prophet Isaiah describes the time for which we are preparing with these words (Isaiah 2:2-4).

² In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. ³ Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

We light the first candle as a sign of our willingness to prepare for the coming of God's reign in Christ.

(Light candle)

Reader 1: (Let us pray) Gracious God, help us to prepare not only our homes but also our hearts for the coming of Emmanuel. As we go up the mountain of faith, may we listen for your voice and pay attention to your teachings, that Christ may come to us in the fullness of time to bring us your gift of peace. Amen.

Unison

1. Long a - go, proph-ets knew Christ would come,
 2. God in time, God in man, this is God's
 3. Ma - ry, hail! Though a - fraid, she be - lieved,
 4. Jour - ney ends! Where a - far Beth-lehem shines,

born a Jew, come to make all things new, bear his peo-ple's bur - den,
 time-less plan: he will come, as a man, born him-self of wom - an,
 she o - beyed. In her womb, God is laid till the time ex - pect - ed,
 like a star, sta - ble door stands a - jar: un-born Son of Ma - ry,

Refrain

free - ly love and par - don. r.h. l.h. r.h. l.h.
 God di - vine - ly hu - man. Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing, choirs, sing,
 nur - tured and pro - tect - ed.
 Sav - ior, do not tar - ry!

8ba

sing, sing! When he comes, when he comes, who will make him wel - come?
 (last verse) we will make him wel - come!

(8ba) - - - - - loco

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Lynn Lingafelt

In our prayers of confession, we face up to our sin, but not alone. We do it together, knowing that all have sinned and fallen short of the beauty God intended. Yet the God who knows and loves us better than we know and love ourselves, hears us with compassion. Therefore, with confidence, let us pray together.

The Prayer of Confession (unison)

God, our Holy Friend, we confess to each other and to you, that we are creatures of hope and gloom, success and failure. We are often impatient and thin-skinned. We rush into condemnations without understanding. We take our family and friends for granted. We receive goodwill from strangers with scant gratitude. Our leaders are expected to mirror our biases. Our Bible is selectively used to buttress our opinions. Our hope is often centered on our personal ambitions. Our faith is measured by whether we get what we want. Our love for others is selective and intermittent. We need help. We need a kind yet determined Savior. Where else can we go but to you? God, our Healing Friend, with the saving grace of Christ Jesus, have mercy on us, save us from our follies and besetting sins, and put some delight back into our belief and some risk back into our love.

The Silent Confession

The Assurance of Pardon²

Hear the Good News! Dare to step free of all guilt and give thanks to the Lord. If we honestly repent from our sins, God will forgive us and cleanse us of all evil, that we may prove blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!

The Act of Praise³

PUER NOBIS

To you, O Christ, all praises be,
whose advent sets your people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore!

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Hebrew Bible

Isaiah 64:1-9

Michael Hood

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— ²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God**

**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, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

²⁴“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

RESPONDING IN FAITH

The Hymn of Discipleship

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"⁴

HYFRYDOL

1. Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear De - sire of ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

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

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”
Sue Crocker, organ

Friedrich Zachau

¹Words: Copyright © 1971 by Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under OneLicense #A-708116.

²(Bruce D. Prewer, used with permission of the author, adapted)

³The tune and text of “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” are in the public domain.

⁴Music: From *The English Hymnal* by permission of Oxford University Press, London. Reprinted with permission under OneLicense #A-708116.

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.

Our annual stewardship emphasis has begun with the theme *In the wilderness prepare a way for the Lord... And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed*. Please help us to meet our budget goal by returning your pledge card to the church office (you may also pledge online at: <https://fbcraleigh.org/pledgecard/>). As of November 24, we have received 113 pledges totaling \$761,236 for the 2021 budget.

End-of-year giving: Please continue to be faithful to your financial stewardship commitment. Your generous support toward this year’s budget will allow us to end the year with a solid base on which to begin 2021. Year-end contributions must be received or postmarked by December 31.

Hanging of the Greens will be held virtually this year, on Sunday, December 6. Remember a loved one with a donation toward the purchase of holiday decorations for our sanctuary during Advent and Christmas. Forms — found in Sunday School boxes, on our website, or by following the link in the *Rose Window Weekly* — must be received with payment by Friday, December 4.

Hurricane Relief Offering: As happened last year, instead of the usual breakdown for the fall NC Mission Offering, all money collected will go CBF Global Disaster Response to help our neighbors who are victims of hurricanes. Please join CBF in praying for those affected by the hurricanes and please give generously to this offering to support CBF Disaster Response’s relief and long-term recovery efforts. As of November 24, we have received \$2,455.00.

Calendar Highlights • November 29–December 5, 2020

Sunday, November 29

- 10:00 6th Grade Sunday School (Virtual)
- 7th and 8th Grade Sunday School (Zoom)
- High School Sunday School (Zoom/In-person TBD)
- 11:00 Virtual Worship Service (YouTube)
- 2:00 3rd–5th Grade Sunday School (Zoom)
- 4:00 1st and 2nd Grade Sunday School (Lingafelt yard)
- Three-year-olds–Kindergarten Sunday School (Zoom)
- 7:00 Minister of Music Search Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Monday, November 30–Sunday, December 6

Hanging of the Greens Teams (Sanctuary/2nd floor children's Sunday School area)

Tuesday, December 1

- 10:00 Ministerial Staff Meeting (Library or Zoom)
- 6:00 Hanging of the Greens Prep, youth included (Sanctuary)
- Theology on Tap (Zoom/In-person TBD)
- 6:15 Middle School Small Group (Zoom or 1107 Marlowe Road)
- 7:30 Pathfinders Sunday School (Virtual)

Thursday, December 3

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 7:00 Nominating Committee Meeting (Zoom)