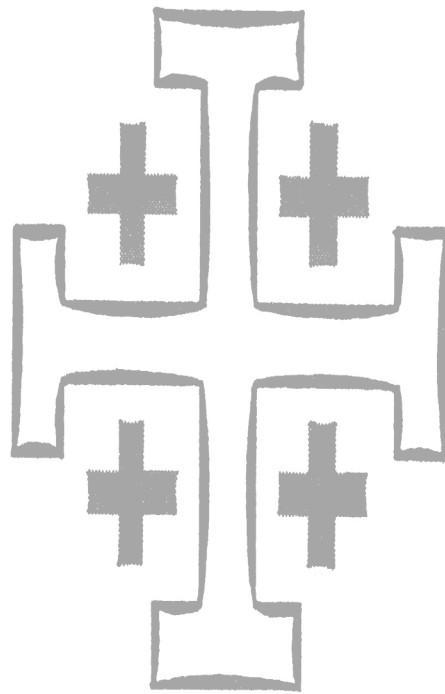


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



March 14, 2021

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 14, 2021

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the Fourth Sunday in Lent, a season of penitence and reflection, as we follow Jesus on the way to the cross. All the texts focus on God's grace and love, though in different ways. While the familiar words of John 3:16 clearly point to God's love for the world revealed in Jesus, and the reading from Ephesians boldly proclaims that it is by grace alone that we have been saved through faith, the reading from Numbers may seem like an outlier. One of only three uses of this biblical book in the lectionary, this reading seems to present an image of a vengeful God, one who strikes down rebellious Israelites with poisonous snakes. And there are troublesome details in this story that have no easy explanation. But in the end, God does extend grace, for the Israelites as a whole are not cut off completely from God, even though they have violated the covenant and questioned God's concern at the very moment God is providing for their needs. God provides for their needs yet again, through the use of a bronze serpent for protection. God continues to love people who do not return that love very well. We sing of such love today, offer praise to the God who extends love to us again and again, and pray that our lives might reflect God's love more clearly.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

The Prelude

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"
Sue Crocker, organ

arr. Emma Lou Diemer

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 107

LEADER: O give thanks to the Lord, who is good; whose steadfast love endures forever.

PEOPLE: **Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,**

LEADER: those redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands,

PEOPLE: **from the east and the west, from the north and the south.**

LEADER: Some were fools because of their sinful ways; they suffered because of their wickedness.

PEOPLE: **They had absolutely no appetite for food, they arrived at death's gates.**

LEADER: Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble and God saved them from distress.

PEOPLE: **The Lord sent word and healed them and delivered them from destruction.**

LEADER: Let them thank the Lord for steadfast love, for wonderful works to humankind.

PEOPLE: **And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices and tell of God's deeds with songs of joy.**

The Invocation

Leah Reed

1. God is Love, let heaven a - dore him; God is Love, let
 2. God is Love; and love en - folds us, all the world in
 3. God is Love; and though with blind-ness sin af - flicts all

earth re - joice; let cre - a - tion sing be - fore him
 one em - brace; with un - fail - ing grasp God holds us,
 hu - man life, God’s e - ter - nal lov - ing kind - ness

and ex - alt him with one voice. God who laid the earth’s foun-
 ev - ery child of ev - ery race. And when hu - man hearts are
 guides us through our earth - ly strife. Sin and death and hell shall

da - tion, God who spread the heavens a - bove, God who breathes thro’
 break - ing un - der sor - row’s i - ron rod, then we find that
 nev - er o’er us fi - nal tri - umph gain; God is Love, so

all cre - a - tion: God is Love, e - ter - nal Love.
 self - same ach - ing deep with - in the heart of God.
 Love for - ev - er o’er the u - ni - verse must reign.

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

Lynn Lingafelt

The Prayer of Confession (unison)²

God, our Redeemer, you welcome us with the unbounded love of a parent for a lost child: help us when we turn away from your safekeeping; watch over us when we choose the far country of doubt and fear; guide us back with thoughts of the place you have prepared for us; forgive us when we fail to see Jesus, sent from you. Turn our eyes toward the cross where he was lifted up for us. In his name we pray . . .

The Silent Confession

The Assurance of Forgiveness

The Act of Praise

“Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

ARISE

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are: "I will a-rise and go to Je - sus; he will em-brace me in his arms; in the arms of my dear Sav - ior, O, there are ten thou - sand charms."

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Hebrew Bible

Numbers 21:4–9

Leah Reed

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.

⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— ⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God**

The Morning Prayer

Michael Hood

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

The Gospel

John 3:14-21

¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

1. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus, vast, un - meas - ured, bound - less, free,
 2. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus, spread his praise from shore to shore!
 3. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus, love of ev - ery love the best,

roll - ing as a might - y o - cean in its full - ness o - ver me!
 He who loves us, ev - er loves us, chang - es nev - er, nev - er - more;
 vast the o - cean of his bless - ing, sweet the ha - ven of his rest!

Un - der - neath me, all a - round me, is the cur - rent of his love,
 he, who died to save his loved ones, in - ter - cedes for them a - bove;
 O the deep, deep love of Je - sus— for my heaven of heavens is he;

lead - ing on - ward, lead - ing home - ward to that glo - rious rest a - bove.
 he, who called them his own peo - ple, watch - es o - ver them in love.
 this my ev - er - last - ing glo - ry— Je - sus' might - y love for me!

RESPONDING IN FAITH

The Musical Response

“A Prayer for Humility”

Mark Patterson

Jeanie Scott, Jeri Ellen Helms, sopranos

Mighty God and gentle lamb, Lord of all creation, How we long to know you.
How we long to serve you.
Help us now to love you even more.
Give us humble hearts to praise you,
And listening ears to hear your voice.
Willing hands to serve you, thankful spirits to rejoice.
Lord of all, we adore you and we bring this prayer before you.
Create in us humble hearts.
When our thoughts turn sad, remind us of the grace you freely give.
When we lose our way, Lord, find us. Bring us close to you again.

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

“Trumpet in Dialogue”

Louis Clerembault

Sue Crocker, organ

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Easter is Sunday, April 4. Remember a loved one with a donation toward the purchase of Easter lilies for our sanctuary, with the remaining funds benefitting the Day Mission Fund. Forms — found on our website or by following the link in the *Rose Window Weekly* — must be received with payment by Wednesday, March 24.

There will be a virtual Church Conference via Zoom on Wednesday, March 24, at 5:30 p.m. The link and more information may be found in the *Rose Window Weekly*. Those needing assistance should contact Deborah Mastrodonato (dmast@fbcraleigh.org).

Global Missions Offering supports CBF personnel around the world as they spread the Gospel. Please prayerfully consider your support of these missionaries. As of March 11, we have received \$17,485.

Calendar Highlights • March 14–20, 2021

Sunday, March 14 – Sunday, March 21

Family Promise Week

Sunday, March 14

- 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 1st and 2nd Grade Sunday School (Zoom)
- 3rd–5th Grade Sunday School (Zoom)
- 3:00 Dream Team Meeting (Zoom)
- 4:00 Three-year-olds – Kindergarten Sunday School (Ellis yard)
- 6:30 Youth Group (Zoom)
- 7:00 Minister of Music Search Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Monday, March 15

- 8:00 Nominating Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, March 16

- 10:00 Ministerial Staff Meeting (Library or Zoom)
- 6:00 Theology on Tap (Zoom/In-person TBD)
- 6:15 Middle School Gathering (Ellis home)
- 6:30 High School Boys Bible Study (Carter home)
- High School Girls Bible Study (Helms home)
- 7:30 Pathfinders Sunday School (Zoom)

Wednesday, March 17

- 5:30 1st–5th Grade Boys Music and Missions (Pegram yard)
- 6:15 Centerpoint (Zoom)
- 7:00 Youth Movie Night (Netflix Teleparty)

Thursday, March 18

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 7:30 College Gathering (Zoom)