

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



May 2, 2021

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 2, 2021

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the Fifth Sunday of Easter and the first Sunday we have been able to gather in-person in our sanctuary for over a year. Thus, it is a day of genuine hope, a day to celebrate the good news of resurrection and give thanks for all the ways God sustains us through all circumstances of life. We express our gratitude through hymns of praise, prayers of thanksgiving, and a willingness to listen for God's voice speaking through the reading of Holy Scripture, the act of proclamation, and the gift of sacred music. The sermon explores the image Jesus develops in the reading from John 15 wherein we are called to abide in him like branches abiding in a vine. The celebration of communion creates space for us to fulfill this calling, as the sharing of the bread and the cup binds us more closely to God and one another. For the safety of all who are gathered here, and all we will encounter this week, we ask that everyone in the sanctuary remain masked and safely distanced throughout the service, though members the same household may sit closer together, and all are welcome to remove their masks to partake of the communion elements. We will also not pass an offering plate, but we have plates available in the narthex and gathering room. These simple measures will enable us to continue gathering in-person and, at the same time, provide evidence of our willingness to love our neighbor in fulfillment of the teaching in 1 John 4.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers Leah Reed

The Prelude David German
"A Festive Trumpet Tune"
Sue Crocker, organ

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 Introit Michael Keller
"Two Celebrations"
The Evening Bells

The Call to Worship (responsive) from Psalm 22

LEADER: From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

PEOPLE: **my vows I will pay before those who fear God.**

LEADER: The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

PEOPLE: **those who seek the Lord shall sing praise. May your hearts live forever!**

LEADER: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord;

PEOPLE: **and all the families of the nations shall worship before God.**

LEADER: For dominion belongs to the Lord,

PEOPLE: **who rules over the nations.**

LEADER: To God, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;

PEOPLE: **before God shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for the Lord.**

LEADER: Posterity will serve the Lord; future generations will be told about the Lord,

PEOPLE: **and proclaim deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that God has done it.**

1. Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil-grim through this bar - ren land;
 2. O - pen now the crys - tal foun-tain, whence the heal - ing stream doth flow;
 3. When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious fears sub - side;

I am weak, but thou art might - y— hold me with thy power - ful hand:
 let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me all my jour - ney through:
 death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion, land me safe on Ca - naan's side:

Bread of heav - en, Bread of heav - en, feed me till I want no
 Strong De - liv - erer, strong De - liv - erer, be thou still my strength and
 Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es I will ev - er give to

more, (want no more,) feed me till I want no more.
 shield, (strength and shield,) be thou still my strength and shield.
 thee, (give to thee,) I will ev - er give to thee.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The First Reading

Acts 8:26–40

Maria Childrey

²⁶Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. ³³In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." ³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Second Reading

1 John 4:7–21

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

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

The Gospel

John 15:1-8

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

1. O come to me, the Mas - ter said, my Fa - ther knows your need;
2. A - bide in me, the Mas - ter said, the true and liv - ing vine;
3. Be - lieve in me, the Mas - ter said, for I have called you friends,

and I shall be, the Mas - ter said, your bread of life in - deed.
my life shall be, the Mas - ter said, poured out for you as wine.
and yours shall be, the Mas - ter said, the life that nev - er ends.

By faith in him we live and grow and share the bro - ken bread,
His bod - y to the cross he gave, his blood he free - ly shed,
And so, with sin and sor - row past, when death it - self is dead,

and all his love and good - ness know, for so the Mas - ter said.
who came in love to seek and save, for so the Mas - ter said.
the Lord shall raise us up at last, for so the Mas - ter said.

The Sermon

“How the Best Has Come out in Us”

Christopher Chapman

RESPONDING IN FAITH

The Celebration of Communion

The Invitation to the Table

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Musical Reflection

“The Peace May Be Exchanged”

Dan Locklair

The Bread Is Broken

The Cup Is Shared

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship

If you desire membership in this congregation, you are invited to present yourself during the singing of the Hymn of Discipleship. As an open membership church, we honor your previous baptism in any other Christian community. If you have not made a confession of faith, we invite you to do so and receive Christian baptism. Church members are invited to use this time to reflect upon their covenantal relationship with God and their commitment to Christian service.

1. For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2. In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
 3. For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.

For his gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.

For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de -
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con -

sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 spair - ing, in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
 found us, most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

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

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

arr. John Ferguson

Sue Crocker, organ

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The musical reflection is taken from a larger work entitled *Rubrics: A Liturgical Suite for Organ*. It was a 1988 commission from the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh. The composer, Dan Locklair is a North Carolina native and is currently Professor of Music and Composer-in-residence at Wake Forest University.

The Deacon on Call is Maria Childrey. Maria is a 28-year member of First Baptist and a member of the Formations Sunday School Class. She and her husband Tom have three daughters: Katie, Ann, and Caroline.

The Sanctuary flowers are placed in honor of our wonderful church staff for their thoughtful, safe, and reverent way of "doing church" for the last 14 months by Sterling and Myra Brickell.

Sympathy to Betty Henderson on the April 20 death of her brother, Edward Ledford.

With our return to in-person services, if you would like to donate flowers or designate your selection of our banners with a donation to the Day Mission Fund, please contact Myra Brickell at 919-812-6680 or myrabrickell@gmail.com.

Calendar Highlights • May 2–8, 2021

Sunday, May 2

- 9:00 Everette Miller Friendship Sunday School (Zoom)
- 10:00 6th Grade Sunday School (Virtual)
7th and 8th Grade Sunday School (Zoom)
High School Sunday School (Zoom/In-person TBD)
- 11:00 Worship Service (Sanctuary & YouTube)
- 4:00 3rd–5th Grade Sunday School (Lingafelt yard)
- 5:30 Youth Group (Church parking lot)

Monday, May 3

- 8:00 Nominating Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, May 4

- 10:00 Ministerial Staff Meeting (Conference Room)
- 6:00 Theology on Tap (Zoom/In-person TBD)
High School Bible Study (Helms home)
- 7:00 Properties Committee (Fellowship Hall)
- 7:30 Pathfinders Sunday School (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 5

- 5:30 1st–5th Grade Girls Music & Missions (Wade yard)
- 7:00 Youth Movie Night (Netflix Teleparty)

Thursday, May 6

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 5:00 Dream Team (Zoom)
- 7:30 College Group (Zoom)