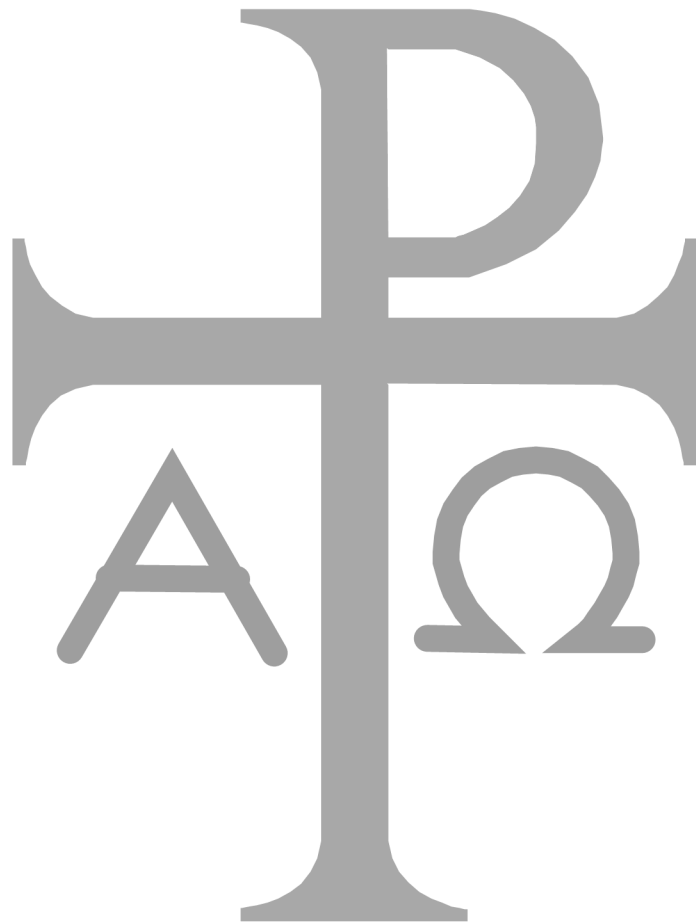


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



December 19, 2021

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 19, 2021

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent, a season of expectation and preparation for the coming of the Christ. As we draw closer to the great day of celebration, we continue with the lighting of Advent candles — today the candle of love — and time for confession and assurance. We offer prayers of thanks and songs of praise to the God who brings gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. We read texts which proclaim God's love for the world and listen for the voice of God speaking through these texts and their interpretation, the gifts of prayer and music, the majesty of our sanctuary and the people around us, even the silence. The sermon explores the use of song in the reading from Luke and all the narratives surrounding Jesus' birth. How might we benefit from breaking forth into song like the characters in the biblical story? We depart taking our songs of joy and healing into a world filled with too much silent suffering.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

Lynn Lingafelt

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 Prelude

"In Dulci Jubilo"
J.S. Bach

Maureen Howell

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

Rance and Betty Henderson
David and Sherri Henderson

LEADER: We have lit three candles—for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

(The fourth candle is lit.)

ALL: Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your love within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

1. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 2. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 3. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now ye hear of end - less bliss; Je - sus Christ was born for this;
 now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save;

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
 he has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
 calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

WORDS: Macaronic carol, 14th C.; para. John M. Neale, 1853, alt.
 MUSIC: Traditional German melody, 14th C.

IN DULCI JUBILO
 Irregular

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

The Call to Confession

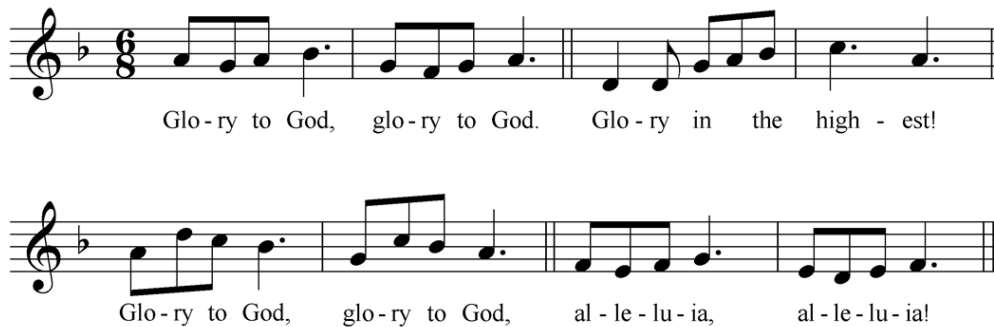
The Prayer of Confession (unison)

God of Advent hope and Christmas celebration, like Mary, we are moved to song by the birth of a child but not for all the same reasons. She embraces the Christ-child without hesitation while we wonder what he knows about us and what he might expect. She sings with joy of lifting up the lowly and bringing down the powerful while we wonder where we fit in this image, whether we might be considered powerful. We sing with joy at the birth of a savior, but tremble at what his lordship might require of us. So, we sing, as we do most things, with conditions and strings attached. Forgive us for giving just a part of ourselves when you ask for all. Cleanse us of all fear and hesitation. Free us to sing as those who are all-in and thus able to share in the joy Christ brings.

The Silent Confession

The Words of Assurance

The Act of Praise (All sing)



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God. Glo-ry in the high - est!

Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Jacques Berthier, Taizé, 1978

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Prayer for Illumination (sung)

**O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.**

Phillips Brooks, 1868

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Christian Testament

Hebrews 10:5–10

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).” ⁸When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Anthem

“O Yule, Full of Gladness”

Sanctuary Choir
Becky Mercer, flute

Norwegian Carol; Carolyn Jennings, arr.

O Yule, full of gladness and cheer and delight,
we welcome you now with our singing.

Our hearts open wide to the brilliance of light
from heaven to earth you are bringing.

*We merrily clap and sing, a happy welcome bring,
So glad are we, for Christ is born now at Christmas.*

With shepherds and wisemen your star we behold,
its brightness o’er Bethlehem beaming.

And we too would follow, as prophets foretold,
where light everlasting is streaming.

Now join hand in hand, together welcome the Yule,
and pledge love and faith to each other,
for we all are bound by the love that we share.

Rejoice, every sister and brother!

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

Luke 1:39–55

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle
 2. He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of
 3. Je - sus is our child-hood's pat - tern, day by day like us he
 4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem-ing

shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 grew, he was lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and
 love; for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our

man - ger for his bed: Ma - ry was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall: with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew: and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren

mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 low - ly lived on earth, our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he has gone.

WORDS: Cecil F. Alexander, 1848
MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

IRBY
8.7.8.7.7.7.

“The Benefits of Breaking Forth into Song”

RESPONDING IN FAITH

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.

*The Hymn of Discipleship

“Canticle of the Turning”

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

Caroline Childrey, solo

Becky and Cady Mercer, flutes

Eliza Meyer, guitar

Verse 1 (solo), Verses 2-4 (all)

Verses



1. My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you
3. From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
4. Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, And my spir - it sings of the
work great things in me, And your mer - cy will last from the
stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You
depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your
jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant from his throne. The
liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This



fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, So from east to west shall my
those who would for you yearn, You will show your might, put the
food they can nev - er earn; There are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
prom - ise which holds us bound, 'Til the spear and rod can be

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

dawn draws near, And the world is a - bout to turn!

Text: Luke 1:46-58; Rory Cooney, b.1952
 Tune: STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN, Irregular with refrain; Irish melody; arr. by Rory Cooney, b.1952
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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

"Giga on IN DULCI JUBILO"
 Norman Dello Joio

Maureen Howell, organ

*The congregation may stand.

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The Deacon on Call is Betsy Neal. A 44-year member, Betsy is a Clothing Ministry volunteer, a member of the Counting Team, and a member of the Everette Miller Friendship Class. She and her husband Clint have two adult children (both FBC members) and five grandchildren.

As we continue our annual stewardship emphasis, please prayerfully consider your 2022 financial commitment and return your pledge card to the church office as soon as possible. As of December 16, 148 pledge cards totaling \$1,086,293 have been received.

Global Missions Offering supports CBF personnel around the world as they spread the Gospel. We have received \$1,548 toward our goal of \$20,000.

2022 Contribution Envelopes are available on the first floor corridor leading to the Clothing Ministry; if you would like some but haven’t gotten any in the past, contact Wayne Hager (whager@fbcraleigh.org).

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 24. This service will include scripture, carols, and celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Children are welcome.

On Wednesday, December 29, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., we will be hosting The Blood Connection in our parking lot for a blood drive. To make an appointment, go to [The Blood Connection website](#). All donors will receive a \$20 eGift card! For any questions, contact [Dr. Chapman](#).

The church-wide ski retreat is scheduled for January 7–9 at Pipestem and Winterplace, West Virginia. More information and the sign-up link may be found in the *Rose Window Weekly*. Contact [Michael Hood](#) with any questions.

Calendar Highlights

December 19–26

Sunday, December 19

- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 Worship (Sanctuary & YouTube)
Japanese Worship/Potluck Luncheon (301/302)
- 6:30 Adult Choir Christmas Party (Fellowship Hall)

Monday, December 20

- 6:00 Music Made in Heaven Rehearsal (Sanctuary Balcony)

Tuesday, December 21

- 10:00 Staff Meeting (Conference Room)
- 10:45 WMU Group 2 (Springmoor)
- 7:30 Pathfinders Sunday School Class (Zoom)

Thursday, December 23

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 6:30 College Group (Garth/Room 318)

Friday, December 24–Tuesday, December 28

Church Office Closed (Christmas Holiday)

Friday, December 24

- 5:00 Christmas Eve Service/Reception

Sunday, December 26

- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 Worship/Michael Hood Preaching (Sanctuary & YouTube)
Japanese Worship (Zoom)

