

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812

*Gloria
in excelsis
& Deo*

December 25, 2022

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25, 2022

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Every seven years or so, with adjustments for leap years, Christmas falls on a Sunday, as it does this year. While some churches debate whether or not to have worship on these Sundays, it seems more appropriate to consider whether we might worship on Christmas, no matter what day it falls on in a given year. We do worship every Christmas Eve, except in the case of inclement weather, but the incarnation is central to our faith. It is worthy of full recognition and reflection not only on this day, but for the full twelve days of Christmas that end on January 6 with Epiphany. We welcome all who gather to lift up joyous songs of praise, to offer prayers of gratitude, and to reflect on the meaning of this great sign of love God has given us — to us is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord!

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

"Wexford Carol"
Mark Hayes

Maureen Howell

The Call to Worship

from Psalm 98

LEADER: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

PEOPLE: **Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.**

LEADER: Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

PEOPLE: **Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord who is coming to judge the earth.**

ALL: **The Lord will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.**

1. An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 2. Shep - herds in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
 3. Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
 4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear,
 5. Though an in - fant now we view him he will share his Fa - ther's throne,

ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant Light:
 seek the great De - sire of Na - tions, ye have seen his na - tal star:
 sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, in his tem - ple shall ap - pear.
 gath - er all the na - tions to him; ev - ery knee shall then bow down.

Refrain

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1816, 1825, alt.
 MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1867

REGENT SQUARE
 8.7.8.7.8.7.

*The Invocation (unison)

Living Presence, on this glad morning, dawning with loving kindness, shining upon us with tender compassion, revealing to us the gift of yourself in the infant Jesus, fill us with wonder on this sacred day, awestruck by this treasure, vulnerable in our hands, that our lives may embody your unconditional love. We pray this in the Spirit of Jesus, Word made flesh, in the splendor of eternal life, now and forever. Amen.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Hebrew Bible

Isaiah 52:7-10

Myra Brickell

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." ⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Christian Testament

Hebrews 1:1-4

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

*The Hymn of Devotion

"Love Came Down at Christmas"

GARTAN

Solo: Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas—
Star and angels gave the sign.

**All: Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus—
What shall be our sacred sign?
Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and neighbor,
Love for prayer and gift and sign.**

Christina Rosetti, 1883

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 2:1–20

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

The Duet

“What Child Is This?”
 Brent Olstad

John and Elaine Holley
 viola and violin

The Sermon

“Signs of Love”

Christopher Chapman

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it . . . And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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

“O Splendor of God’s Glory Bright”

PUER NOBIS

1. O Splen-dor of God's glo - ry bright, from light e - ter - nal bring-ing light,
 2. Come, ver - y Sun of heav-en's love, in last-ing ra - diance from a - bove,
 3. Con-firm our will to do the right, and keep our hearts from en-vy's blight;
 4. All praise to God the Fa-ther be, all praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee,

thou Light of light, light's liv - ing Spring, True Day, all days il - lu - min-ing:
 and pour the Ho - ly Spir - it's ray on all we think or do to-day.
 let faith her ea - ger fires re - new, and hate the false, and love the true.
 whom with the Spir - it we a - dore for - ev - er and for - ev - er-more.

WORDS: Ambrose of Milan, 4th C.; tr. composite
 MUSIC: Trier manuscript, 15th C.; adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1609

PUER NOBIS
 L.M.

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

“Fum, Fum, Fum”

Maureen Howell

David Huntsinger

*The congregation may stand.

The tunes and texts of *Angels from the Realms of Glory*, *Love Came Down at Christmas*, and *O Splendor of God's Glory Bright* are in the public domain.

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The Deacon on Call is Carolyn Dickens. A 45-year member, Carolyn serves as the church archivist and as the vice president of the Thirty-Niners and is on their Program Committee. She is a member of the Adult Ministries Council, the Pathfinders Sunday School class, and the Sanctuary Choir. She is also a wedding director and a substitute teacher for Grains of Sand class. Carolyn and her husband Kent have two married children and four grandchildren.

2022 financial year gifts must be post-marked or given electronically by December 31 in order to be recorded on your 2022 contribution statement. Gifts brought to the church office must be in the office by December 30 since the 31st is a Saturday. The last Sunday to bring an offering is today. If you have a question about your giving in 2022, please contact Katherine Rattie (financeadmin@fbcraleigh.org).

If you have used offering envelopes this year or have requested them for 2023, you will find them in the first floor corridor leading to the Clothing Ministry. If you would like some but have not requested them, go to the website (www.fbcraleigh.org/offeringenveloperequest).

The December mission project is collecting gently used blankets or jackets, scarves, mittens, or toboggans for the clothing ministry. You may place your donations in the drawer in the Lewis Building cabinet or in the clothing ministry cart at the back door any time during December.

Sign up now for Salt Shakers 2023! Email Jessica Helms (jessica.brickell.helms@gmail.com) by January 10 to be assigned to dinner groups which will meet on four dates throughout the year. This is a great way to get to know people at the church! See the *Rose Window Weekly* for more details.

In the case of inclement weather, cancellation information about scheduled activities will be noted on a recorded greeting on the office voice mail (919-832-4485) and posted on our home page and on social media (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram). Information will also be supplied to WRAL-TV (1st Baptist, Salisbury St) and WTVD-TV (First Baptist Church–Salisbury St.).

98 stewardship cards totaling \$711,430 have been received. Your gift matters! Please return your stewardship card to the church, or you may pledge online (www.fbcraleigh.org/stewardship). Also, if you are not receiving offering envelopes and wish to, wish to change what you receive, or wish not to receive envelopes for 2023, please go to the church website (www.fbcraleigh.org/offeringenveloperequest/).

The Global Missions Offering supports CBF personnel around the world as they spread the Gospel. So far, we have received \$3,032 toward our goal of \$20,000.

Diaper changing stations are located in the men's and women's bathrooms on each floor of the Lewis building, and a nursing room is located in our preschool suite on the first floor.

Children of all ages are welcome in worship! Worship bags are located in the narthex and in the Gathering Room; preschoolers (birth – kindergarten) are also welcome to join the supervised play in the preschool suite on first floor.

Calendar Highlights
December 25–January 1

Sunday, December 25

10:00 Intergenerational fellowship (Fellowship Hall)
11:00 Worship (sanctuary & YouTube)
JBC worship (226)

Monday, December 26, and Tuesday, December 27

Church office closed

Tuesday, December 27

10:45 WMU Group 2 (Springmoor)

Thursday, December 29

7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)

Saturday, December 31

First Night of Raleigh

Sunday, January 1

9:45 Sunday School
11:00 Worship (sanctuary & YouTube)
JBC worship (226)

- The church office will be closed on Monday, January 2.
- The clothing ministry will be closed on December 26 and January 2.
- Mid-week activities will resume Wednesday, January 4.

To facilitate your giving to FBC, use the QR codes below to link to the website for our main electronic giving, VANCO Faith, and the page that lists all our e-giving options and instructions.

Use this QR code to e-give to FBC on line:



Use this code to e-give through PayPal
and other options:

