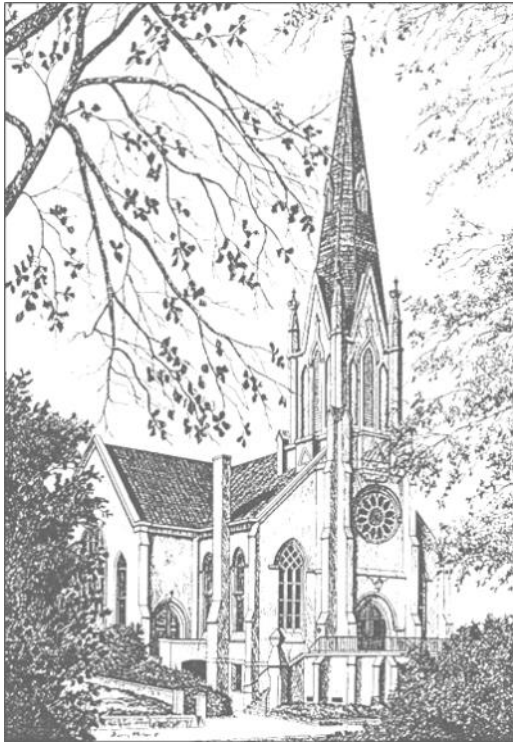


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



September 17, 2023

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP
THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 17, 2023

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: The texts for today's service invite reflection on the character of God and the nature of our calling. God is presented as an All-Powerful Sovereign who inspires faithfulness from every part of creation, yet also One who offers forgiveness and thus expects us to forgive one another. The texts raise questions as well, some of which the sermon will explore. But the affirmations and the questions all lead to greater understanding and deeper faith. The service music enriches our view of the texts and moves us to worship, as the hymn of praise echoes God's call to all creation, the hymn of belonging echoes the reading from Romans, and the hymn of discipleship explores further the role and imagery of water introduced in the psalm, the reading from Exodus, and the sermon. We respond to our hearing of God's call with the dedication of all that we have and are.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

Leah Reed

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

"Prelude on SOMOS DEL SEÑOR"
Emma Lou Diemer

Maureen Howell

The Call to Worship (responsive)

Psalm 114

LEADER: When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

PEOPLE: Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel the Lord's dominion.

LEADER: The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

PEOPLE: The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

LEADER: Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?

PEOPLE: O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?

LEADER: Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

PEOPLE: who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

*The Hymn of Praise, 53

"Let All Things Now Living"

ASH GROVE

*The Invocation

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

The Hebrew Bible

Exodus 14:19–31

Greg Flowers

¹⁹The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. ²²The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. ²⁵He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

²⁶Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." ²⁷So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

³⁰Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

*The Hymn of Belonging

“When We Are Living”

SOMOS DEL SEÑOR



Pues si vi - vi - mos, pa-ra él vi - vi - mos
When we are liv - ing, it is in Christ Je - sus,



y si mo - ri - mos, pa-ra él mo - ri - mos.
and when we're dy - ing, it is in the Lord.



Sea que vi - va - mos o que mu - ra - mos,
Both in our liv - ing and in our dy - ing,



so-mos del Se - ñor, so-mos del Se - ñor.
we be - long to God, we be - long to God.

**Through all our living, we our fruits must give,
Good works of service are for offering.
When we are giving, or when receiving,
we belong to God, we belong to God.**

**Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God, we belong to God.**

**Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind,
but when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God, we belong to God.**

Words: traditional Spanish (st. 1); tr. Elise S. Eslinger, 1983
Roberto Escamilla (sts. 2-4), 1983; tr. George Lockwood, 1987
Music: Traditional Spanish

The Morning Prayer

Christopher Chapman

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.**

²¹Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”

²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

The Anthem

“I Will Arise”

Sanctuary Choir

Alice Parker/Robert Shaw, arr.

I will arise and go to Jesus, he will embrace me in his arms.
 In the arms of my dear Savior, oh, there are ten thousand charms.
 Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
 praise the mount! I’m fixed upon it, mount of God’s unchanging love!
 Come, thou Fount of every blessing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.

Words: Anonymous, 19th c., and Robert Robinson, 1758

Music: *RESTORATION*, Southern Harmony, 1835

The Sermon

Christopher Chapman

“Learning about God and Ourselves”

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 “Crashing Waters at Creation”

RESTORATION



1. Crash - ing wa - ters at cre - a - tion,
2. Part - ing wa - ters stood and trem - bled
3. Cleans - ing wa - ter once at Jor - dan
4. Liv - ing wa - ter, nev - er end - ing,



or - dered by the Spir - it's breath,
as the cap - tives passed on through,
closed a - round the one fore - told,
quench the thirst and flood the soul.



first to wit - ness day's be - gin - ning
wash - ing off the chains of bond - age—
o - pened to re - veal the glo - ry
Well - spring, source of life e - ter - nal,



from the bright - ness of night's death.
chan - nel to a life made new.
ev - er new and ev - er old.
drench our dry - ness, make us whole.

Words: Sylvia Dunstan, 1991
Music: RESTORATION, Southern Harmony, 1835

*The Offertory Prayer

The Offertory

“Voluntary on RESTORATION”
Albert L. Travis

MAUREEN HOWELL

*The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
And praise the Spirit evermore –
The Triune God, whom we adore.**

Music: Genevan Psalter 1551
Words: Thomas Ken, 1695 adapt.

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

“Recessional on THE ASH GROVE”
Jacob B. Weber

Maureen Howell

*The congregation may stand.

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The Deacon on Call is Greg Flowers. Greg is a 30-year member of First Baptist. He serves on the Worship and Hospitality Committees and is a member of the Unity Sunday School Class and the Sanctuary Choir. He and his wife Marchelle reside in Louisburg.

Thomas Archer is our offering helper today, reminding us that no matter our age, we all can offer our gifts of thanksgiving to God.

The sanctuary flowers are given today in loving memory of Richard Gene Puckett by Robbie and family.

Centerpoint: Wednesday, September 20; meal served at 5:15pm, prayer time and program at 6:15pm. This week, we will have a panel discussion of anticipated changes resulting from the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI).

Wednesday night meal reservations may be made at the church website (www.fbcraleigh.org/foodservice), by email (dmast@fbcraleigh.org), or by calling the church office (919-832-4485). The menu for September 20 is: herb-roasted chicken with potatoes and corn; non-meat option: veggie patties; kids: pizza rolls.

Please keep the 11 people going on the Wilderness class retreat to Hyco Lake campground in your prayers. They are leaving Friday, September 22, and returning Sunday, September 24.

Theology on Tap will gather at The Raleigh Times on Thursday, September 21, at 6pm. Please join us!

The mission project for September is supporting Toy Joy either by donating money to purchase toys and needed supplies, by shopping for new toys, or by donating used toys. The next donation day for used items is September 24, 12–3pm, in the fellowship hall. Please note: this day and the one in October are the only dates we can accept and process used donations (you may bring new donations at any time). See the *Rose Window Weekly* for more information.

Interest in joining a yoga class? Join us Tuesdays, 1:30–3:30pm, from September 26 until December 21 in room 302. Cost: \$20/class or \$240 for the session. Please bring all of your own gear. Email Julie Rosier (yogawithjulie@me.com) to register.

On October 1, the Scriptural Serendipity class will begin a study of the movement and influence of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. We meet in room 219, and all are invited and welcome to join us!

Our NC Missions Offering helps fund non-profit organizations doing work and providing services primarily in North Carolina. Through the generosity of FBC members, we have received \$466.36.

The Heck-Jones offering provides a way for our congregation to connect to mission work with ties to our church. As of September 7, we have received \$3,905 towards our goal of \$10,000.

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.

Visiting? We'd love to get to know you. Scan the QR code to the right to share your contact information.



Calendar Highlights • September 10–17

Sunday, September 17

- 9:00 Nominating Committee meeting (conference room)
- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 Worship (sanctuary & YouTube)
JBC worship (226)
- 12:00 Rise Against Hunger meal-packing (fellowship hall)
- 5:00 Youth choir (choir room)
- 6:00 Youth supper (fellowship hall/Blue Room)
- 6:30 Youth program (Blue Room)

Monday, September 18

- 10:00 Clothing ministry open
- 6:15 Finance Committee meeting (Zoom)
- 6:30 Music Made in Heaven (302)

Tuesday, September 19

- 10:00 Staff meeting (conference room)
- 10:45 WMU Group 2 (Springmoor)
- 1:00 WMU Group 2 (Independence Village)

Wednesday, September 20

- 1:00 WMU Circle #7 (parlor)
- 5:15 Meal served (fellowship hall)
- 5:45 Children's music (301/307/311)
- 6:15 Centerpoint (fellowship hall)
- 6:30 Children's missions (children's and preschool suites)
Handbell rehearsal (302)
- 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal (310/sanctuary)

Thursday, September 21

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 10:30 Thirty-Niners (fellowship hall)
- 5:00 Church Council meeting (Zoom)
- 6:00 High school Bible study (Sasser home)
Theology on Tap (The Raleigh Times)

Friday, September 22–Sunday, September 24

Wilderness class retreat to Hyco Lake campground

Sunday, September 24

- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 Worship (sanctuary & YouTube)
JBC worship (226)
First grade worship prep class (231)
- 12:00 Toy Joy toy collection (fellowship hall)
Adult choir lunch & rehearsal (301/310)
- 5:00 Youth choir (choir room)
- 6:00 Youth supper (fellowship hall/Blue Room)
- 6:30 Youth program (Blue Room)