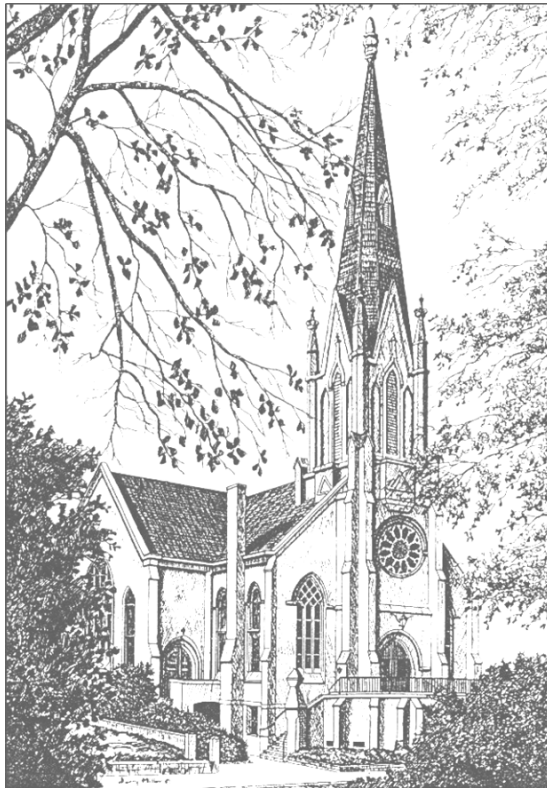


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH RALEIGH, NC

ORGANIZED MARCH 8, 1812



September 20, 2026

THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 20, 2026

Eleven o'clock

About our Worship: Today's texts explore similar themes to those we encountered last week but in a more pointed way. God's grace and our calling to reflect it in our love for others take center stage again, but now we specifically ponder the calling to love our enemy in the reading from Jonah. We know we are saved by grace and grace alone, but how do we feel about those who come to grace late in their journey? This is the question raised by Jesus' parable about workers in the vineyard. We are reminded that God's love is unlimited, which is good news for us. So, we sing songs of praise and thanksgiving, we pray for hearts to open wide, and we respond with the offering of gifts and devotion.

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

The Greeting of Worshipers

Michael Hood

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

"River of Peace"
Maureen Howell

Maureen Howell

The Call to Worship (responsive)

LEADER: Whether we embrace God's call in our lives or try to avoid it,

PEOPLE: **God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

LEADER: Whether we are longtimers or latecomers in the life of faith,

PEOPLE: **God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

LEADER: Whether our lives in Christ are comfortable or bring hardship,

PEOPLE: **God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

ALL: **We praise God's name forever and ever!**

LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD

The Hebrew Bible

Jonah 3:10–4:11

Caleb Petty

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

¹But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

LEADER: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Call to Prayer “Pues si Vivimos / When We are Living” SOMOS DEL SEÑOR
 Claire Carothers, solo

(congregation invited to sing on the repeat in either Spanish or English)

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.

Words: Mexican trad. English trans. Elise Eslinger, 1989

Music: SOMOS DEL SEÑOR, Mexican trad.

The Morning Prayer

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 Anthem

"Peace Like a River"
Mack Wilberg, arr.

Sanctuary Choir
Lauren Dunseath, cello

I've got peace like a river in my soul.

I've got faith like a river in my soul.

I've got hope like a river in my soul.

I've got love like a river in my soul.

Music and Words: African American Spiritual

The Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16

¹"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of

them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

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

*The Hymn of Devotion, 379

AR HYD Y NOS

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

[Stanza 1 – choir; stanzas 2 and 3 – **All**]

The Sermon

Christopher Chapman

"Common Themes in a Common Text"

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, 422

LLANGLOFFAN

"O God of Every Nation"

*The Offertory Prayer

The Offertory

"Long Journey"

Lauren Dunseath, cello

Kurt Kaiser

*The Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose pow'r uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674, 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

“March”
Flor Peeters

Maureen Howell

*The congregation may stand.

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We invite visitors to join us after the service for light snacks and fellowship at our visitors table found right outside the library on the second floor. Members: if you find yourself in conversation with a new guest, don’t hesitate to bring them so they can make a good connection here at FBC and learn more about the church!



The Deacon on Call is Caleb Petty. A ten-year member who has been at FBC since birth, Caleb is a member of the Wilderness Sunday School class and the Church Nominating Committee. He and his wife Claire live in Raleigh.

The sanctuary flowers are given in loving memory of Christy Isaacs Alston, on what will be her 56th birthday on September 23 by her son Alejandro Alston and her parents, Linda and Dan Roberts.

Our offering helper is Evie Filomena, reminding us that no matter our age, we all can offer our gifts of thanksgiving to God.

Sympathy to Rhonda Lowe and her family on the September 12 death of her mother, Christine Lowe.

Please keep the 12 people returning today from the children's retreat at Camp Kanata in your prayers. Remember also the many FBC members participating in the MS Bike Ride in New Bern this weekend.

Centerpoint: Wednesday, September 23; meal served at 5pm, prayer time and program at 6pm. This week, we have *Faces in the Pew* and will talk with the Formations Sunday School class, Noel Tucker, and Crystal Bacon. In person and via Zoom; see the *Rose Window Weekly* for link.

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 23 is: *pasta night*.

For our September mission project, we are supporting Toy Joy. Next week from 9:30am–12:30pm is the first of two donation collection days. At that time, we will collect new and GENTLY USED toys, games, puzzles, stuffed animals, and books. Please make sure that all used items are clean and in very good condition, with ALL of their pieces and parts included. See the *Rose Window Weekly* for links to Amazon and Target wish lists. If you prefer for our Toy Joy team to do the shopping, you may also donate funds.

In the event of an emergency, first aid kits can be found at the greeting desk in the Lewis Lobby and in the workroom in the church office. The church has two defibrillators (AED): one between the elevator and the church offices on the second floor and one on the main floor behind the sanctuary on the Edenton Street side.

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.

To access the church WiFi, please use our guest network: *FBC-MG*; password: "biography." You will need to sign in upon each use.

Calendar Highlights • September 13–20

Sunday, September 20

- 9:00 Nominating Committee meeting (conference room/Zoom)
- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 FBC worship (sanctuary/YouTube)
JBC worship (227)
- 5:00 Youth group (choir room/301/Blue Room)

Monday, September 21

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

Tuesday, September 22

- 10:00 Staff meeting (conference room)
- 10:45 WMU Group 2 (Springmoor)
- 1:00 WMU Group 2 (Independence Village)
- 1:30 Yoga (Blue Room)

Wednesday, September 23

- 5:00 Meal served (fellowship hall)
- 5:45 Children's music (301/307/311)
- 6:00 Centerpoint (fellowship hall)
- 6:30 Children's missions (preschool and children's suites)
Evening Bells rehearsal (302)
- 7:30 Adult choir rehearsal (choir room/sanctuary/301)

Thursday, September 24

- 7:00 Band of Brothers (Zoom)
- 11:30 Thirty-Niners lunch outing (High Park Bar & Grill, 625 E.
Whitaker Mill Rd)

Sunday, September 27

- 9:00 Nominating Committee meeting (conference room/Zoom)
- 9:30 Toy Joy collection (fellowship hall)
- 9:45 Sunday School
- 11:00 FBC worship (sanctuary/YouTube)
JBC worship (227)
- 5:00 Youth group (choir room/301/Blue Room)



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

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



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF RALEIGH
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Rev. Warren Howell, Music

Rev. Dr. J. Daniel Day, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Lynn Lingafelt, Children

Rev. Michael Hood, Youth/College

Rev. Jun Matsuzaki, Japanese Ministry Pastor

Maureen Howell, Organist/Music Assistant

Rev. Leah Anderson Reed, Community

A place of grace, a place of challenge, a place for you.