



Hercules Brabazon Brabazon, Mountain Landscape, 19th century

Sunday, March 5, 2023
The Second Sunday in Lent

Welcome to worship with the First Baptist Church of Christ.

Whatever road has brought you here and wherever you should go once we depart, know that you are welcome in this space fully and completely, and that the image of God we all bear together this hour is more complete because you are here as a part of it.

Things to Know

Restrooms can be found through the double doors on the side near the elevator, one flight of stairs up or one flight down.

Participate in the service as much or as little as you like. Stand when others stand, or remain seated. Sing when others sing, or enjoy the way this old sanctuary fills with sound. Invitations to stand as you are able are marked with an asterisk (*). Invitations to respond in word or song are noted in bold.

For Those With Children

Thank you for bringing a child to worship! Take a deep breath and know they are welcome here. Parents with infants are more than welcome to remain in the sanctuary, or ushers can direct you down the back stairs to a comfortable room with sound from the sanctuary so all can still hear the service. A nursery is provided for children younger than 3. Preschoolers (age 3-Kindergarten) are invited to leave after “Let the Children Come” for our W.O.W. (Working on Worship) experience.

For Those with Special Needs

Thank you for joining us for worship! We love our historic buildings, but know they can be a challenge for those with mobility needs. Know that we are committed to doing all we can to make this space welcoming to everyone. Reserved seating for those in wheel chairs and those sitting with them is found near the elevator, and is marked with signs on the walls and on the back of the pews. Please don't hesitate to ask an usher for assistance. If you have special hearing needs, please ask one of the ushers to bring you a hearing assistance device from the sound booth in the back, or feel free to go back there and get one. An accessible restroom is located up one floor across from the office. If you, or someone with you, requires special assistance for any reason, please find a minister or an usher.

THE OFFERING OF PRAISE

The Sounding of the Hour

Anne Armstrong

Finn Wallace, acolyte

The Prelude

"Processional"

Darwin Wolford

Anne Armstrong, organ

The Call to Worship

Rebecca Pursiful

Sing praise to God who reigns above, the God of all creation.

The God of power, the God of love, the God of our salvation.

With healing balm my soul God fills, and every faithless murmur stills.

To God all praise and glory!

*The Hymn of Praise 315 Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

MIT FREUDEN ZART

**Sing praise to God who reigns above, the God of all creation,
The God of power, the God of love, the God of our salvation;
With healing balm my soul He fills, and every faithless murmur stills:
To God all praise and glory.**

**What God's almighty power has made in mercy He is keeping;
By morning glow or evening shade His eye is never sleeping;
Within the kingdom of His might, lo! all is just and all is right:
To God all praise and glory.**

**The Lord is never far away, but through all grief distressing,
An ever-present help and stay, our peace and joy and blessing;
As with a mother's tender hand He leads His own, His chosen band:
To God all praise and glory.**

**Thus all my toilsome way along I sing aloud His praises,
That all may hear the grateful song my voice unwearied raises;
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart! Both soul and body bear your part:
To God all praise and glory.**

**Let all who name Christ's holy name give God all praise and glory;
Let all who know His power proclaim aloud the wondrous story.
Cast each false idol from its throne, for Christ is Lord, and Christ alone:
to God all praise and glory.**

*The Invocation

Allie Ford

*The Gloria Patri 705

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
World without end. Amen, amen.**

The Welcome

Scott Dickison

“Let the Children Come”

Rebecca Pursiful

Children in 3K-K are invited to W.O.W., a preschool worship experience! We will meet with the W.O.W. Shepherds at the end of “Let the Children Come.” Pick up your children there after worship. The W.O.W. leader this week is Allie Ford and the shepherd this week is Yumiko Jones.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS

*The Hymn of Offertory 366

O God Beyond All Praising

THAXTED

**O God beyond all praising,
We worship You today
And sing the love amazing
That songs cannot repay;
For we can only wonder
At every gift You send,
At blessings without number
And mercies without end;
We lift our hearts before You
And wait upon Your Word,
We honor and adore You,
Our great and mighty Lord.**

**Then hear, O gracious Savior,
accept the love we bring,
that we who know Your favor
may serve You as our King;
and whether our tomorrows
be filled with good or ill,
we'll triumph through our sorrows
and rise to bless You still:
to marvel at Your beauty
and glory in Your ways,
and make a joyful duty
our sacrifice of praise.**

*The Offertory Prayer

Doug Barnes
Deacon of the week

The Offertory

“I Was Glad”
The Chancel Choir

Eleanor Daley

I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet shall stand in thy gates: O Jerusalem.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls: and plenteousness within thy palaces.

Text: from Psalm 122

*The Offertory Response 186

HAMBURG

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Mission Moment

Ivy Hall
Habitat for Humanity

THE OFFERING OF THE WORD

The First Lesson

Genesis 12:1-4a

Maddie Cooke

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

For the Word of God in Holy Scripture,

Thanks be to God.

The Call to Confession

Scott Dickison

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank You for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship You have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for Your love which is unbounded and eternal,

O Thou, most holy and beloved, our Companion, our Guide upon the way.
We repent the wrongs we have done:

The Discipline of Silence

The Response 399

“O Lord, Hear My Prayer”
(*sung twice*)

Jacques Berthier

**O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer:
When I call answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.**

The Assurance of Pardon

Scott Dickison

We have wounded Your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world, transfigure us.

We forget that we are Your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Eternal Spirit, living God, in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to You,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.

Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

Amen.

The Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Scott Dickison

**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. And lead
us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory forever and ever, Amen.**

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.
For the Word of God in Holy Scripture,

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"The One Who Keeps You"

Scott Dickison

OFFERING OF COMMITMENT

*The Hymn of Commitment 566 O God, Our Help in Ages Past

ST. ANNE

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!**
**Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.**
**Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.**
**A thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.**
**Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears mortals all away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.**
**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last, and our eternal home.**

*The Benediction

Scott Dickison

*The Congregational Response 512 "We Go in Peace"

Keith Christopher

**We go in peace, we go in love,
We go with grace and mercy from the Lord above
To tell the world this very thing:
That Jesus Christ is Lord and King!**

Postlude

"Chorale Modale"
Anne Armstrong, organ

Charles Callahan

2023 Spring Musical

childrens choir Presents



Life of the



Party

The Story of Jesus
healing Lazarus



Details:

When: March 5th @ 6:00 pm

Where: First Baptist Church of Christ's
Sanctuary



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Sunday, March 5

9:45 am Sunday school
 11:00 am Worship
 4:00 pm Call time for musical cast
 6:00 pm Children's Musical

Wednesday, March 8

9:30 am Language Ministry
 5:30 pm Youth Choir
 5:30 pm Family Dinner
 6:00 pm Young Musicians and
 Music Makers in sanctuary
 6:15 pm Youth "Unplugged"
 6:30 pm Language Ministry
 Adult Bible study
 Chancel Choir rehearsal

Sunday, March 12

9:45 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship
 12:15 pm Making Disciples
 5:00 pm Youth Parents Night
 5:30 pm Master Plan meeting

Deacon of the Week

March 3 Doug Barnes
 March 9 David Johansen

Birthdays

March 5 Monica Stevens Kirby
 March 7 David Nicholson
 Marianne Kell
 March 8 Terri Collinsworth
 March 10 Chris Scoggins
 Jillian Dumas
 Steven Wallace
 March 11 Dolly Pace
 March 12 Fannie Marchetti
 Jan McGuire

Save the Date:

April 29: Church-wide Mission Day
 May 21: Graduate Sunday
 June 12-16: VBS
 July 16-19: PassportKids

The Record Speaks

As of 1/31/2023

Monthly Budget: \$50,200
 Receipts: \$47,400
 Expenses: \$50,805
 Year to Date: (\$3,405)
 Missions Giving: \$2,550

Wednesday Night Supper

Please use this QR code to make reservations this afternoon for Wednesday night, March 8.



Wednesday Night Bible Study: The Poetry of Lent.

Join us Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall as we pair scripture with poetry to illuminate the holy in our Lenten walk together.

Around the Table

We are excited to once again offer these opportunities to gather for a meal around each other's tables.

On Saturday evenings in Lent, March 11, and March 25, members of the congregation will open their homes to host a group from within the church for supper. We make an effort to mix up the guest lists to have a diverse group at every table. The meal is potluck, with the host providing the main dish and the guests bringing a side (which is usually coordinated ahead of time the week of). If you'd like to attend or host, follow the QR code below.



Lenten Devotionals

We are offering two different Lenten devotionals this year, one geared more toward families with children and youth, and another for general use. Copies are available at the church, or you can download a digital copy of the general use devotional by following the link in the Highlites.

Sanctuary Flowers

If you would like to sponsor flowers for the sanctuary this year, please use the link in the newsletter or contact Mary Leonard.

Women's Book Club

Our next women's book club gathering will be Sunday, March 26, 6:00 pm, at Tricia Whitby's house (210 Sleepy Creek Rd). The book will be *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng. Mark your calendar to join us!

Men's Retreat

Fort Mountain State Park, Chatsworth, GA
May 5-7

March is Baptist Women in Ministry (BWIM) Month of Advocacy

In an effort to build upon their annual drive to encourage churches to invite a woman to preach, this year BWIM is initiating a month of advocacy. Congregations and individuals are encouraged to "take the next step in affirming, valuing, and elevating women in ministry" by engaging in a variety of suggested actions and initiatives.

Scan the QR code below to learn more:



Or you can access an interactive monthly calendar to keep your own practice of advocating for women in ministry:



YOUTH NEWS

Mission Madness

When: April 14-16

Where: Columbus, GA

Cost: \$140

Sign up with a \$40 deposit. Mission madness is a weekend retreat coordinated by CBFGA. We will drive to Columbus, Georgia Friday afternoon and back on Sunday. We spend most of the day Saturday on mission sites throughout the community. Youth worship, work, play, and fellowship together. Cost includes t-shirt, hotel, and meals.

Parent's Night

Sunday, March 12

5:00-7:00 in basement of Just Tap'd

An event just for parents and guardians of youth! Come hang out, share in the joys and challenges of raising teens, and hear from Kelsey about what's happening in the youth ministry.

No childcare or youth event will be offered at the same time. If you'd like to coordinate with parents of older youth to watch younger students, contact Karen.

Youth Hangout

Sunday, March 26

5:00-7:00pm

CHILDREN'S NEWS

Wednesday Night Activities

5:30 pm Dinner

6:00 pm Children's Choir

6:45 pm Kids on Mission

Children's Ministry Dates:

April 2: Easter egg hunt after worship

May 20: End of school celebration

June 12-16: VBS

July 16-19: PassportKids

MISSIONS

Trip to the Border

October 22-26, 2023

CBF is offering an Educational Experience to the Texas/Mexico Border

This experience is similar to the trip we had to cancel in 2020. Meet with CBF field personnel Elket Rodriquez and Global Missions staff in Harlingen, Texas. The itinerary includes meeting with local pastors to hear about their churches' responses to border needs, attending immigration court to learn about the asylum process, volunteering at the Humanitarian Respite Center in Brownsville, a prayer walk along the border/river, and breaking bread with immigrant families as we share stories. Contact Kelsey for more information.



NOW. HERE. THIS.

No doubt by now most of you have heard of the new artificial intelligence software, ChatGPT, which we're told is ushering in a new area of technological innovation not seen since the rise of social media some fifteen years ago—yay!

ChatGPT is billed as a powerful piece of software that can scour the internet for useful information and package it within a simple chat function. It's only wrong sometimes. But of course it's up to you to figure out when!

Among the many questions raised by this leap in technology is how it might render countless jobs presently performed by humans irrelevant. Curious about how my own vocation might fare in the face of such a threat, I asked ChatGPT to write this week's Now. Here This. under the prompt, "How should I observe Lent this year?"

Here's what it gave me. Enjoy! (I'll have a few concluding thoughts at the end.)

1. *Give up something: Traditionally, people give up something they enjoy during Lent as a form of sacrifice and self-discipline. This could be anything from sweets to social media to television.*
2. *Add something: Instead of giving something up, you could add something to your routine. This could be something like volunteering, reading a*

religious text, or spending more time in prayer.

3. *Attend church: Lent is a time when many churches hold special services and events, such as Ash Wednesday and Holy Week services. Attending these events can help you reflect on the season and deepen your spiritual practices.*
4. *Practice forgiveness: Lent is a time to reflect on our own shortcomings and seek forgiveness for our sins. Consider reaching out to someone you may have wronged and asking for their forgiveness.*
5. *Fast: Fasting is another traditional practice during Lent. You could fast by abstaining from food for a period of time, or by fasting from something else that is important to you.*

Remember, the most important thing is to approach Lent with a spirit of humility, openness, and reflection. Whatever you choose to do during this season, make sure it is something that will help you grow spiritually and draw closer to God."

Well, that made me a little nervous! I expected "give something up" and "fast," was impressed by "add something," was grateful for "attend church" and was a little taken aback by "practice forgiveness"—that's some higher level spiritual counseling.

So, to ease my mind I asked a follow-up:
“How might a pastor have offered a
better answer to that question?”

ChatGPT’s response:

“As an AI language model, I am not able to evaluate the quality of a pastor's answer. However, a pastor may be able to offer a more tailored response to this question based on their understanding of the individual's spiritual background, interests, and personal goals. They may be able to provide more specific guidance on how to observe Lent in a way that aligns with the individual's beliefs and practices. Additionally, a pastor may be able to offer additional resources such as Lenten devotionals or recommend specific Lenten practices that are commonly observed in their denomination or tradition. Ultimately, a pastor's response may be more personalized and grounded in their knowledge of the individual's needs and spiritual journey.”

That was a relief!

Which reminds me, we’ll have details about our Holy Week schedule out next week, devotionals are available in the church office, we continue this week with our Wednesday Bible Study, “The Poetry of Lent,” and if you’d like to get together for coffee or, well, any pastoral need a computer can’t meet, my email is scott@fbcxmacon.org.

SHD

Signs of the Season

The paraments on the pulpit and communion table along with the ministers' stoles are visual reminders of the current season of the church year. The season of Lent lasts forty days, beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending with Easter Sunday. It is traditionally a time of fasting, penitence, and prayer. The color purple, symbolizing repentance, marks the season.

Sanctuary Flowers

The sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God and In honor of the marriage of Angela Windham and Michelle Thompson.



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PASTOR

Allie Ford
MINISTRY INTERN

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Connie Pursiful
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Rebecca Pursiful
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Tricia Whitby
VICE CHAIR OF DEACONS