



How does a
weary world
rejoice? *We allow ourselves
to be amazed*

Our Worship of God

December 17, 2023

11:15 am

(† Indicates those who are able, please stand)

~ Third Sunday of Advent ~

Welcome

Caleb Cooke, *Pastoral Resident*

Prelude

What Child is This?

arr. Jefferey Hall

Chancel Bells

David Chang and Olivia Chang, *cello*

†Call to Worship (responsive)

Caleb Cooke, *Pastoral Resident*

Our God can part the sea.

**God can bring water from a rock,
and provide bread in the desert.**

Our God can walk on water.

**He can heal the sick,
and turn water into wine.**

Our God sets the stars in the sky.

**God hears our voice when we cry,
and is closer than our own breath.**

There is nothing our God cannot do.

**Let us be filled with awe.
Let us worship God with wonder.**

†Opening Hymn

Isn't It Amazing

Sung to: GLORIA (“Angels We Have Heard on High”)

*Seeds within the soil grow
Deep under the ground below
Planted when the earth was bare
No life showing anywhere*

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

*Deeper, deeper grow the roots
Reaching upward grow the shoots
Through the earth they weave and snake
Until soil starts to break
(Refrain)*

*Cell by cell a plant is built
Toward the sun the leaves will tilt
Nourished by the sun and rain
To bring forth its seed and grain
(Refrain)*

*Even when the earth seems bare
Plant the seeds of hope with care
If you water in the drought
You will reap with joyous shout
(Refrain)*

†Passing the Peace of Christ

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

Anne Bills & Debbie Jacobs

How does a weary world practice joy?

By dancing, and throwing birthday parties.

By hanging Christmas lights, and holding sleepy babies.

By singing loudly, and looking for good news.

By telling the story of Jesus, and showing up for our community.

There are a million ways to practice joy.

So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge.

With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.

The third candle is lit.

†Hymn 146

Joy to the World

Scripture Reading

Hugh Emerson

Luke 1:57-66

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For indeed the hand of the Lord was with him.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise be to Christ.

Sharing Our Gifts

Anthem

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

arr. Mack Wilberg

Chancel Choir

Brenna Donnelly, *soloist*

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall
Oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the Babe is Lord of all
Swiftly winging angels singing, Nowells ringing, tidings bringing
Christ the Babe is Lord of all. Christ the Babe is Lord of all.*

*Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow
Christ the Babe was born for you. Christ the Babe was born for you.*

Affirmation of Faith

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

We believe in a God who knows our names,
**who counts the hairs on our heads,
and carries the dreams in our hearts.**

We believe that God's fingerprints are all over creation,
and that God is forever speaking to us in a million different ways.

We believe that awe and wonder,
goosebumps and laughter, telling stories and paying attention,
are all ways that we can say thank you
to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.

**Therefore we commit ourselves to moving through this world
with eyes wide open, with joyous hearts, and grateful spirits.**

We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude,
**trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper
into God's loving arms.**

We believe.

**We are in awe.
Thanks be to God!**

†Hymn 166

While by the Sheep We Watched

Message

We Allow Ourselves to be Amazed

Caleb Cooke

†Hymn of Response

Light Dawns on a Weary World

*Light dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to see all people's dignity.
Light dawns on a weary world: the promised day of justice comes.*

*The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.*

*Love grows in a weary world when hungry hearts
find bread and children's dreams are fed.
Love grows in a weary world: the promised fest of plenty comes.*

*The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.*

*Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures,
once forlorn, find wilderness reborn.
Hope blooms in a weary world: the promised green of Eden comes.*

*The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.*

Life of the Church

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

†Benediction

Caleb Cooke, *Pastoral Resident*

Family of faith,
as you leave this place,
you go into a weary world—
so speak tenderly.
Do the good that is yours to do.
Choose connection.
Hold onto hope.
And remember that Christ
took on flesh for you.
You are God's beloved.
So go rejoicing.
The world needs it.
Amen.

†Postlude

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear arr. Smith & Hustad
Colleen Ostercamp, *organ* Carter Thiemann, *piano*

Worship Notes

Isn't It Amazing, ©Anna Strickland, 2023. Commissioned by A Sanctified Art, LLC. Free for congregational use.

Joy to the World, Words: Isaac Watts, 1719; para. of Psalm 98. Music: Lowell Mason, 1848; based on G. F. Handel, 1742.

While by the Sheep We Watched, Words: Traditional German Carol. Music: Traditional German melody.

Light Dawns on a Weary World, Words: Mary Louise Bringle, 2001. Music: William P. Rowan, 2000.

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Week at a Glance

Sunday, December 17

- 9:10 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
- 9:15 am Awakening Worship in the Fellowship Hall
- 10:15 am Spiritual Formation Hour –Adult, Youth & First Kids Sunday School
- 11:15 am Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary
- 5:00 pm Christmas Dinner in the Fellowship Hall

Monday, December 18

- 1:00 pm Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 20

- 5:30 pm Chancel Bells Concert at Lenior Greenwood Room

Thursday, December 21

- 10:30 am First Baptist Women’s Zoom Book Study
- 6:00 pm Blue Christmas Service in the Fellowship Hall

Friday, December 22

- OFFICES CLOSED for Christmas Holiday

Sunday, December 24

- 10:15 am Spiritual Formation Hour –Adult, Youth & First Kids Sunday School
- 11:15 am Combined Worship in the Sanctuary
- 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25-Tuesday, December 26

- OFFICES CLOSED for Christmas Holiday

Announcements

Welcome Visitors!

If you are visiting, we are so glad to have you with us! If you would like to receive more information about First Baptist and our ministries, you can fill out a connection card at the welcome table, scan the QR code in the bulletin, or visit our website at fbc-columbia.org/connect.



Self-Study Survey

Following both worship services, the Self-Study Committee is asking you to stay for a brief update and to begin our self-study survey. The Survey can be found at <https://bit.ly/FBCCOMOSurvey>. Paper copies are available upon request. The deadline to complete the survey is December 24. The Self-Study Committee will share a summary of this survey at two Table Talk sessions, with a third meeting to elect the pastoral search committee. All three Sundays will be structured with combined worship at 10:15 am. Both Table Talks will take place in the Fellowship Hall with pastries, fruit, coffee, and juice provided by the church. Youth are encouraged to participate, and childcare will be provided.



- **January 7, 2024** - Immediately following combined worship, the self-study team will present a summary of the Values and Vision sections of the survey and conversation will center around our Values and Vision.
- **February 4, 2024** - Immediately following worship, the self-study team will present a summary of the Pastor Skills, Characteristics, and Tasks sections of the survey and conversations will focus on the skills and responsibilities of our next Senior Pastor.
- **March 3, 2024** - Immediately following combined worship, the congregation will elect the Senior Pastor Search Committee. Our bylaws provide guidance, and more details will be provided in the weeks to come.

Forward in Faith

We ask our faith community to consider partnering with us by pledging their financial support. Our theme for this year's annual pledge drive is Forward in Faith. As we move into our 200th year of ministry, we wanted a theme that reflected the church's commitment to the future. Your pledge ensures that our unique progressive Christian voice will continue. You can pledge at <https://fbc-columbia.org/giving/>.



First Baptist 200th Anniversary Christmas Ornament!

Crafted from locally sourced, natural Missouri red oak or cherry, each ornament is laser-engraved by a talented local artisan. Add a reminder of our church family and anniversary celebration to your Christmas decor for \$7.00. You can purchase an ornament by using this QR code:

Ornaments will be ready in the first quarter of 2024!



Christmas Dinner – Tonight, December 17 at 5pm

We invite you to join us for our Annual Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 17, at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Come prepared for a lovely meal of turkey, ham, and beverages provided by the church, and excellent side dishes and desserts prepared by you and your First Baptist friends. To help ensure we have a variety of food, we encourage you to bring a side dish if your last name begins A-M and a dessert if your last name begins with N-Z. Young musicians will provide special entertainment and our Chaotic Christmas Pageant is back for another year of fun and laughter. Come feast and celebrate with us!

Blue Christmas Service - December 21

6 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Although the season of Advent is joyful for so many, we also know that the holiday season can be drenched in fatigue, grief, and loneliness. For those who have experienced loss, the joy of the holiday season can often feel elusive and out of reach. As a result, churches around the world have adopted the practice of having a “Blue Christmas” or a “Longest Night” service during the Advent season. These services are designed to provide space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance amidst the twinkle lights and holiday hustle and bustle. Honoring our Advent theme, we wanted to provide a special service for the weary. Bring your grief. Bring your weariness. Bring your fatigue, and allow yourself space to reflect and draw near to God. *At this time, we are unable to offer childcare. If you would like to volunteer with our children so others who may need this space to grieve can attend, please contact Pastor Brittany.*

Sundays of Christmastide

See below for the worship schedule beginning on December 24:

- December 24 at 11:15 am – Combined worship in the Sanctuary celebrating the Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 24 at 11:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- December 31 at 10:15 am – Brunch worship in the Fellowship Hall
- January 7 at 10:15 am – Combined worship in the Fellowship Hall with Pastoral Resident Caleb Cooke preaching, followed by a church-wide conversation.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service- December 24

11:00 pm in the Sanctuary

With joy, we will celebrate the coming of Christ with carols, a retelling of the Christmas story, and the tradition of sharing the light with candles as we sing “Silent Night.” Bring family and friends and join us as we worship in the Sanctuary at 11:00 pm. On Christmas Eve morning, we will have small groups at 10:15 am, followed by a combined worship service at 11:15 am in the sanctuary.

New Year's Eve Brunch Worship

We will celebrate New Year's Eve on Sunday, December 31, with Brunch Worship at 10:15 am and gather in the Fellowship Hall around tables to worship God through song, food, and conversation. You can contribute to worship by bringing a yummy potluck dish to share. Brunch Worship will be in-person only and takes the place of all other worship offerings for the day.

Annual Business Meeting - Sunday, January 21

10:15 am - Fellowship Hall

Join us Sunday, January 21 at 10:15 am in the Fellowship Hall for our Annual Business Meeting. We will vote on the Nominating Committee report and elect our leadership for 2023. Then, we will hear a report from the finance committee and vote on the 2023 budget.



First Baptist Church
columbia, mo

Rev. Brittany McDonald Null, Pastor of Families and Spiritual Formation

Caleb Cooke, Pastoral Resident

Jonathan Ray, Music Director-Traditional Worship

Shelby Myers, Awakening Worship Praise Band Director

Colleen Ostercamp, Pianist and Organist

Noah Hartsfield, Handbell Director

Susan Goudie, Administrative Assistant

Brenda Rice, Administrative Assistant for Web, Facilities, and Arts

Mike Ide, Custodian

Marcy Douglas, Childcare Coordinator

Ella Pritchett, Student Intern