

First Baptist Church at Worship

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Ten-thirty O'clock in the Morning

“Power From on High”

Gathering

Greeting

Jeremiah Banks

Keaton Bales, acolyte

Prelude

Joy to the World (The Savior Is Here)

arr. by Caleb & Kelsey

Alice Tremaine and Summer Walter

Lighting the Candle of Joy

David & Cheryl Landrum

Teresa & Emily Morton

When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed,

“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.”

In this season of waiting and expectation, we pray for power from on high that God would come down and heal our broken world.

We light this candle as a sign of joy for this world, and we wait in anticipation for our coming Lord.

In joy, we worship the God who brings good news.

+Hymn 87

Arise, Your Light Is Come!

FESTAL SONG

+Prayer of the Day

Carolyn Garr

*Holy God of Joy, we rejoice in the reality of who you are. We live within the joy of your love for us. Our contentment comes and goes. Our happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children. And we give you thanks. **Amen.***

+The Peace

Alex Lockridge

*The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.*

*Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Proclaiming

A Reading from Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Janie Akins

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I, the Lord, love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my whole being shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Children's Sermon

Jeremiah Banks

+Hymn of Expectation

Live into Hope

DUKE STREET

*Live into hope of captives freed, of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see the year of God's own jubilee!
Live into hope! The blind shall see with insight and with clarity,
Removing shades of pride and fear, a vision of our God brought near.
Live into hope of liberty, the right to speak, the right to be,
The right to have one's daily bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed.
Live into hope of captives freed from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release to faith and hope and joy and peace.*

A Reading from the Gospels: John 1:6-9, 19-28

Alex Lockridge

The Gospel of our Lord

Thanks be to God

Sermon

“The Power of Joy”

Alex Lockridge

Responding

+Hymn 301

In This Very Room

IN THIS VERY ROOM

If you desire to become a follower of Christ or if you wish to present yourself for membership today, please come to the front of the sanctuary during the hymn and a minister will receive you. You are welcome here.

+Offertory Prayer

Jeremiah Banks

Loose change received in December will go to the White Flag Ministry fund.

Offertory

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

arr. by Sandra Eithun

FBC Handbell Choir

Prayers of the People

Alex Lockridge

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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

+Doxology for Advent

VENI EMMANUEL

*To You, O Christ, all glory be, whose advent sets Your people free;
Whom, with the Father, we adore, and Holy Spirit, evermore;
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Sending

+Hymn 102

Joy to the World! The Lord is Come

ANTIOCH

+Commission and Blessing

Alex Lockridge

*Beloved, hear this good news:
God's love never fails, and is always at work
To bring us back to God and one another.
May God restore us to the joy of our common life now and always. Amen.*

Organ Postlude

Joy to the World!

setting by David Lasky

+all who are able may stand

leading in worship today

Janie Akins
reader

Rev. Jeremiah Banks
Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation

Donna Davis
Organist

Samuel Garr
pianist

Carolyn Garr
Interim Music Director

Rev. Alex Lockridge
Senior Pastor

*The Advent wreath is placed in memory of
Felix & Mattie Pace and
Leonard & Marie Leake
by
Kevin & Sherry Pace; Daniel, Lindsay, Jackson, Harrison, & Emerson Lowe*

Today's organ music is from a library of more than 1,000 digitized hymns, anthems, and solo-organ music that Gayle Majors recorded over the last several years. We are thankful for Gayle's life, for her 36-year tenure as Organist for First Baptist Church, and for this fine legacy that she has left for us.