

First Baptist Church at Worship

March 12, 2017
Ten-thirty O'clock in the Morning

The Second Sunday in Lent

Gathering

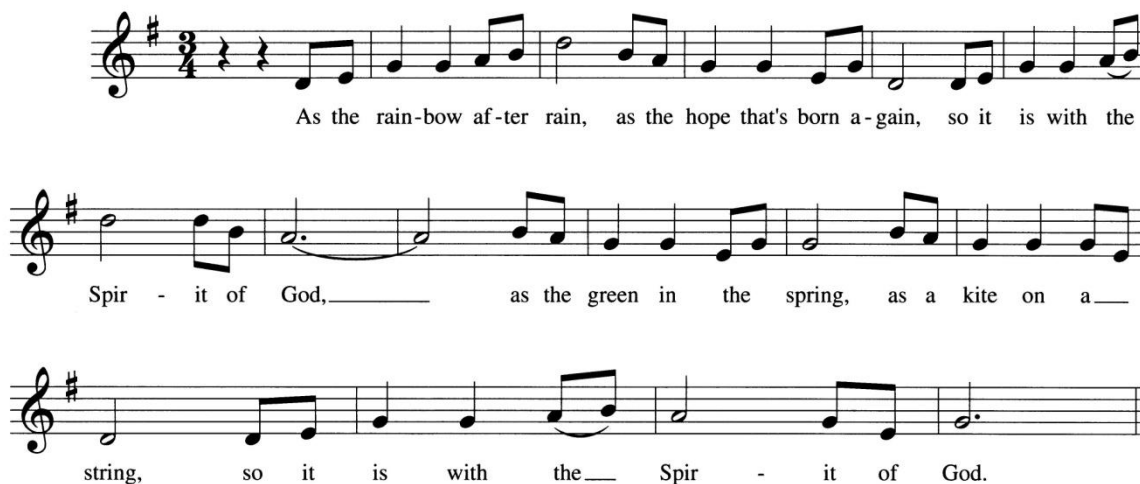
Greeting

Austin Carty

Gathering Song

So It Is with the Spirit of God

by Swee Hong Lim



As the rain-bow af-ter rain, as the hope that's born a-gain, so it is with the
Spir - it of God, _____ as the green in the spring, as a kite on a ____
string, so it is with the _____ Spir - it of God.

*Never seen, ever known where this wind has blown bringing life, bringing power to the world,
As the dancing tongues of fire, as the soul's most deep desire, so it is with the Spirit of God. REFRAIN*
- Shirley Erena Murray, 21st century

Call to Worship

Alex Lockridge

We gather today in celebration of our birth into the Kingdom of God.

***Spirit of God, giver of new beginnings, open our eyes
to see Love, high and lifted up, on the cross of Calvary.
Breathe into us the breath of life that lasts forever,
and reveal to us the kingdom of God in all its glory.***

+Hymn 355

We Praise Thee, O God

REVIVE US AGAIN

+Prayer of Confession

Paul Sims

+Assurance of Forgiveness

Cameroon melody; setting by John Bell

The Word

Children's Sermon

Alex Lockridge

Psalm 121

setting by Hal Hopson



I look high to the hills. From where shall come my help?

*My help comes only from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. **REFRAIN***

God will not let you fall; the guardian of your life never sleeps.

*No, never sleeps, nor slumbers, the guardian of Israel true. **REFRAIN***

God is your help and shade, ever near to protect and guide you.

*The sun shall not strike you by day; the moon shall not harm you by night. **REFRAIN***

- 20th century

A Reading from the Epistles: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

Austin Carty

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

+Hymn 251

I Will Be Your God

LLANFYLLIN

A Reading from the Gospels: John 3:1-17

Alex Lockridge

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

***“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

*The Gospel of our Lord
Thanks be to God*

Sermon

“Be Not Astonished”

Austin Carty

Responding

+Hymn 349

To God Be the Glory

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

If you wish to present yourself for membership today, or if you have another decision to share, please come to the front of the sanctuary during the hymn and a minister will receive you. You are welcome here.

+Offertory Prayer

Steve Surmont

Loose change received in March will support the work of The Everlasting Arm homeless shelter.

Offertory Anthem

God So Loved the World

by Thomas Keesecker

God so loved the world, he gave his only Son.

A Son to shine in our darkness, a light to cast out despair.

He comes to take away evil, and in his light we have life!

And everyone who believes will have eternal life.

Lord, lifted up, we come to you with wonder, thanks, and praise.

Thank you, Lord, for your steadfast love. Let all who seek you rejoice.

Deliver us from distress and lead us forth in joy.

Do not live in fear. Called to life, arise!

Turn away from sin. Oh come, Lord, enter in.

Faith Story

Ruth Bradley

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 Lent

OLD HUNDREDETH

Praise God, the Source of life and birth.

Praise God the Word, who came to earth.

Praise God the Spirit, holy flame.

All glory to God's holy name! Amen.

Sending

+Hymn 415

Lift High the Cross

CRUCIFER

refrain – all; stanzas – choir

+Commission and Blessing

Austin Carty

Paul says:

***The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
generosity, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.***

May we live by the Spirit.

Amen.

Organ Postlude

Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound

setting by Diane Bish

+all who are able may stand

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Gayle Majors, Organist

Ann Hacker, Pianist

Alice Tremaine, soloist

Carolyn Garr, flutist

The picture on the screens is from Cameroon, Africa, and depicts Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus. It is from a series of paintings entitled JESUS MAFA, wherein photographic interpretations of gospel passages were staged and then transcribed to paintings. The song that serves as our Assurance of Forgiveness, *He Came Down*, is also from Cameroon. It is a "reminder" song: helping us to remember what Jesus brings us, why he came, and, therefore, what spiritual gifts we should be practicing and affirming as a community of disciples.

The choral anthem, *God So Loved the World*, is based on John 3:14-21 and Psalm 107. The anthem quotes the hymn, *Lift High the Cross*, written in 1916 by George Kitchin and Michael Newbolt. *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself* (John 12:32).

Sanctuary flowers are given in honor of

Casie McBurney

in celebration of her 18th birthday

by her grandparents,

Bobby and Linda McBurney