

The background is a deep purple with lighter purple, wavy, layered shapes that create a sense of depth. A large, solid black cross is positioned on the right side. Several palm fronds are scattered throughout the design, some overlapping the wavy shapes and the cross. The overall aesthetic is modern and spiritual.

**Seventh & James Baptist Church**  
**February 26, 2023 · 11:00 a.m.**  
**The First Sunday of Lent**  
**Living Questions**

**Seventh & James Baptist Church**  
**February 26, 2023 · 11:00 a.m.**  
**The First Sunday of Lent**

**Living Questions: Did God say...?**

**Chiming of the Hour**

**Meditation**

“I Call to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ”  
*(Ich ruf’ zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ)* BWV 639

J.S. Bach

**Welcome and Call to Worship**

Erin Conaway

One: We gather together at the edge of a new season.

**Many: We stand together on the cusp of something new.**

One: Will we wade into self-reflection?

**Many: Will we invite honesty to dance?**

One: Will we listen for God’s invitation?

**Many: Will we seek deeper faith?**

One: What kind of fast do we choose? What kind of faith will we build?

**Many: We gather together at the edge of a new season.**

One: Listen, God is speaking.

— Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed  
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**Choral Summons**

“Psalm 32”

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;

When the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;

You surround me with shouts of deliverance.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;

I will guide you with my eye.

Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.

Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

**Processional Hymn, No. 332**

“O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

**Litany of Lenten Travels**

Leslie Rosencrans

One: The journey is never longer than when we take the first step, and as we gaze down this road to the cross on which we must travel this Lenten season, we ask, O God, for you to give us courage and strength for this journey.

**Many: Help us move closer to the cross, and the enormity of your Love.**

One: It is not without a great deal of inner resistance that we assume a penitent posture. Everything in our world beckons us to gather, to conquer, to keep, to take...we know these things are fleeting so we want more for when they run out, but you call us to set a few of them aside just for a season; to taste and see that you are good, and that you provide for us.

**Many: Help us to let go and take up all that will get our attention and focus our hearts on you.**

One: We set our faces toward Jerusalem, and the journey you took to get there. Help us to travel deeply and to abandon the fear that would prevent us from clearing out a kneeling place in our hearts and in our lives. Guide us along this path, for you know it intimately and have the scars to prove it.

**All: Help us to see the way, to overcome our fear, and to walk with you.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Leslie Rosencrans

**Meditation**

“Dido’s Lament”  
 (“When I am laid in earth”) from *Dido and Aeneas* arr. Torun Fredberg  
 Kristin Mortenson, *violin*

**Old Testament Reading**

*Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7*

Linda McManness

**Epistle Reading**

*Romans 5:12-19*

Joy Marshall

**What Is God Calling Us to Give?**

**Hymn, No. 169**

“Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”

**Gospel Reading**

*Matthew 4:1-11*

Daniel Farris

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

## Prayers of God's People

Daniel Farris

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever. Amen.

## The Work of God's People

Sharon Rollins

## Offertory

“Be Still, My Soul”

(FINLANDIA)  
Jean Sibelius  
arr. Tyler Castleton

Kristin Mortenson, *violin*  
Lydia Bratcher, *piano*

Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship.

## Doxology

*(sung to O WALY, WALY, tune of “When Love Is Found,” No. 524)*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

## Children's Sermon

Leslie Rosencrans

*All children are invited to come forward for the Children's Sermon.  
Preschoolers [ages 4-kindergarten] may then go to Extended Session.*

## Anthem

“Offertory”

John Ness Beck

With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
Shall I come before him with yearling calves?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
With ten thousand rivers of oil?  
Shall I give him my firstborn for my transgressions,  
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has shown you, o man; He has shown you what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness  
And to walk humbly with your God.

**Sermon**

“Did God Say...?”  
(Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7)

Erin Conaway

## **Silent Reflection**

We have so moralized [Satan] that we fail to see that the most satanic temptation of all is the temptation to become someone other than ourselves. When people try to be ‘good Christians’ — what is that but Satan’s crowning victory? For ‘being a good Christian’ is always collectively defined by some denomination or strong religious personality or creed. One does not need to ‘live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’ in order to be a ‘good Christian’; one need only be pliant, docile, and obedient. Is it not easier to ‘let Jesus do it all for us,’ or imitate Christ, rather than embark on the risky, vulnerable, hazardous journey of seeking to find God’s will in all its mundane specificity for our own lives?

— Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, p. 19

## **Hymn of Commitment, No. 409**

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

*If you would like to make a public profession of your faith in Christ  
or request membership in this congregation, our ministers  
will greet you at the front of the sanctuary.*

## **Congregational Response**

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place; we offer you our love, our care, our kinship, and our hopes; we hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, by God’s grace. Amen.

## **Going Out**

Scott Turner

**One:** We have questions, some are trivial and some rise from the unseen depths of our souls.

**Many:** We seek your face, O Lord...not only the answers...but the love, the grace, the mercy, and the mystery in which we trust you will reveal enough for us to move forward together.

One: As our shared focus grows darker in this room, may the light we carry to the world grow ever brighter.

**Many: Guide us to love, even when it hurts;**

One: Help us to walk in faith, even when the way is hidden;

**All: Be with us as we journey into eternity and your victorious kingdom that begins and continues even now. Amen.**

### **Choral Response**

“Be Thou My Vision”

arr. Paul Basler

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art:  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

### **Postlude**

“Toccata in E Minor”

Johann Pachelbel

## **Today at Seventh**

**Our Pianist today** is Donnie Balmos.

**The Sanctuary Flowers** are given in honor of Lillian Claire Lowe on her 17th birthday.  
*Colossians 1:9-14*

**The Art on the Cover** was designed by Rachel Farris.

Hearing devices are available at the sound booth for any who need assistance.

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