

Worship Preparation

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of DURHAM

What Is Exceptional about This Week?

- Dr. Andrew Davis will be preaching a sermon entitled **“The Second Greatest Act of Faith in History”** based on **Hebrews 11:17-19**.
- We will hear a testimony of God’s work from **Adam Darnell** and the **South Durham Church**.
- Through our worship in song, we will be singing about the sovereignty of God in the midst of our trials as Christians.
 - **“Come, People of the Risen King”**
 - **“God Moves in a Mysterious Way” 73**
 - **“Blessed Be Your Name”**
 - **“God Will Provide a Lamb”**
(Jason Burgin will be singing this great song by Michael Card.)
 - **“Lamb of God”**



“God Moves in a Mysterious Way”

William Cowper’s Profound Hymn

The hymn “God Moves in a Mysterious Way” has been acclaimed as one of the finest songs ever written on the theme of **God’s providence**. This label is made all the more amazing by the fact that the hymn text was written by an English poet who lived a lifetime of mental distress. William Cowper’s emotional upsets included an 18-month stay in an insane asylum and later several attempted suicides. During his time in the asylum, Cowper began reading the Bible. At the age of 33 he had a genuine conversion experience. Yet he was periodically haunted by deep depressions, vices, and visions, and the overwhelming thought that God had forsaken him and would doom him to hell.

But between these ties of mental melancholia, William Cowper was a gifted writer. Several of his secular works achieved great literary fame. For nearly two decades he worked closely with John Newton in Olney, England, and eventually their combined talents produced the famous *Olney Hymns* hymnal. In this ambitious collection of 349 hymns, 67 were written by Cowper, including such favorites as “O for a Closer Walk with God” and “There Is a Fountain.”

“God Moves in a Mysterious Way” was originally titled **“Conflict: Light Shining out of Darkness.”** It is thought to be Cowper’s final hymn text and a reflection of God’s leading throughout his own lifetime. There is even speculation that it was written following a failed attempt at suicide drowning. Regardless of the original motivation for their writing, these words have since been used to bring much **comfort** to God’s people for nearly two centuries.

-Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Stories for Daily Devotions, by Kenneth W. Osbeck

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.”

Hebrews 12:28-29



When Abraham left his servants behind, while he and Isaac were going to the place of sacrifice, he said to them, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then **we will come back** to you" (Gen. 22:5). Abraham expected to return with Isaac, and since he intended to sacrifice his son in obedience to God, the only way this could happen was through God's restoring Isaac's life.

-Peter T. O'Brien, on Heb. 11:19

Pray for our Leaders:

- ✓ **Preaching:** Andrew Davis
- ✓ **Leading in Prayer:** Andrew Davis, Flynn Cratty, Chase Jenkins, Ryan Hutchinson
- ✓ **Leading in Praise:** Worship Ministry Team, Jason Burgin (solo)
- ✓ **Reading Scripture:** Herb Bullard
- ✓ **Church Life:** Ryan Hutchinson
- ✓ **Translating:** Herbert Rivera
- ✓ **South Durham Church Testimony:** Adam Darnell

SUNDAY'S SERMON:

"The Second Greatest Act of Faith in History"

*The following passage is the Sermon Scripture for Sunday. Read and meditate on God's Word, and memorize the verse printed in **bold**, this week's suggested memory verse.*

HEBREWS 11:17-19 (NIV)

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

¹⁸ even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."

¹⁹ **Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.**