



Greenwood Forest

Baptist Church





Greenwood Forest
Baptist Church

March 13, 2022

LENT

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Scan to give!

an inclusive community of faith

► Welcome to worship!

We are so glad you've chosen to join us this week. Greenwood Forest Baptist Church is an inclusive community of faith, which means we welcome, affirm, and include all God's people in their diversity of genders, sexual orientations, races, ethnicities, ages, abilities, and backgrounds. We are each beloved by God and we are happy to welcome you to our church this morning exactly as you are.

► *Today's color is purple for Lent, a season of reflection and repentance.*

► *Hearing assistance devices are available at the back of the sanctuary.*

► *Services are livestreamed and you may end up on camera.*



Order of Worship

Second Sunday of Lent

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

They Laid Jesus Christ in His Gave

Woody Guthrie

Jesus Christ was a man
who traveled through the land
hard working man and brave.

He said to the rich,
"Give your goods to the poor."

So they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

He went to the sick, he went to the poor,
and he went to the hungry and the lame;
said that the poor would one day
win this world,
and so they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

He went to the preacher,
he went to the sheriff,
told them all the same;
"Sell all of your jewelry
and give it to the poor,"

but they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

When Jesus came to town,
the working folks around,
believed what he did say;
the bankers and the preachers
they nailed him on a cross,
and they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

Poor working people,
they followed him around,
sung and shouted gay;
cops and the soldiers,
they nailed him in the air,
and they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

Well the people held their breath when
they heard about his death,
and everybody wondered why;
it was the landlord and the soldiers
that he hired

That nailed Jesus Christ in the sky.

When the love of the poor
shall one day turn to hate.
When the patience of the workers
gives away,

"Would be better for you rich
if you never had been born,"
so they laid Jesus Christ in his grave.

This song was written in New York City
of rich men, preachers and slaves.

Yes, if Jesus was to preach
like he preached in Galilee,
they would lay Jesus Christ in his grave.

Welcome to Worship

Rev. Lauren Efird

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace

Rev. Efird

Call to Worship (Sanctified Art)

Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks

Leader: God is a hen,

People: And we are under her wing.

Leader: God is a table,

People: And we each have a seat.

Leader: God is a house,

People: And we are safe from the storm.

Leader: God is a party,

People: And we're invited to dance.

Leader: God is a melody,

People: And our names are the lyrics.

Leader: This is God's house, and all are loved.

People: Let us worship holy God.

Invocation

Rev. Dr. Stacks

Gathering Hymn

Like a Mother with Her Children

(see page 4)

Offertory Prayer

Katie Lockhart

Presentation of the Offering

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, who forms us from the dust.

Praise Christ, who frees us through the cross.

Praise Holy Ghost who drives us on

To meet God in the wilderness. Amen.

Like a Mother with Her Children

Unison



1. Like a moth - er with her chil - dren You will com - fort us each
 2. In Your im - age You have made us, call - ing each of us by
 3. With Your vi - sion You in - spire us, giv - ing each a ho - ly

day, giv - ing guid - ance on our jour - ney, as we
 name, giv - ing strength for ev - ery chal - lenge as our
 call; we will o - pen doors of free - dom by Your

seek to find our way. When we walk through fi - ery
 gifts we ful - ly claim. We can hear You gent - ly
 pow - er in us all. Life a - bun - dant spreads be -

tri - als, You will help us take a stand; when we
 say - ing, "Do not wor - ry, do not fear; for I'll
 fore us as with ea - gle's wings we soar; join - ing

pass through trou - bled wa - ters, You hold out Your ten - der hand.
 al - ways go be - side you; ev - ery mo - ment I am near."
 in Your new cre - a - tion, we re - joice for - ev - er - more.

The Prayers of the People

Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome

We affirm each prayer with the following response:

Leader: Lord, in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

We conclude the Prayers of the People with 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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Luke 13:31-35

Rev. Efir

We affirm the reading of Scripture with the following response:

Reader: The word of God for us, the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Gather Us In

arr. Lloyd Larson

Here in this place new light is streaming	Here we will take the wine and the water
Now is the darkness vanished away	Here we will take the bread of new birth
See in this space our fears and our dreamings	Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
Brought here to you in the light of this day	Call us anew to be salt for the earth
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken	Give us to drink the wine of compassion
Gather us in, the blind and the lame	Give us to eat the bread that is you
Call to us now and we shall awaken	Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
We shall arise at the sound of our name	Lives that are holy and hearts that are true
We are the young, our lives are a mystery	Not in the dark of buildings confining
We are the old who yearn for your face	Not in some heaven light years away
We have been sung throughout all of history	But here in this place the new light is shining
Called to be light to the whole human race	Now is the kingdom, now is the day
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty	Gather us in and hold us forever
Gather us in, the proud and the strong	Gather us in and make us your own
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly	Gather us in, all peoples together
Give us the courage to enter the song	Fire of love in our flesh and our bones

Sermon

Rev. Melissa Florer-Bixler

Hymn

God of Grace and God of Glory

1. God of grace and God of — glo - ry on thy peo - ple
2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil — round us scorn thy Christ, as -
3. Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils
4. Set our feet on loft - y — plac - es; gird our lives that

4
pour thy pow'r; crown thine an - cient chur - ch's — sto - ry,
sail his ways! Fears and doubts too long have — bound us,
we de - plore; let the seach for thy sal - va - tion
they may be ar - mored with all Christ - like — grac - es

7
bring her bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom,
free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wis - dom,
be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom,
in the fight to set all free. Grant us wis - dom,

10
grant us cour - age, for the fac - ing of this hour.
grant us cour - age, for the liv - ing of these days.
grant us cour - age, serv - ing thee whom we a - dore.
grant us cour - age, that we fail not man nor thee!

Text: Harry Emerson Fosdick

Tune: EDEN CHURCH
by Dale Wood

Benediction

Rev. Efird

Postlude

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Full to the Brim

An expansive lent

LENT is one of the major seasons of the Christian calendar. It originated as a time to leave the old life behind and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. Lent is a practice of stepping away from one kind of life to live another. We step away from the American obsessions of success, greed, corruption, scarcity, and emptiness to adopt a life of wholeness, generosity, compassion, and abundance. Our theme this year, in partnership with the art collective *Sanctified Art*, emphasizes this kind of life.

Full to the Brim trusts in the promise of our baptisms—that God has already claimed us as beloved children and nothing can change that. When we are filled to the brim with that lavish love, that love spills over to those all around us.

We hope this Lent will be an invitation to be authentically who you are, to

counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, and to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. This love disrupts the scarcity mentality that oppression and hierarchy in all its forms can plant inside of us. Love, like water, rushes and overflows, touching everything in its path.

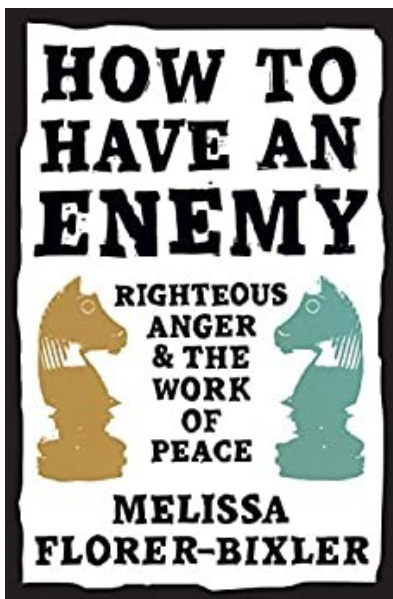
There are *Full to the Brim* Lenten devotionals available in the back and in your email inboxes. We also used a Reflective Assessment Tool at our Ash Wednesday service, which you also have access to in your email, and there are copies in the narthex with the devotionals. There's also a gallery of thematic artwork in the narthex. If you have trouble accessing any of the online versions of the materials via email, please contact Rev. Spears-Newsome at wesley.spears-newsome@gfbccary.org.

Guest Preacher Bio: Rev. Melissa Florer-Bixler



Melissa is the pastor at Raleigh Mennonite Church, one of our partner churches in ONE Wake. She is a graduate of Duke University and Princeton Theological Seminary. She spent time studying in Israel/Palestine, Kenya, and England. Much of her formation took place in the L'Arche community of Portland, OR. Now she prefers the Eno River and her garden in Raleigh, NC. She is the chair of L'Arche North Carolina and a steering committee member in

broad-based organizing in her county. Melissa's writing has appeared in *Christian Century*, *Sojourners*, *Geez*, *Anabaptist Witness*, *The Bias*, *Faith&Leadership*, and *Anabaptist Vision*. From time to time she publishes academic writing. She and her spouse parent three children.



"Jesus called us to love our enemies. But to befriend an enemy, we first have to acknowledge their existence, understand who they are, and recognize the ways they are acting in opposition to God's good news. In *How to Have an Enemy: Righteous Anger and the Work of Peace*, Melissa Florer-Bixler looks closely at what the Bible says about enemies—who they are, what they do, and how Jesus and his followers responded to them. The result is a theology that allows us to name our enemies as a form of truth-telling about ourselves, our communities, and the histories in which our lives are embedded. Only then can we grapple with the power of the acts of destruction carried out by our enemies, and invite them to lay down their enmity, opening a path for healing, reconciliation, and unity." — from Herald Press (2021)

► Family Promise Returns to GFBC

One of the primary challenges for people to survive and thrive in Wake County is housing. While we work to adjust policies and advance projects for affordable housing through organizing in ONE Wake, we also work to provide housing *now* for those who need it with Family Promise of Wake County.



During the height of the pandemic, families in the transitional housing program were living at the Family Promise center and some other properties owned by their non-profit. **We are now transitioning back to a model of housing that uses churches as hosts for families in need.** The change won't happen all at once, but Greenwood Forest will be one of the first churches to begin hosting families in our building again. We will welcome our guests **March 20-27**.

This week will be a smaller-scale relaunch of this ministry than we're used to at GFBC. We'll only be hosting 1-3 families for our week and will be paring down some of the roles we need help with at the church. Family Promise is also daily screening participants at their center and requires at least a negative COVID-19 test to enter their program.

► How can you help?

We need volunteers to fill a few different roles throughout the week. Here's how you can help out:

Set-Up and Tear Down: We need people to help us set up the rooms for our guests and their overnight hosts. This involves setting up and making beds and a few other amenities in the rooms we'll be using. Contact Andy Jarrell (andyjarrell@gmail.com) if interested.

Overnight Hosting: We need some folks to stay overnight with our guests in case they need anything while they're here. You'd have your own room at the church and be here from 7:30pm one day to around 7:30am the next day. Overnight hosts also set up breakfast for our guests. Contact Rev. Spears-Newsome (wesley.spears-newsome@gfbccary.org) if interested.

Meals: We need some Faith Formation classes or individuals to provide meals for our guests during the week. Meal hosts would need to be present from 6:00-7:30pm. Contact Natalie Patten (nhpatten@gmail.com) if interested.

Van Drivers: To help our guests with transportation, we often run a van between GFBC and the Family Promise center depending on the families' needs. Contact Dave Atkins (daveatkins313@gmail.com) if you're interested in driving.

► Blood Donations Needed

How will you give during this Lenten season? Maybe instead of giving something up, consider giving something of yourself. If donating blood is a way you can give, the American Red Cross needs your help. We are currently facing a national blood crisis. It's the worst blood shortage in over a decade.

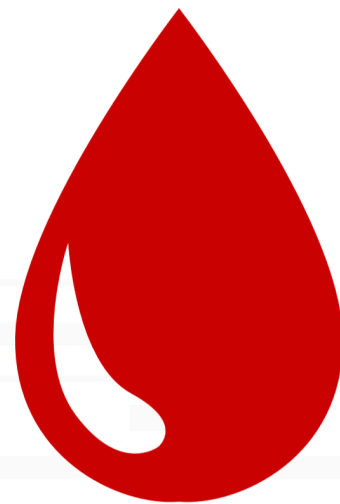
► How can you help?

You can pledge to give and sign up to give blood at gfbccary.org/blood. At the link, you can schedule an appointment at a local, convenient donation center or a local blood drive.

Your single blood donation can save as many as three lives! Imagine the impact our collective generosity will have on the families of the recipients and our community.

Additionally, giving now allows you to give for Lent and give again at our annual "Be a Hero" blood drive hosted at GFBC on 6/3.

THERE'S POWER IN THE BLOOD



Donate Blood This Lent

Appointments at gfbccary.org/blood

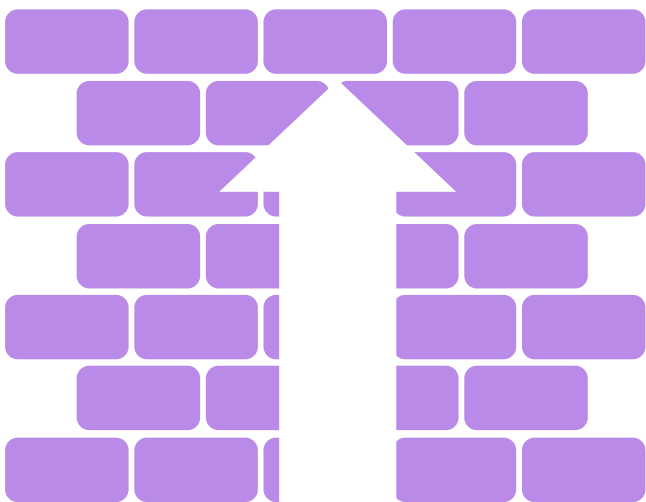
► Town Hall and Business Meeting

There will be a churchwide meeting on Sunday March 20 beginning at 2pm—we have some exciting and important things to discuss!

First, we will have another Town Hall at 2pm on progress with the Property Repurposing effort. There will be a presentation on a specific proposal involving one of our longtime ministry partners.

Second, there will be a business meeting at 3pm. The meeting will include a distribution of the final proposed bylaw changes (based on your feedback; no vote this meeting).

This meeting will be held in-person in the Fellowship Hall at GFBC, but there will also be online access available. We have some exciting updates to share and important matters to attend to together, so we look forward to seeing you there!



► Senior Pastor Sabbatical

From the Personnel Committee:

One of the great traditions and church disciplines of Greenwood Forest Baptist Church is the practice of a minister's sabbatical. Per our church's tradition and policy, every 5 years we provide for a period of intentional sabbatical for our Senior Pastor. The purpose of this period away from normal pastoral duties is for renewal, rest, creative work, professional development, and other experiences in order to reinvigorate the Senior Pastor and enhance their work in ministry at GFBC.

Rev. Lauren Efird, has served at Greenwood Forest for almost 11 years and is approaching her 6 year anniversary as our Senior Pastor. Rev. Efird offered to delay her sabbatical in the midst of the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to provide necessary leadership for the church. To mark her years of service, **Rev. Efird will start a sabbatical this May lasting for 12 weeks.** The rest of the church staff will be providing coverage of her critical duties during this time and we have an exciting series of voices lined up to fill the pulpit while she is away. We are grateful that Rev. Efird is able to continue this tradition at GFBC and are excited for the experiences she will share with us as a result!

► Prayer List*

Nell Allen
 Peter Barboriak (Valerie Brooks' friend)
 Gilles Bikindou
 Valerie Brooks
 Bob Curti
 Vanna Fox
 James Mark Frazier (Sue Hughes' brother)
 Jack Lancaster (Christy Brown's father)
 Janet Merriman (Roz Slawson's friend)
 Sylvia Morgan
 Brynn Oliver
 Tom Poe (Annie Poe's son)
 Gerry Ritter
 Fred Seeger
 Marta Whitehouse (Al Whitehouse's mother)
 John Wilkes (Rebekah Oliver's father)
 Our partners at Ebenezer Baptist, Cuba

**To add a name to the prayer list, please contact the church office. Names rotate off and can be re-added upon request.*

► Ways to Tithe

- Set up an automated bank draft by filling out a form requested from the church office, attaching a voided check, and mailing it back to the church office.
- Set up auto pay through your bank using the "Bill Pay" function. Then, your bank will mail a check to the church weekly or monthly.
- Give online through the church website at gfbccary.org/give.

► February 2022 Finance Update

Updated when the previous months' books close.

	Feb. 2022	YTD
Congregational Giving	\$45,572	\$283,497
Congregational Giving Target	\$51,000	\$344,180
Congregational Giving Under/Over	(\$5,428)	(\$60,192)
Other Receipts	\$11,105	\$69,522
Total Giving and Receipts	\$56,677	\$353,019
Total Disbursements	\$57,942	\$373,019
Under/Over Receipts vs. Disbursements	(\$1,265)	(\$20,114)
Together We Build Giving	\$11,325	\$133,642

COVID-19 Pandemic Guidance Update

This past week, the CDC introduced a new metric for determining COVID-19 risk: "COVID-19 Community Levels." The Community Level metric is an attempt to balance community spread and positive case count with vaccination rates and healthcare capacity in one's area. **Based on this new metric, Wake County's COVID-19 Community level is low**, which comes along with a loosened set of recommendations for public gatherings.

You can find out more about the Community Level metric at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html.

In light of this new metric, we are updating our COVID-19 precautions as of Monday, March 14. Our new guidance/precautions are as follows:

Masking

- ♦ Well-fitting masks are recommended indoors until Wake County's Community Transmission Rate is no longer high, but are no longer required.
- ♦ If you are isolating or have been exposed to COVID-19, you are required to mask according to the CDC's isolation/exposure guidelines (visit cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html).

Distancing

- ♦ Physical distancing between those of separate households is no longer required.
- ♦ We ask that you respect the personal boundaries of those who wish to remain cautious. As a general rule, if someone continues to mask inside, we will assume they also wish to continue to distance from those outside their household unless they tell us otherwise.

Symptoms/Exposure

- ♦ Do NOT come onto campus with any COVID symptoms (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)
- ♦ Do NOT come to church if you are within isolation/quarantine time frame even if you are asymptomatic. Follow all CDC/NCDHHS isolation guidelines (see Masking section) if you have been, or think you may have been, exposed to COVID.

Vaccination

- ♦ We strongly encourage all eligible people who engage with our community to stay up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations. If you need resources or information on vaccination, please contact the church office.

Ventilation

- ♦ We will continue to monitor and maintain good ventilation in all areas of our building but especially in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall where the largest gatherings occur.

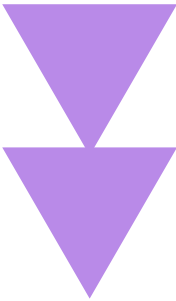
Nursery

- ♦ Nursery workers are still required to mask around unvaccinated children until the Community Transmission is no longer high. Although this is not required by the new CDC guidance, we feel it is a reasonable precaution that prioritizes the safety of those who cannot choose to be vaccinated yet.

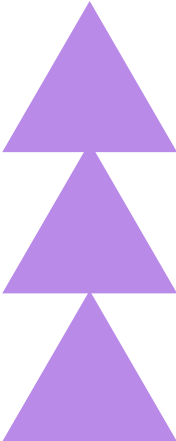
Find out more about community transmission levels at covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view.

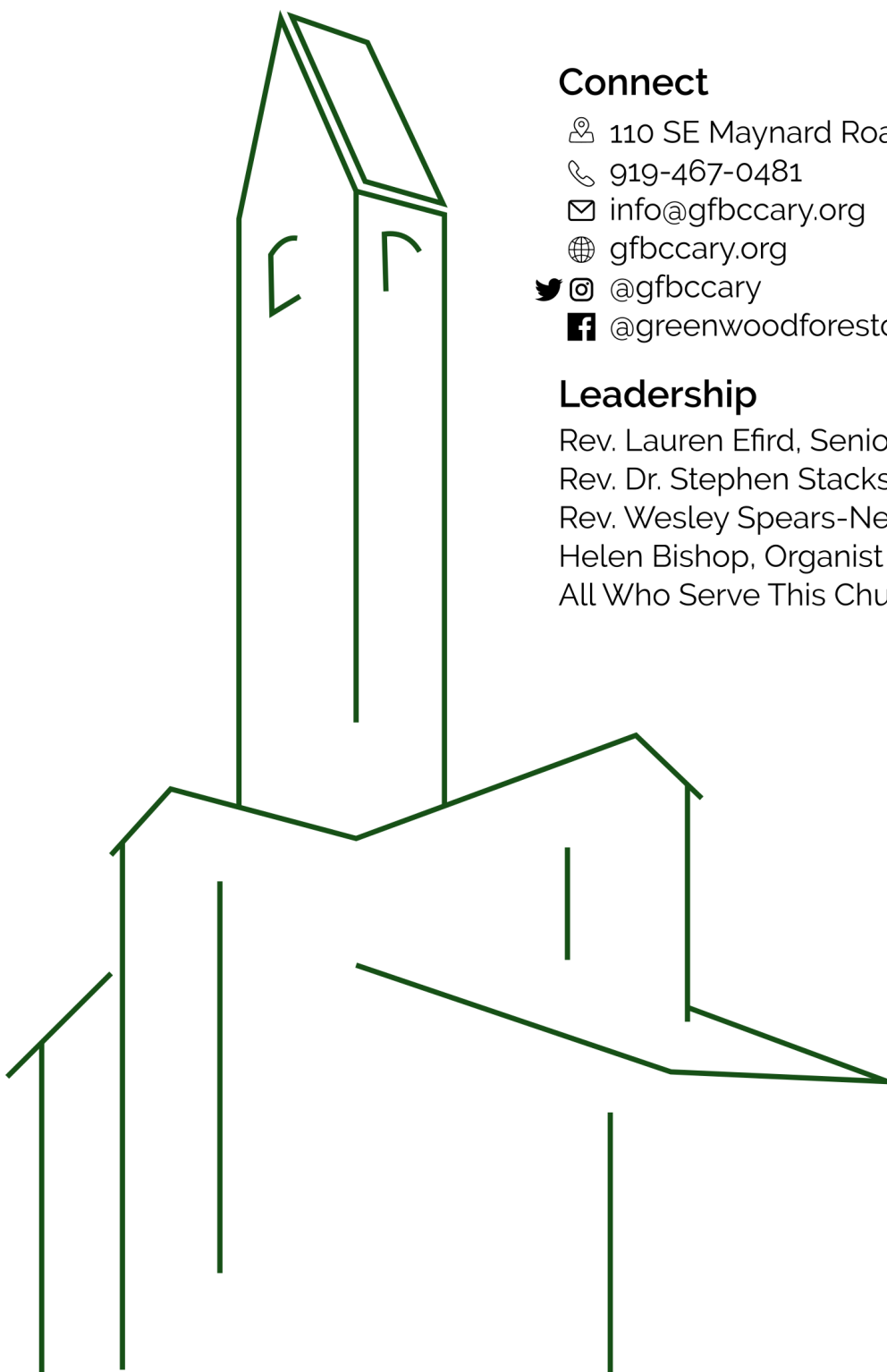
Omicron-Specific Precautions

- ♦ We are lifting the omicron-specific precautions we put in place in January 2022. The following activities can resume and these adjustments have been made to worship:
 - ⇒ in-person visitation
 - ⇒ communion during worship
 - ⇒ the singing of multiple hymns during worship
 - ⇒ we have removed the separate lectern for lay speakers
 - ⇒ food and drink can now be offered at indoor gatherings



Overall, we want to emphasize that we have operated in keeping with the best available scientific data and public health recommendations throughout the pandemic and will continue to do so. If there are signs of an impending surge or if it appears these loosened precautions become a risk for vulnerable people at GFBC, we will quickly move to reinstate stricter precautions. Even as we loosen required precautions, we encourage all individuals to continue engaging in the ways that make them feel safe and included, and to act in ways that prioritize the health and wellbeing of all within our community.





Connect

📍 110 SE Maynard Road Cary, NC 27511

☎ 919-467-0481

✉ info@gfbccary.org

🌐 gfbccary.org

🐦 @gfbccary

📘 @greenwoodforestcary

Leadership

Rev. Lauren Efird, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks, Associate Pastor

Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome, Associate Pastor

Helen Bishop, Organist

All Who Serve This Church