



Greenwood Forest

Baptist Church





Greenwood Forest
Baptist Church

March 27, 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. Resources for Lent are available in your inbox. Contact Rev. Spears-Newsome if you have trouble accessing them.*

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

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



Order of Worship

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

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's reach is endless.

People: God's mercy is unstoppable.

Leader: God's grace is lavish.

People: God's love is constant.

Leader: God's wisdom is vast.

People: God's hope is stubborn.

Leader: God's presence is here—

People: with us, among us, moving through us.

Leader: Breathe easy. Breathe deeply. We are in God's house.

People: Let us worship the One who welcomes us home.

Invocation

Rev. Dr. Stacks

Gathering Hymn

I'm Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table.

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days. Alleluia!

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table;

Gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna eat and never get hungry...

I'm gonna drink and never get thirsty...

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table...

Offertory Prayer

Anthony Warren

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.

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 15:1-3, 11b-32

Rev. Dr. Stacks

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

The Road Home

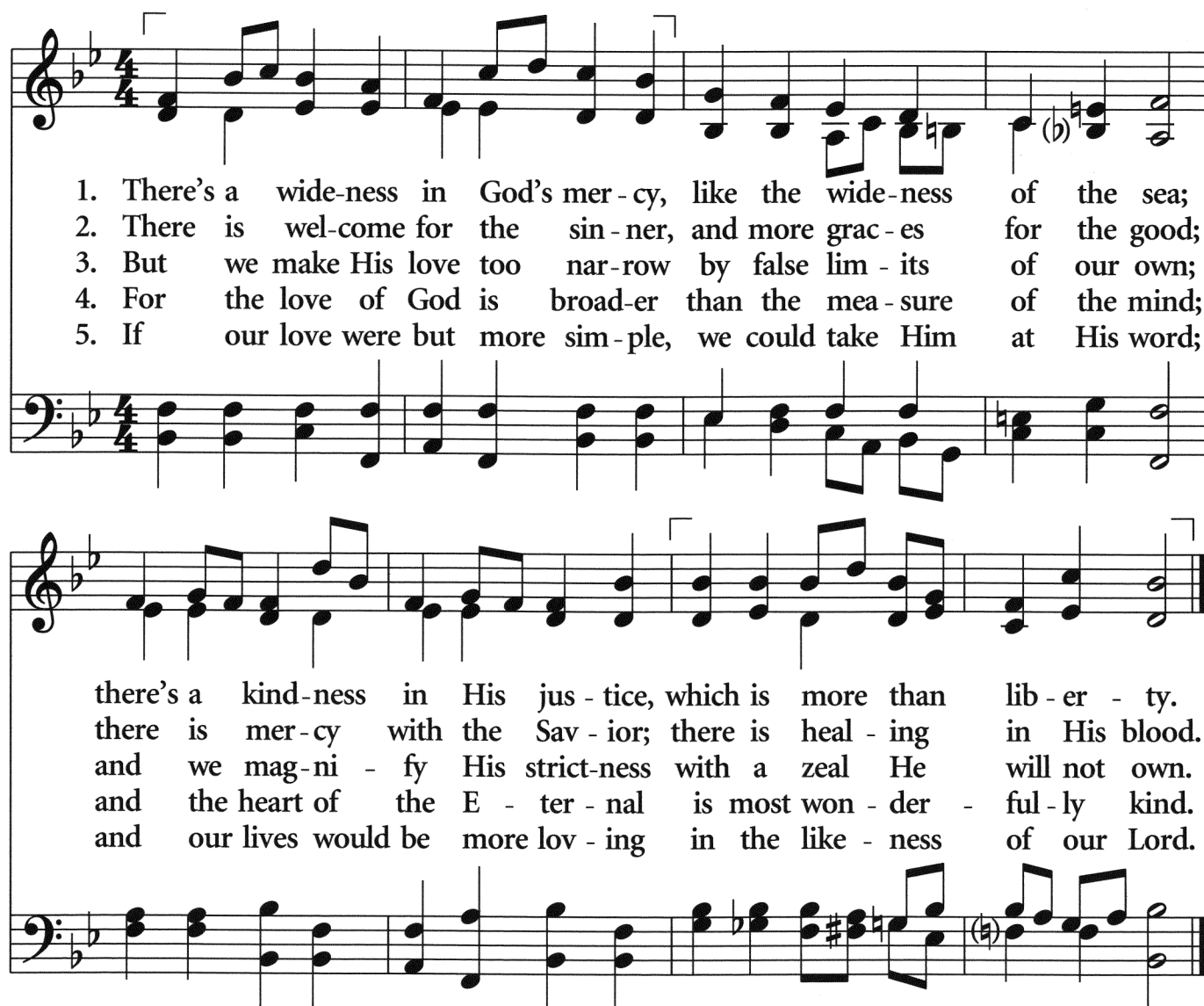
Stephen Paulus

Tell me, where is the road
I can call my own,
That I left, that I lost,
So long ago.
All these years I have wandered,
Oh, when will I know
There's a way, there's a road
That will lead me home?
After wind, after rain,
When the dark is done,
As I wake from a dream,
In the gold of day,

Through the air there's a calling
From far away,
There's a voice I can hear,
That will lead me home.
Rise up, follow me,
Come away, is the call,
With the love in your heart
As the only song!
There is no such beauty
As where you belong.
Rise up, follow me,
I will lead you home.

Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1. There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2. There is wel-come for the sin-ner, and more grac-es for the good;
3. But we make His love too nar-row by false lim-its of our own;
4. For the love of God is broad-er than the mea-sure of the mind;
5. If our love were but more sim-ple, we could take Him at His word;

there's a kind-ness in His jus-tice, which is more than lib-er-ty.
there is mer-cy with the Sav-ior; there is heal-ing in His blood.
and we mag-ni-fy His strict-ness with a zeal He will not own.
and the heart of the E-ter-nal is most won-der-ful-ly kind.
and our lives would be more lov-ing in the like-ness of our Lord.

Benediction

Rev. Efrd

Postlude

Today's hymn comes from Celebrating Grace. Copyrighted music use is covered by CCLI License #1243530 and OneLicense #A-721397.



Holy Week @ Greenwood Forest

April 10 (11am) Palm Sunday

April 15 (7pm) Good Friday

April 17 (11am) Easter Sunday



Easter Lilies

You can purchase Easter Lilies and dedications to be printed in the Easter bulletin online at gfbccary.org/lilies.



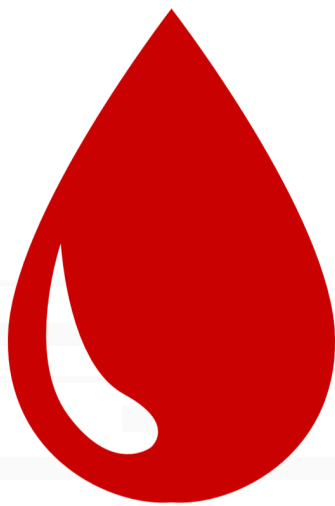
Egg Hunt

Kids are welcome to join in an egg hunt after worship on Palm Sunday, April 10!

► Blood Donations Needed

We are currently facing a national blood crisis. It's the worst blood shortage in over a decade. 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

► Get Out the Vote for Spring Elections

Redrawn maps and late census data led to multiple delays in our municipal elections in Cary, but they are finally coming up this spring!

Local elections, off-year elections, and elections at odd times often have very low turn out — and this spring's election suffers from all three! That's why we need you to join us in a non-partisan Get Out the Vote (GOTV) effort with ONE Wake, our local community organization with Greenwood Forest and over 40 other congregations and organizations in Wake County.

Greenwood Forest has pledged to bring 20 people to a GOTV launch on March 31 (7:30 via Zoom) where you'll be equipped to help your friends, family, and neighbors have what they need to go to the polls during Early Voting or Election Day in Cary. Sign up for the Zoom invite at gfbccary.org/gotv today!

► Family Promise Thank You

Thank you to everyone who gave of their time and energy to host Family Promise at GFBC this week. We were the first church to host in-person for Family Promise since March 2020!

Hosting families in our building is a vital ministry standing in the gap for families experiencing homelessness. Thank you for your continued support!

► 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!



► Karen Work Anniversary

March 24th marks Karen Burden's 8th year as Greenwood Forest Baptist Church's Office Administrator. We'd like to thank Karen for her many years of faithful service. Karen is often the first friendly voice you hear or kind face you see when you visit the church during the week. We greatly appreciate all her efforts to help keep our church running. If you see or speak to her this week, be sure to say an extra thank you for all she does.

► Thank You Note

Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for each prayer, call, and visit during the last six months. Without them, I don't know how we would have continued on.

Sincerely, Elizabeth Harvey

► Prayer List*

Richard Adair (Janice Medford's brother)
 Peter Barboriak (Valerie Brooks' friend)
 Gilles Bikindou
 Scott Davenport (friend of the Biser family)
 BJ Facemire
 Vanna Fox
 James Mark Frazier (Sue Hughes' brother)
 Jack Lancaster (Christy Brown's father)
 Howard Manning
 Janet Merriman (Roz Slawson's friend)
 Sylvia Morgan
 Gerry Ritter
 Fred Seeger
 Marta Whitehouse (Al Whitehouse's mother)
 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)	(\$60,683)
Other Receipts	\$11,105	\$69,522
Total Giving and Receipts	\$56,677	\$353,019
Total Disbursements	\$57,942	\$373,133
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.

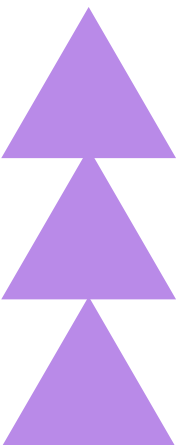
Find out more about community transmission levels at covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view.

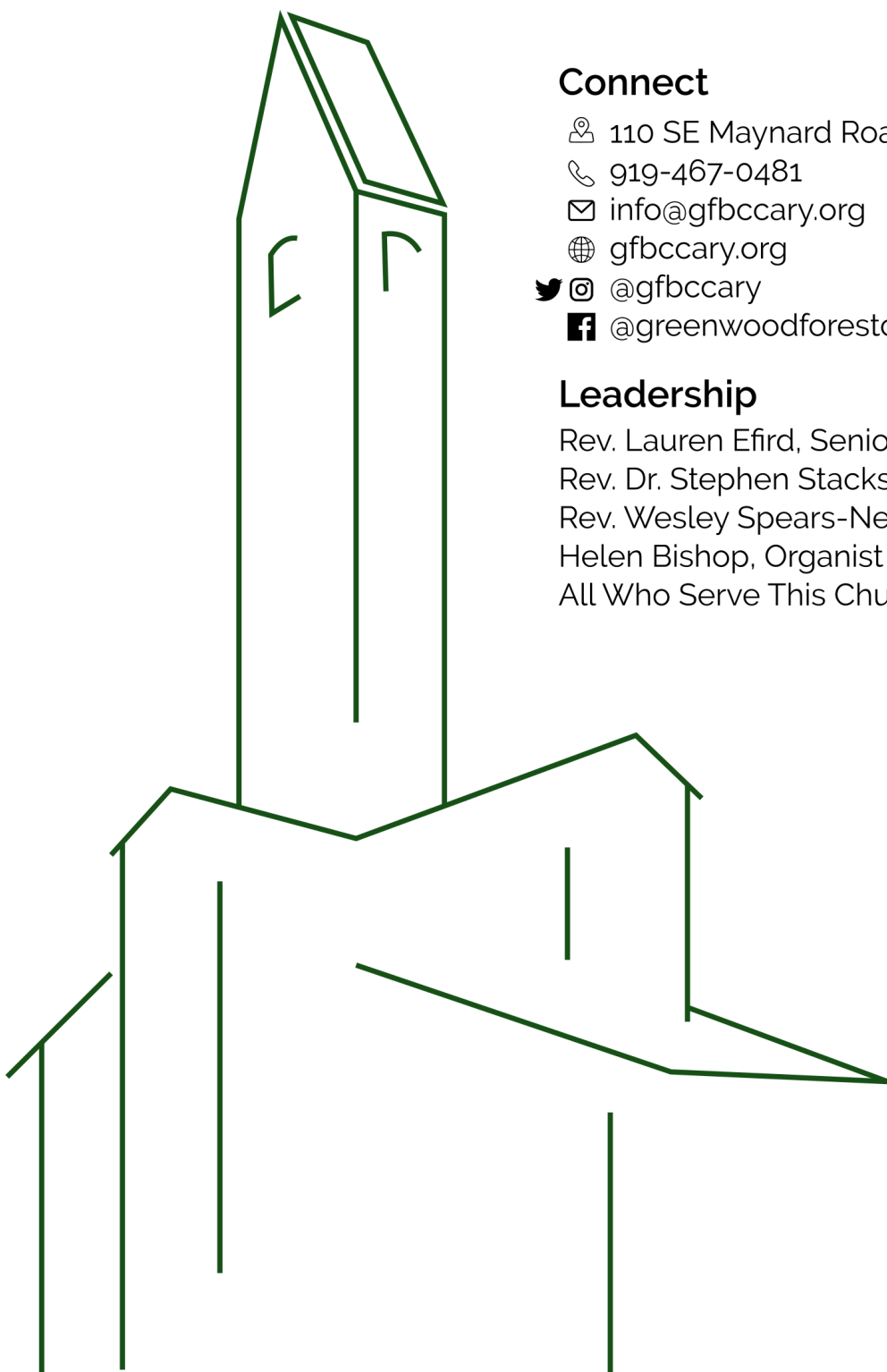
Omicron-Specific Precautions

- ♦ 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

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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