



Greenwood Forest

Baptist Church

December 4, 2022



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Our Advent and Christmas theme this year is “What Can’t Wait.” Advent is a season of waiting, but is mere idle waiting what God wants for us? Let’s wonder together: What can’t wait? What demands our immediate attention? What requires our work and preparation? What is it that God can’t wait for? Is it our praise? Reconciliation? Is it the end of suffering? Isolation? Fear? This Advent we invite you to join us in imagining, prioritizing, and preparing. As we wait, what can’t?

Week 2:

Peace Can’t Wait

Bulletin Art:

A Child Shall Lead Them by Lisle Gwynn Garrity
(Graphic Image, Inspired by Isaiah 11:1-10)

Artist Statement:

The image of the stump of Jesse might have knocked the air out of those first hearing these words. The stump represented the end of the Davidic dynasty, the family line believed to carry Yahweh’s goodness. The monarchy was either thwarted by the Babylonian exile, or the Assyrian empire—historically, we’re not exactly sure. Regardless, Isaiah names what no one wants to say out loud—Jerusalem’s political future feels dead, cut off, stunted by despair.

The image of a stump might accurately represent how we feel about our own future. Greenhouse gases and sea levels continue to rise. No place—schools, sanctuaries, theaters, malls—is safe from mass shooting attacks. Our government leaders fight like lions and wolves starving for dominance. We also need Isaiah’s vision for a reordered world where creation exists in harmony, not as a threat to itself.

When reading this poetry of peace, I found myself pausing at the line, “and a child shall lead them” (Is. 11:6). The example of Naomi Wadler came to mind. After the Parkland, FL, school shooting, Naomi, an eleven-year-old at the time, organized a walkout at her elementary school to honor victims of gun violence. In addition to those slain in Parkland, Naomi and her fifth grade classmates also recognized people of color who are killed by gun violence every day and never make news headlines. Naomi went on to speak courageously before crowds in DC and on TV shows about the need for gun reform. When she spoke, she held the nation—and much of the world—captive with her passion, her insight, and her urgency.

Where is new life shooting up? Perhaps in the places where God can’t wait for peace. Perhaps in the voices of our children, who urge us to find a better way.



Greenwood Forest
Baptist Church

**an inclusive
community
of faith**

Welcome

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 exactly as you are.

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REMINDERS



Nursery care is available for infants and toddlers. There is also a glider in the back of the sanctuary if you need to rock your little ones.



Hearing assistance devices are available at the back of the sanctuary along with a transcript of the sermon.



Services are livestreamed and you may end up on camera.



Gender-neutral, single-occupant bathrooms are located at the back of the sanctuary in the Narthex.



gfbccary.org



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Announcements Church Events and Updates

Poinsettias for Sale

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia for the sanctuary adornment and a dedication listed in the bulletin, please visit gfbccary.org/poinsettias. Poinsettias and dedications are \$15. Any profits from poinsettia sales will go to the Organ Fund. Deadline is December 11.

Town Hall Meeting

Mark your calendar for a Town Hall meeting for updates on the church's property repurposing effort. We'll be meeting in the Fellowship Hall during the Faith Formation hour (9:45-10:45am) on December 11.

Business Meeting

Mark your calendar for a brief business meeting following worship on December 11.

Staff Love Offering

If you would like to contribute to this year's staff love offering, please mail your gifts to the church and make out checks payable to Andy Jarrell. You can also venmo gifts to Andy at @Andy-Jarrell (919-749-3662).

Advent and Christmas at Greenwood Forest

Mark your calendar for all of these community gatherings this holiday season:

Dec. 4: Youth Advent Party (5pm)

Our youth gather for a fun time of fellowship and holiday games!

Dec. 14: Service of Lament (6pm)

A time reserved to acknowledge the grief and sadness that can come in around the holidays.

Dec. 18: Christmas Breakfast (9:45am)

Potluck breakfast in the Fellowship Hall for the whole church!

Dec. 18: Lessons & Carols (11am)

Traditional service of readings and Christmas Carols on Sunday morning.

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve

Children's Christmas Eve (11am)

A kids-oriented service where we assemble a nativity together!

Candlelight Christmas Eve (8pm)

Our traditional Christmas Eve service.

Dec. 25: Christmas Day Livestream

A special online event for us to enjoy with our families on Christmas morning!

Community Notes Prayer Requests and Giving



Please keep in prayer these members of our community and their friends and family. To add a name to the prayer list, please contact the church office. Names rotate off and can be re-added upon request.

Nell Allen
Bess Averde
Peter Barboriak (Valerie Brooks' friend)
Gilles Bikindou
Louann Clarke (Felice Parent's sister)
Scott Davenport (friend of the Biser family)
Elaine Dodson
Vanna Fox
James Mark Frazier (Sue Hughes' brother)
Karen Peter (Virgil and Gail Jones' friend)
Dick Reinert
Harold Ritter
Fred Seeger
Esther Todd (Sara Beck Jordan's grandmother-in-law)
Our partners at Ebenezer Baptist in Cuba

Thank You from Leta Huntsinger

Your notes, cards and messages during this time of loss and transition brought joy and comfort to my days. Thank you for your words of love, support and sympathy. I love calling GFBC home, and all of you my family.

Peace, Leta



All of the ministries of Greenwood Forest Baptist Church are supported by members of our community like you. Thank you! Supporting us is easy. You can:

- Give online at gfbccary.org/give
- Place your gift in the offering plate before or after worship.
- Set up an automated bank draft through the church office.
- Set up a recurring gift through your bank's "bill pay" function.

A monthly finance update is available in the weekly church email. If you're not receiving our weekly email and would like to, please contact the church office.

Monthly Ministry Highlight:

Neighborhood Partnership

For many years, Greenwood Forest Baptist Church has been in a partnership with the Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church to serve alongside our neighbors. The Backpack Buddies Program, Neighborhood Summer Program (a feeding and summer enrichment program), and more activities all support the children and families that live near our churches. Right now, you can contribute to Christmas gifts for our neighbors at gfbccary.org/gifts.

Order of Worship

Second Sunday of Advent

✝ This icon indicates an invitation to stand or express reverence however you see fit.

📖 This icon indicates a worship aid is available in the righthand column.

🎵 Hymns and song lyrics are available in the songbook following the Order of Worship.

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude | *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* | arr. Hayes

Lighting of the Peace Candle | PJ Harris

Welcome to Worship | Rev. Lauren Efird

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship (Sanctified Art) | Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome

Prepare the way!

Deck the halls and light the candles.

Prepare the way!

Open the doors and sing a song of hope.

Prepare the way!

Make space in our hearts for a new kind of love.

Christ is coming.

Prepare the way!

Invocation | Rev. Spears-Newsome

✝ **Gathering Hymn** | *Prepare the Way, O Zion* (pg. 7)

Offertory Prayer | Anthony Warren

✝ **Doxology** | Tune: CRANHAM 📖

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,

If I were a wise man I would do my part,

Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.

Today's color is **purple**, signifying an emphasis on penitence and preparation.

The Passing of the Peace

The passing of the peace is a symbolic enactment of the reconciling love and mercy of God in our midst. We express it through a peace sign, a handshake, a wave, or many other expressions of peace. Be mindful and considerate of others' desire for physical space or distance.

Prayer in Worship

We use many kinds of prayers in worship. The Call to Worship is a communal prayer using call and response. The Invocation is a single individual inviting (or invoking) God into our worship this morning. The Prayers of the People uses intercessory prayer to ask God to come to the world's aid. The benediction is a blessing offered over those gathered in worship.

The Doxology

A "doxology" is a short hymn that usually praises the Trinity. We sing the doxology as we symbolically present our offerings back to God.

The Prayers of the People | *Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks* 📖

Lord, in your mercy:

Hear our prayer.

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.

† **Hymn** | *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* (vv. 1, 3, & 4; pg. 8)

Scripture Reading | *Isaiah 11:1-10* | *Rev. Spears-Newsome*

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | *The Kingdom of Love* (pg. 10)

Sermon | *Peace Can't Wait* | *Rev. Efird*

Communion | *Rev. Efird* 📖

Prayer of Confession: Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be obedient disciples. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we've not loved our neighbors, and we've not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us for what we have done and for what we've left undone, and free us for joyful obedience through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mystery of Faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

† **Hymn** | *Put Peace into Each Other's Hands* (pg. 9)

Benediction | *Rev. Efird*

Postlude | *A la Venue de Noel* | *arr. Lynette Maynard*

The Prayers of the People

This prayer typically has five parts: a confession, prayers for the earth, prayers for the world, prayers for the church, and prayers for those with needs in our own community.

Communion

During Communion, we gather around the table, as Christ showed us, to remember and give thanks for God's saving acts with bread and wine. We have an open table—all who wish to take Communion are invited to participate.

We are practicing communion by means of intinction, which means you receive a piece of bread and dip it in the cup. A gluten-free option is available on the altar.

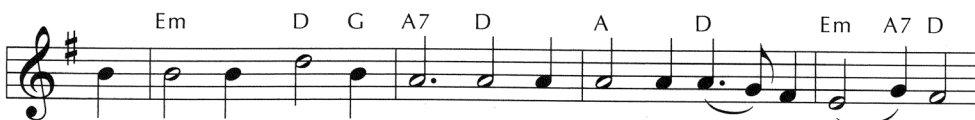
Prepare the Way, O Zion



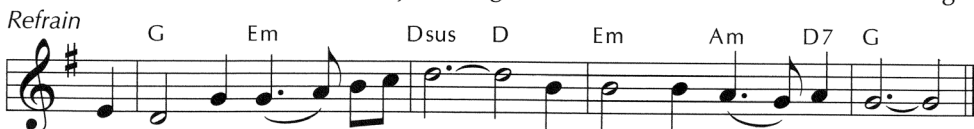
- 1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw-ing near!
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
 His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
 and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro-claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry.
 Lift high your praise re-sound-ing, for grace and joy a - bound-ing.
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3. All ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4. For lo! the days are has-tening on, by proph-et bards fore-told,

from an - gels bend-ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years comes round the age of gold;

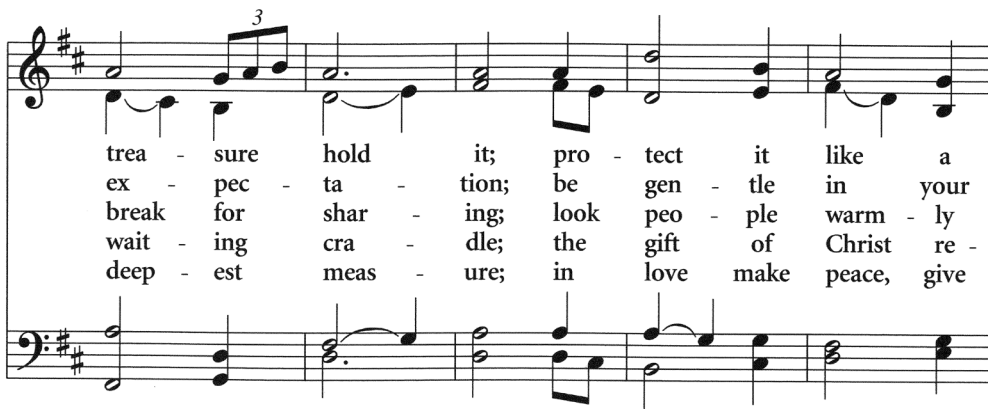
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all - gra - cious King."
 A - bove its sad and lone-ly plains they bend on hov - ering wing,
 look now! for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,

The world in sol - emn still-ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the heaven-ly an - gels sing.
 O rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.
 and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

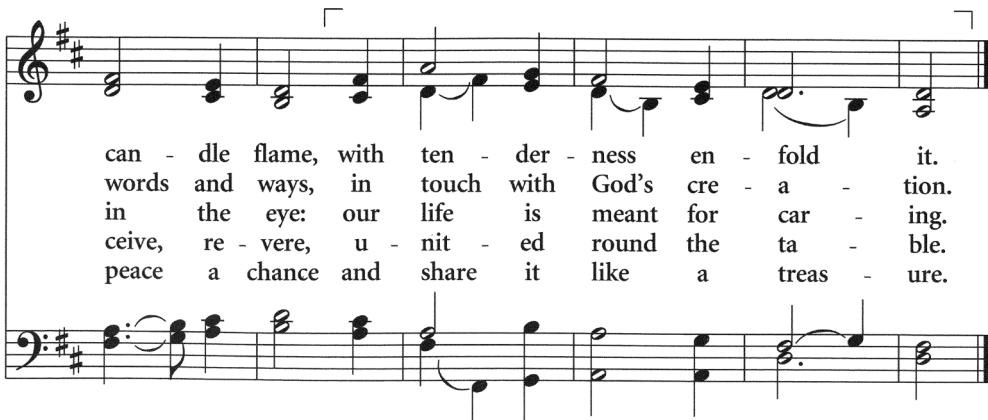
Put Peace into Each Other's Hands



1. Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands and like a
 2. Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands with lov - ing
 3. Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands, like bread we
 4. As at com - mun - ion, shape your hands in - to a
 5. Put Christ in - to each oth - er's hands, He is love's



treas - ure hold it; pro - tect it like a
 ex - pec - ta - tion; be - gen - tle in your
 break for shar - ing; look peo - ple warm - ly
 wait - ing cra - dle; the gift of Christ re -
 deep - est meas - ure; in love make peace, give



can - dle flame, with ten - der - ness en - fold it.
 words and ways, in touch with God's cre - a - tion.
 in the eye: our life is meant for car - ing.
 ceive, re - vere, u - nit - ed round the ta - ble.
 peace a chance and share it like a treas - ure.

Anthem The Kingdom of Love

David Ashley White

Flute: Helen Bishop

Piano: Teri Edwards

Percussion: Sean Glasgow

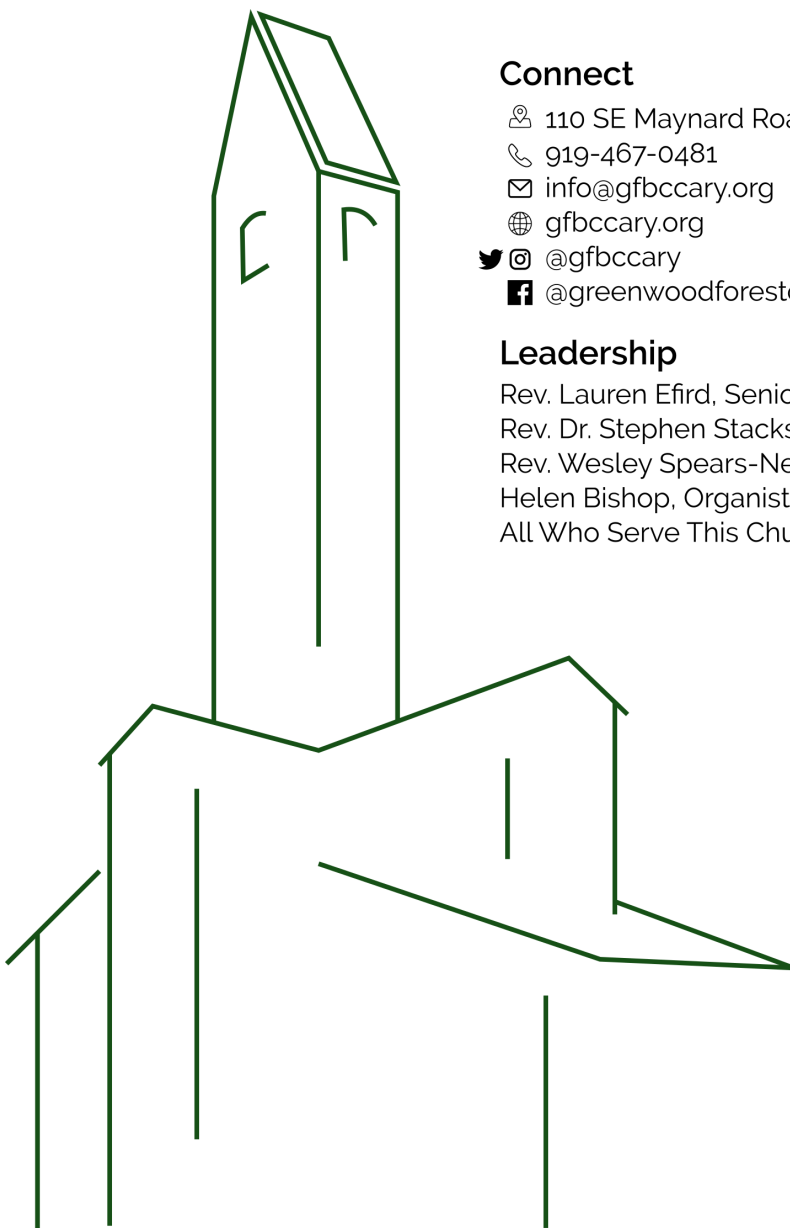
Make straight in the desert a highway;
prepare the way of the Lord:
let mountains and hills bow in reverence
and valleys rise up for their King.
In joy shall the wilderness blossom,
and streams through the desert be poured;
the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and tongues that were silent shall sing.

Break forth into singing, O Zion,
your King is coming to you.
Jerusalem, shout with rejoicing,
he comes to redeem you from fear.
For God shall bring peace and abundance,
your praise and renown to renew;
prepare to receive your salvation:
the promised Redeemer is near.

The reign of the Lord will be gracious,
its blessings ever will last;
for then will God bring to fulfillment
the promise of peace from above.
All creatures will prosper together,
to plowshares all swords will be cast:
earth's people will find their true freedom
in God's perfect Kingdom of Love.

Reprinted hymns come from Celebrating Grace, Glory to God, or the The African American Heritage Hymnal unless otherwise noted. Copyrighted music use covered by CCLI License #1243530, OneLicense #A-721397.

Additional Resources for Advent and Christmas come from A Sanctified Art.



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