



Scan for Digital

GREENWOOD FOREST

Baptist Church

JOHN THE BAPTIST ARRESTED



Orthodox Icon, c. 1300

Local religious leader detained for criticism of regional power players

John the Baptist had appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said:

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."

John wore clothing on camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan,

confessing their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them:

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

Herod arrested John, bound him, and put him into prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because John had been telling him: "it is not lawful for you to have her."

(continued on A5)

Work continues despite leader's absence

Levi of Galilee reporting

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali.

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people."

Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them.

(continued on B1)

Bulletin Art

Faux Newspaper by Rev. Spears-Newsome

The cover of the bulletin this week recounts the events surrounding this week's Scripture reading. We begin our passage today with the arrest of John the Baptist, which would have been a seismic event in Jesus' circles. By all accounts, John was an influential regional leader, but he was known for his confrontational style.

The "news articles" are taken from passages in the Gospels, but how do you imagine today's news media might describe John the Baptist? We often think in glowing terms of past leaders, organizers, and activists; however, they were rarely celebrated in their lifetimes.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whom we celebrated last week, was widely criticized and disliked in his day. Especially in the years before his assassination, the mainstream (largely White-owned and -operated) media turned on him for his criticisms of broader American society, including the War in Vietnam and the failure of the so-called "War on Poverty."

Who might we be reading negative headlines about today that we might lionize tomorrow? How can we change our outlook now instead of later?

- Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome



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.



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Announcements Church Events and Updates

New Fellowship Meals

Starting Sunday, January 29, we will have monthly fellowship meals following worship hosted by Franz and Jill Bryant. The cost for the meal will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids, with all proceeds going to the organ fund. The menu for January is assorted soups, salad, pimento cheese sandwiches, chicken nuggets (kids only), cookies, and tea. This will be an excellent opportunity to gather and socialize, and to raise money for the upcoming organ installation. Plan on attending!

Discipleship Retreat

This year's Discipleship Retreat will feature an exploration of what it means to pray and how we can strengthen our prayer lives. The weekend will feature sessions led by the ministers on a wide range of prayer styles including food and prayer, praying with nature, Ignatian imaginative prayer, and prayer journaling. Sunday morning's session will feature lay people sharing their insights as well.

We'll use James Martin's book *Learning to Pray* as our guide for the weekend (February 24-26). The registration fee is \$35 and includes the book and 3 meals.

Register on Realm ([onRealm.org/GreenwoodForest](https://onrealm.org/GreenwoodForest)) today! If you need assistance creating an account or registering, contact Rev. Spears-Newsome.

Concert Singers of Cary @ GFBC on Jan. 31

On Jan. 31 at 8pm in the Sanctuary, Concert Singers of Cary will present a concert titled *I Believe*, featuring works by Caroline Shaw and Margaret Bonds. The music and texts explore themes of racial harmony and social justice for displaced persons. Concert Singers is happy to offer members of GFBC discounted tickets of \$10, which can be purchased at the door with cash or check. Simply come and let us know you are members. We would love to share this wonderful music with you. Please join us!

Randy Palmer Work Anniversary

From the Personnel Committee:

Friday, January 27th marks Randy Palmer's 19th year of serving GFBC as our custodian. In addition to helping ensure the day-to-day operation of our church, Randy is an active church member whom you will often hear lending his musical talents. When you see Randy this week be sure to thank him for all he does for our church family.

Coffeehouse Theology

Faith Formation Series Continues Sunday!

Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." In this series, we'll test the hypothesis that every thing is sacred by looking at "secular" music and how it speaks to our spiritual lives. Each week, Rev. Dr. Stacks will select and perform a song and we will break down the song and discuss its resonance with our faith journeys. (Jan. 22, 29)

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

Peter Barboriak (Valerie Brooks' friend)

Gilles Bikindou

Katie Buchanan (Pat and Tom Brooks' niece)

Scott Davenport (friend of the Biser family)

Elaine Dodson

Vanna Fox

James Mark Frazier (Sue Hughes' brother)

Gail and Virgil Jones

Fred Mangum

Betty Mayfield

Jay Martin at the death of his sister

Annie Poe

Jerry Poe

Fred Seeger

Our partners at Ebenezer Baptist in Cuba



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:

Discipleship Ministry

Our Discipleship Ministry is dedicated to the Christian formation of our community through regular Faith Formation on Sundays, special churchwide Teaching Series, and our annual Discipleship Retreat. Your gifts to Greenwood Forest make this ministry possible. Don't forget to register for the Discipleship Retreat on February 24-26!

Order of Worship 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

✝ 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 | *The Lord is My Light* | arr. Sewell

Welcome to Worship | Rev. Lauren Efird

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship (Psalm 27) | Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks

The Lord is our light and our salvation!

Whom shall we fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of our life!

Of whom shall we be afraid?

When evildoers assail us to devour our flesh.

They shall stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against us,

Our heart shall not fear.

Though war rise up against us,

We are confident.

One thing we asked of the Lord, that we will seek after:

To live in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives.

To behold the beauty of the Lord,

And to inquire in God's temple.

For God will hide us in shelter on the day of trouble.

God will conceal us and set us high on a rock.

Invocation | Rev. Dr. Stacks

Today's color is **green**, symbolizing creation and growth.

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.

† **Gathering Hymn** | *Guide My Feet* (pg. 7)

Offertory Prayer | *Tim Carr*

† **Doxology** | *Tune: GLORIA PATRI* 📖

Glory be to the Maker,
And to the Christ,
And to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen! Amen!

The Prayers of the People | *Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome* 📖

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** | *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* (pg. 8)

Scripture Reading | *Matthew 4:12-23* | *Johnny Jackson*

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | *O Jesus, I Have Promised* (pg. 10)

Sermon | *Rev. Efird*

† **Hymn** | *You Walk Along Our Shoreline* (pg. 9) 📖

Benediction | *Rev. Efird*

Postlude | *In Thee is Joy* | *arr. Maynard*

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

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.

Final Hymn: An Invitation

During the final hymn, if you'd like to join our community at Greenwood Forest Baptist Church, we invite you to come forward to the altar. When you come forward, you'll be greeted by a minister and a deacon who will then introduce you to the congregation after the hymn. Welcome!

Guide My Feet

1. Guide my feet
2. Hold my hand while I run this race,
3. Stand by me
4. Search my heart

yes, my Lord!

guide my feet
hold my hand while I run this race,
stand by me
search my heart

yes, my Lord!

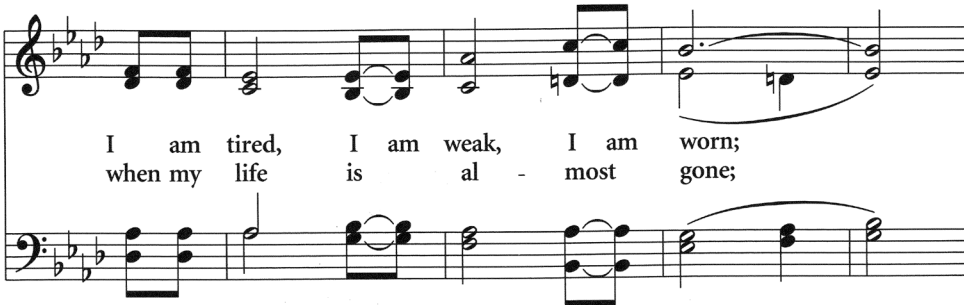
guide my feet
hold my hand while I run this race, for I
stand by me
search my heart

don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

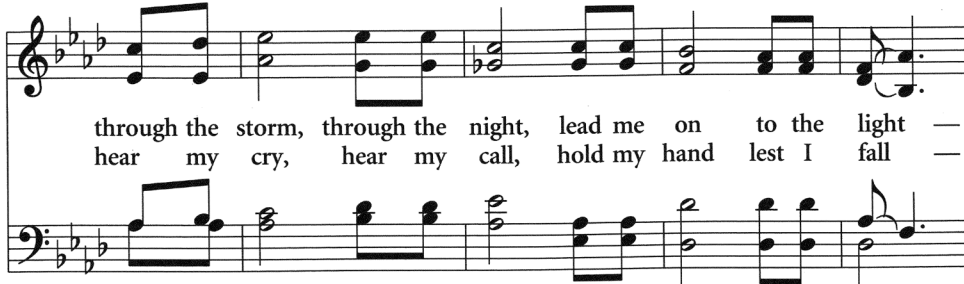
Precious Lord, Take My Hand



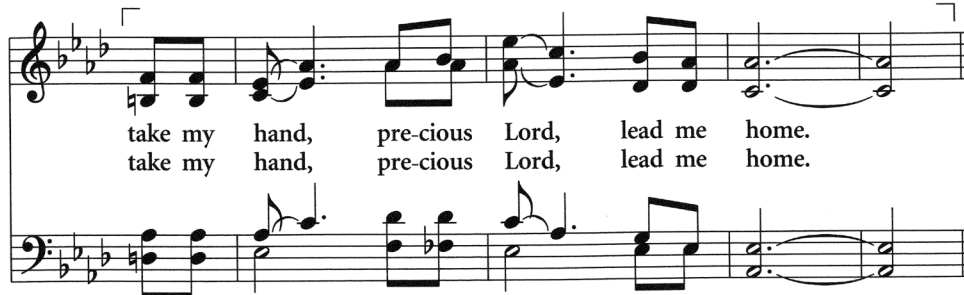
1. Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand —
 2. When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near —



I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
 when my life is al - most gone;

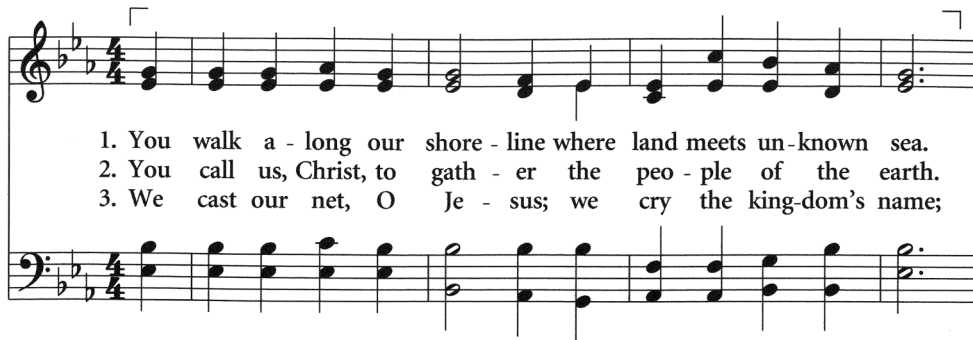


through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light —
 hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall —

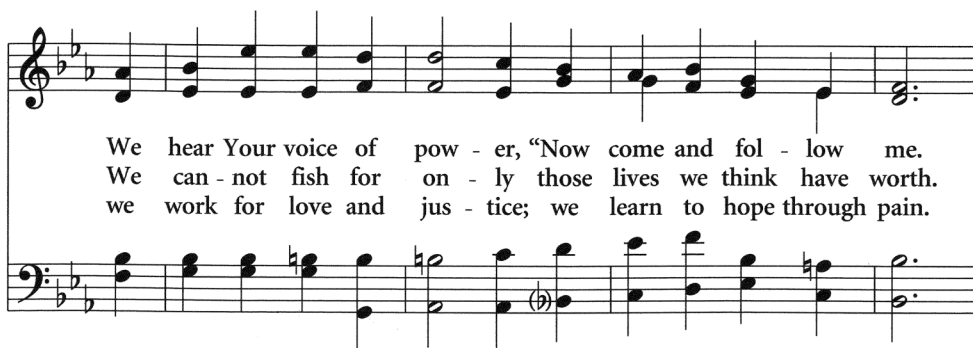


take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.
 take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

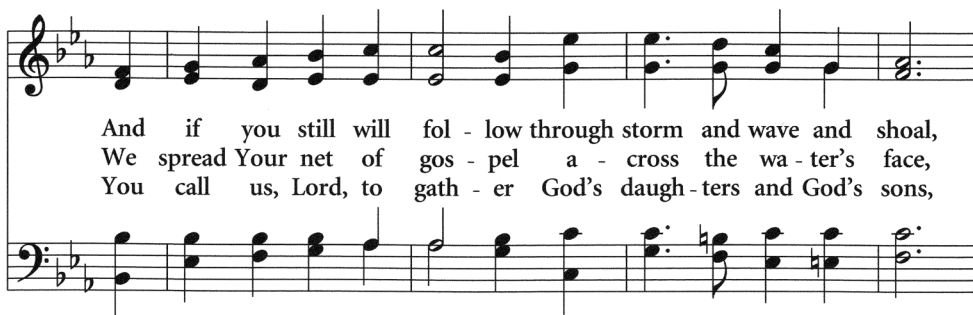
You Walk Along Our Shoreline



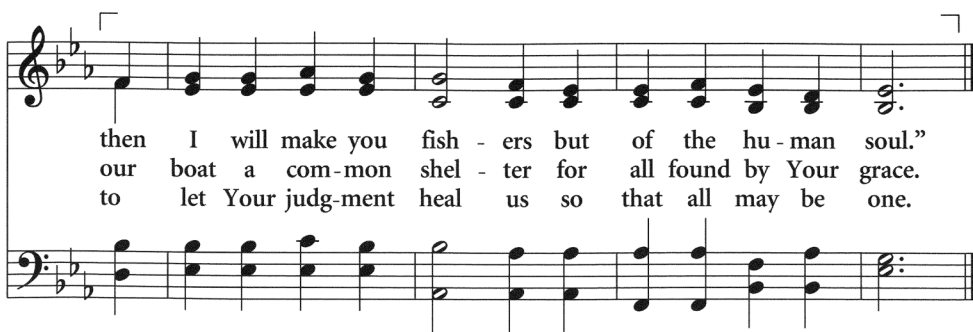
1. You walk a - long our shore - line where land meets un - known sea.
 2. You call us, Christ, to gath - er the peo - ple of the earth.
 3. We cast our net, O Je - sus; we cry the king - dom's name;



We hear Your voice of pow - er, "Now come and fol - low me.
 We can - not fish for on - ly those lives we think have worth.
 we work for love and jus - tice; we learn to hope through pain.



And if you still will fol - low through storm and wave and shoal,
 We spread Your net of gos - pel a - cross the wa - ter's face,
 You call us, Lord, to gath - er God's daugh - ters and God's sons,



then I will make you fish - ers but of the hu - man soul."
 our boat a com - mon shel - ter for all found by Your grace.
 to let Your judg - ment heal us so that all may be one.

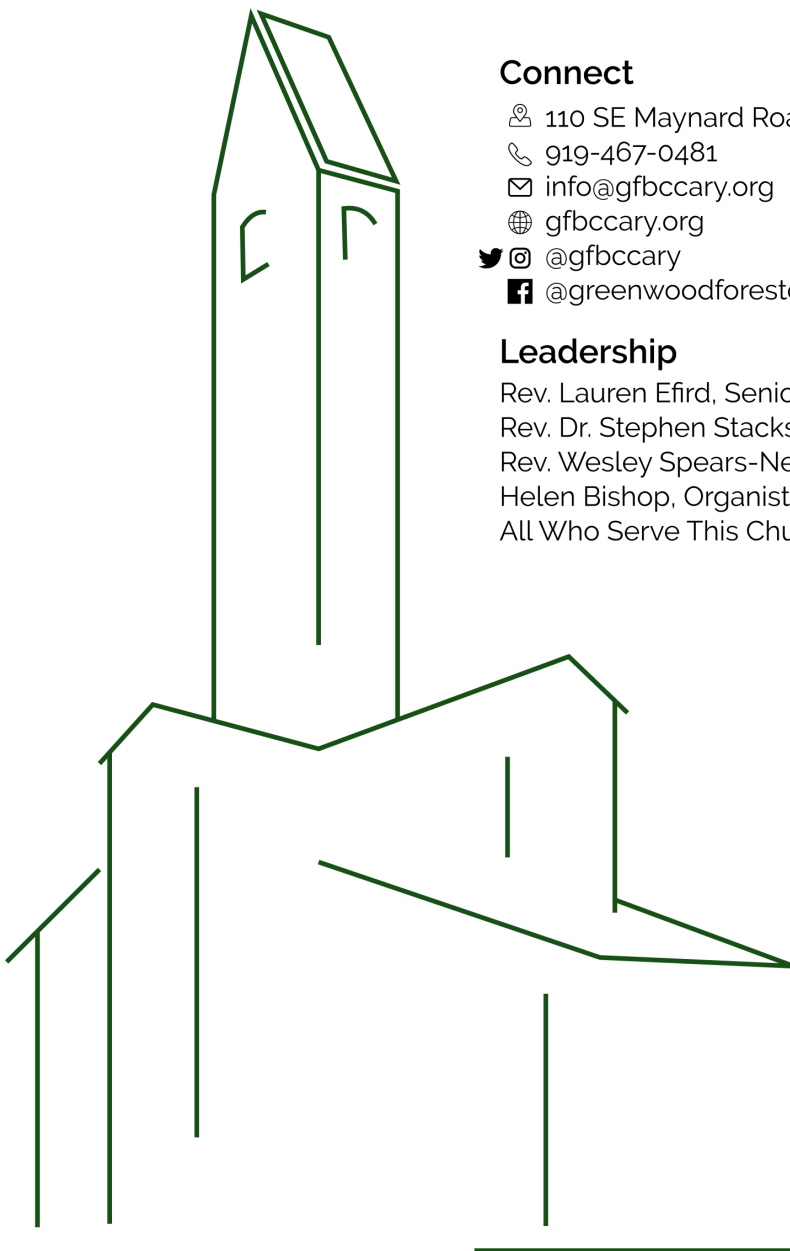
Anthem O Jesus, I Have Promised

arr. Timothy Shaw

O Jesus, I have promised
To serve you to the end;
Be now and always near me,
My master and my friend;
I shall not fear the battle
If you are by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If you will be my guide.

Oh, let me feel you near me;
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear;
My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But, Jesus, draw still nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.

O Jesus, you have promised
To all who follow you
That where you are in glory
Your servant shall be too;
And Jesus, I have promised
To serve you to the end;
Now give me grace to follow,
My master and my friend.



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