



Greenwood Forest
Baptist Church January 14, 2024



Scan for Digital

Bulletin Art "Beloved" by Lauren Wright Pittman

Digital Painting and Collage (inspired by Luke 3:21-22)

Luke's account of Jesus' baptism is brief and vague. He was baptized among "all the people" (Luke 3:21) by an unnamed baptizer, and until he prays, the scene is rather unremarkable. During his prayer, however, an iconic scene unfolds with the heavens opening, the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove, and a voice booming from heaven.

As I considered how I might visually respond to this text, it was difficult to imagine this event with a beginner's mind. I've seen lots of imagery of Jesus in the water with clouds breaking open and a dove descending, or Jesus bursting out of water into a beam of light. These images are powerful, but I wasn't sure if creating a similar image would be helpful, or if I'd be offering insight into the text that hadn't already been visually explored.

I began to meditate on what was unspoken and implied in Luke's account, and one moment that stuck out in my imagination was the moment Jesus was underwater. How did Jesus feel when he held his breath and descended into the river?

This image offers a snapshot of Jesus right before he steps into his calling, on the threshold of spectacular affirmation. He is completely suspended, embraced, and upheld by the waters of baptism. The water's surface is choppy. The future is unknown and precarious. His path is a lonely and formidable one, eventually leading to his suffering and death.

Despite what is to come, Jesus reaches toward the surface. Two fish are drawn to the light of his halo, foreshadowing his companionship with fishers and his miraculous feeding of the five thousand. All of creation is leaning into his call.

This is what trusting your belovedness feels like—muscles and bones relieved of gravity's burden, serenity, weightlessness, oneness with creation, and the warmth of God's love permeating every cell of your body and every corner of your soul.



Current Sermon Series:

TAKE ME TO YOUR RIVER

Jan. 7: Down the Jordan (Mark 1:4-11)

Jan. 14: Surrender to the Good Lord (Mark 10:35-45)

Jan. 21: Blood on My Hands (Acts 9:1-31)

Jan. 28: I Wanna Come Near (Acts 8:26-39)



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 Teaching Series Begins January 14

God is Red: Learning from Indigenous Spirituality, Decolonizing Your Faith – Jan. 14, 21, 28 @ 9:45am.

Fifty years ago, Native American scholar and activist Vine Deloria, Jr. published *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*. Since then, indigenous voices have repeatedly called for Christians, especially those of European descent, to examine their conscience and leave behind colonizer religion. During this series we will learn together from Native theologians what it means to decolonize our faith and what a Christianity that respects indigenous people might look like. Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks is facilitating.

Rev. Spears-Newsome Work Anniversary

From the Personnel Committee:

On January 3rd we celebrated Reverend Wesley Spears-Newsome's 7th year of serving as our Associate Pastor of Community and Youth. Among Wes' many responsibilities are leading our youth, coordinating our church's participation in ONE Wake and our other local missions, and lending his design talents to the church website and bulletin. Be sure to give Wes a big "thank you!" for his seven faithful years of ministering in our church and greater community.

Tucson Trip | Register by January 31

This summer, we'll be traveling as a group with an organization called **Borderlinks** based in Tucson to the US-Mexico Border and other parts of Arizona (July 1-6). We'll engage in some service, learning, and relationship-building activities with residents of the borderlands and the migrants who cross them. Register at gfbccary.org/tucson by January 31. If you have questions, please direct them to Rev. Spears-Newsome.

Ministry Monday

We'll be gathering for our first Ministry Monday of 2024 on January 29 beginning at 6pm. We meet in two groups:

Group A Committees (6-7pm): Children's Ministry, Congregational Care, Personnel, Properties, and Youth

Group B Committees (7-8pm): Discipleship, Finance, Outreach and Fellowship, and Worship

We'll be meeting in-person at the church in the Faith Formation Hallway with breakout rooms for each committee. We look forward to seeing you there!

Community Notes Prayer Requests and Giving



PRAY

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
Gilles Bikindou
Valerie Brooks
Jeff Cisco (friend of Susan Beck)
Scott Davenport (friend of the Biser family)
Stephanie Fancher (friend of Gerry Ritter)
Anjar Hossain (friend of Kevin Schaefer)
Aaliyah Murray (family of Gail Jones)
Katheron E. Palmer (mother of Randy Palmer)
Fred Seeger
Sydney Spivey at the death of her mother, Lori Baysden
Eddie Stewart (friend of Diana Morde)
Kimberly Taliano (Mercedes Auger's daughter)
Mathias Warne (family of Gail Jones)
Our partners at Ebenezer Baptist in Cuba

Thank You Note

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for all your prayers and concerns when my brother was sick for over four years. After James Mark's death, I have been touched by all the prayers, calls, cards, texts, and emails. I am truly loved by a caring church.

In Christian love,
Sue Hughes



GIVING

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 fbccary.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 fuels our spiritual growth both as individuals and as a community. We'll enjoy a new churchwide Faith Formation series this month *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* and we look forward to a Discipleship Retreat on March 1-3 on reading Scripture. These efforts wouldn't be possible without your generosity and gifts!

Order of Worship Second 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 | *River* | *Leon Bridges*

Welcome to Worship | *Rev. Lauren Efirid*

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship (from Psalm 139) 📖

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

You discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue,

O Lord, you know it completely.

You hem me in, behind and before,

And lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

It is so high that I cannot attain it.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;

You knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,

Intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written all the days that were formed for me.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

I try to count them—they are more than the sand;

I come to the end—I am still with you.

Today's color is **green**, representing growth and change.

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, expressed through a peace sign, a handshake, a wave, conversation, etc. We hope you will take the time to greet and speak with those around you or with someone you haven't met!

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.

Invocation | *Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome*

† **Hymn** | *Baptized in Water (vv. 1 and 3; pg. 7)*

Offertory Prayer | *Steve Denning*

Offertory | *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* | *arr. Labenske*

† **Doxology** | *Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN* 📖

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

O praise God. Alleluia!

Praise God above ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

O praise God! O praise God!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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

Reading | *Mark 10:35-45* | *Rev. Spears-Newsome*

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | *Deep River (pg. 10)*

Sermon | *Surrender to the Good Lord* | *Rev. Efird*

† **Hymn** | *I Surrender All (pg. 9)* 📖

Benediction | *Rev. Efird*

Postlude | *Blessed Assurance* | *arr. Leonard*

The Offertory

During the offertory music, we pass plates across the pews as a way to make our collective offering to God and the wellbeing of this community. A short doxology follows as we offer our gifts.

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!

Baptized in Water

Unison

1. Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the
2. Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the
3. Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the

Spir - it, cleansed by the blood of Christ, our
Spir - it, dead in the tomb with Christ, our
Spir - it, marked with the sign of Christ, our

King; heirs of sal - va - tion, trust - ing His
King; one with His ris - ing, freed and for -
King; born of one Fa - ther, we are His

prom - ise, faith - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.
giv - en, thank - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.
chil - dren, joy - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.

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 —

The first system of music features a treble and bass staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

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

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

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

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

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

The fourth system concludes the piece with a final cadence. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

I Surrender All

1. All to Je - sus I sur-ren - der, all to Him I free - ly give;
2. All to Je - sus I sur-ren - der, make me, Sav - ior, whol - ly Thine;
3. All to Je - sus I sur-ren - der, Lord, I give my - self to Thee;

I will ev - er love and trust Him, in His pres - ence dai - ly live.
let me feel Thy Ho - ly Spir - it, tru - ly know that Thou art mine.
fill me with Thy love and pow - er, let Thy bless - ing fall on me.

I sur-ren - der all, I sur-ren - der all;
I sur-ren - der all, I sur-ren - der all;

all to Thee, my bless - ed Sav - ior, I sur-ren - der all.

Anthem Deep River

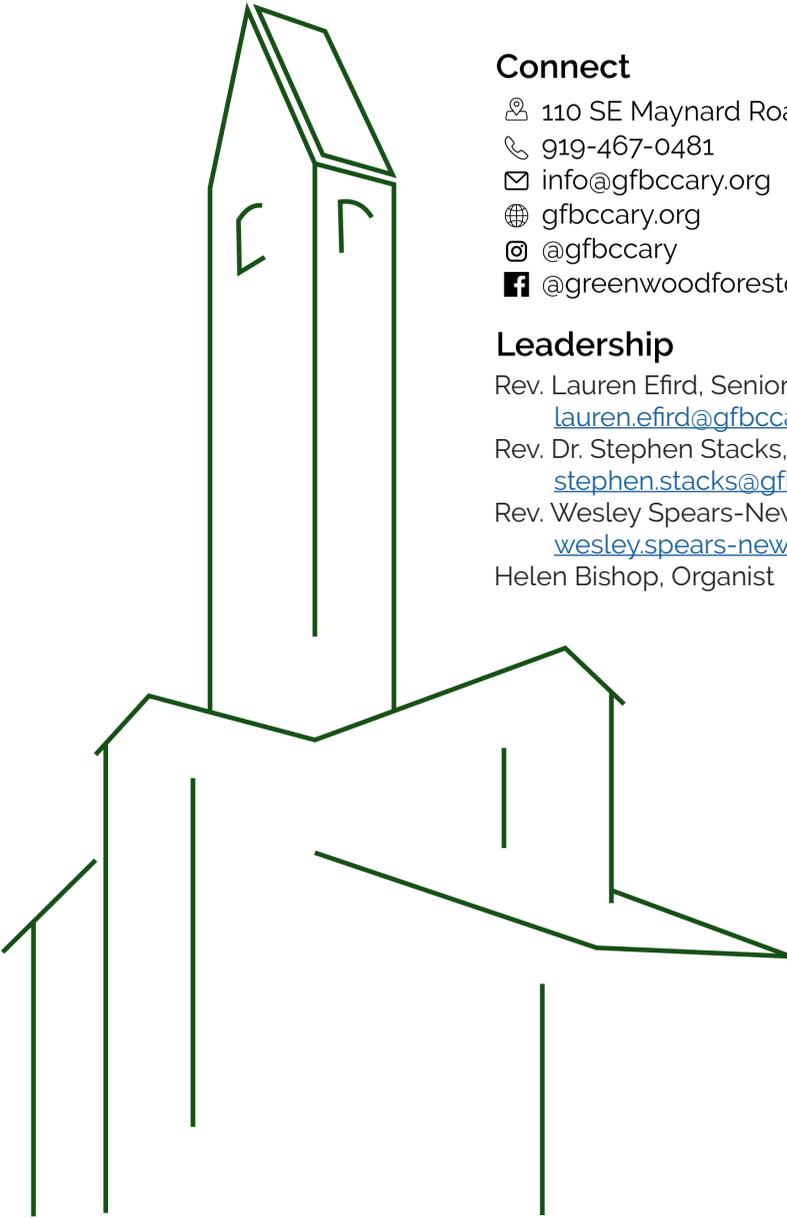
Moses Hogan

Deep river, my home is over Jordan.

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go to that gospel feast?

That promised land, where all is peace?



Connect

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Leadership

Rev. Lauren Efird, Senior Pastor

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Helen Bishop, Organist

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.