



Greenwood Forest Baptist Church

Feb. 18, 2024



Bulletin Art River of Grace

Lisle Gwynn Garrity | Inspired by Luke 5:1-11 | acrylic painting on canvas with digital drawing

“Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” (Luke 5:8)

As we begin Lent, this desperate confession introduces us to Peter, the disciple whose story—and wandering heart—we will follow for the next 7 weeks. If you’ve ever acted in a play or film production, you may have been tasked with writing your character’s backstory, imagining the threads of your character’s life that form the tapestry of their personality and motivations. If we do this exercise with Peter, many threads of imagination and historical details weave together. Peter was a commercial fisherman; his business partners were Andrew (his brother) as well as Zebedee and his two sons. Based in Galilee, he was most likely bilingual, speaking Aramaic and Greek. Culturally, he was immersed in Judaism and Hellenism. His business would have been under oppressive control of the Roman government, which arbitrarily imposed harsh rental and harbor fees, fishing licenses, and taxes on domestic fishermen. He was likely a blue-collar worker daily constrained by tides and taxes.

With this backstory in mind, we may hear Peter’s response to the abundant catch of fish with fresh ears. There are so many messages within his protest: “I’m not prepared. I’m not capable. I’m not deserving. I’m not faithful enough. I’m not smart enough. I’m not the type you’re looking for.” Have you ever found yourself saying these things in response to a new calling, or to an abundant gift of grace?

In this image, the bursting nets transform into a river of grace meandering through the composition of Peter’s life. The river pours into Peter’s hands, but he can’t quite grasp the fullness of this gift and calling quite yet, and so most of it rushes right by. As you will see in my other pieces for this series, this river of grace will wander alongside Peter throughout his life.

The river represents how his journey with Christ begins and ends: with an abundant catch of fish. He is forever tethered to the overflowing love of God. The river is a symbol of Peter’s gifts, as God uses what Peter knows how to do well (being a fisher of fish) and invites him to apply his skills to a new calling (being a fisher of people). It’s a visible reminder of the ways God’s grace bends and turns and rushes to find each of our wandering hearts.

Despite Peter’s resistance, grace seeks him out. His right thumb gets caught in the net. He can’t escape the fact that God’s goodness and mercy will pursue him all the days of his life (Psalm 23:6). The river rushes in. The question for Peter—and for each of us—is will he follow where it leads?



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

Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, our worship services during February will feature music from Black composers and artists, as well as liturgical elements from the African American Heritage Hymnal. Our keynote preacher this year is Rev. Racquel Gill, who will be with us in worship on February 11. We will also welcome back the NCCU University Choir on February 25 to sing a program of spirituals in collaboration with our Sanctuary Choir.

Here at GFBC, we celebrate Black History Month alongside our Black congregants and Black siblings everywhere as a way to honor Black stories, beauty, and contributions, but also as a way to signal our continued commitment to Black lives throughout the year. For us, Black History Month is not a way to absolve ourselves of the year-round and life-long work of anti-racism, but a moment to celebrate and to recommit ourselves to the gospel work of inclusivity in our worship and in our lives.

Save the Date for Randy's Retirement Party!

We'll be celebrating Randy Palmer's retirement on March 17 at 2pm. Be sure to mark your calendars and be prepared to join us! In appreciation for Randy's 20 years of service, we will be collecting a love offering. If you'd like to contribute to this offering, please give your contribution to Andy Jarrell. You may make checks payable to Andy Jarrell and drop them at the church office, or you can use Venmo to send money to @Andy-Jarrell (last digits of phone number are 3662). Donations will be collected through, Wednesday, March 13th.

HOW TO READ YOUR BIBLE

March 1-3

Sign up at gfbccary.org/bible



Discipleship Retreat

Our annual discipleship retreat is coming soon (March 1-3). This year we'll be digging into how to read the Bible. Sign up and check out the full schedule at gfbccary.org/bible. Topics will include authorship, canon, translation, interpretation, imagination, and more! Lauren Efird, Stephen Stacks, Wes Spears-Newsome, and Lynn McLaughlin will be facilitating sessions over the weekend. Cost is \$25.

Bluebird Boxes for Sale

Like last year, Diana Morde will be taking orders for Blue Bird Boxes for you to play host to baby birds this spring! Cost is \$22 per box and proceeds benefit the final stages of the organ reconstruction. You can contact Diana at 919-801-7433 to place your orders.

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
George Daniel
Deborah Davis (friend of Susan Beck)
Carol Fuller
Aaliyah Murray (family of Gail Jones)
Katheron E. Palmer (mother of Randy Palmer)
Jennie Pegram
Fred Seeger
Mathias Warne (family of Gail Jones)
Miles Warren
Our partners at Ebenezer Baptist in Cuba



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 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:

Music Ministry

We're going to see a lot from our Music Ministry this month! Each week, Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks, Helen Bishop, and the Sanctuary Choir lead us in hymns; we saw our youth musicians lead us in worship on Feb. 4; and we'll witness the choir's collaboration with NCCU's University Choir on Feb. 25. These efforts wouldn't be possible without your generosity and gifts!

Order of Worship First Sunday of Lent

✝ 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

Welcome to Worship | *Rev. Lauren Efrid*

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship (Sanctified Art) 📖

Come in.

Feel your feet on the floor.

Settle your worries.

Take a deep breath.

Dust the cobwebs from your ears.

Relax the tension in your jaw,
for Christ is here.

God never stops seeking us.

We have been found.

Let us find God in return.

Let us worship the God of deep waters.

Amen.

Invocation | *Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome*

✝ **Hymn** | *Come, Thou Fount (pg. 7)*

Offertory Prayer | *Sally Shaver*

Offertory | *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* | *arr. Ovid Young*

Today's color is **purple**, representing repentance and reflection.

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.

† **Doxology** | *Tune: 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. 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** | *You Walk Along Our Shoreline (pg. 8)*

Reading | *Luke 5:1-11* | *Rev. Spears-Newsome*

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | *Hear My Prayer (pg. 10)*

Sermon | *Jesus Sought Me* | *Rev. Efird*

† **Hymn** | *You Sought Me (pg. 9)* 📖

Benediction | *Rev. Efird*

Postlude

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

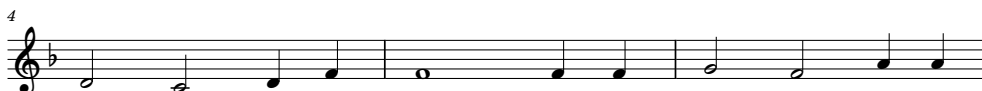
During the final hymn, if you'd like to join our community at Greenwood Forest Baptist Church, we invite you to come forward to the altar. When you come forward, you'll be greeted by a minister and a deacon who will then introduce you to the congregation after the hymn. Welcome!

Thank you to Addie Smith for serving as offertory pianist.

Come, Thou Fount



1. Come, thou fount of ev' - ry bles - sing; tune my
 2. Here I raise my E - be - nez - er, hi - ther
 3. O, to grace how great a debt - tor dai - ly



heart to sing thy grace; streams of mer - cy ne - ver
 by thy help I'm come; and I hope, by thy good
 I'm con - strained to be! Let thy good - ness, like a



ceas - ing call for songs of loud - est praise. Teach me
 plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home. Je - sus
 fet - ter, bind my wand'r - ing heart to thee. Prone to



some mel - o - dious son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a -
 sought me when a strang - er, wand'r - ing from the fold of
 wand - er, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I



bove; praise the mount! I'm fixed u - pon it, mount of
 God; he, to res - cue me from dang - er, in - ter -
 love; here's my heart; O, take and seal it; seal it



God's un - chang - ing love.
 posed his pre - cious blood.
 for thy courts a - bove.

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.

You Sought Me

ERHALT UNS, HERR 8.8.8.8

Words by Anna Strickland, 2023

Music by Joseph Klug, 1543



My ___ bones and ___ head were bent down low
A ___ chance en - count - ter ___ by the lake
I ___ tried to ___ tell you, "Leave me be—
When I be - gin to ___ doubt my worth



When you ap - proached me on your own
I thought this must be some mis - take
I'm not sure what you see in me."
Re - mind me I was formed from earth



You sought me ___ out ___ and called my name
That some - one ___ wrapped in hol - i - ness
And yet you ___ chose my net ___ to fill
The ve - ry ___ good cre - a - tion of



My life would nev - er be the same
Would wil - ling - ly em - brace this mess
With all my faults you call me still
My God who seeks me out in love

Anthem Hear My Prayer

arr. Hogan

O Lord, please hear my prayer, in the mornin' when I rise.

It's your servant bound for glory.

O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.

O Lord, please hear my prayer, keep me safe within your arms.

It's your servant bound for glory.

O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.

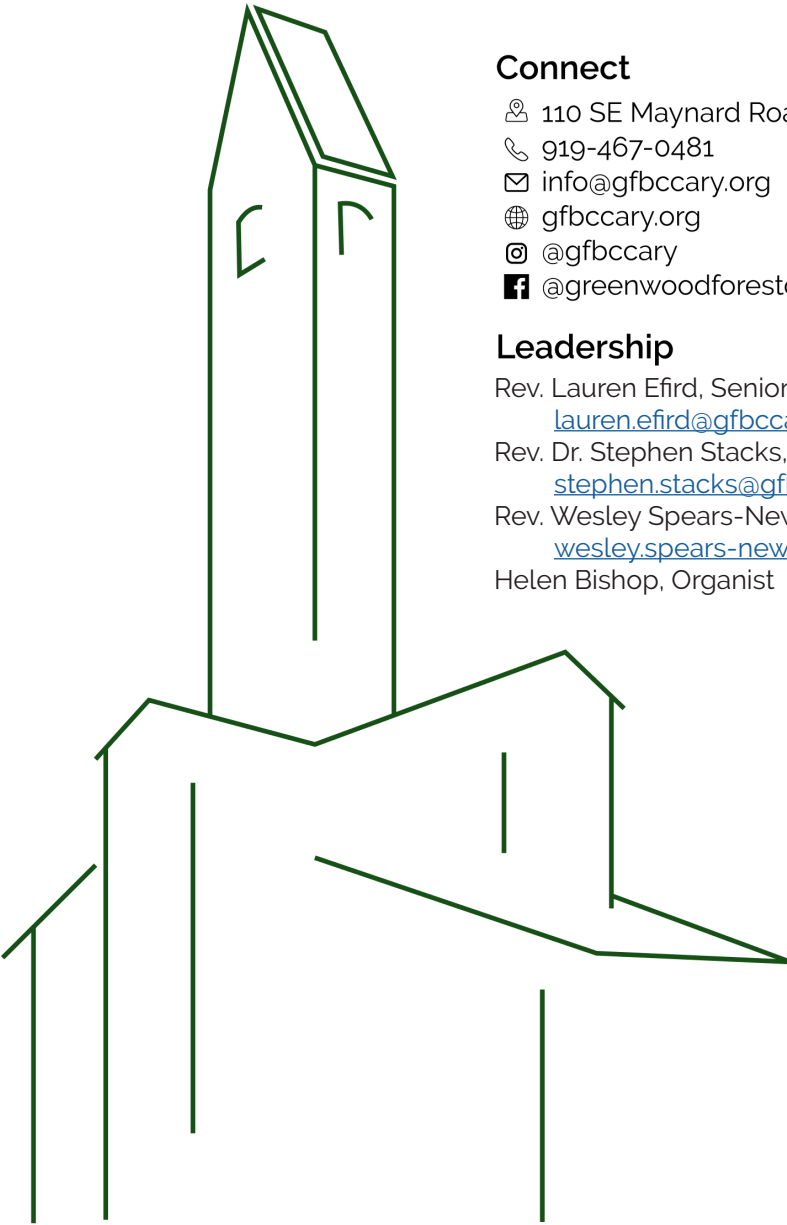
When my work on earth is done, and you come to take me home.

Just to know I'm bound for glory.

And to hear you say well done.

Done with sin and sorrow, have mercy.

Amen.



Connect

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Leadership

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Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome, Associate 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.

Special resources for Lent and Easter by A Sanctified Art (sanctifiedart.org).