

Greenwood Forest Baptist Church December 22, 2024



Bulletin Art

Full of Life in the Emptiest of Places | Lauren Wright Pittman | Inspired by Isaiah 58 | Digital Painting

After repeated readings of this text, I began to see a garden bursting out of a spring. I imagined the flowers working together to build a beautiful arched structure in a parched place. For me, the structure came to represent the rebuilt ruins in the text which create a safe space for restored communities to thrive. I began creating the piece by finding both drought-resistant and water-emergent plants to create the structure. The water-emergent plants lay the foundation in the midst of the gurgling spring: lotuses, birdbill dayflowers, blue flags, and buttonbush flowers. Building from there, drought-resistant plants craft the strong bones and arches of this rebuilt ruin; from the base to the top of the shelter are: catmint, coneflower, geraniums, dianthus, butterfly weeds, agapanthus, and verbena. Metaphorically speaking, the health of the garden depends on the hard work of gardeners culling weeds (which in the Isaiah passage could be represented by removing the yoke, the pointing of fingers, and the speaking of evil). The garden also depends on adding necessary nutrients to the soil (offering food to the hungry and satisfying the needs of the afflicted). This is the good that is ours to do.

I have a difficult time considering an image complete without a person as the focal point. As I worked on this piece, the flowers and structure alone felt insufficient to represent the fullness of life I was hoping for, so I decided to add bees floating and fluttering throughout this restored flower sanctuary. The community garden shelter provides nourishment for the twelve bees, which in turn provide for the whole ecosystem. When we do the good that is ours to do, our work in discipleship raises up the foundations of many generations. The whole community is uplifted when we lean into God's will in our life and share that goodness with others.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

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, citizenship statuses, 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.



Poinsettia Dedications



Mercedes Auger in memory of Huey V. Auger and Tim Carr

Faye Beal in memory of Donald Beal

Susan and Chuck Beck in honor of Nancy Walters

Bill Monty and Sophie Coleman; Tess, Clay and Sawyer Setser in memory of Jennifer Denning

Blair Biser in memory of Roy Hamilton Biser, Helen Osborne Biser, and Joe Blake Barefoot

Tom and Pat Brooks in memory of their parents and in honor of their children and grandchildren

Emilie H. Carr in memory of Timothy A. Carr

Georgia C. Carter in honor of Jon, Jennifer, and Justin; and Janice and Randy Medford

Jennifer, Tom, and Sarah Coltrane in honor of Jean Harris and in memory of Jerry Harris

Steve and Vivian Denning in memory of Jennifer Denning.

David Floyd and Nancy Long in memory of their parents, Ed and Marjorie Floyd

The GFBC Sanctuary Choir in memory of Jeff Parent and Tim Carr

Jane Griffin in memory of Ann Griffin Clawson

Jean Harris in memory of her husband Jerry Harris and in honor of her family

Andy Jarrell and the Wonder Room Kids and Adults in memory of Tim Carr and in honor of the GFBC staff

Virgil and Gail Jones in memory of their parents, Anna and Gerald Jones and Dorothy and Ford Mastin

Randy and Janice Medford in memory of Dorothy and Howard Beard; and Deroy and Vida Adair

Beckie Mitchem in memory of her husband Terry Mitchem

Lynn Newsome in honor of Wesley, Megan, and Evelyn Spears-Newsome; in memory of Fred Newsome

Felice Parent in memory of Jeff Parent

Gerry Ritter in memory of her husband Harold Ritter, their son Dean Ritter, and Harold and Gerry's parents

Marlen Ruegg in memory of Susan Miller and Marietta Potok

Jennifer Scull in honor of Greg and Carol Carter

Wesley, Megan, and Evelyn Spears-Newsome in honor of Stuart and Joyce Spears and Lynn Newsome, and in memory of Fred Newsome

Sydney Spivey in memory of Lori Baysden and Harold McDonald

Carole and Bucky Sydnor in memory of Shreya Thapa

Mackenzie Tilley in memory of Doc and Nancy Tilley and in memory of Odis and Kathleen Hull

Lee and Patti Webb in memory of William Webb Glasgow, Morris and Lorene Phillips, Hurst and Virginia Webb; and in honor of Leanne, Scot, Catherine and Sean Glasgow; Susan, Henry and Hannah Meador

Community Notes | Prayer Requests and Giving

Prayer

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.

Gilles Bikindou

Jo Brooks

Sue Daniel

Edwina Erwin

Barney Graham

Doris Martin

Jennie Pegram

Fred Seeger

Kathleen Wicker

Our siblings in Western North Carolina

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.

Order of Worship | Lessons and Carols

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

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

Chiming of the Hour

† **Processional** | Once in Royal David's City (pg. 8)

Lighting the Advent Wreath (Love) | The Sisley Family

Welcome and Bidding Prayer | Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Carol | Up! Good Christen Folk and Listen | arr. G.R. Woodward

Ding-dong, ding:

Ding-a-dong-a-ding:

Ding-dong, ding-dong:

Ding-a-dong-ding.

Up! good Christen folk, and listen

How the merry church bells ring,

And from steeple

Bid good people

Come adore the new-born King:

Tell the story how from glory

God came down at Christmastide,

Bringing gladness,

Chasing sadness,

Show'ring blessings far and wide.

Born of mother, blest o'er other,

Ex Maria Virgine,

In a stable

('Tis no fable),

Christus natus hodie.

Lesson 1 | Humanity Fails but God Promises Freedom | Felice Parent

Carol | Jesus Christ the Apple Tree | Elizabeth Poston

The tree of life my soul hath seen,

Laden with fruit, and always green:

The trees of nature fruitless be

Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:

By faith I know, but ne'er can tell

The glory which I now can see

In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,

And pleasure dearly I have bought:

I missed of all: but now I see

'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,

Here I will sit and rest awhile:

Under the shadow I will be

Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,

It keeps my dying faith alive;

Which makes my soul in haste to be

With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Lesson 2 | Abraham's Descendants Will Bless the World | Jonah Sisley

† **Carol** | Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (pg. 9)

Lesson 3 | Isaiah Foretells God's Coming Liberation | Rev. Randy Palmer

† **Carol** | Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (pg. 10)

Lesson 4 | Isaiah Foretells the Peaceful Reign of God | Rev. Spears-Newsome

† **Carol** | It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (pg. 11)

Lesson 5 | Mary Receives Gabriel's Blessing | Jazzmoné Sutton

Offertory Prayer | Nathan Bullock

Offertory | Personent Hodie | arr. Vicki Tucker Courtney

† **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 him my heart.*

Lesson 6 | The Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem | Cameron Aiken

† **Carol** | Infact Holy, Infant Lowly (pg. 12)

Lesson 7 | The Shepherds Go to the Manger | Lucy Beal

Carol | Wexford Carol | arr. Howard Helvey

*Good people all, this Christmas time,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done,
In sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray
To God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon the morn
There was a blest Messiah born.
Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear
Which put the shepherds in great fear.
Prepare and go, the angels said,*

*To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn,
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born.
With thankful heart and joyful mind,
The shepherds went the babe to find,
And as God's angel has foretold,
They did our Savior Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid,
And by his side the virgin maid
Attending to the Lord of Life,
Who came on earth to end all strife.*

Lesson 8 | A Star Leads the Magi to Jesus | Rev. Spears-Newsome

† **Carol** | On This Day, Earth Shall Ring (pg. 13)

Lesson 9 | The Mystery of the Incarnation | Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks

Carol | If They Ask You Why He Came | Lena McLin

*If they ask you why he came
To show mankind how to live here below
Being guided from above,
He taught brotherhood and love.
If they ask you why he came
To teach us peace and harmony
Being guided from above,
He taught brotherhood and love.
The world took note,
Up his path people trod,
Marching hand in hand,
Trying to do their part,
Up the pathway to freedom and justice for all,
He was sent from God above,
To teach brotherhood and love.
That's the reason why he came,
And the Prince of Peace was his name.*

Collect and Benediction | Rev. Spears-Newsome

Recessional | O Come, All Ye Faithful (pg. 14)

Once in Royal David's City

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a
2. He came down to earth from heav - en who is
3. For He is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by the
4. Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the

low - ly cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, and His shel - ter was a
day on earth He grew; He was tempt - ed, scorned, re -
ox - en stand - ing by, we shall see Him, but in

ba - by in a man - ger for His bed. Ma - ry
sta - ble, and His cra - dle was a stall. With the
ject - ed, tears and smiles like us He knew. Thus He
heav - en set at God's right hand on high; when like

was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle Child.
poor and meek and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad - ness, and He shares in all our glad - ness.
stars His chil - dren crowned, robed in white shall gath - er round.

9 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Unison

1. Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
2. King of kings, yet born of Ma - ry, as of old on
3. Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard
4. At His feet the six - winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with

trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed,
earth He stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture,
on the way, as the Light of light de - scend - eth
sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the Pres - ence,

for with bless - ing in His hand, Christ our God to earth de -
in the bod - y and the blood; He will give to all the
from the realms of end - less day, that the powers of hell may
as with cease - less voice they cry, "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

scend - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand.
faith - ful His own self for heav - en - ly food.
van - ish as the dark - ness clears a - way.
lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Lord Most High!"

The musical score is written for a unison voice part. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/2. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system. The first system includes a 'Unison' marking above the staff. The lyrics are: '1. Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and 2. King of kings, yet born of Ma - ry, as of old on 3. Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard 4. At His feet the six - winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with'. The second system lyrics are: 'trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed, earth He stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture, on the way, as the Light of light de - scend - eth sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the Pres - ence,'. The third system lyrics are: 'for with bless - ing in His hand, Christ our God to earth de - in the bod - y and the blood; He will give to all the from the realms of end - less day, that the powers of hell may as with cease - less voice they cry, "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -'. The fourth system lyrics are: 'scend - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand. faith - ful His own self for heav - en - ly food. van - ish as the dark - ness clears a - way. lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Lord Most High!"'. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

1. Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem
2. I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the Rose I have
3. This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills

hath sprung. Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as
in mind: with Ma - ry we be - hold it, the
the air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor, the

saints of old have sung. It came a flow-eret bright,
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right
dark-ness ev - ery - where. True Man, yet ver - y God,

a - mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
she bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
from sin and death He saves us, and light - ens ev - ery load.

It Came Upon a 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.

The musical score is written in 6/8 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It features a vocal line in the treble clef and a piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are arranged in four systems, each with a corresponding musical staff. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn. The second system contains the next four lines. The third system contains the next four lines, including a quote. The fourth system contains the final four lines of the hymn. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in the bass clef, providing harmonic support for the vocal line.

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

1. In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for His bed a cat - tle stall;
2. Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new

ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the Babe is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.

Swift are wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, no - els ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing greet the mor - row:

Christ the Babe is Lord of all, Christ the Babe is Lord of all.
Christ the Babe is Lord of all, Christ the Babe is Lord of all.

On This Day, Earth Shall Ring



1 On this day earth shall ring with the song
 2 His the doom, ours the mirth; when he came
 3 God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three
 4 On this day an - gels sing; with their song



chil - dren sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to
 down to earth Beth - le - hem saw his birth; ox and ass be -
 to him led; kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts be -
 earth shall ring, prais - ing Christ, heav - en's King, born on earth to

Refrain



save us; him the Fa - ther gave us.
 side him from the cold would hide him. *Id - e - o - o - o - o,
 fore him, praise him and a - dore him.
 save us; peace and love he gave us.



id - e - o - o - o - o, id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

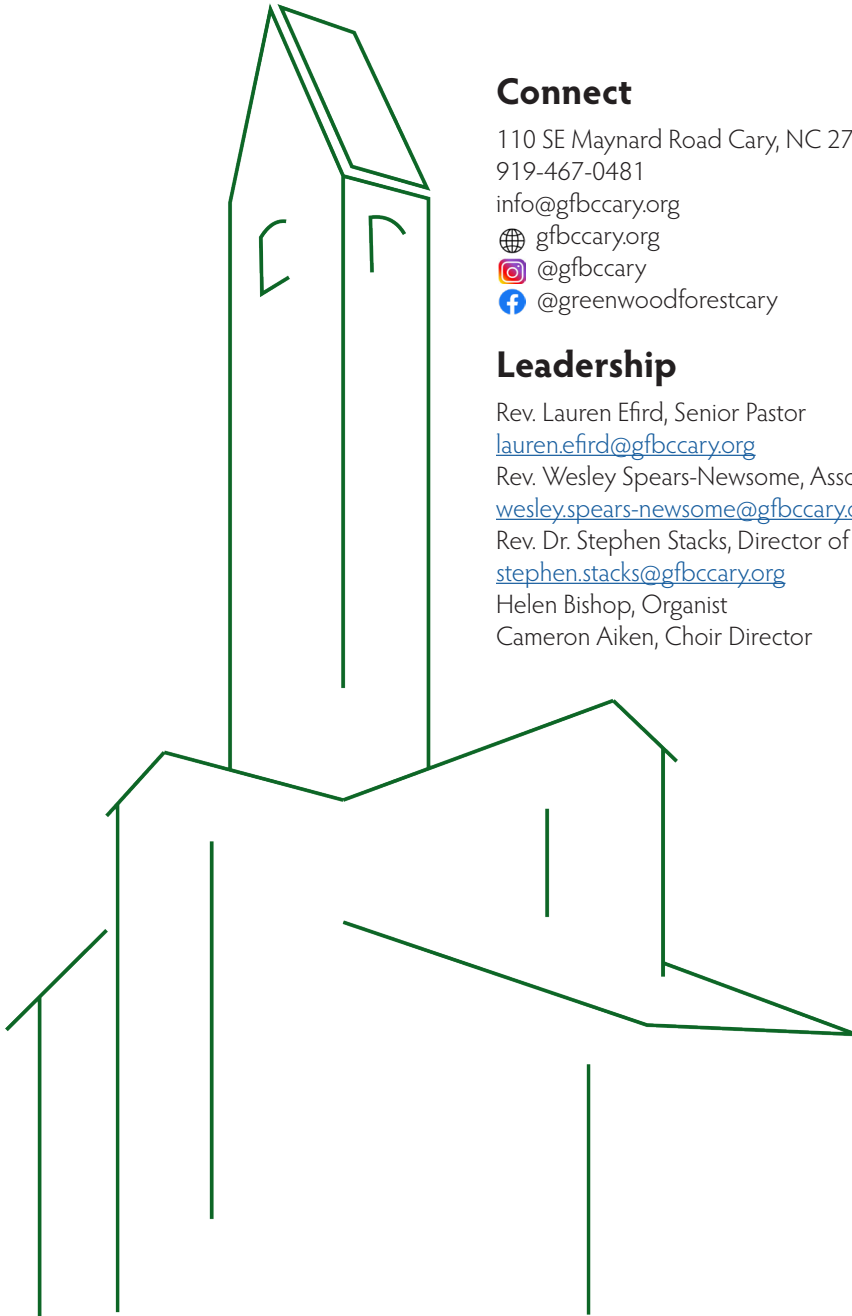
O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O come ye, O
 2. True God of true God, Light from Light E - ter - nal, lo, He
 3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, O sing, all ye
 4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this hap - py morn - ing, Je - sus, to

come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come and be - hold Him, born the King of
 shuns not the vir - gin's womb; Son of the Fa - ther, be - got - ten, not cre -
 cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the
 Thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap -

an - gels!
 at - ed. O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,
 high - est!
 pear - ing!

O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!



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Cameron Aiken, Choir Director

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