



Greenwood Forest Baptist Church

April 6, 2025





everything [in] between

Meeting God in the midst of extremes

Bulletin Art

Lauren Wright Pittman, "Zacchaeus," digital painting | inspired by Luke 19:1-10

I had a lot of fun discovering new layers to this familiar story. I learned that Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore fig tree, which was a food source for poor people because the fruit was bitter and generally undesirable. I had always imagined a fruitless tree, but the presence of fruit opened up interesting avenues to explore. The root word for sycamore tree is σῦκον, meaning "fig," and as I did a study of other key words in the text, I noticed this same root word in συκοφαντεω, or "defrauded," which was used to describe what Zacchaeus did to his community. It was curious to me that the root word for "defrauded" was "fig," so I dug deeper to find that the Greek word was from the phrase "fig-informer" or a person who would notify authorities if one was exporting figs from Greece without paying a tax. It seemed that these "fig-informers" would use the threat of exposure to extort money from fig farmers. This is where the word "sycophant" comes from, which evolved to more generally describe a "malignant accuser from love of gain," which perfectly describes Zacchaeus.

Jesus calls Zacchaeus out of his identity as "sycophant" into his new identity as "repentant host" who invites Jesus into his home and redistributes his ill-gotten wealth. Zacchaeus's clothing holds a repeated pattern of four figs and halves of coins, referencing the fruits of his transformation.

The area where Zacchaeus sat in the tree is fruitless and dying. His actions were destructive and oppressive to his own community. The crowd is correct in grumbling about him; their anger is righteous, but Jesus offers mercy. In this visual metaphor, Jesus removes him from the tree so it has a chance to heal and nourish the whole community. Jesus' clothing is patterned with suns, representing righteousness, and water, representing mercy, because it is through his merciful actions that righteousness for the community is achieved.

—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, transcripts of the sermon, and large print bulletins are available at the back of the sanctuary.



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.



Announcements | Church Events and Updates

Carr Center at Cary Town Council on April 24

Please note the change of date!

The vote for rezoning of our land to build the Carr Center will be on April 24 at 6:30pm at Cary Town Hall. We invite everyone to come for what we anticipate to be a positive result. Anyone is also invited to join in celebrating at Bond Brothers Brewery (202 E Cedar St, Cary, NC 27511) afterward to mark this milestone!

Important Dates for Lent

April 13: Palm Sunday and Children's Ministry Egg Hunt (following worship)

April 18: Good Friday Tenebrae Service (7pm)

April 20: Easter Sunday

May 18 Block Party!

Save the date for a Block Party celebrating the Carr Center on May 18, 3-5pm in the GFBC Parking Lot. We'll be gathering the whole Cary community in support of the project and welcoming them to a time of fun, food, and games for all ages! Stay tuned for more.

Good Friday (April 18)

Join us for our annual Service of Tenebrae on Good Friday (April 18) at 7pm in the Sanctuary. We remember the last days of Jesus' life, take communion together, and hear the story of the crucifixion leading up to Easter Sunday.

Eastertide Flowers

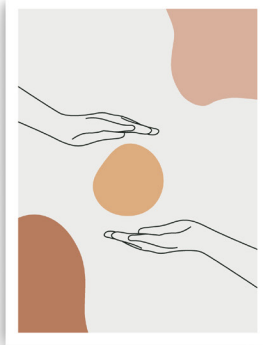
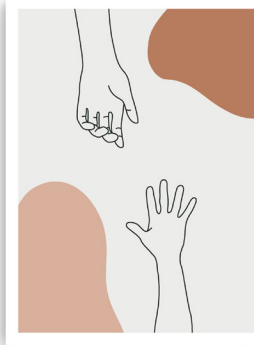
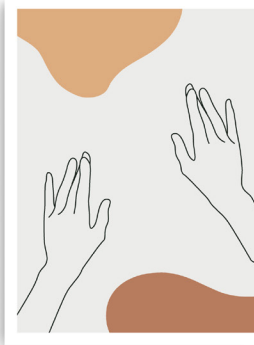
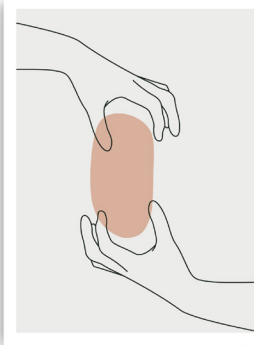
Our Sanctuary Adornment team would like everyone to bring flowers from their gardens (or a local store if you lack a green thumb!) on Easter Sunday (April 20) for the Easter Cross decorations!

Also, our nursery has stopped carrying Easter Lilies, so we won't be doing dedications this year. In lieu of that, we invite anyone who wants to dedicate flowers to sign up on the sheet outside the office for any of the weeks in Eastertide (you can team up, too!). Dedications of those flowers will be printed in the bulletin.

Work Anniversary

March 24 marks Karen Burden's 11th year as our Office Administrator. Karen is the first voice you hear when you call the church phone and often the first face you see when you visit the church during the week. She is critical in ensuring our church functions and we are forever grateful for her hard work. While Karen recovers from surgery, you can send cards to the church office and we'll make sure they get to her!

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.

Helen Bishop
Jo Brooks
Karen Burden
Barney Graham
Doris Martin
Jennie Pegram
Fred Seeger
Ken Scott
Mathias Warne (family of Gail and Virgil Jones)
Anne Whelan
Kathleen Wicker

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: The Carr Center

GFBC and the Greenwood Forest Children's Center are in a partnership with DHIC, The Caring Place, and the YMCA to develop a mixed-use affordable housing center on our land. The Carr Center, named for Tim Carr who spearheaded its development, will include a new preschool, program housing and services from The Caring Place, and affordable housing by DHIC. The rezoning required for the project to continue is up for a vote on April 24 at 6:30 at Cary Town Hall. Join us there and celebrate after!

Order of Worship | 5th 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 | Servant Medley | arr. Mark Hayes

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 A Sanctified Art) 📖

We come to worship because we long for mercy.

We long for community. We long for God.

We come to worship because we need a good word.

We need connection. We need moral reminders.

We come to worship because we are in between:

hope and grief, faith and doubt,

joy and longing, curiosity and conviction.

So we come to worship and God meets us here.

Surely, we are not alone.

Thanks be to God for meeting us here! Amen.

Invocation | Nathan Bullock

✝ **Hymn** | Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior (pg. 7)

Offertory Prayer | Blair Biser

Offertory | Interlude | arr. Mark Hayes 📖

✝ **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.

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

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.

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 | 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

† Hymn | Righteous Mercy (pg. 8)

Reading | Luke 19:1-10 | Rev. Spears-Newsome
The word of God for us, the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem | Zaccheus, Come Down | Abe Cáceres (pg. 10)

Sermon | Righteousness & Mercy | Rev. Efird

Communion

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 | Jesus at Your Holy Table (pg. 9)

Benediction | Rev. Efird

Postlude | How Majestic Is Your Name | arr. Mark Hayes

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.

* = In the Lord's Prayer, you may say any name for God (e.g., Mother/Father/Parent).

Communion

During Communion, we gather around the table as Christ showed us, to remember and give thanks. We have an open table—all who wish to take Communion are invited. We practice intinction, which means you receive a piece of bread and dip it in the cup. A gluten-free option is available on the altar.

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

Thank you to Nancy Whelan for joining us in worship today while Helen Bishop is recovering!

Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior

1. Pass me not, O gen - tle Sav - ior, Hear my hum - ble
2. Let me at a throne of mer - cy Find a sweet re -
3. Trust - ing on - ly in Thy mer - it, Would I seek Thy
4. Thou the Spring of all my com - fort, More than life to

cry, While on oth - ers Thou art call - ing,
lief; Kneel - ing there in deep con - tri - tion,
face; Heal my wound - ed, bro - ken spir - it,
me, Whom have I on earth be - side Thee?

Solo: I'm call - ing
Do not pass me by. Sav - ior, Sav - ior,
Help my un - be - lief.
Save me by Thy grace.
Whom in heav'n but Thee?

Hear my hum - ble cry; While on oth - ers Thou art

call - ing, Do not pass me by.

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D ("Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus")

Words by Anna Strickland, 2023

Music by Rowland H. Prichard, 1830;
harm. Ralph Vaugh Williams, 1906



Since our child - hood you have taught us what is wrong
Though there's wide - ness in your mer - cy, let us not
Far too of - ten we hold on - to an - ger dressed



and what is right Nur - tur - ing our sense of
a - buse that grace Called in - to this Chris - tian
as righ - teous - ness We for - get we serve a



8
jus - tice, fuel - ing us to work and fight Keep that
jour - ney, let our lives re - flect our faith When we
God who calls us to re - la - tion - ship So when



14
fire for jus - tice burn - ing in the sha - dow
fal - ter and fall short of our com - mit - ment
those who caused us harm re - pent and choose a



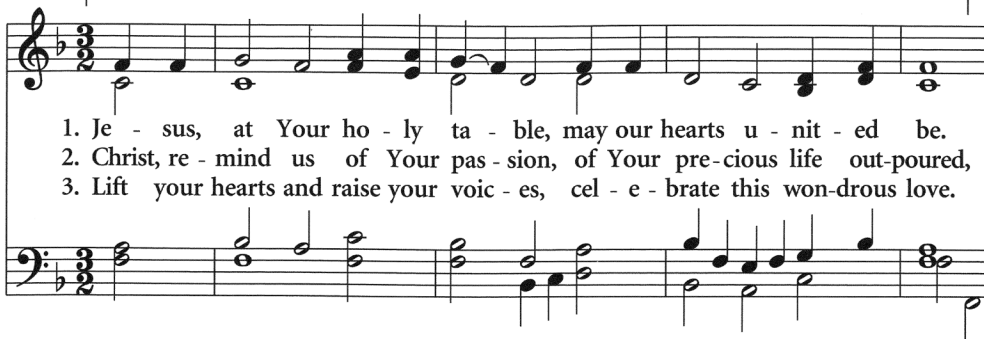
19
of our fear E - ven there your Spi - rit's stir - ring,
to your will Hold us, wrap - ping us in your love
bet - ter way Spi - rit move our venge - ful hearts



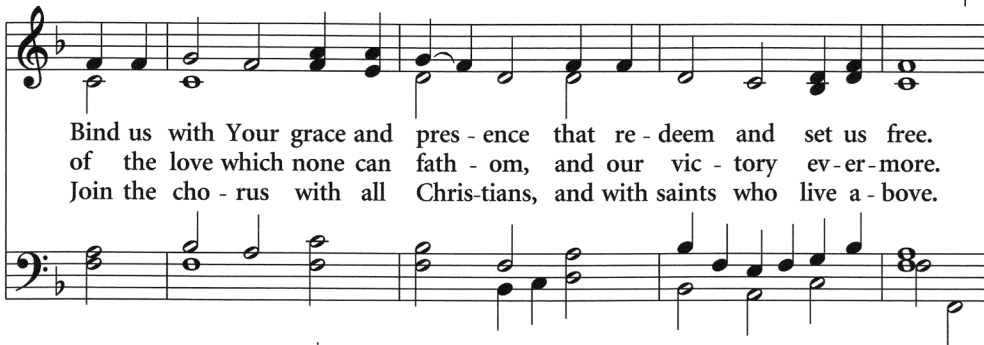
25
light - ing us a path that's clear
as we work toward whole - ness still
to choose love in - stead of wrath

Jesus At Your Holy Table

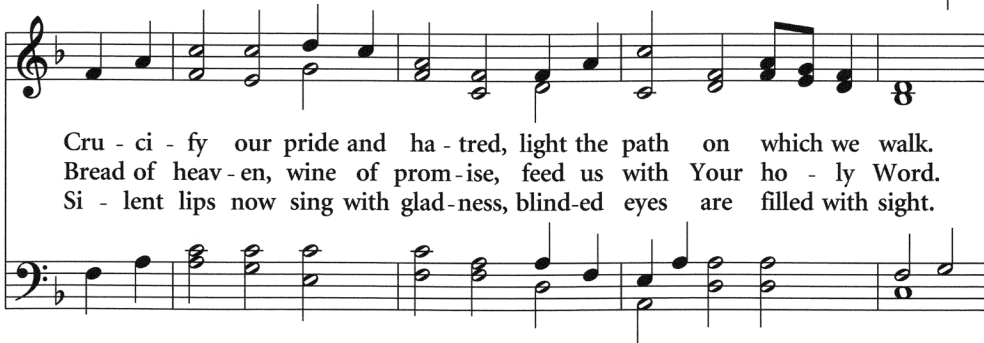
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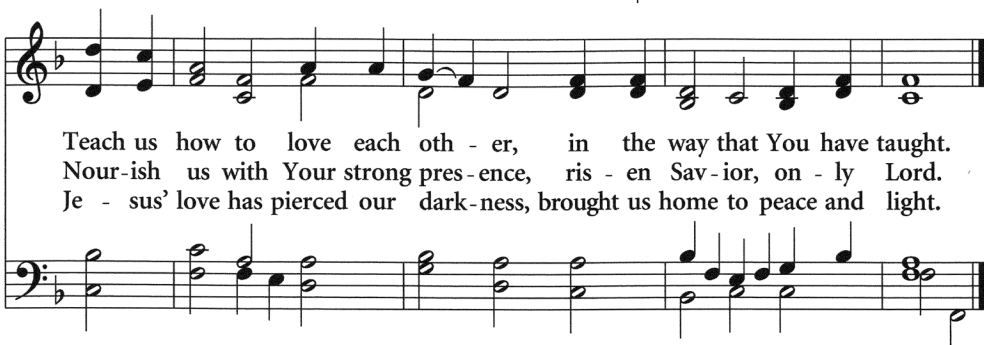
1. Je - sus, at Your ho - ly ta - ble, may our hearts u - nit - ed be.
2. Christ, re - mind us of Your pas - sion, of Your pre - cious life out - poured,
3. Lift your hearts and raise your voic - es, cel - e - brate this won - drous love.



Bind us with Your grace and pres - ence that re - deem and set us free.
of the love which none can fath - om, and our vic - tory ev - er - more.
Join the cho - rus with all Chris - tians, and with saints who live a - bove.



Cru - ci - fy our pride and ha - tred, light the path on which we walk.
Bread of heav - en, wine of prom - ise, feed us with Your ho - ly Word.
Si - lent lips now sing with glad - ness, blind - ed eyes are filled with sight.



Teach us how to love each oth - er, in the way that You have taught.
Nour - ish us with Your strong pres - ence, ris - en Sav - ior, on - ly Lord.
Je - sus' love has pierced our dark - ness, brought us home to peace and light.

Anthem Zaccheus, Come Down

Abe Cáceres

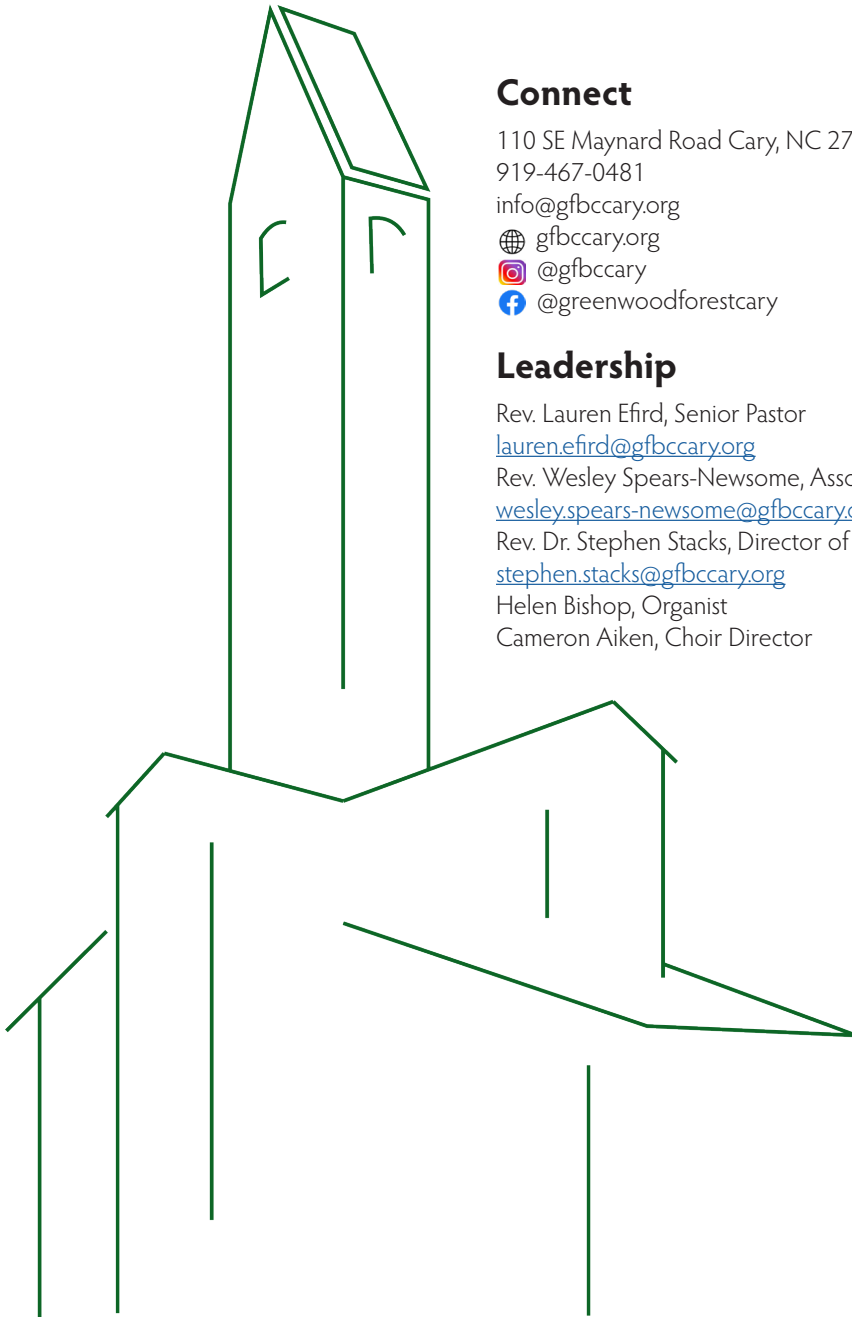
*Come down from the tree, Zacchaeus,
Come down from the tree, Zacchaeus,
You came to see me so come down from the tree,
I must stay at your home Zacchaeus.*

Zacchaeus, chief of the publicans,
was a very wealthy man, indeed.
Folks began to wonder
if Jesus would blunder
by guesting with a man of greed.

Zacchaeus, joyously received him
and made a public confession.
"Half of all I own, I give to the poor,
And to all I have cheated, I return four times more."

"Today, O son of Abraham
Your salvation is homeward bound.
For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost,
And now you are found. You are found!"

*My name is also Zacchaeus,
My name is also Zacchaeus,
Jesus says to me, "Come down from the tree,
I must stay at your home, Zacchaeus.*



Connect

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Helen Bishop, Organist

Cameron Aiken, Choir Director

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