



Greenwood Forest
Baptist Church April 27, 2025



Bulletin Art

Lauren Wright Pittman, "In Our Hands," Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on paper

In the beginning God filled the formless void with color, texture, light, flavor, time, and life. God scooped the clay and carefully molded it, breathing life into the nostrils of humanity. These are the images of a tender, imaginative God who loves Creation limitlessly.

Following the Creation narrative, humanity quickly spirals into violence, corruption, and power-hunger toward the total destruction of Creation. God becomes deeply aggrieved and even regrets creating humanity (Gen 6:6). God decides it best to return all of Creation to the chaotic void, though God finds hope in Noah's family. I've struggled with this narrative, but I find myself feeling a tremendous amount of compassion. I can only imagine how painful it is to watch the work of your hands devolve into brutality.

In this image, God's hands hold various animals and plant life, and are surrounded by the bands of the rainbow, shielding Creation from the swirling waters of chaotic destruction. I chose not to image humanity because the hands are at once God's and ours. We must respond to God's covenant by protecting and keeping the earth. It is our responsibility; it is our calling. God meets us where we are—utterly dependent and bound toward self- destruction—with a promise sealed with a bow bursting with the endless spectrum of colors light holds.

-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 \mathfrak{D}))) 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 Rezoning Successful!

Thank you to everyone who came to the Cary Town Council meeting last Thursday (April 24) to support the rezoning for the Carr Center. We were joined by people from all over Cary in support of the project, including our friends from ONE Wake and Habitat for Humanity! The Town Council spoke well of the project and now we move on to development.

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.

Eastertide Flowers

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.

From the Sanctuary Adornment Committee

Thank you to everyone who brought in flowers and helped decorate the sanctuary for Easter! The church looked beautiful and it was wonderful to see the fruits of a great community effort.

- The Sanctuary Adornment Committee

Thank You

Thank you to Paula Harrell for joining us in worship today while Helen Bishop is recovering!

Happy Earth Day

This week we're marking Creation Care Sunday in honor of Earth Day, which occurred last week on April 22. Join us as we reflect on our connection to all of God's good creation.

In 1969 massive oil spills ravaged the coast of California. These oil spills served as a tipping point for concerned politicians who launched a "teach-in" day across college campuses to educate students on air and water pollution. Inspired by the college "teach-ins," activists scaled these efforts to reach the broader public. As a result, a national Earth Day was launched on April 22 in 1970.

Within that same year, the energy around Earth Day helped lead to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Environmental Education Act, and the Clean Air Act.

Since that time, Earth Day has become a beacon of hope around the world. Classrooms teach about environmental justice, cities hold parades, people visit their farmer's markets, and many Christians mark it in their worship life.

Community Notes | Prayer Requests and Giving









Scan to Give Online Today!

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

Allan Huntsinger and Leta Huntsinger at the death of their mother

Sandra Jarrell

Doris Martin

Jennie Pegram

Fred Seeger

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 Carying 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 Carying Place, and affordable housing by DHIC. The rezoning required for the project to continue was affirmed by the Cary Town Council on April 24!

Order of Worship | Creation Care Sunday

- This icon indicates an invitation to stand or express reverence however you see fit.
- ii 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 Efird

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace

Call to Worship (from A Sanctified Art)

Where do you see God?

We see God in the wide reach of sky, in the towering height of mountains, in the depths of the sea, and in the vividness of flowers.

Where else do you see God?

We see God in early morning sunrises, in the quiet after a snow, in the reaching of rivers and tributaries, and in the stars that light the night.

And in your seeing, what do you know?

We know that God is here, and we know that God is good. Let us worship the God of creation!

Invocation | Rev. Amanda Warren

† Hymn | Morning Has Broken (pg. 7)

Offertory Prayer | Blair Biser

Offertory

Today's color is white, representing the glory of God.

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.

† 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. 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 | Beautiful Savior (pg. 8)

Reading | Romans 8:18-27 | Rev. Spears-Newsome

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | Bring in the Year of Jubilee | The Porter's Gate

The meek will inherit the earth
The meek will inherit the earth

The first will be last and the last will be first

The meek will inherit the earth

The wicked will lose what they stole

The wicked will lose what they stole

All that they thought they could own and control

The wicked will lose what they stole

Jubilee, now is the year of God's favor Jubilee, rest for the weary creation now Bring in the year of Jubilee

Sermon | Creation Longs for Jubilee | Rev. Efird

+ Hymn | His Eye is on the Sparrow (pg. 9)

Benediction | Rev. Efird

Postlude

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).

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!

Turn now from evil to good
Turn now from evil to good

Then we will dwell in the land as we should

Turn now from evil to good

The earth will sigh with relief

The earth's gonna sigh with relief

There's more than enough for the hungry to feast

The earth will sigh with relief







Eye is on the Sparrow







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