



# Greenwood Forest Baptist Church

June 29, 2025



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## Current Sermon Series:

# FAITH BEYOND EMPIRE

In *Faith Beyond Empire*, we'll be exploring the ways our Scriptures lead us to resist imperial impulses like the desire to conquer, control, exploit, and consume. From Genesis to Revelation, we'll examine stories, parables, and poems to determine how we identify and respond to empire in our midst today based on how God's people have responded in Scripture.

## Bulletin Art

This week, I've simply placed an image of a weakening chain for our art. The passage in question this week involves the liberation of a child from cruel slavery and the destruction of the prison attempting to hold the men who set her free.

There's hardly a clearer image of the way the gospel should be an affront to our social institutions than this story. The image of this weakening chain has fascinated me and remained in my mind since I first saw it because it shows how things break down. Abolitionists didn't abolish slavery all at once. They took in escapees, harbored people on the Underground Railroad, and spirited people off to other countries for freedom long before the Emancipation Proclamation or any Constitutional Amendments came about. These were all little weaknesses in the chains of bondage that culminated in something much bigger.

A chain only needs to snap at one link to lose a good deal of power.

—Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome

## Next Sermon Series:

# you've got a friend

friendship. connection. creation.

In July, we're beginning a new sermon and event series called "You've Got a Friend: Friendship. Connection. Creation." In worship, we'll be exploring biblical friendships and there will be several events through July and August you'll want to mark your calendars for:

- **July 20-23:** Youth Mission Trip with other local progressive churches to Western NC
- **July 27:** Toy Story Movie Night at GFBC
- **August 9:** Youth-led fundraiser for Western NC in Raleigh
- **August 15:** Makers Festival and a Night with David Lamotte (more info to come!)
- **August 24:** Backpack Blessing for Children, Youth, and Educators in Worship
- **August 31:** Lilo and Stitch Movie Night

The series will also feature special Faith Formation sessions on friendship led by Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome.

# 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 Fellowship Hall if you need to rock your little ones.



Transcripts of the sermon and large print bulletins are available at the sound table for those who need them.



Services are livestreamed and you may end up on camera.



Restrooms are located on the hallway off the Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to use the bathroom that best aligns with your gender identity (our gender-neutral, single-occupant restrooms are currently in a part of the building without HVAC).



# Announcements | Church Events and Updates

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## Karen Burden's Retirement

This Sunday, June 29, at **2:30pm (new time!)** we're celebrating Karen Burden's retirement! Karen has served many years as our office administrator and we'll be celebrating her together in the Fellowship Hall.

## ONE Wake Assembly (7/12)

We need to represent at the ONE Wake Assembly on July 12 at 12pm at Watts Chapel Missionary Baptist Church (3703 Tryon Road). We're hoping for 1,000 ONE Wake members to be there to hold our elected leaders accountable for pledges they made last fall. We need their continued commitment to affordable housing across the county, and your presence ensures it! RSVP at [onewake.org](http://onewake.org).

## Volunteer with the Summer Program Partnership

We've partnered with the Kirk of Kildaire and Cary Presbyterian for many years to provide summer enrichment activities for neighborhood children during the summer months. If you are interested in volunteering to help these programs succeed (your presence and kindness are all that's needed, no advanced planning or training), please email Rev. Spears-Newsome to get connected. The program takes place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30am to 12:30pm at the Kirk of Kildaire.

## Business Meeting Sunday

As you may have noticed, the church campus is a little warm! We will be having a business meeting next Sunday (June 29) at 9:45am in the Fellowship Hall to discuss the current state of the HVAC, the financial implications of the fix, and how we need to redirect funding to address this project. We hope you'll join us for this important conversation.

We will have Faith Formation offerings for children and youth, as usual, but there will be no Adult Faith Formation because of the 9:45am Business Meeting.

## July Faith Formation - Neighbors at the Border

During July, as we transition from our worship series about moving beyond empire to a series on friendship, we will consider how we can be better friends with our migrant neighbors. In churchwide Faith Formation in the Fellowship Hall, three lay people and Rev. Dr. Stacks will reflect on their trip to the border last year in conversation with scripture. The schedule for these Faith Formation series is below.

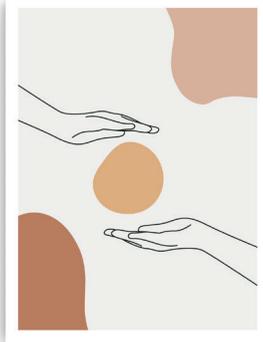
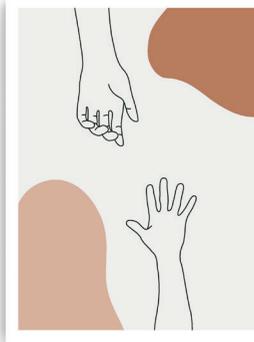
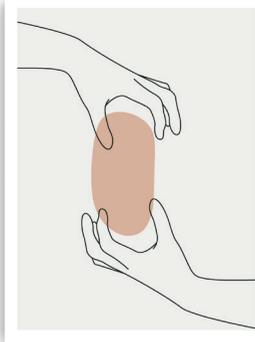
July 6 - Lynn McLaughlin

July 13 - Mary Whitehouse

July 20 - Jazzmoné Sutton

July 27 - Stephen Stacks

# 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.*

Jo Brooks  
Barbara Dial (Carol Carter's Sister)  
Barney Graham  
Doris Martin  
Jennie Pegram  
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](http://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.



Scan to Give  
Online Today!

# Order of Worship | Third Sunday after Pentecost

✝ 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** | Jesus Shall Reign | arr. Stan Pethel

**Welcome to Worship** | Rev. Lauren Efrid

Leader: The Lord be with you!

**People: And also with you!**

**Passing of the Peace** 📖

**Call to Worship (Psalm 97)** 📖

The LORD reigns! Let the earth rejoice;

**Let the many coastlands be glad!**

Clouds and thick darkness are all around you;

**Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.**

Fire goes before you,

**And consumes your adversaries on every side.**

Your lightnings light up the world;

**The earth sees and trembles.**

The mountains melt like wax before you,

**before the Lord of all the earth.**

The heavens proclaim your righteousness;

**and all the peoples behold your glory.**

All worshipers of worthless idols are put to shame,

**All gods bow down before you.**

Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice,

**Because of your judgments, O God.**

For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;

**You are exalted far above all gods.**

Light dawns for the righteous,

**And joy for the upright in heart.**

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,

**And give thanks to God's holy name!**

**Invocation** | Steve Denning

Today's color is **green**, representing spiritual growth.

The pastors are wearing rainbow stoles in honor of **Pride Month**.

## 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.

† Hymn | His Eye is on the Sparrow ( pg. 7)

**Offertory Prayer** | Leta Huntsinger

**Offertory** | Holy, Holy, Holy | arr. Cindy Berry 📖

† **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 | Steal Away (pg. 8)

**Reading** | Acts 16:16-40 | Rev. Spears-Newsome  
The word of God for us, the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Anthem** | Freedom Come | Ben Allaway (pg. 10)

**Sermon** | From Bondage to Liberation | Rev. Efird

† Hymn | How Can I Keep From Singing (pg. 9) 📖

**Benediction** | Rev. Efird

**Postlude** | Live Into Hope | arr. Hal Hopson

### 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!

# His Eye is on the Sparrow

1. Why should I feel dis-cour-aged, Why should the shad-ows  
2. "Let not your heart be trou-bled," His ten-der word I  
3. When ev-er I am tempt-ed, When ev-er clouds a -

come, Why should my heart be lone-ly, And  
hear, And rest-ing on His good-ness, I  
rise, When songs give place to sigh-ing When

long for heav'n and home; When Je-sus is my  
lose my doubts and fears; Though by the path He  
hope with-in me dies, I draw the clos-er

por-tion? My con-stant Friend is He; His  
lead-eth, But one step I may see; His  
to Him, From care He sets me free;

eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es

me; His eye is on the spar-row, and I

know He watch-es me. I sing be-cause I'm

hap-py, I sing be-cause I'm free; For His

eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me.

# Steal Away

Steal a-way, steal a-way, steal a-way to Je - sus!

The first system of music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The vocal line features a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass line consists of chords and single notes.

Steal a-way, steal a-way home, I ain't got long to stay here.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. It ends with a double bar line.

Verses  
*Unison*

1. My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the thun - der;  
2. Green trees are bend-ing, Poor sin - ners stand a trem-bling;  
3. My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the light-ning;

The verses are written in unison. The melody is a simple line of quarter and eighth notes. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment.

The trum-pet sounds with-in my soul; I ain't got long to stay here.

*div.* **D.C.**

The final system includes a double bar line, a fermata over the final note, and the instruction 'div.' (divisi) and 'D.C.' (Da Capo).

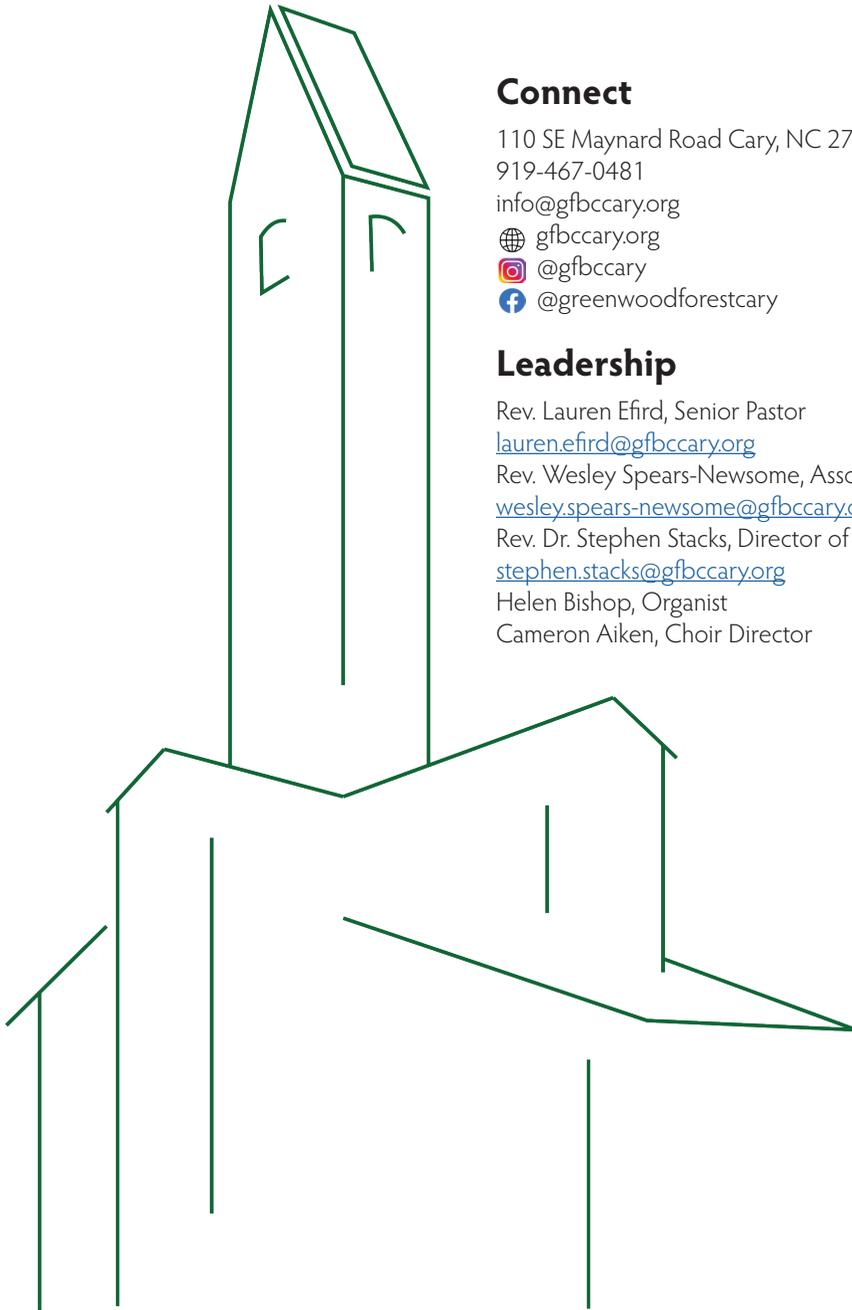
# How Can I Keep From Singing

1. My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam - en - ta - tion,  
2. What though my joys and com - forts die? My Sav - ior still is liv - ing.  
3. I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a - bove it;

I hear the sweet, though far - off hymn that hails the new cre - a - tion.  
What though the shad - ows gath - er 'round? A new song Christ is giv - ing.  
and day by day this path-way smooths, since first I learned to love it.

Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing;  
No storm can shake my in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing;  
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring - ing;

it finds an ech - o in my soul — how can I keep from sing - ing?  
since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?  
all things are mine since I am His — how can I keep from sing - ing?



## Connect

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[@greenwoodforestcary](https://www.facebook.com/greenwoodforestcary)

## Leadership

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Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks, Director of Liturgy & Formation

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Helen Bishop, Organist

Cameron Aiken, Choir Director

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