



Greenwood Forest Baptist Church

August 10, 2025



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Bulletin Art

Ethiopian Orthodox Icon of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace

Though little known in the West, icons depicting Christian themes have been reproduced in Ethiopia for a much longer period than any other center of Christianity in Africa. The achievements of Ethiopians in the creation of illuminated manuscripts, church murals, and icons on wooden panels are equal to those of Egyptian and Nubian Christians.

Unfortunately, these achievements have rarely been mentioned in art publications, and representative works are equally rare in the collections of European and American museums. This neglect is understandable given the topological remoteness of Ethiopia. For over two thousand years, far from the currents of world history (as we know it), these people remained hidden atop their African high plateau. During the middle ages the very existence of this hidden empire was a subject of mythology. [...]

Another reason why these icons were virtually unknown to foreigners is found in their liturgical use by the Oriental Orthodox Church in Ethiopia. There are no icon screens with doors that separate the Beta Mekdes (Holy Place) from the nave as in Eastern Orthodox churches. As a general practice, icons are not exhibited during the liturgy except on rare occasions. So holy are these images in the eyes of the faithful that there would be no thought of having them in their homes.

- *Ethiopian Icons: The Sacred Art of the Hidden Empire*

Icons in Christian traditions around the world are typically conceived as windows through which the viewer sees the Holy and Sacred. Here, we see the three Jewish dissidents who had been thrown into the Babylonian furnace for not worshipping idols. They appear calm and undisturbed because they are accompanied by an angel of God. The angel guards them from the fire, not letting it even singe their clothes.

I wonder what significance this story might hold for Ethiopia itself, as it is one of the oldest countries in Africa and one of very few places on the continent successful in resisting European colonization. With the exception of a brief occupation by Italy in 1936, none of the interested imperial powers of Europe were able to take over the ancient country. How might they have felt like the Jewish dissidents in the fiery furnace during the "Scramble for Africa" in the nineteenth century as nations across the continent were attacked and occupied by European powers? How much more so during the fascist Italian occupation until the would-be colonizers were ousted by Ethiopian resistance fighters?

The struggles of the Jewish people in the Old Testament are often framed as international conflicts even as they involved the lives of individuals.

How might the friendship of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego help them under persecution, prejudice, and discrimination in Babylon?

Has a mutually-experienced hardship ever forged a friendship between you and someone else? How can times of trial strengthen our bonds?

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



August Faith Formation

In August, Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome and our high school youth will be leading Churchwide Faith Formation! They'll be showcasing an interview game called "Wild Card" (based on the podcast of the same name) with various adults in the congregation. You won't want to miss these deep conversations at 9:45am in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays in August.

August Business Meeting

We'll be holding a business meeting in the Fellowship Hall on August 24 at 2pm. This is the annual meeting where we discuss and vote on the budget and nominating slate for the 2025-2026 church fiscal year. Come join us for these important deliberations!

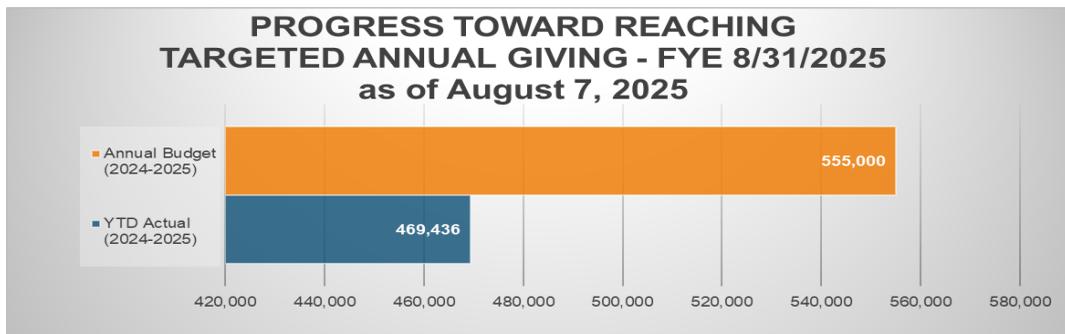
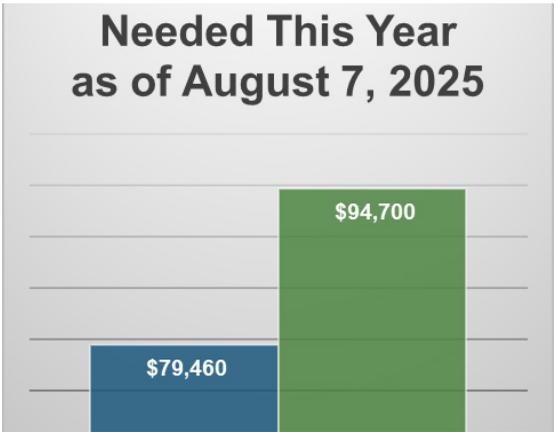
Driver Needed For BPB

Back Pack Buddies needs an additional delivery driver for the upcoming school year. Bags are picked up from GFBC and delivered to the schools on Thursday mornings. You would be responsible for one delivery

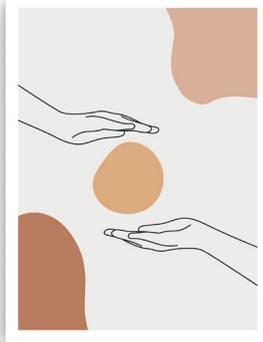
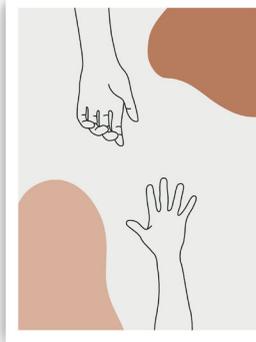
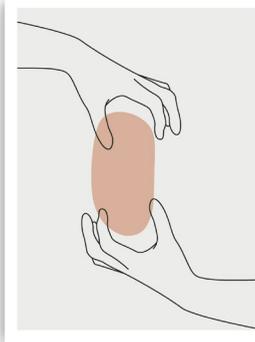
per month, to a single school. If this is something you can do, email Judy Vaccaro at judyvaccaro@gmail.com.

Update from Finance

We wanted to give you an update on where we are on our giving goals for the year as of July 22. Below, in the blue and green graph you can see our progress on the mortgage payment for this year. We still need \$14,500 for the mortgage as of July 22. In the orange and blue graph, you can see our progress on the Annual Budget. Currently, we are \$85,500 away from fulfilling needed giving to the budget for the '24-'25 fiscal year. The church fiscal year ends on August 31 (just a few weeks from now), so we appreciate any and all gifts to these annual funds!



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)
Mac Graham
Doris Martin
Kathleen Wicker
Steven (friend of GFBC)
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.



Scan to Give
Online Today!

Order of Worship | Ninth 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 | Praise God the Lord, Ye Sons of Men | arr. Gottfried

Welcome to Worship | Rev. Lauren Hayes

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship 📖

God has called us to gather together as beloved children.

We come ready to share our authentic selves, our hearts, with God and one another.

Wherever we are in our faith journey, God meets us right where we are,

calling us out from isolation and fear into sacred community.

We come to humbly praise and worship the One who chose vulnerability for the sake of perfect love.

Let us worship holy God.

Invocation | Nathan Bullock

† **Hymn** | The Bond of Love (pg. 7)

Offertory Prayer | Steve Denning

Offertory | We Gather Together | arr. Labenske

† **Doxology** | Tune: OLD HUNDRETH 📖

Transcendent God, we bless your name

Incarnate Christ, the Risen One

The Spirit with us, Immanent

The Source, the Word, the Breath of life. Amen.

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

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 | As Grain on Scattered Hillsides (pg. 8)

Reading | Daniel 3 | Rev. Spears-Newsome
The word of God for us, the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem | Gracious Spirit Dwell Within Me | K. Lee Scott (pg. 10)

Sermon | Rev. Hayes

† Hymn | God of Grace and God of Glory (pg. 9) 

Benediction | Rev. Hayes

Postlude | Praise Him! Praise Him! | arr. Susan Naylor Callaway

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!

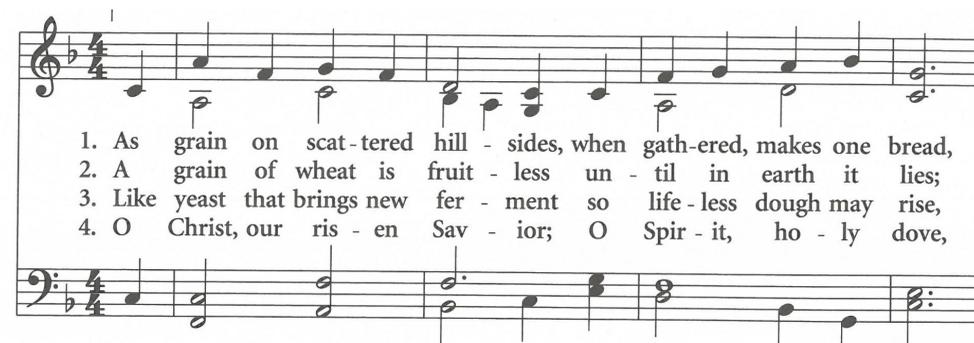
The Bond of Love

The image displays a musical score for the hymn 'The Bond of Love'. It is written in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is presented in two systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line uses a treble clef, and the piano accompaniment uses a bass clef. The lyrics are: 'We are one in the bond of love; we are one in the bond of love.' and 'We have joined our spir-its with the Spir-it of God; we are one in the bond of love.'

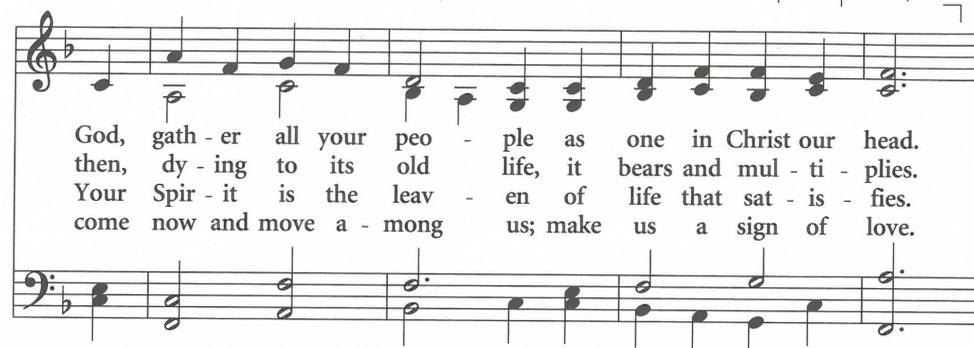
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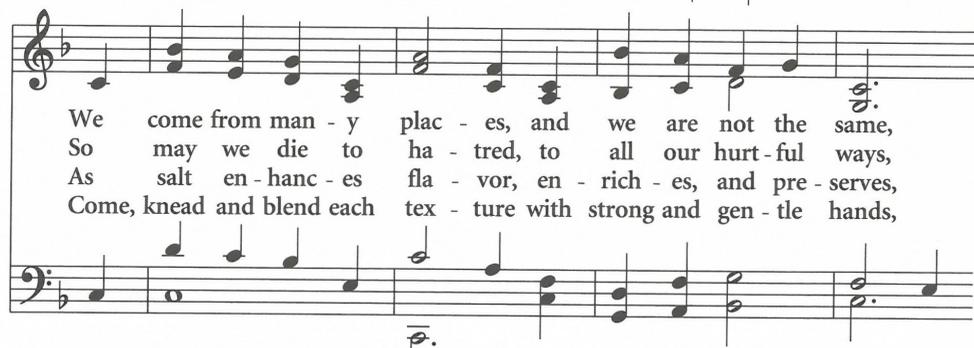
As Grain on Scattered Hillsides



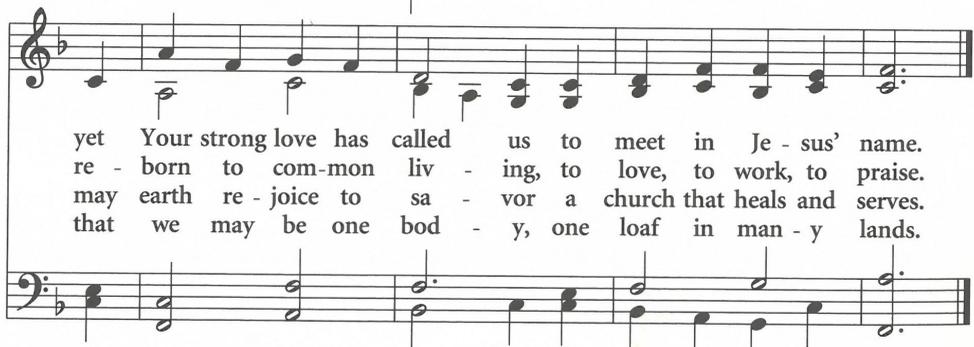
1. As grain on scat-tered hill - sides, when gath-ered, makes one bread,
2. A grain of wheat is fruit - less un - til in earth it lies;
3. Like yeast that brings new fer - ment so life - less dough may rise,
4. O Christ, our ris - en Sav - ior; O Spir - it, ho - ly dove,



God, gath - er all your peo - ple as one in Christ our head.
then, dy - ing to its old life, it bears and mul - ti - plies.
Your Spir - it is the leav - en of life that sat - is - fies.
come now and move a - mong us; make us a sign of love.



We come from man - y plac - es, and we are not the same,
So may we die to ha - tred, to all our hurt - ful ways,
As salt en - hanc - es fla - vor, en - rich - es, and pre - serves,
Come, knead and blend each tex - ture with strong and gen - tle hands,



yet Your strong love has called us to meet in Je - sus' name.
re - born to com - mon liv - ing, to love, to work, to praise.
may earth re - joice to sa - vor a church that heals and serves.
that we may be one bod - y, one loaf in man - y lands.

God of Grace, God of Glory

1. God of grace and God of glo - ry, on Thy peo - ple
2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us scorn Thy Christ, as -
3. Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils
4. Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; gird our lives that

pour Thy power; crown Thine an - cient church - 's sto - ry,
sail His ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us,
we de - plore; let the search for Thy sal - va - tion
they may be ar - mored with all Christ - like grac - es

bring her bud to glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
in the fight to set all free. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
serv - ing Thee whom we a - dore, serv - ing Thee whom we a - dore.
that we fail not man nor Thee! That we fail not man nor Thee!

Anthem I Gracious Spirit Dwell Within Me

arr. K. Lee Scott

Gracious Spirit, dwell with me:
I myself would gracious be;
and with words that help and heal
would thy life in mine reveal;
and with actions bold and meek
would for Christ my Savior speak.

Truthful Spirit, dwell with me:
I myself would truthful be;
and with wisdom kind and clear
let thy life in mine appear;
and with actions brotherly
speak my Lord's sincerity.

Mighty Spirit, dwell with me:
I myself would mighty be;
mighty so as to prevail
where unaided man must fail;
ever by a mighty hope
pressing on and bearing up.

Holy Spirit, dwell with me:
I myself would holy be;
separate from sin, I would
choose and cherish all things good,
and whatever I can be,
give to him who gave me thee!



Connect

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