



Greenwood Forest Baptist Church

February 22, 2026



Messianic Secret

by T. Denise Anderson

Inspired by John 2:1-11

14"x18" Acrylic on canvas

The Wedding at Cana is my favorite text because there is a lot of humor in it. There's humor in a mother approaching her son and telling him to do something without ever actually telling him to do it. There's his pouty resistance to his mother's non-demand while she completely ignores him and paints him in a corner. There is humor in a raucous wedding reception where the people are so "lit" that the wine has run out. And, for me, it's particularly humorous that there's this huge, beautiful secret of which only a few people are aware. Those people include Jesus' mother and the select servants who help him pull off the miracle that inaugurates his ministry. Servants are normally meant to be inconspicuous, so I wanted to focus on the servant who goes to the chief steward with a cup full of what, as far as he's concerned, is water.

If Jesus—whose ministry has not started, so there haven't been any wonders associated with him yet—tells you to fill jars with water and draw from the jar to give to the chief steward, what is going through your mind at that moment? I invite the viewer to focus on this servant and all his curiosity and expectation, and think of a time when you were surprised by something God did. What actions preceded the miracle? Did it make sense? What did you know, and what was hidden from you? What "secrets" might God be keeping from you now as God works clandestinely on your behalf?

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.



gfbccary.org



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Black History Month Guest Preachers

Rev. Annie Ross: Preaching February 8



Pastor Annie Ross is a multifaceted gift to the world. With sheer charisma, she delivers a message of hope among many people from every walk of life. Her poetic art of public speaking, unmistakable love for helping people, practical wisdom and insightful teaching, has positioned her as a highly sought after presenter. Ross's love for spreading her inspirational message extends into artistic genres, and her passion for monologues, poetry and music is clearly at the forefront of this commitment. The heart of Pastor Annie Ross is beautifully captured in her poetic written work, "Erasure." On the heels of her many artistic contributions, Ross has launched several Outreach Projects, including "A Servants Heart" geared towards helping families with food insecurity. In addition, Ross established "A Pot of Grace," an effort that ensures that those healing from sickness, grief or loneliness receive meals, groceries and a visit to uplift and inspire them during their recovery and healing. As

an ordained minister, and passionate dedication to her Christian faith, Ross approaches her new assignment as the Senior Pastor of Imani MCC with a respect for the legacy of the Ministry and the opportunities in the future.

Pastor Annie enjoys reading, gardening, cooking, Bitcoin and AI technology, traveling, family and friends. She obtained a BS in Health Administration and BA in Religion from Auburn University and a Master in Accounting with a concentration in Taxation from Strayer University. She is married to First Lady Priscilla Ross and will soon celebrate 30 years together this October. They have two adult children, Matthew Coleman from Washington, DC and Jessika Coleman of Raleigh, NC. Ross's storytelling yet powerful delivery continues to inspire, impact, and empower many young and seasoned alike.

Rev. Dr. Mycal Brickhouse: Preaching February 15



Rev. Dr. Mycal Xavier Brickhouse is a servant-leader whose journey in ministry is rooted in a deep commitment to faith, education, and community. Ordained as an Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, his ministry has included pastoring in North Carolina, deepening alumni engagement as Director of Alumni Relations at Duke Divinity School, and now, shaping institutional impact as the Managing Director of Programs and Grants at Leadership Education at Duke Divinity.

In addition to his work at Duke, he serves as the Director of Outreach and Church Expansion at Baptist Grove Church in Raleigh, NC, where he leads strategic efforts to extend the church's reach and witness into the broader community. Whether in the academy or the local church, Rev. Brickhouse brings a consistent call to form leaders, cultivate connection, and embody the gospel through justice and joy.

Rev. Racquel Gill: Preaching February 22



Rev. Racquel C.N. Gill is a native of Winnsboro, SC. Racquel is a 2012 graduate of Columbia College in Columbia, SC where she holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Education. Racquel received her Master's of Divinity in May of 2015 from Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC. Upon completion of her theological studies, Racquel served on the pastoral staff at the St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York.

After her time in Brooklyn, Racquel served as the Associate Chaplain at Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC for 3 years and most recently as the Minister for Intercultural Engagement at Duke University Chapel. Racquel currently works in local government for the City of Raleigh, NC. She lives in Durham, NC with her spouse, Rev. Dr. Chelsea Brooke Yarborough, PhD and they are members of Southeast Raleigh Table United Methodist Church under the leadership of Pastor Lisa Yebuah. Racquel is an active member on the board of directors for the Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice in Durham, NC.

New Lent Series Begins February 18

from A Sanctified Art



Lent was originally a season for new converts to learn and prepare for their baptism on Easter. During that time, they would study what was central to Christianity. As we crafted this series, we asked: what are the core, foundational concepts of Jesus' life and ministry? What makes each of these good news? Can we trust that the good news is truly good, even when it challenges us?

If we're being honest, we can easily distort or sanitize Jesus' teachings. Following Jesus leads to a richer, more expansive life, but it's not necessarily comfortable. We often describe Jesus' ministry as "radical" which comes from the Latin word "radicalis," meaning "root" or "ground." Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God's unending grace.

The good news is extravagant, untamed, illogical, and persistent. It is joyful—like fine wine saved for celebration. It grows like a mustard seed that flourishes rapidly into a tree to shelter the birds. It smells like expensive perfume poured from an alabaster jar and like crumbling bread passed endlessly through a hungry crowd. It sounds like children laughing and like stones dropped to the ground instead of violently thrown. It feels like feet washed with tender care. The good news is alive in the world.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, may the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.

Key Dates:

February 18 (6:15pm) - Ash Wednesday

February 20-22 - Discipleship Retreat

March 29 (11am) - Palm Sunday

April 3 (7pm) - Good Friday

April 5 (11am) - Easter Sunday

Devotional Books Now Available!

Announcements | Church Events and Updates

Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, our worship services during February will feature music from Black composers and artists, as well as liturgical elements from the African American Heritage Hymnal. Here at GFBC, we celebrate Black History Month alongside our Black congregants and Black siblings everywhere as a way to honor Black stories, beauty, and contributions, but also as a way to signal our continued commitment to Black lives throughout the year. For us, Black History Month is not a way to absolve ourselves of the year-round and life-long work of anti-racism, but a moment to celebrate and to recommit ourselves to the gospel work of inclusivity in our worship and in our lives.

Chili Cookoff and Maker's Festival- March 1st at 4pm!

Join us Sunday, March 1st from 4pm-6pm for a special time of congregational sharing in food, fellowship, and craft! We want to share our gifts with one another, so if you're good at painting, pottery, quilting, music, writing, drawing, woodworking, or any other craft and want to share something you've made, we want to see it! If baking is your creative gift, please let Susan Beck (carygator1@gmail.com) know if you would be willing to provide a dessert for the event.

HVAC Update

Thanks to your generosity, our HVAC project is almost fully funded! Only \$4,080 remains. If you feel led to give, now is a wonderful time to help us cross the finish line. Thank you for your faithful support.

Faith Formation Today!

Join us in the Fellowship Hall at 9:45am for a Churchwide Faith Formation session led by Rev. Dr. Stacks on the meaning of the cross for our lives today. You do not need to have attended the retreat to appreciate the conversation.

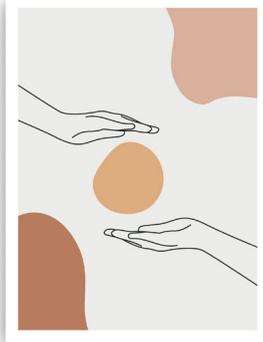
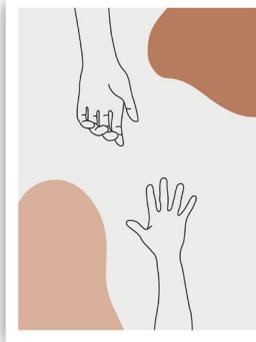
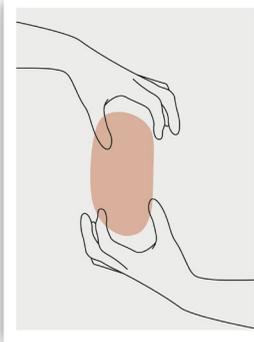
Ministry Highlight

Greeters and Ushers serve our weekly worship service in two ways. Greeters stand (or sit) in the Narthex to welcome all who enter our church on Sundays. They provide a warm smile and get to know new members and visitors. You can help by taking this role on a rotating weekly or monthly basis to ensure all who enter our doors feel welcomed. Ushers serve to help make sure our service runs smoothly. They hand out bulletins, answer questions, and occasionally assist with other logistics. Most importantly, the ushers oversee the passing of the collection plates during the offering. If you are interested in joining this team, please speak with Nathan Bullock or reach him by email at nathan.f.bullock@gmail.com

Faith Giving Sundays

We ask you to consider making a special investment of \$20 on the last Sunday of every month. This collective effort is essential in ensuring our budget remains on track, allowing us to continue making a difference in our community and beyond. Contact Susan Beck if you have any questions or want to give a Gratitude Testimony about what GFBC means to you and why you give.

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.

Bess Averre
Jo Brooks
Carrie
Mac Graham
Lee Taylor
Nancy Watson
Anne Whelan
Steven (friend of GFBC)
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.



Scan to Give
Online Today!

Order of Worship | The First 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 | I'm Gonna Sing/Ain't-a That Good News? | arr. Larry Shackley

Welcome to Worship | Rev. Lauren Hayes

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship 📖

The good news of the gospel is:

mana in the desert,

water turned into wine,

love after loss,

forgiveness after pain,

loving embrace.

The good news of the gospel is:

release for the captive,

hope for the hopeless,

mourning turned to dancing,

hunger and thirst ended,

and strangers turned to friends.

So come on in.

There's no time to waste!

This surprising good news is here for you.

Let us worship this good-news God.

Today's color is **purple**, representing contemplation 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.

Invocation | Betsy Sisley

Stewardship Testimony | Meg Spears-Newsome

† **Hymn** | I Will Arise (pg. 9-10, v. 1)

Offertory Prayer | Rev. Evan Owoc-Edwards

Offertory | Nothing But the Blood of Jesus | arr. Marianne Kim

† **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.

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** | I Want Jesus to Walk With Me (pg. 11)

Reading | John 2:1-11 | Rev. Hayes

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

Thanks be to God.

Anthem | Let Everything | André Thomas

Sermon | Beginning With The End in Mind | Rev. Racquel Gill

† **Hymn** | In a Neat and Tidy Garden (pg. 12) 

Benediction | Rev. Hayes

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).

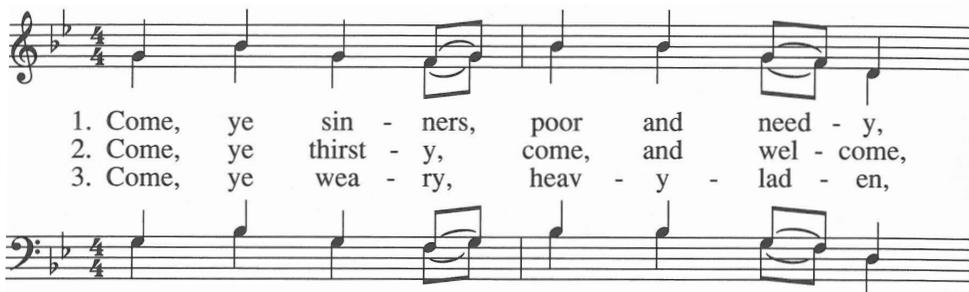
Final Hymn: An Invitation

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!

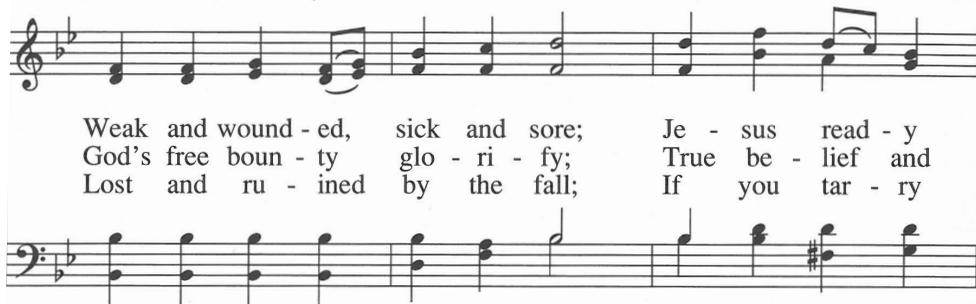
Thank You!

Our songleader today is Rev. Dr. Stephen Stacks

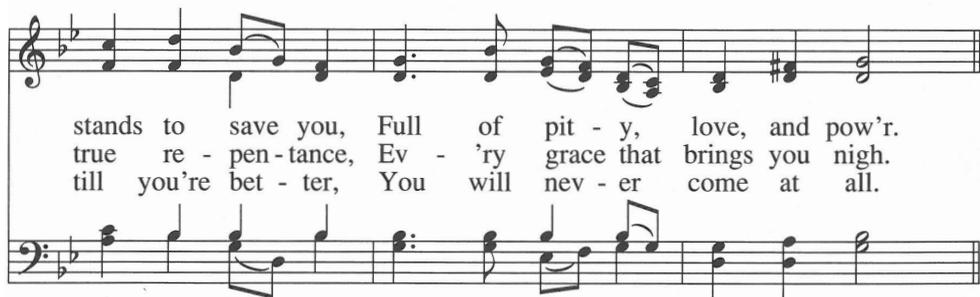
I Will Arise



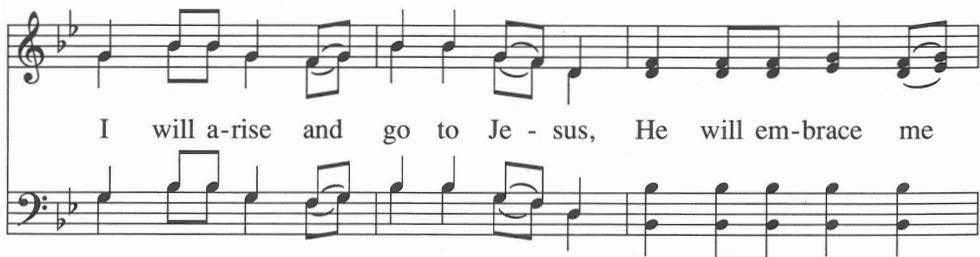
1. Come, ye sin - ners, poor and need - y,
2. Come, ye thirst - y, come, and wel - come,
3. Come, ye wea - ry, heav - y - lad - en,



Weak and wound - ed, sick and sore; Je - sus read - y
God's free boun - ty glo - ri - fy; True be - lief and
Lost and ru - ined by the fall; If you tar - ry



stands to save you, Full of pit - y, love, and pow'r.
true re - pen - tance, Ev - 'ry grace that brings you nigh.
till you're bet - ter, You will nev - er come at all.



I will a-rise and go to Je - sus, He will em-brace me

in His arms; In the arms of my dear

Sav - ior, O there are ten thous - sand charms.

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

E

1. I want Je - sus to walk with me,
2. In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me,

I want Je - sus to walk with me,
In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me,

All a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
When the shades of life are fall - ing,

Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

In A Neat and Tidy Garden



In a neat and tidy garden grows a secret tiny seed
Green and tender leaves I harvest from the mustard growing wild
O - ther gar - den - ers may struggle and pre - tend they have con - trol



There among the planted barley will emerge a shocking weed
To enrich and spice my dishes that were until now too mild
O - ver land that God cre - a - ted but I'll tell you what I know:



Grow - ing quick - ly through the soil to break forth in vacant spot
Un - ex - pec - ted and sur - pris - ing, un - con - trolled by hu - man hand
I am not the Mas - ter Gar - dener, just a stew - ard of this place



What a joy when I dis - cov - er God has plan - ted in my plot!
See the reign of God is grow - ing, ta - king root through - out the land!
God has seed - ed ev - ery a - cre with sur - pris - ing, wi - ld grace!



What a joy when I dis - cov - er God has plan - ted in my plot!
See the reign of God is grow - ing, ta - king root through - out the land!
God has seed - ed ev - ery a - cre with sur - pris - ing, wi - ld grace!

Anthem Let Everything

André Thomas

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Praise ye the Lord, Praise God in his sanctuary.
Praise him in the firmament of his power.
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Praise him for his mighty acts;
Praise him for his excellent greatness.
Praise him with the sound of the trumpet;
Praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him, praise the Lord.
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.



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Rev. Wesley Spears-Newsome, Associate Pastor

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

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Helen Bishop, Organist & Interim Choir Director

Alex Filby, Director of Administration and Facilities

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