



Greenwood Forest

Baptist Church

August 23, 2026



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.

Contents

- 4 | Announcements
- 5 | Community Notes
- 6 | Order of Worship
- 8 | Songbook

Visitor Form



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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Announcements | Church Events and Updates

Business Meeting Today

Today, **Sunday, August 23rd at 2pm**, we will be conducting a churchwide business meeting in the Fellowship Hall. All are encouraged to attend as we prepare for the new church year!

Backpack Buddies

The first packing session of our Backpack Buddy program will be **Tuesday, Aug 25 at 6:30pm**. Please join us in the suite behind the Fellowship Hall kitchen. This ministry provides weekend food for about 100 students each week. Contact Susan Beck if you want more details.

Join Us for Affordable Housing on September 19

ONE Wake's affordable housing campaign takes a step forward on **September 19** as we gather ourselves and future homeowners and residents seeking their place among us as neighbors. Join us as we hear stories of longing, innovation, and dedication to addressing the housing crisis. We'll present solutions to elected officials from throughout Wake County.

We cannot continue to operate in the same systems, hoping that developers will care enough to save a small portion of their property for those who want to live and work here. Housing at all levels of affordability is an investment in a thriving civic society. People are not thriving when they're spending more than a third of their wages on housing. More than a quarter of Wake County residents are experiencing that burden. If that describes your struggle too, we definitely want to see you on September 19.

Join Greenwood Forest and fellow sibling institutions and congregations in ONE Wake on September 19 at 1:00pm at the Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi (11401 Leesville Road Raleigh, 27613). RSVP at onewake.org/events.

Sunday Schedule Change

When leadership reviewed the results of this year's Spiritual Life Survey (participants included long-time members, newcomers, and even some visitors!), we learned that most people are longing for deeper relationships and community.

The survey revealed a desire for more in-person communal discipleship and fellowship events. Deeper engagement with community leads to better spiritual well-being. But, in the past few years, we've noticed a decrease in participation for Faith Formation groups on Sunday mornings, and we've observed that it's harder for new people to find and join small groups upon arrival to our campus. At the same time, we've noticed newcomers in our pews, lively conversation in the sanctuary, and higher worship attendance.

In order to allow space for even deeper connection, the staff and deacons have created a new Sunday meeting schedule. **Starting September 6, 2026**, we will begin gathering in the sanctuary at **10am**, so folks can visit, have a cup of coffee, and settle in. We will **worship** together from **10:15am to 11:00am**.

From there, we will transition to **community hour**, where there will be several different offerings, such as Churchwide Faith Formation Sessions; Faith Formation Groups; Coffee with a pastor; Sermon Series Talk Back Sessions; Youth Group (grades 6 to 12); Wonder Room (K to 5); Rainbow Room (infants and preschoolers).

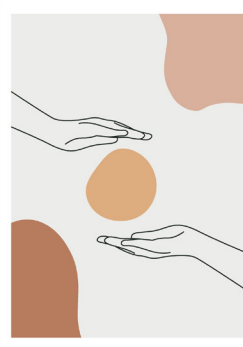
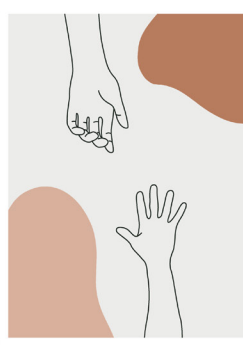
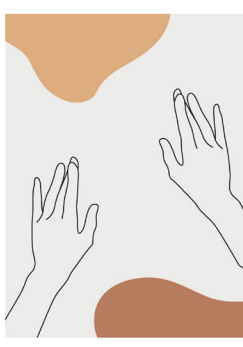
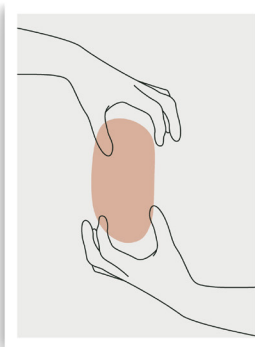
Youth and children's rooms will **dismiss at 12pm**. More details will be provided in the new church year booklet. We are really excited about the opportunities this new schedule will provide!

Be sure to check out the new 2026 Church handbook ([link here](#)). Printed copies are available in the Narthex.

Grief Group

We are hoping to gauge interest in a 6 week grief group counseling session. These sessions would be in partnership with Good Shepherd United Church of Christ and would be led by Brynn White, M. Div., BCC. If you are interested in participating or if you'd like more information, reach out to Alex Filby.

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
Mercedes Auger
Richard Adair (Janice Medford's brother)
Jo Brooks
Tom Hartnett (Diane Morde's brother-in-law)
Rick Hollings (Mary Whitehouse's father)
Kathy and Lee Taylor
Nancy Watson
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 | Thirteenth 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 | Kirken den er et gammelt Hus | arr. Wilbur Held

Welcome to Worship | Rev. Lauren Hayes

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Passing of the Peace 📖

Call to Worship (Isaiah 56:1, 6-8) 📖

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—
let the people now say—

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side,

When our enemies attacked us,

Then they would have swallowed us up alive,

When their anger was kindled against us;

Then the flood would have swept us away,

The torrent would have gone over us;

Then over us would have gone the raging waters.

Blessed be the LORD,

Who has not given us as prey to their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers;

The snare is broken,

And we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the LORD,

Who made heaven and earth.

Invocation | Diana McGahan

✝ **Hymn** | The Solid Rock (pg. 8)

Offertory Prayer | Andy Jarrell

Offertory | Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation | arr. Richard Proulx

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

† **Doxology** | Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

The Prayers of the People | Nathan Bullock

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** | Built on the Rock (pg. 9)

Reading | Matthew 16:13-20 | Andy Jarrell

The word of God for us, the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem | Come to Him, a Living Stone | Mark Kilstofte

Sermon | Rev. Al Whitehouse

† **Hymn** | Will You Come and Follow Me (pg. 10)

† **Benediction** | Rev. Hayes

Postlude | When Israel Was in Egypt's Land | arr. Larry Shackley

collective offering to God
and the wellbeing of this
community. A short doxology
follows as we offer our gifts.

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).

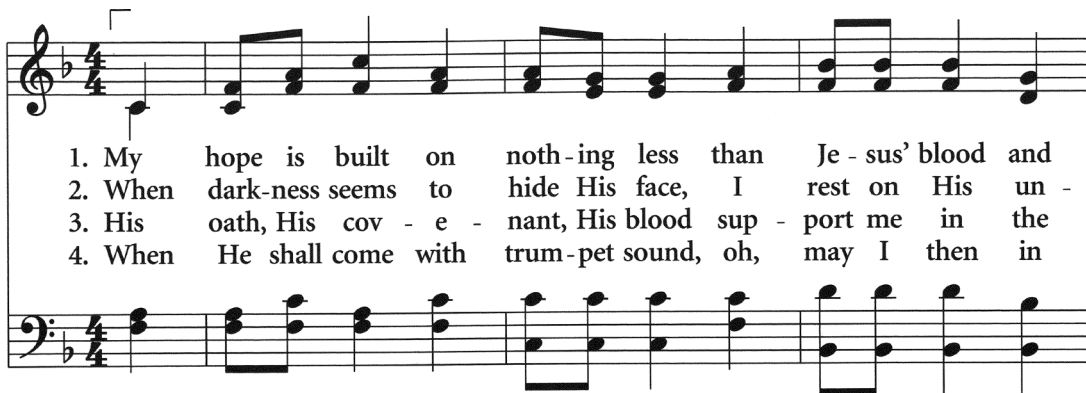
Final Hymn: An Invitation

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.

Thank You!

Our hymn leader today is Blair
Biser.

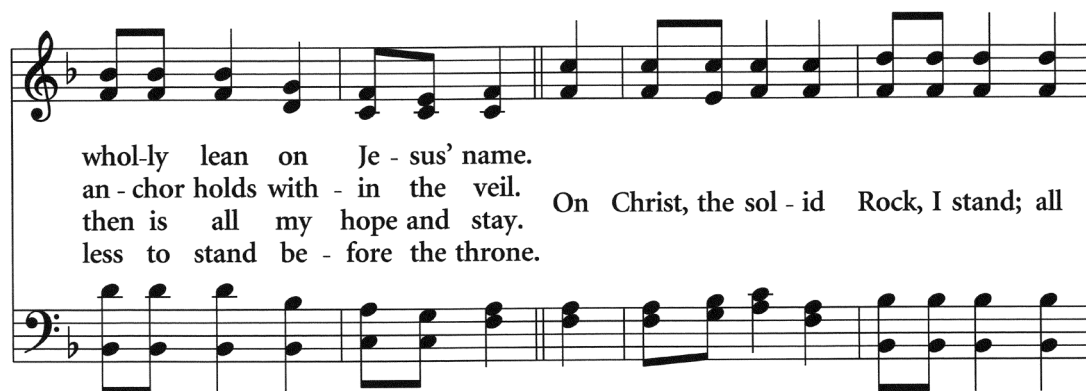
The Solid Rock



1. My hope is built on noth-ing less than Je - sus' blood and
 2. When dark-ness seems to hide His face, I rest on His un -
 3. His oath, His cov - e - nant, His blood sup - port me in the
 4. When He shall come with trum-pet sound, oh, may I then in



right - teous-ness; I dare not trust the sweet-est frame, but
 chang-ing grace; in ev - ery high and storm - y gale, my
 whelm-ing flood; when all a - round my soul gives way, He
 Him be found, dressed in His right - teous - ness a - lone, fault -

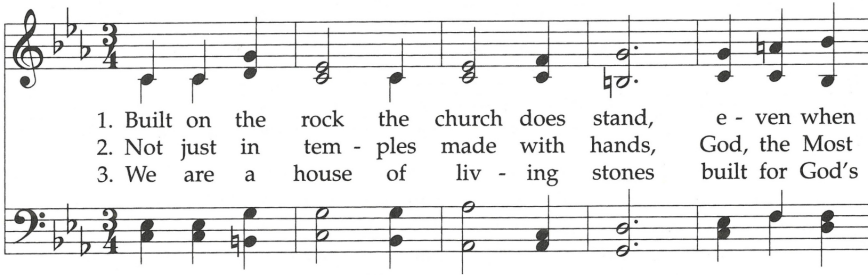


whol-ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 an - chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand; all
 then is all my hope and stay.
 less to stand be - fore the throne.



oth - er ground is sink-ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink-ing sand.

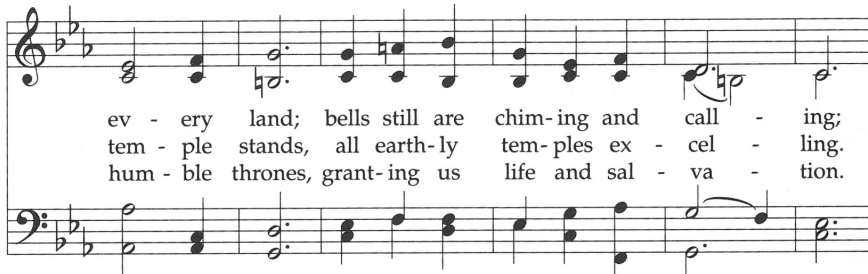
Built on the Rock



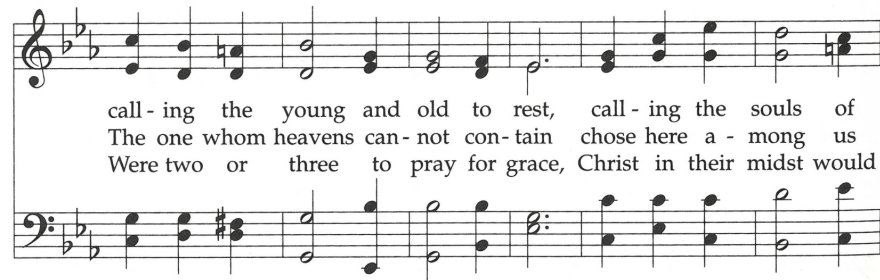
1. Built on the rock the church does stand, e - ven when
 2. Not just in tem - ples made with hands, God, the Most
 3. We are a house of liv - ing stones built for God's



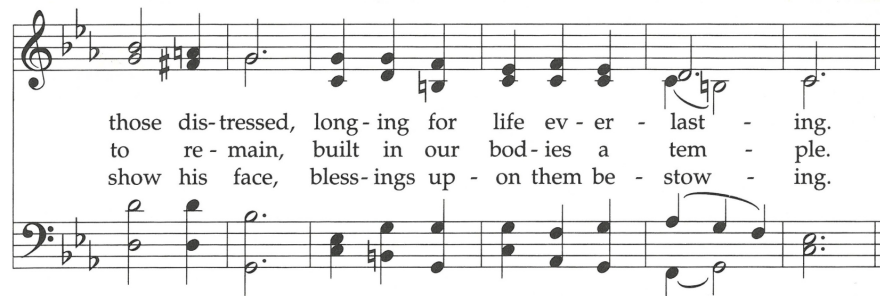
stee - ples are fall - ing, Christ builds the church in
 Ho - ly, is dwell - ing, Hid - den from sight God's
 own hab - i - ta - tion; God fills our hearts, these



ev - ery land; bells still are chim-ing and call - ing;
 tem - ple stands, all earth-ly tem - ples ex - cel - ling.
 hum - ble thrones, grant-ing us life and sal - va - tion.



call - ing the young and old to rest, call - ing the souls of
 The one whom heavens can - not con - tain chose here a - mong us
 Were two or three to pray for grace, Christ in their midst would



those dis - tressed, long - ing for life ev - er - last - ing.
 to re - main, built in our bod - ies a tem - ple.
 show his face, bless - ings up - on them be - stow - ing.

Will You Come and Follow Me

Unison

1. Will you come and fol - low Me if I but call your name?
 2. Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call your name?
 3. Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call your name?
 4. Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?
 5. Lord, your sum-mons ech - oes true when You but call my name.

Will you go where you don't know and nev - er be the same?
 Will you care for cruel and kind and nev - er be the same?
 Will you set the pris-oners free and nev - er be the same?
 Will you quell the fear in - side and nev - er be the same?
 Let me turn and fol - low You and nev - er be the same.

Will you let My love be shown, will you let My name be known,
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare should your life at - tract or scare?
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean and do such as this un - seen,
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the world a - round,
 In Your com-pa - ny I'll go where Your love and foot-steps show.

will you let My life be grown in you and you in Me?
 Will you let Me an - swer prayer in you and you in Me?
 and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in me?
 through My sight and touch and sound in you and you in Me?
 Thus I'll move and live and grow in You and You in me.

Anthem | Come to Him, a Living Stone

Mark Kilstofte

Come to him a living stone,
Though rejected by mortals, yet chosen and precious in God's sight.
And like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.
Come to him, to him.



Connect

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