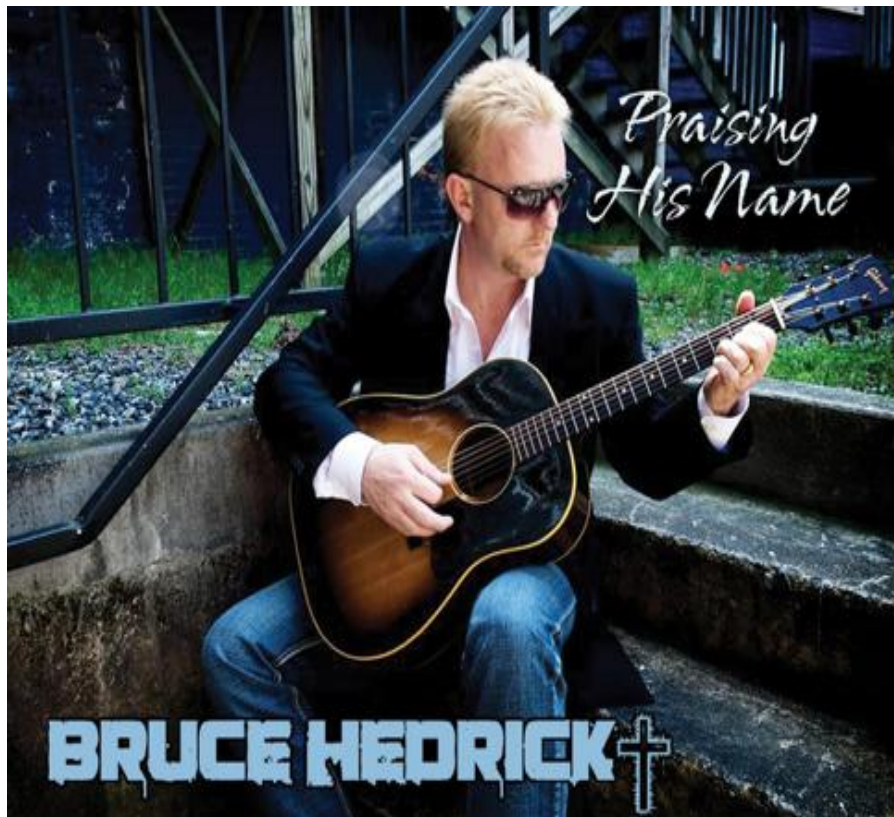


Bruce Hedrick



In Concert!

Great Swamp Baptist Church

April 23, 2023

Great Swamp Baptist Church

Sunday Morning Worship

10:30 AM

Announcements

Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.

Call to Worship

Invocation

Freddie Malphrus

Praise & Worship

Bruce Hedrick

Pastoral and Offertory Prayer
Worship by Giving
Offertory Special

Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.

Message

Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.

Invitation

Benediction Prayer

Sunday Mornings
Following The Song Service:



Nursery
Help Needed

Children's
CHURCH

Helpers:
Emily Johnson



DEACON OF THE WEEK:

Today:

Freddie Malphrus: 843-986-8525

Next Week:

Bjo Mills: 843-726-4344



*From
Pastor
Ralph's
Desk:*



Benefits of the Ascension **(Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11)**

Introduction:

Tammy and I had the privilege of traveling to Israel in the winter of 1980. While there one of the so-called sacred spots we visited was called the Chapel of the Ascension. It's located in the village of Bethany on top of Mount Olives. Inside this chapel you find just a large open room with nothing but a rectangular boxed in area on the ground. Inside that boxed in area is what's claimed to be two footprints etched into the stone on the ground. The claim is that these two footprints were Jesus' footprints from when He ascended back to heaven. While we were there, and even now when people visit there, some would bend down and either touch the footprints or literally kiss them. And in the minds of many of those who touch or kiss the footprints, they believe that their action will somehow benefit their lives.

Now let me say that it's highly unlikely that these are actually Jesus' footprints because Jesus' disciples were there and they never mentioned anything about Jesus leaving His footprints when He ascended. But even if they were just touching them or even kissing them, are not going to somehow magically benefit your life. However there are indeed very clear benefits for the child of God because of Jesus' ascension, and that's what we will look at in this week's message.

I. The first benefit let's consider has to do with when Jesus ascended (Acts 1:1-3).

In these verses Luke, who wrote the book of Acts, tells us that Jesus' ascension took place after He had spent a period of forty days revealing Himself to His disciples and teaching them many things during those days.

So the benefits from when He ascended was, first of all, that He ascended only when He had fully accomplished all He was sent to accomplish. Meaning that we have full assurance that Jesus didn't go back until we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that He had done all that was necessary to bring about our eternal salvation.

Another valuable benefit from when He ascended was the fact that He didn't ascend until He gave us convincing proof that He indeed arose from the dead. Which, in turn, means that our faith is not a blind faith in something that wasn't real or just a story or a fairytale. Jesus actually died for us, arose from the dead, and then ascended back to glory, and it was all witnessed. Oh, what a glorious faith we have because it **IS** real!!

II. The second benefit let's consider has to do with where Jesus ascended from (Luke 24:50).

This verse tells us that Jesus led His disciples out to the vicinity of Bethany, which is on the Mount of Olives and it was from here that He ascended.

So the question is why did Jesus chose this area to ascend from? Well, we all know that Bethany was a place filled with many great memories for Jesus and His disciplines. In the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, there had been sweet fellowship, moments of great teaching, and witnessing of great miracles. So I believe that Jesus chose this as His departing place to say to His disciples that though He's going away they still would have sweet fellowship with Him. They still would receive His teachings and they still would know of His resurrection power at work in their lives. So while Jesus is in heaven, we are still experiencing these great benefits that His disciples knew when they were with Him in Bethany.

III. The third benefit let's consider has to do with where Jesus ascended to (Acts 1:10, 11).

These verses tell us that the place Jesus ascended to was heaven. So He's going back to the place that He came from to begin with -- heaven. In Jesus' great high priestly prayer that He made, Jesus said these word to His Father, "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began" (John 17:5). So Jesus is returning to all the glory He knew in the presence of His Father from before His coming to us, and even before His creation of us.

Also He tells us that in this place of His glory, called heaven, He's preparing a place for all of His believers so that we can spend eternity with Him (John 14:1-6). So the benefit of where He ascended to reminds us of Jesus in all of His glory and that we aren't home yet and that like Jesus we will one day go to be with Him. Amen and praise God!

IV. The fourth benefit let's consider has to do with what Jesus was doing when He ascended (Luke 24:50, 51).

What Jesus was doing was blessing His disciples. He is blessing His disciples with His hands raised before He ascends, but the picture shows even more — He's also blessing His disciples *while* He was ascending. What a beautiful picture this is! He's not condemning His disciples as He descends, He's not chastising them as He descends, but rather He's blessing them.

John told us on one occasion that, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world in Him" (John 3:17). So Jesus came into the world blessing us and He went out blessing us and He's still blessing us because He's up in heaven interceding on our behalf.

“Who is He who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died -- more than that, who was raised to life -- is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us” (Romans 8:34). Oh, thank God that Jesus ascended to continuously bless us through His interceding on our behalf!

V. The fifth benefit let’s consider has to do with who was released when Jesus ascended (Acts 1:4, 5).

In the gospel of John Jesus told His disciples that He was going to go away, but He wasn't going to leave them because He would send back the Holy Spirit to dwell in each of them. So through the gift of the Spirit Jesus would dwell in each of His followers.

However according to John’s gospel Jesus said the promised gift of the Spirit couldn't be released until He ascended back to His Father. “But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I’m going away , unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you” (John 16:9).

Now just before Jesus ascends back to heaven, Jesus reminds them of this great promise. In these verses chosen for this point, He told them to wait for the promised gift of the Father which was the Holy Spirit. So when Jesus ascended they could be assured that soon the Holy Spirit would come upon them, and in just a few short days following the ascension, the Holy Spirit came and indwelt the believers and He’s still doing it today.

VI. The sixth benefit let’s consider has to do with the reminder of Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:9-11).

In the times that we are living the reminder of Jesus’ ascension is incredibly comforting. Because what it reminds us of is the return of Jesus, or if you would, His second coming. For the angels present at Jesus’ ascension told the disciples directly “...’this same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.’”

Thus we can rejoice knowing that because Jesus ascended He will also return.

Conclusion:

Luke tells us that when Jesus was taken up to heaven the disciples worshipped Jesus and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And after they returned they kept right on rejoicing even though Jesus was now gone and the reason why is because the ascension further proved that Jesus was who He claimed to be all along. The second reason was because they now understood that His ascension was to their benefit. So let us too rejoice and worship our blessed Lord because His ascension proves His Deity and benefits our walk with Him!

Jesus Loves You,

Ralph Lee



Mark your calendars for the following upcoming events!

May is going to be busy!!!

May 5th-6th - SFCA State Basketball Tournament

May 17th - Baccalaureate in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

May 18th - SFCA Sports Banquet in the Multi-Purpose Building at 6:00 p.m.

May 19th - K5 Graduation in the SFCA Gym at 7:00 p.m.

May 20th - Senior Graduation in the SFCA Gym at 4:00 p.m.



Operation Christmas Child

April is here and we are collecting new items! See the list below and please help out if you can. The more you can donate, the more boxes we can fill, hence the more children receive boxes. So let's all bring in some hygiene items!

April:

Stuffed Animals

Barbies

Matchbox Cars

Any Assorted Toys

Yo-yos

Puzzles

Balls

Jump Ropes

Remember: NO liquids, glass, or military items. You can also give a monetary donation instead of buying the items. No donation is too small!





<i>Sunday</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>Rose Boyles</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>Sybil Reynolds</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>26th</i>	<i>Nicole Mariocourt</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>28th</i>	<i>April Malphrus</i>





Business Meeting
Wednesday, May 10th
at 7:00 p.m.



Deacons' Meeting
Monday, May 8th
at 6:00 p.m.



Grandmothers' Group
Monday, May 1st
at 11:30 a.m.
All grandmothers welcome!



**Beginning at 6:00 p.m.
Service to follow at 7:00 p.m.**

**Team Timmy will be cooking!
Come out and have dinner
and fellowship with us!**

\$5.00 each or \$15.00 for a family of 4 or more



**Sunday Morning
Breakfast**

Begins at 8:00 a.m.
Ends at 9:00 a.m.
\$5.00 each or \$15.00
for a family of 4
or more

Sunday School Classes

@ 9:15am

CAMO CLASS - Room 406 - Bobby Smith
.....

GLEANERS CLASS - Room 401 - Darlene Bollack
.....

VISIONARIES CLASS - Building 3, Old Social Hall
Leader - Greg Mariocourt/Diane Thames
.....

SOJOURNERS CLASS - Room 401 - Mack Pope
.....

YOUTH - Youth Annex Leader - Amanda Hodges
.....

BLUE ANGELS - 1ST & 2ND GRADES - Room 415 -
April Malphrus

Wednesday Night Services

@ 7:00 pm

WORSHIP SERVICE *Multi-Purpose Building*
Leader-Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.

YOUTH GROUP *Youth Annex*
Leader-Michelle Waitt

R.A.'S (Royal Ambassadors) *Room 417*
Leader-Wallace Malphrus & Fred Stanley

G.A.'S (GIRLS IN ACTION) *Room 415*
Leader-Diane Thames



VBS 2023

VBS is currently taking donations of large rocks and towel and tissue tubes. We have boxes/bins in the main foyer to place these items should you have any to donate. We also still need monetary donations as prices have risen and there is a lot that needs to be purchased (especially food). So please help us if you can.

Anything is better than nothing!

Also, please sign up to help out during VBS on the back wall, if you haven't already. If you want to help out but can only come part-time or for a few hours, just write that on the sheet (on the back wall) or talk to Nicole, Saylor or Jennifer about it. Even if you can only help out with VBS for a few hours, WE STILL NEED YOU!! We appreciate any help!

Any questions, comments, suggestions, etc. please call Nicole Mariocourt at 843-726-2211, Saylor Olivas at 843-812-8879, or Jennifer Meador at 843-726-3631.





MOVIE NIGHT!!!

**Sunday, May 21st
Concessions at 6:00 p.m.
Movie starts at 6:30 p.m.**

**Please bring finger foods to share!
Tea and Popcorn provided.**

Come Enjoy A Great Wholesome Family Movie!

Muffins for Mom Program



May 12th



Beginning at 8:15 a.m.

Located in the Multi-Purpose Building

Come grab a muffin and watch SFCA students perform in honor of Mother's Day. All moms and grandmas are welcome!



Graduation Recognition Service

Sunday, May 21st

During regular service

If you want to recognize a graduate, please keep an eye out in the coming weeks for an insert in the Sunday morning bulletins. It will be an insert that will need to be filled out with the graduate's information and then returned to the church office. If you will not be here in the coming Sundays, please contact Jennifer at 843-726-3631 and give her the information regarding the graduate to be recognized.

GSBC Prayer Page

*Ralph Lee, Jr. - Pastor
Richard Waitt- Music Director
Deacons*

Leadership

*President / Vice President of
the United States of America*

Church Needs

*Sunday School
SFCA-Donna Carter
Child Development
Ministries*

*Ministries
Outreach Ministry
In reach Ministry*

Bereavement

*Family of Inez Scoggins
Family of Gary Way*

Unspoken

Hospitals

Surgery/Recovery

*Tex Lowther
Keith Gamo*

Cancer/Treatments

*Pat Headley
Leigh Laycock
Joyce Garbade
Gene Price
Ann Blocker
Tex Lowther*

Other Health Needs

*Pinky Rushing
Mary Kay Cade
Barry DeMay
Tristan Simmons
Marie Coleman
James Williamson
Glenn Scott
Rhonda Stones*

Nursing Centers

*Elaine Degler - RNC
Bobby Mohn - Indigo Pines HHI
Byron Vaigneur - Legacy at South Pointe
Dot Nettles - NHC*

Please Continue To Remember

Homebound

<i>Shirley Malphrus</i>	<i>Tom Hinely</i>
<i>Rose Boyles</i>	<i>Ann Blocker</i>
<i>Judy Smith</i>	<i>Doby Cleland</i>
<i>Vera Floyd</i>	<i>Lucille & Ron Degler</i>
<i>Barbara Mills</i>	<i>Red & Helen Malphrus</i>
<i>Kenny Smith</i>	<i>Thomas & Erma Cooler</i>
<i>Diane Hannah</i>	<i>Marie Malphrus</i>

Pray For Our Military

*Sgt. Jared Blanton-Deployed
Matthew Mills-US Marines
Jericho Malphrus-Sp. Agent/Air Force
Washington, D.C.
Michael Sottile - Ret.
Tristan Blanton-San Diego/SWCC
Andrea C. Daring-Charleston, SC*

Church Staff

Pastor: Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr*jehu27@gmail.com*

Music Director: Richard Waitt*waittfamily83@gmail.com*

Sunday School Director: Mike Davis

Pianist: Michelle Waitt *waittfamily83@gmail.com*

Administrative Assistant: Jennifer Meador*greatswampbaptist@hargray.com*
843-726-3631

School Administrator: Donna Carter*dcarter@hargray.com*

Stewardship

Tithes	This Week	Weekly Budget	Surplus/Deficit + / -
	<i>\$4,739.00</i>	<i>\$ 5,012.49</i>	<i>\$-273.49</i>
<i>Online Offerings</i>	<i>\$50.00</i>		
Designated Funds	This Week	*****	Acct. Balances
<i>Office Supplies</i>	<i>\$25.00</i>	*****	<i>\$762.55</i>
<i>Adult Senior Trip 2023</i>	<i>\$1063.00</i>	*****	<i>\$1,971.94</i>
<i>Wednesday Night Supper</i>	<i>\$160.00</i>	*****	<i>\$-168.91</i>
<i>Annie Armstrong Offering</i>	<i>\$125.00</i>	*****	<i>\$497.00</i>
<i>VBS 2023</i>	<i>\$285.00</i>	*****	<i>\$1,358.42</i>
<i>Sunday Morning Breakfast</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>	*****	<i>\$1,053.21</i>



Great Swamp Baptist Church
9009 Tarboro Rd.
PO Box 446
Ridgeland, SC 29936

Sunday School.....9:15AM
Morning Worship.....10:30AM
Wednesday Night Service.....7:00PM

Email: greatswampbc@gmail.com
Website: greatswampbaptistchurch.com
Church Office: (843) 726-3631