



*Great Swamp Baptist Church*  
*April 21, 2024*

# *Great Swamp Baptist Church*

Sunday Morning Worship

10:30 AM

**Announcements**

*Pastor Ralph Lee*

**Call to Worship**

**Invocation**

*Fred Stanley*

**Praise & Worship**

Pastoral and Offertory Prayer

*Pastor Ralph Lee*

Worship by Giving

Offertory Special

**Message**

*Pastor Ralph Lee*

**Invitation**

**Benediction Prayer**

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*Sunday Mornings*  
*Following The Song Service:*



Nursery



Teacher:  
Olivia Stanley

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DEACON OF THE WEEK:

*Fred Stanley*



Phone: 843-726-1963

*From  
Pastor  
Ralph's  
Desk:*



**A Look at the Ascension of Jesus**  
**Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11**

**Introduction:**

In our last message we examined the 40 day period that Jesus hung around revealing Himself to His disciples prior to his ascension back to heaven. In this message, we will take a direct look at the ascension itself. Oftentimes ministers completely bypass preaching a message exclusively on the ascension. However, the Blessed Holy Spirit of God made sure that two direct accounts of Jesus ascension were recorded. Thus, it behooves us to take a thorough look at Jesus's ascension.

**I. First, let's notice the reality of Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:9)**

In the preceding verses, to the one that we are using for this particular point Jesus calls upon His disciples to be His witnesses in the world. These early disciples of our Lord were indeed the perfect match for being his witnesses, for they had witnessed Jesus's life, ministry, miracles, death, and his resurrection.

However, what they witnessed of Jesus's life didn't conclude with the resurrection for as our accounts reveal to us they also witnessed Jesus's ascension. The particular verse we are looking at says that Jesus was taken up before their eyes. So there is no doubt whatsoever that Jesus ascended back to heaven by his disciples because they literally eyewitnessed it themselves.

Our are blessed Lord went out of His way to make sure that every aspect of His earthly ministry and mission was eyewitnessed so that there would be complete confidence for his followers that their faith was and is grounded in reality. We don't follow a make believe story or fairytale. Rather, our faith is grounded in the one who actually came into our midst and lived the life for us that we couldn't. Then he died for our sins so that we wouldn't have to and He conquered the grave so that we, too, can. He also as our present set of verses tells us literally ascended to heaven where one day He will ascend us to. Wow! What a real faith we have!

Now no commentary or scholar I read anywhere made the point that I believe is vital to Jesus's necessity for ascending and making sure that it was all eyewitnessed. He wanted to make sure that it was eyewitnessed so no one could make the charge that since Jesus wasn't seen anywhere anymore that He therefore wasn't real. But because they saw Him ascend they could declare that He was and is real for sure because they saw Him ascend with their very own eyes. And heaven is where He still he's still at carrying on His ministry for us but from the very throne room of heaven.

Also had Jesus not ascended, then you can count on it that our ascension wouldn't be a reality either, but because He did we, too, will ascend as well. So thank God for the reality of His ascension.

**II. Second, let's notice that regality of Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:9,10)**

Jesus's ascension happened in a very regal manner. As He was speaking to them He suddenly began to ascend toward heaven. But His ascension was not Jesus simply disappearing and He's simply gone. Nor was it Him just simply flying again. Either one of those ways would have certainly seemed miraculous to His disciples.

However what we are told is that all of creation bowed down to its creator and carried Him away to glory by lifting Him up on a cloud and carrying Him up to heaven. Also there were two angels who appeared as men who suddenly came into the midst of the disciples to inform them that though Jesus was being regally escorted back to glory He was also returns in like fashion. So we have the angels of glory involved in His ascension.

All of this reminds us that we are not just referring to someone who is merely just a great person whose getting some special recognition because they did some good in the world. Nor are we just talking about a person as He's often referred to as the man upstairs.

No. Jesus is so much more and this ascension reminds us of that. It was a regal ascension letting us know that this was the glorious Son of God that's ascending to heaven on the clouds of creation. And we need to be rejoicing that this regal ascension reminds us that Jesus is regal. That He is the Son of God and the King of Kings. Therefore His ascension to heaven will be glorious for Him and a blessing to us. For because of who He is He can continue His work of helping us right from the very throne room of heaven. Amen.

### **III. Third, let's notice the realm of Jesus's Ascension (Acts 1:11)**

Well, we have a clear answer for this point from this particular verse that we are using. For it says that He was taken back to heaven. Oh, what a scene that must have been in heaven when Jesus arrived!

Though there are differing opinions on whom is being spoken about and when it took place, in the verses I am about to share I am fully convinced that it's a prophecy of Jesus's ascension back to heaven and what a glorious picture it is!!

"Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty — he is the King of glory." (Ps 24:7-10)

Then once the King of Glory came through those heavenly gates we get a glimpse of what kind of reception Jesus must have received from Revelation chapters 4 through 7. I'll just share a little portion of one of the scenes in these chapters. "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Rev 5:11, 12).

Oh, let us rejoice that Jesus's ascension was back to the realm of heaven so that He could receive the unending praise, honor, and worship that He forever deserves. Also praise His name that we will have the privilege of joining in this realm with Him that we might be where He is and give Him the praise He deserves.

In our next point we will look at the reasons why heaven is where Jesus went to instead of staying here on earth.

### **IV. Fourth, let's notice the reasons for Jesus's ascension (Acts 1:11; Luke 24:50, 51)**

First, Jesus ascended back to heaven because that's where He originally came from. "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). So if you could ask Jesus where He originally came from He would say heaven.

Second reason why Jesus ascended back to heaven was because He had finished His work and mission that He was sent to do. Jesus's last words on the cross before He took His last breath were, "It is finished." (John 19:30). He had paid the price for our sins and that's what He came to do. So now He could resurrect to prove that what He did at the cross was good enough to save us and that He was the Son of God. At that point having done all that was required of the Father for salvation of us lost sinners He could return back to His home.

Third reason why Jesus ascended was so that He could prepare a place for us to come and be with Him. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." (John 14:1-3).

Fourth reason that Jesus ascended back to heaven was so that He could be our intercessor to our Heavenly Father. In Luke's gospel he tells us that Jesus was blessing His disciples just before He ascended but he also tells us that He was blessing them while He was ascending. He continues to bless us from heaven by interceding on our behalf. The apostle Paul reveals this great ministry of Jesus to us.

"Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. 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. (Rom 8:33-34). Oh, what a blessing that is to us.

Fifth reason why Jesus ascended back to heaven was so that He could send to His church the Father's promised gift of the Holy Spirit to Him once He was finished with His ministry and ascended back to heaven.

In the next chapter of the Book of Acts we find the apostle Peter preaching to a very large gathered group of people at the temple. It was just following the church's reception of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Near the end of his message Peter explains to the people how it came about that they had received the Holy Spirit.

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear." (Acts 2:32-33). So praise be to our blessed Lord that His ascension back to glory opened the door so that we could receive the precious Holy Spirit to help us live for Jesus.

**V. Fifth, let's notice the return of Jesus following His ascension (Acts 1:11)**

As we've already noted Jesus ascended in a very visible, bodily, and regal manner. But it is not the end of His time here on earth. For throughout His ministry Jesus often taught His disciples that He would eventually die, resurrect, and ascend and one day eventually return back.

On this occasion the angelic beings that came into the midst of the disciples as they were watching Jesus ascend, reminded them of the very thing Jesus had already been teaching them, that one day He would and will return, and it will be visible, bodily and regal. Are you ready for His soon return? Only if you have surrendered yourself to Him.

**VI. Sixth, let's notice the rejoicing following His ascension (Luke 24:52-53)**

After Jesus ascended Luke tells us that the disciples worshiped Him, they had great joy and they kept on praising Him in public.

To know that their Master Lord and Savior was alive and now in heaven seated at the right hand of the Father, they had every reason to praise Him, to worship Him, and to have great joy. For this meant He was who He always claimed He was, and could, and would do everything He promised, and from heaven He could and is. Praise His Holy Name.

**Conclusion:**

So what are you going to do with Jesus? We've noted over the last three weeks the reality of His resurrection. We've noted the many proofs He gave them to know that He's alive and finally we noted with this message the reality of His ascension. Folks, he's real and one day we will come face to face with Him. Will that be a favorable time for you? It will if you have surrendered yourself to Him as Lord, Savior, and Master.

Jesus Loves You,  
Ralph Lee





<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>Rose Boyles</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>Sybil Reynolds</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>26th</i>	<i>Nicole Mauriocourt</i>

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## **Operation Christmas Child**



These are the items being collected for April or you can give a monetary donation and we will do the shopping for you.

### **Here is the list for the month of April:**



Ponytail Bands  
Stuffed Animals  
Toothbrushes



Ziploc Bags - Gallon & Quart  
Socks - Boys & Girls



Yo-yos, jump ropes, or any other toy  
Hair Barrettes, Scrunchies, & Headbands



Any questions, please ask Dorthie.  
Thank you.





**We're Having a**  
**COOKOUT**

**Saturday, April 27th**  
**11:00 am to 3:00 pm**

We are looking for volunteers to help with the kitchen, clean up, and games. There is a sign up sheet on the back wall. Please take a moment and sign up. Thank you for your help!

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Saturday - May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**COME JOIN US!!**

Savannah River Baptist Association WMU/WOM  
Spring 2024 Meeting  
Okatee Baptist Church  
Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 am til 12:00 noon  
Lunch will follow - 12:00 noon til 1:00 pm.

This will be our Annual Training and Board Recruitment Meeting, with Special Guests from our State WMU Board (Jess Archer and Cindy Skelton), as well as several other speakers from around our area.

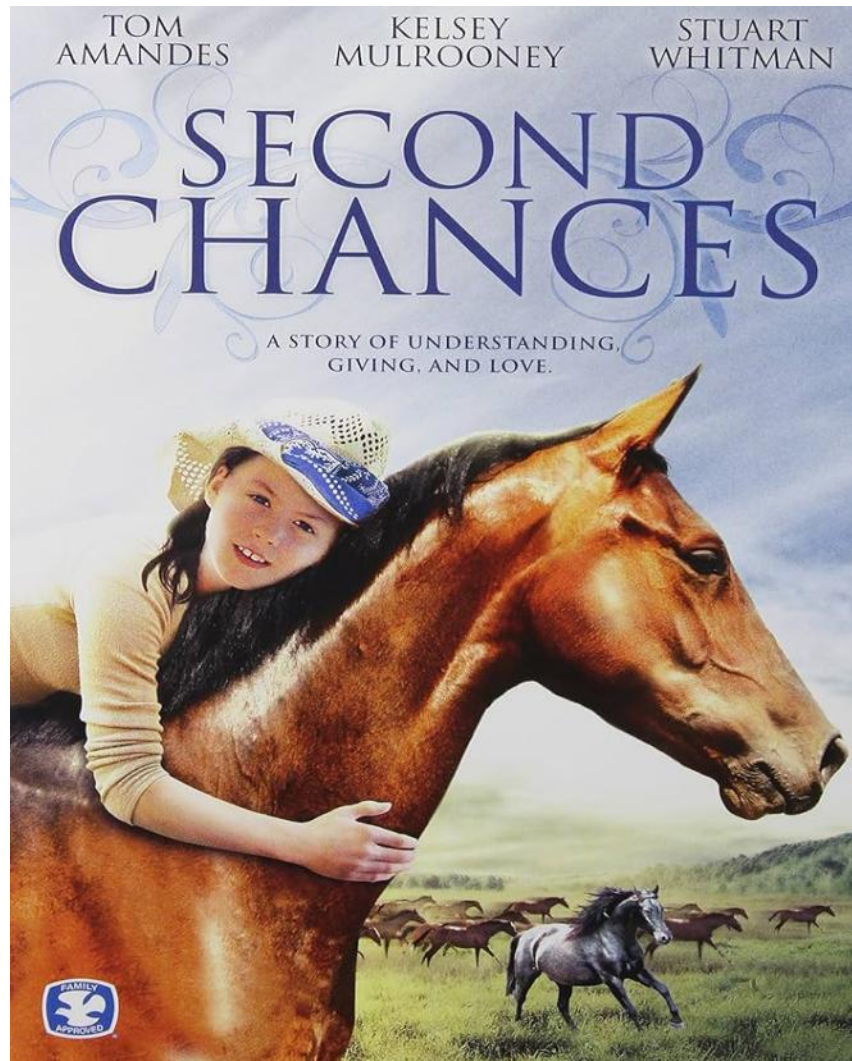
We will have special missions presentations by Ms. Sheila Roemling with *Fresh Start, Healing Hearts* (our local human trafficking assistance organization), and our SRBA WMU Associate Director Vicki Farrow, representing the Dru Graves Ministry.

Since we have not had an "official" food pantry item collection event this year, those churches that have not had the opportunity to support our local church food pantries are encouraged to bring items to be sorted and distributed to these churches. If you are interested in starting a pantry at your own church, this is the time to discuss this with us and work towards forming your own pantry that we as an association can help support.

**\*\* Lunch will be catered for this event. \*\***  
Please RSVP to Cindy Rhodes at (843) 247-6364 OR by email [cindyrhodes@savannahriverbaptist.org](mailto:cindyrhodes@savannahriverbaptist.org)

Thanks and we look forward to seeing you there!!

*Beth Bonds, Director, SRBA WMU*  
(832) 334-2563 email: [bethie59@protonmail.com](mailto:bethie59@protonmail.com)



## **MOVIE NIGHT!!**



**Showing: Second Chances  
Tonight, Sunday, April 21st  
Concessions at 6:00 p.m.  
Movie starts at 6:30 p.m.**



**Please bring finger foods for your family  
and more to share with all!  
Tea and Popcorn provided.**



## Wednesday Night Supper

Meals served from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
every Wednesday night.

**Team Timmy will be cooking Wednesday, April 24th.  
Menu: Baked chicken, potatoes & gravy, green beans, rolls**

\$5.00 per person or \$15.00 per family of four or more.

No meal deliveries.

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## Sunday Morning Breakfast

Breakfast will be served  
from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00  
a.m.

\$5.00 per person or  
\$15.00 per family of  
four or more.

# GSBC Prayer Page

## Church Leadership

*Sunday School*  
*SFCA-Donna Carter*  
*Child Development*  
*Ministries*  
*Ralph Lee, Jr. - Pastor*  
*Richard Waitt- Music Director*  
*Deacons*  
*Church Finances*

## Leadership

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

## Bereavement

*Family of Cookie Daley*

## Unspoken

## Hospitals

## Surgery/Recovery

*Saylor Olivas*

## Cancer/Treatments

*Revel Crosby - 4 years old*  
*(Leukemia)*  
*Ken Lawler*

## Other Health Needs

*Mary Kay Cade*  
*Julia Rushing*  
*Pinky Rushing*  
*Amy Hannah*  
*Kathy Breland*  
*Grace Hetrick*  
*Arthur Pearson*  
*Pete Williamson*  
*Rodney Malphrus, Jr.*  
*Mark Mingledorff*  
*Bill Carter*  
*Mike Wall*

## Nursing Centers

*Byron Vaigneur - Legacy at South Pointe*  
*Tommy & Erma Cooler - Ridgeland Nursing Home*  
*David Sauls - Morrell Nursing Center*  
*Doby Cleland - Life Care Center of HHI*  
*Shirley Malphrus - Resorts at Beaufort (D wing)*

## Please Continue To Remember

### Homebound

*Rose Boyles*  
*Judy Smith*  
*Vera Floyd*  
*Barbara Mills*  
*Kenny Smith*  
*Tom Hinely*  
*Ann Blocker*  
*Red & Helen Malphrus*  
*Diane Hannah*  
*Ann Long*  
*Tex Lowther*

### Pray For Our Military

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

## Church Staff

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

Music Director: **Richard Waitt** .....

Sunday School Director: **Mike Davis** .....

Pianist: **Michelle Waitt** ..... waittfamily83@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant: **Jennifer Meador** .....greatswampbc@gmail.com  
843-726-3631

School Administrator: **Donna Carter** .....dcarter@sfcaweb.org

 <p style="font-size: 2em; font-family: cursive; margin-top: 10px;">greeters</p>	<p><b><u>Greeters for Today:</u></b> Kim &amp; Richard</p> <p><b><u>Next Sunday 4/28:</u></b> Juliette &amp; Mike Wall</p>
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## Stewardship

Tithes	This Week	Weekly Budget	Surplus/Deficit + / -
	<i>\$3,010.00</i>	<i>\$4,923.33</i>	<i>-\$1,913.00</i>
<i>Online Offerings</i>	<i>\$50.00</i>		
<b>Designated Funds</b>			<b>Acct. Balances</b>
<i>SMB</i>	<i>\$90.00</i>	*****	<i>\$856.26</i>
<i>WNS</i>	<i>\$220.00</i>	*****	<i>\$404.40</i>
<i>Operation Christmas Child</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>	*****	<i>\$151.00</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](mailto:greatswampbc@gmail.com)  
Website: [greatswampbaptistchurch.com](http://greatswampbaptistchurch.com)  
Church Office: (843) 726-3631