

# The Gazette



March 2026



Laurel Presbyterian Church

*Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve*



## Lenting with Love: Image to Likeness

This is the time of year where we follow our Suffering Servant off the mountaintop of his transfiguration, and down into the wilderness for 40-days. Lent actually means “to lengthen” and is used biblically to talk about lengthy periods of time like the flood, or the years the people of God were in the wilderness learning to depend on God. I want us to think about this time as a perpetual Sabbath. A perpetual return to the Lord, our God, to remember who we are and to practice it, to actively, intentionally practice it until we know that we are as “beloved ones, with whom God is well pleased.” To listen carefully for our image of God so we can move into practicing our likeness of God. The harsh conditions of the wilderness are ripe for shattering our well-defined and well-worn images of

ourselves. They are the best foil for helping us to let down our guard, to let who we think we are crumble under the weight of Lenting, and to let God remind of who we truly are. The emphasis this Lent is on returning to God to receive our identity. Letting God re-form us, re-pattern us, re-shape us so we can see as God sees us and each other. So, we know that our iteration of God’s love is important and central to living as “salt” and “light.” That it is essential to feeding the hungry at Lamb’s Basket, or clothing the naked through our Goodwill donations, or visiting the sick by checking on people or through our card ministry, or greeting people on Sundays with warmth and hospitality, or eradicating injustice by working for peace, equity, and restoration of dignity for all people. As the years go by, we can easily forget the joy that we are to God, and the blessing that we offer the world. This Lent, I want us to return to the Lord, and recover the God given blessing that we are in Christ.

“Return to the Lord,  
your God,  
for the Lord is gracious and merciful.  
slow to anger,  
and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing.” *Joel 2: 12b-13*

*O Beloved God, we have turned away from you, the Source of our Love and Being, by not embracing your image and likeness inside of us. We have turned away from you by not recognizing your image and likeness in our neighbor. We have turned away from you by not recognizing your image and likeness in your creation. Forgive our misunderstanding of who we are, both as your people, and as your Beloved Community. Lead us back to your heart “to see how you see,” so we don’t waste another moment missing your presence within and around us. Lead us back “to love what you love,” so we don’t miss another moment of your love pulsating through our lives and your world. Have mercy on us always and give us strength, courage, and the sight to follow your Son into the wilderness even through all of our imperfect ways of loving, and all of our imperfect ways of being, for we pray all of these things in the name of our Suffering Servant, who is and was and always will be, our Christ. Amen.*

Reverend Ann

## MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Sunday March 1

9:00am Sunday School meets.  
 10:00am Worship service/Communion/Good Samaritan Offering  
 Lenting with Love Series I  
 12:00 noon Team Meetings

### Wednesday March 4

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
 3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Saturday March 7

10:00am -3:30pm Church Officer Retreat.

### Sunday March 8

10:00am Sunday School meets.  
 \*11:00am Worship service-Due to Daylight Savings time.  
 (Tommy Campbell preaching).  
 Lenting with Love Series II  
 1:00pm W&E Team Meeting.

### Tuesday March 10

10:00am Women's Circle meets.

### Wednesday March 11

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
 3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Sunday March 15

9:00am Sunday school meets.  
 10:00am Worship service.  
 Lenting with Love Series III  
 12:00 noon-Vision Task Force meets.

### Tuesday March 17 Happy St. Patrick's Day



### Wednesday March 18

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
 3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Thursday March 19

7:00pm Kate Bowler, author of *Joyful Anyway* (Virtual)

### Sunday March 22

9:00am Sunday school meets.  
 10:00am Worship service/Annual Church Meeting of Congregation/Corporation meeting.  
 Lenten with Love Series IV

### Sunday March 29-Palm Sunday

9:00am Sunday school meets.  
 10:00am Worship service/Palm Sunday/Special Music with James Sudbury/Five Cents a Meal Offering  
 11:15 am Vision Task Force meets.  
 11:15 am Prepare Easter baskets for Coal Pit children.



**Shepherd on Call:** The Shepherd on Call for the month of March is Gladys Chamberlayne. Gladys can be reached at 804-755-6172. Please contact her if you know of someone who could use a visit or some extra Laurel love this month.



**HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF LAUREL! MAY YOU BE ABUNDANTLY BLESSED THIS YEAR.**

Ann Catherine Roeder (4)  
 Washington Ndirangu (7)  
 Marshall Chamberlayne (20)  
 Greg Roeder (20)  
 Vickie Chaplin (21)  
 Janice Berger (23)  
 Bernie Cheatham (24)  
 Carol Cummins (28)

### GERANIUMS FOR EASTER!

Help Laurel decorate for Easter! Purchase pink Geraniums for **\$20.00 each**. Please mark "Easter Flowers" on your check or offering envelope and place this form and your payment in the offering plate today. Or mail this form and check to the church to be **received no later than March 22nd**.

(Please print clearly)

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

**# of      Circle one:**

\_\_\_\_\_ in Honor of / Memory of  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ in Honor of / Memory of  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ in Honor of / Memory of  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_ **Plants x \$20.00 = \$** \_\_\_\_\_



## MARCH SANCTUARY FLOWERS

**March 1-Open**

**March 8-Open**

**March 15-** Michael Henderson-To the Glory of God and in memory of my father, H. Lee Henderson.

**March 22-**Mary Jane Bowlin-To the Glory of God and in memory of "Flash" Bowlin.

**March 29-Palm Sunday**

### LENTING WITH LOVE— WITH INTENTION

Lent officially began on Ash Wednesday. This year we are intentionally working on trusting how God names us and living out of this identity.



### HOW MIGHT WE DO THAT?

Use the "Lenting with Love" Guide to deepen your capacity to trust in God's goodness. Attend the Sunday 4-Week Series on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> to learn how to practice being a beloved child of God. Read the daily Lent devotion. Talk to God. Read scripture. Pray and listen. Take long walks in God's creation. Journal. Reflect. Create. Attend the special services. Let God remind you of your core goodness. Remember that no matter what, "you are formed from Love and to Love you will return." Know that there is nothing you can do to brush off God's Love, or to be disowned. Listen. Trust. Return to God again and again to recover who you really are.

### OUR LENT TOOLS:

**Our Lent Devotion:** Written by Teri Ott, Editor of the Presbyterian Outlook, this year's daily devotion explores Matthew's Gospel while asking the question: How can we live faithfully amid division and uncertainty? This will be electronically emailed on Saturdays. You will also find a hard copy by sanctuary entrances.

**Our "Lenting with Love" Guide:** Pick up your "Lenting with Love" Guide as you leave the sanctuary. The focus this year is learning to practice trusting that we are "precious, honored and oh so loved." The guide will also be emailed weekly.

**Our "Lenting with Love" Series:** Starting March 1<sup>st</sup>, a

4-part series will be offered after worship to deepen our identity as God's beloved ones. This is one of God's provisions for us and it protects us from temptation when we live from it.

**Special Lent Services:** Ash Wednesday, Lent Sundays, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday. Come out and walk with our Suffering Servant, and this people of faith, as we discover God in us, and in our midst.

### LAMB'S BASKET

Please bring in boxed or canned items to refill our Lambs basket. There is a donation box in the narthex. Thank you.



### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW ELDERS!

We have examined, installed, and ordained our Class of 2028! Gladys Chamberlayne and Thomas Miller are our newest elders through 2028. Our current serving elders are Rebecca Owen (2026), Julie Messick (2026), Billy Shepherd (2026) and Rudy Van't Riet (2026).

### WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2028!

**Gladys Chamberlayne** "I was born and raised in Louisa County. I had four brothers and two sisters. I met Marshall on a blind date and we married on June 8th after dating for two years. We had two children, Sid and Susan, now deceased. In 1980, we visited Laurel Church and have been here ever since. Marshall and I both have served as elders before. It is my pleasure to serve again."

**Thomas Miller** "Thomas graduated from the University of Virginia in 2020 and moved to the Richmond area for his job as an analyst for Capital One. He briefly attended The Chapel in Scott's Addition before seeking out a more permanent church home when his wife, Madeline, moved to the area. In 2023, God placed them in their first home in the Tall Timbers neighborhood and after visiting Laurel Presbyterian Church in late 2024, they immediately felt welcomed and at home. Thomas quickly got plugged into Sunday School where he enjoys learning (and occasionally teaching) more about God and His work in our lives. He is passionate about data and analytics and enjoys watching sports (you can certainly catch him rooting for all UVA teams!) Thomas is looking forward to serving on the Session and serving the church wherever he can.

### WORSHIP AND EDUCATION MEETING CHANGES:

Our Worship and Education (WE) Team is moving to the second Sunday of the month to include more people in

our meetings beginning in March. If you would like to lend your voice and your hands to this work, please join us on Sunday, March 8th, at 1:00pm.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 8th, WORSHIP TIME CHANGED TO 11:00 AM:**

We will worship at 11:00am on Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup>, due to daylight savings time on Sunday morning, where we spring forward and lose an hour of sleep.

**A CELEBRATION OF LIFE MINISTRY TEAM FORMED**

Beverley and Bill Shepherd have agreed to head up a ministry team for Celebration of Life services when someone we love passes away. If you are interested in serving, please let them or Reverend Ann know. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. We are looking for parking lot attendants, reception and kitchen help, greeters, sound booth team support, etc. You can reach Beverley at [bev373158a@gmail.com](mailto:bev373158a@gmail.com) or at (804) 305-9247.

**JAMES SUDBURY LEAVING LAUREL...**

Regretfully, James Sudbury, our Director of Music, has submitted his resignation to the Session. His last day will be Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup> (Easter Sunday). He has accepted a similar position at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Gloucester. It is a bigger role, more hours, more responsibilities, more compensation, and closer to home. He will be sorely missed. He has talked to each choir member individually about his decision.

The Personnel Team met with the choir on February 22 to discuss next steps. The Session will be appointing a Search Team in the near future. If you feel an inkling to serve, please let Rebecca Owen, the Chair of Personnel or Reverend Ann know. James has given us plenty of notice, and this grace will enable us to locate substitutes. Glenda Miller has been appointed by the Session to locate our interim musicians and to select our weekly hymns.

The search process to find James took approximately 15 months or more but the wait allowed God time to lead James to us. Pray for all. You can reach out with your thoughts to our Personnel Team. Rebecca Owen, Mary Jane Bowlin, Carol Cummins and/or Paige Nobles.



**OUR ANNUAL MEETING IS POSTPONED TO SUNDAY MARCH 22:**

Our annual meeting has shifted for a month due to our snow pause. This will be a meeting of the congregation to hear our financial report and team year end reports; and a meeting of the corporation to elect new officers. It is also a good time to rethink the team you now serve or consider joining a new team.

**TEAM FAIR, April 19<sup>th</sup>:** Our Team Fair has been rescheduled to Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> after worship.

**MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES:** In our church there is a place for everyone to contribute at every stage of life. Please consider how you might use your gifts of God to lift up the people of God.

**Monitor your Email/Texts: Please make a habit of checking emails and texts.**

**Vision Task Force:** VTF will meet briefly on March 15<sup>th</sup> after the Lenting with Love program and then will resume its normally scheduled meeting times on the last Sunday of the month in April. If you are excited about how we might embrace our vision, please join us on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. Ann Whitby is our chair.

**LAUREL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Our Greeter Ministry Needs Volunteers:** Marshall Chamberlayne is a wonderful greeter, and we need more people to follow in his footsteps. On any given Sunday, we need two people to cover both entrances to the sanctuary. The duties for the greeter are to welcome people with warmth and connect them with a bulletin, point to the restrooms or nursery, and answer any questions if they are new to us. We want new people to feel a part of our fellowship as if they have been a member. An extra bonus? Connecting a new person with a member to put people at ease. If you have hospitality gifts, please consider this an important way to contribute your gifts of God. This is a way we show love. A sign-up sheet for this ministry can be found on the bulletin board.

**Building Ministry: Sunday Morning Openers and Closers:** The duties for the opener and closer are to arrive by 9 am, unlock the doors, turn on the lights, turn on the HVAC system, put out the flowers from the refrigerator and to put out the bulletins on top of the mailboxes in the office. At the end of worship, the closer is to reverse the process. Turn off the HVAC system, the lights, move the flowers to the refrigerator if not claimed, and secure the doors. A sign-up sheet is on our bulletin boards.

**OFFICER RETREAT:** Our current serving elders will spend Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, doing a deep dive into what makes our church a church. What makes Laurel, Laurel. As each of us is a custom iteration of the image and likeness of God, so is our church. They also will be exploring their new leadership roles, our future direction, and reviewing our alignment with Presbyterian policies. Thank you to the service of Gladys Chamberlayne, Julie Messick, Thomas Miller, Rebecca Owen, Bill Shepherd, Rudy van't Riet, and Jill Day, our Clerk.

**Our Volunteer Day at Lamb's Basket is Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>:** Come and join us during Holy Week, as we feed the hungry through the Lamb's Basket, a local food pantry in Henrico County, from 9 am-12 Noon. It is a wonderful way to feel connected to practicing our love as Christians. The Lamb's Basket is located at 8419Oakview Ave, Henrico, VA 23228. Linda Patterson is our LB Coordinator

## MEMBER CARE AND MISSION MEETING

Sunday February 15, 2026

Opened the meeting with prayer.

Member check-in

Discussed member concerns.

Decided to have a luncheon after our next meeting in March. Each person will bring a dish to share.

Remember to bring food for Lamb's Basket

Planning a dinner celebration for Coal Pit's 50th anniversary

Please bring in books suited for Coal Pit's students. Ollie's is a good place to buy them, or used books, for a small price at the library.

Submitted by,  
Gladys Chamberlayne



**SUNDAY MARCH 8th**

## STEWARDSHIP & PROPERTY TEAM MEETING MINUTES

February 15, 2026

Discussed finalizing Gingerbread Cottage's 2027 lease.

Gingerbread received correspondence from the State Department of Education concerning carbon monoxide poisoning. We will assist in any correction measures.

We have received a request to install a banister or railing along the hallway to the bathroom. The coat racks for the preschool will not allow us to install a railing. It was suggested that the church purchase one or two walkers or rollators.

Kevin Stephens, grandson of Margie and Reggie Fitch, was recommended to assist us with unskilled maintenance needs at the church. Marshall agreed to mentor Kevin.

Glenda and Bonnie Poff have agreed to perform a financial review in 2026.

Tod and Wayne will conduct the 2026 annual insurance review.

At the most recent Beloved meeting several issues were discussed to improve the church's appearance to include

peeling paint, windows installed in every interior door as per Presbyterian regulations and cleaning or replacing stained carpeting in the hallway by the choir loft. Several members of Beloved offered to volunteer to help.

Steve replaced the ballast in two light fixtures in the Gingerbread office with direct wire, which is LED and eliminates the need for ballast, both of which saves money. We intend in the future to eliminate ballast for all lighting and use LED tubes.

We will be posting a sign-up sheet asking for volunteers to open/close the church. We would like members who presently do not serve on a team or regularly volunteer to sign up. The job tasks will be included on the sheet.

Respectfully,  
Tod Balsbaugh

## WORSHIP AND EDUCATION MEETING

February 15, 2026:

We approved the plan to have Ash Wednesday in the day and skip the simple soup meal based on concern for members traveling at dark. Gladys Chamberlayne and Marshall Chamberlayne will be greeters for the service. Steve Scarce will work sound.

The committee reviewed accomplishments for 2025. We need to recruit Communion Prep, Communion servers, and greeters.

The twice a month communion will be reviewed at our next meeting.

We will focus on Easter Season.

Maudy Thursday Service  
Good Friday Service  
Easter Sunday—We will do the Easter Egg Hunt.  
Michael will coordinate.

Discussion on James Sudbury resigning. We asked James what he needed from the committee to have a smooth transition.

Michael Henderson



**DEADLINE FOR GAZETTE – 19th OF EACH MONTH**

Laurel Presbyterian Church  
9675 Staples Mill Road  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

**MARCH NEWSLETTER**