



Holy Week April 2026



Laurel Presbyterian Church
Enter to Worship. Depart to Serve



Life.

Endings are part of the rhythm of our lives. Some are natural and welcomed and some are not. But all are part of the larger flow of life, and the even bigger picture of God's provision of Love. Just like there are 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night, Jesus explained to his disciples on their way to awaken Lazarus (John 11: 1-48, *The Message*), it is the pattern of our humanity. Life, death, and resurrection.

In Lent we come face to face with hard realities. Our lives are finite. Our friends and beloved creatures are finite. All of the people we love are finite. And Jesus wept. He wept when he came

to the tomb of Lazarus. He wept. Weeping seems like the best response to endings. Weeping. Openly. Letting our pain have voice. Someone we loved has come to an end. Our lives have suddenly shifted. Things are now different.

We start Holy Week with Palm Sunday and the parade of the Messiah we think we want to follow but we quiver midway through the week and quickly back away from. He is not the one we wanted to save us. He dashes our hopes. An ending. He is not a Warrior King to conquer the Roman empire and readdress the injustices of both the government and the Jewish practices, but a humble and gentle servant of the Lord. Another ending. And we turned away from him. A stark ending. We railed in anger and wept in disappointment. How could God be so far off the mark?

On Maundy Thursday, Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with the people he has loved dearly. He tells them in words and deeds that laying down your life is more important than honor and status. Another ending. He washes their feet. One betrays him. Another ending. This shifts everything.

On Good Friday, another ending. Jesus is betrayed not just by Judas, but by all who quivered and knew him not. Peter, the rock upon which the church was to be built, denies him. Pilate washes his hands of him but releases the crowd favorite of Barnabas rather than the innocent man, Jesus. An ending. Jesus is crucified. Another ending. Mary Magdalene, the "Tower", stays with Jesus, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, and his aunt Mary.

All of these endings happened to fulfill scripture as Jesus tells us in John 19:28. All of these endings were necessary for us to see clearly. In the passage in John 11 where Jesus arrives 4 days late to halt the dying of Lazarus, he tells us this:

⁴"This sickness is not fatal. It will become an occasion to show God's glory by glorifying God's Son (John 11:4, *The Message*)."

Death is not fatal. It is an ending. A necessary ending. One we all must negotiate.

One we all will walk with the people we love. An essential ending. And we must weep. We must weep and acknowledge that loving is wounding. It is devastating to lose our people, our creatures, our jobs, our status, our bodies that fail bit by bit. It is devastating not to be saved the way we secretly wished. We must weep the betrayal. The endings. Cry until the tears won't come. And stand by, like Mary Magdalene, The "Tower", magnifying love by her presence in it. Life. Death. Resurrection. Two parts of the same day.

As we begin our descent into death and dying on Palm Sunday, we can embrace these endings and weep right along with the Mary's. We can normalize the pattern. We can call to mind what Jesus told us through Lazarus,²⁵⁻²⁶ "You don't have to wait for the End. I am, right now, Resurrection and Life. The one who believes in me, even though he or she dies, will live. And everyone who lives believing in me ultimately does not die at all. Do you believe this? (*The Message*)."

Or as T. S. Eliot described in the Four Quartets, "In my end, is my beginning (1943)."

Life. Death. Resurrection. Life. Death. Resurrection. Life. Death. Resurrection. Essential endings. New beginnings. The pattern is normed. Night and Day. Let us walk together through both sides of the same day: weeping until there are no tears; and waiting on Holy Saturday for the night to yield to the day when we arise with the sun and shout, "Hallelujah, The Lord is Risen. He is Risen Indeed!" -Reverend Ann Cherry



OUR HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE: Please try to attend a service after Palm Sunday. It is hard to fully appreciate the impact of Easter if we have not traveled with our Suffering Servant through Holy Week. Let your love be known in attendance, prayer, contemplation, scripture reading, and conversation with God.

Palm Sunday March 29 th 10:00 am	Palm branches are waved. Choral Processional and Recessional.
Maundy Thursday April 2 nd , 6:00 pm	The Last Supper Celebrated, Sanctuary is Stripped. We contemplate our betrayal.
Good Friday April 3 rd , 3:00pm	Using spy paper that will disappear in baptismal waters on Sunday we will write our sins and nail them to the cross. We name our corporate participation in his death. This is a Tenebrae candlelight service as we experience the crucifixion.
Holy Saturday April 4 th	This is the day we wait in silence by the Tomb. We pray. We hope that the night will yield to the day. It is a solemn quiet meditative day.
Easter Sunday April 5 th , 10:00 am	The Sanctuary is dressed for Easter. Our Sins are washed away in the Baptismal Font. The Flowering Cross replaces our Sin-Filled Cross. Geraniums adorn our sanctuary. Jesus Christ is Risen Today!

EASTER EGG HUNT: An Easter Egg Hunt will follow the worship service on the front lawn by the bell tower for children of all ages.



Shepherd on Call: The Shepherd on Call for the month of April is Nana Sarfo-Kantanka. Nana can be reached at 804-922-3557. Please contact her if you know of someone who could use a visit or some extra Laurel love this month.



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

- Claude Dickerson (7)
- Avery MacRae (7)
- Cooper, Jane (11)
- Clark, Jim (14)
- Runyon, Larry (19)
- Miller, IV, Clint (23)
- Lannetti, Joe (28)



APRIL SANCTUARY FLOWERS

April 5-Easter Sunday-Geraniums.

April 12-(Pancake & Hymn Sing).

April 19 – Madeline Clore — To the Glory of God and in honor of Georgia Clore.

April 26 – Open



LAMB'S BASKET

Please bring in boxed or canned items, and snacks to refill our Lambs basket. There is a wagon for items located in the narthex. Thank you.

Our Volunteer Day at Lamb's Basket is Tuesday, March 31st: 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 9am-12Noon. It is a wonderful way to feel connected to practicing our love as Christians. The Lamb's Basket is located at 8419 Oakview Ave, Henrico, VA 23228.



Thursday April 2

6:00pm Maundy Thursday service in Sanctuary.

Friday April 3

3:00pm Good Friday Tenebrae service in Sanctuary.

Saturday April 4- Holy Saturday

Sunday April 5 Easter Sunday He Is Risen!

10:00am Worship Service/Communion/Flowering Cross.

11:00am Reception for James Sudbury in Fellowship Hall.

11:15 am Easter Egg Hunt.

Wednesday April 8

1:00pm Beloved A meets.

3:00pm Beloved B meets.

Sunday April 12

9:00am Sunday School meets.

10:00am Breakfast and Hymns in Fellowship Hall

11:15 am Teams meet.

Tuesday April 14

10:00am Women's Circle meets in Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday April 15

1:00pm Beloved A meets.

3:00pm Beloved B meets.

Sunday April 19

9:00am Sunday School meets.

10:00am Worship service.

11:15 am Team Fair in Fellowship Hall.

11:30 am Session meets.

Wednesday April 22

1:00pm Beloved A meets.

3:00pm Beloved B meets.

Thursday April 23

11:30am Lunch Bunch meets at Kitchen 33, 13155 Mountain Rd, Glen Allen.

Sunday April 26

9:00am Sunday School meets.

10:00am Worship service/Five cents a Meal offering

11:15 am Vision Task Force meets.

*West End Toastmasters meets every 1st, 3rd. and 5th Mondays at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.

RECEPTION FOR JAMES SUDBURY, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC...

Regretfully, James has submitted his resignation from his Music Director position here at Laurel, and his last day is on Easter Sunday April 5th. Please join us for a reception in his honor following worship on Easter Sunday morning. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you can bring a food item to share.



CONGRATULATIONS TO CLINT MILLER IV...

Clint Miller IV was named the 2026 Henrico County Public Schools Secondary Music Teacher of the Year! Associated with Godwin HS and Varina HS, Clint was recognized for his dedication to making music a vital part of education. Clint is the son of Clint and Glenda Miller and the grandson of Mary Lawrence.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC SEARCH...

"Our search for a new Director of Music is underway! The search committee and Session approved the Music Director job description, which is now in the hands of the Presbytery of the James and the Richmond Organ Guild. The search committee has not received any resumes yet but is excited to review applications as they come in!"

Thanks,
Madeline Clore

I want to thank the telephone tree for the calls informing us of weather closings and other concerns of the church during this past winter. A job well done!



Bernie Cheatham

Thank you to Glenda Miller who has stepped in to head our search for interim musicians while we look for our next Director of Music. She will also be selecting our weekly hymns. We are grateful for her excellent leadership during this time.

BREAKFAST AND HYMN SING SUNDAY, APRIL 12th

Join us to celebrate the Easter glow with breakfast and hymns thanks to the love of Ann Whitby, the WE Team, Session and Madline Clore and Glenda Miller. This will be our worship in the Fellowship Hall. Please dress casually.



FIND YOUR TEAM AT THE TEAM FAIR SUNDAY

APRIL 19th Laurel offers four teams for you to make your voice known – **Member Care and Missions, Stewardship and Property, Worship and Education and Vision Task Force**. This year is a wonderful time to connect and join. Our Team Fair will be held on Sunday April 19th after worship service. There is a seat reserved for you at the table. We know we are stronger together.

MEMBER CARE AND MISSION

March 1, 2026

Opened with prayer.

Member care check-in.

After our Circle meeting we will continue to have a luncheon.

Plans are being made to have a spaghetti dinner for Coal Pit children and their parents sometime in May.

Continue to bring food items for Lamb's Basket.

We are still collecting books for Coal Pit children.

Next meeting April 12, 2026

Respectfully submitted,
Gladys Chamberlayne



STEWARDSHIP & PROPERTY TEAM MEETING MINUTES

March 1, 2026

New Business:

Billy Shepherd was welcomed as a new member to S&P team.

Our fire alarm system inspection is out of date and Billy met with Kirk Cowles who conducted the inspection. We will receive the report soon.

The 2026-2027 Gingerbread Cottage lease has been prepared and will be presented to the session at its meeting on March 8th and then to Gingerbread.

We will have the chimney swept within the month.

Vendor list has been updated and will be posted in the church office.

Fire Equipment Co. Will be inspecting the fire extinguishers on March 12th.

Will conduct the 2026 annual insurance review on March 6th.

Marshall fixed the latch to the door in the back stairwell leading to the playground. He also addressed a heat issue which was caused by someone turning off the circulator pump.

We will purchase a wireless thermostat that will better meet our needs. Steve and Marshall

Tod Balsbaugh

FROM THE SESSION

March 7, 2026

We welcomed new Session elders, Gladys Chamberlayne and Thomas Miller. Teams have been established. Rebecca Owen and Gladys Chamberlayne will be on Member Care and Mission, (MCM). Julie Messick and Thomas Miller will be on Worship and Education, (WE). Rudy Van't Riet and Bill Shepherd will be on Stewardship and Property, (SP). All are invited to participate in the Vision Task Force (VTF).

Presbytery of the James' policies have been placed in a binder in the Parlor. We will be adding Session Minutes and Monthly Financial Reports to the binder to be easily available for those who are interested. A suggestion was made that we put total monthly financial donations into the Gazette.

Session discussed the POJ budget decrease in funding for Camp Hanover, which many considered a vital ministry of the Presbytery.

The Session voted to donate \$500 from Laurel to Camp Hanover and to invite the congregation to donate as well.

Jill Day, Clerk of Session

FAMILY G The Session approved helping a nearly homeless family of 5 in Henrico County. The father needs a kidney transplant. There are 3 kids. With our Good Samaritan Funds (GSF), we purchased a \$250 Walmart gift card and a \$50 Wawa gift card for gasoline support. The congregation is welcome to add kindness. You can leave gift cards under Reverend Ann's office door, and she will deliver them on our behalf. Thank you for your donations to the GSF so we can help others in need of assistance.

HOLY GROUNDS Thanks to the love of Ann Whitby, chair of the Vision Task Force, Steve Searce, Marshall Chamberlayne, Bert Whitby, and the VTF, we have a new sitting area, bulletin board, and wagons for our Lamb's Basket. It has been dubbed "Holy Grounds." Sit down and take a rest or just greet people as they come in or go out.