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**Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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Check us out on:

Facebook.com/groveparkchurch

Instagram: groveparkchurch

YouTube: YouTube.com/@groveparkchurch



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

<b>Sundays</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Family Night</b>
<b>Mon., Wed., Thurs.</b>		<b>Noon Devotional on Facebook Live</b>
<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Bible Study via Zoom (beginning January 10th)</b>
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Facebook Prayer Meeting</b>
	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Zoom Prayer Meeting</b>
	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal (unless otherwise noted)</b>
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>GPBC Book Club (beginning January 12th)</b>
<b>January 02</b>		<b>Office Closed.</b>
<b>January 03</b>	<b>11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Widow/Single Ladies Support Luncheon</b>
		<b>in Fellowship Hall</b>
<b>January 04</b>	<b>Noon</b>	<b>ROMEO's Lunch at Southbound Sandwich Shop</b>
<b>January 08</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Deacon Fellowship</b>
<b>January 09</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Finance Committee via Zoom</b>
<b>January 10</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Lamentations Bible Study Begins via Zoom</b>
<b>January 12</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>GPBC Book Club begins via Zoom</b>

# The Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of Grove Park Baptist Church | January 2023

**I am a Fearless Influencer...**

My past is forgiven, my future is secure  
 My present is not for me, but for the one who set me free  
 The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line  
 No more prayer-less living, cheap giving & selfish dreaming  
 I am part of the change; I will not hesitate to serve  
 I will gladly pay the cost, contagiously spreading His love,  
 Playing my role on the dream team, the Mavuno family  
 Until all Africa is changed, every sector of society  
 I align myself to God's purpose, I will be who He calls me to be  
 I agree to be shaped & molded, through His word and through His family  
 Until my will and His will fully agree  
 And I become fully the influencer that I was created to be  
 I am a Fearless Influencer.

The preceding poem is a composition by Tina Nduba, a member of Mavuno Church in Nairobi, Kenya, that is featured in a book I read late last year entitled "Megachurch Christianity Reconsidered" by Wanjiru Gitau. First, let me strongly encourage you to read this book. It is filled with insights into being church in new ways as well as how to directly impact what is now the largest generational demographic, millennials. It really does paint a wonderful picture about how connected our world is as the massive similarities between Kenyan millennials and American millennials are illuminated for anyone who has spent time with folks from this generation.

One of the things that Mavuno Church stresses to its membership is the call to influence culture, hence why Nduba writes about being a fearless influencer. I share this with you as a challenge to guide you in the new year as we seek to minister to our community. It's really not that hard to do so, simply substitute Grove Park for Mavuno and Burlington for Africa. What a line it then becomes, "Playing my role on the dream team, the Grove Park family/Until all Burlington is changed, every sector of society." Such is my prayer for this new year and I hope you will make it yours as well. Please take time each day for the first month of the year, or longer if you so choose, to read this poem with the aforementioned substitutions and ask God how you can manifest this prayer in your life each day. I think we will find 2023 a much better year if we pursue such bold, nay fearless, hopes. Oh, and one last thing, always remember Grove Park, you are the dream team.

Grace Abounds,  
Marc

*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)*

I've never been a big fan of change. I like the predictable and don't like surprises. Some people complain that they're stuck in a rut; I like knowing where I am and where I'm going. My mother used to love to take an unfamiliar road just to see where it goes; I do not share that trait. If I'm traveling in unfamiliar places, I bring up Apple Maps to guide me on the way (of course, since I have a terrible sense of direction, that's a survival strategy as well as a tool to make me comfortable).

This is why I enjoy Christmas much more than New Year's Day. I love Christmas carols and presents under the tree (because I have a pretty clear idea of what's in each package). I enjoy rewatching the same Christmas movies I've seen many, many times before. I even like watching the 500 or so holiday baking competitions that endlessly run this season, since they're all basically the same.

Where Christmas is familiar, New Year's Day is somewhat scary. It points us to an unfamiliar future and forces us to consider how little we know about what's ahead of us. You may find that exciting, and that's fine.

If you're excited about 2023, enjoy this moment and revel in the anticipation of new things. If you're nervous about what might come, know you're in good company.

Either way, know this - none of us are facing 2023 alone. As Jesus promised in the Great Commission, He is with us always - every day - no matter what comes. He will be with us every day of 2023 and every day beyond that, until the end of the age. That's way better than Apple Maps can promise!

Trust in His presence, and let Him lead you in this new year!  
Dale

## THE GATE OF THE YEAR

### 'God Knows'

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".*

*And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and  
put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light  
and safer than a known way".*

*So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God,  
trod gladly into the night.*

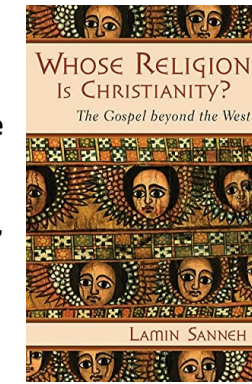
*And He led me towards the hills and  
the breaking of day in the lone East.*

By: Minnie Louise Haskins

### GPBC Book Club

Our next book club will start on January 12th via Zoom. A zoom link will be sent out closer to the starting date. We will be studying 'Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West' by Lamin Sanneh.

The book is available on Amazon.



### Five Alive

We launched a new campaign in November for every Grove Park member to invite 5 currently unchurched or de-churched people to worship at GPBC. We encourage everyone to share their stories of how they are inviting folks to GPBC. We recognize that some folks are homebound and do not have interactions that would lead to invitations on a regular basis, but would still like to participate. We ask these folks to take 5 minutes out of their day every day and pray for those who are inviting to be strengthened in their outreach and for those who are invited to be open to the invitation.

### Bible Study

We will be delaying our study of Ecclesiastes until later this Spring, to study the book of Lamentations as we relaunch our Tuesday Bible study on Zoom on January 10th. We will be looking at the book through a communal lens. If you haven't participated in one of these studies before, please consider doing so this time. We will be glad to help you learn to use Zoom so you can participate. If you do not have Zoom you are welcome to speak to Pastor Marc about other ways to participate. The examination of Lamentations will correspond with our Epiphany sermon series and undergird a project Pastor Marc is doing for his doctorate this Spring.

### Celebrating Epiphany

January 6 marks the conclusion of the liturgical observance of Christmas as we commemorate the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem. It also marks the start of the season of Epiphany. Epiphany is from the Greek for "to bring to light." Accordingly, as we observe Epiphany this year we will seek to observe the life and work of the Trinity and the Church in new ways each Sunday. By looking afresh at these instances, our goal is to seek to reflect God's glory to more and more so that others are brought to the light themselves.

### Ministers On Call for the Month of January:

Jan. 05 thru Jan. 08

Deacon Larry Dodson

Jan. 12 thru Jan. 15

Deacon Jason Bogart

Jan. 19 thru Jan. 22

Deacon Benjy Overby

Jan. 26 thru Jan. 29

Deacon Caleb Warren

(Our Known)

### January Birthdays

Cheryl Parrish	January 04
Janet Durham	January 06
Savannah W. Lambert	January 06
Kim Wood	January 09
Linda Canada	January 13
Richard Shepherd	January 15
Debbie Hamlett	January 19
Irene Britton	January 20
Janice Byrd	January 21
John Evans	January 21
Matt Evans	January 21
Larry Dodson	January 22
Norene Ray	January 22
Mike Byrd	January 23
Rosemary Faircloth	January 25
Tricia Medford	January 25
Altavista Pruitt	January 25

