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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/grovesparkchurch

Instagram: grovesparkchurch

YouTube: YouTube.com/@grovesparkchurch



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mon., Wed., Thurs.		Noon Devotional on Facebook Live
Wednesdays	6:30 p.m.	Facebook Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal (unless otherwise noted)
December 01	10:00 a.m.	SIA Packing Bags for Shut-Ins
December 04	6:00 p.m.	Deacons Fellowship
December 06	11:30 a.m.	Widow's/Single Ladies Support Luncheon in Fellowship Hall
	7:30 p.m.	Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert "Let Carols Ring"
December 07	Noon	ROMEO's Lunch at Southbound Sandwich Shop
December 09		SIA going to Christmas Show at Liberty Theater
December 11	10:00 a.m.	GPBC Christmas Cantata "The Thrill of Hope"
	3:00 p.m.	Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert "Let Carols Ring"
December 13	3:00-5:00 p.m.	ARC Drive-Thru Dinner and Visit with Santa
December 14	9-11 a.m.	GPAL packing Cookies in a Jar
December 19	9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	Red Cross Blood Drive at GPBC
December 21	6:30 p.m.	Longest Night Service
December 24	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 25	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service "The Light of Dawn"
December 26 & 27		Church Office Closed
January 01	10:00 a.m.	Service of Lessons and Carols

# THE MESSENGER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | DECEMBER 2022



I have been giving a great deal of thought recently to the most forgotten figure in the Christmas story-- Joseph. I do not think I have ever heard a sermon preached on the great faith of Joseph. I have never encountered a book detailing how Joseph should be a role model for men everywhere as I have on Mary being such a role model for women. If Jesus's life was made into a movie, Mary would be played by some Hollywood starlet that we would see throughout the movie, while Joseph would be a B movie actor who had a bit part at the beginning of the show. The credits would never recount something like "and George Clooney in the role of Joseph." Yet, Joseph is the figure in the Christmas story that I believe we overlook at our peril, because he is the one that most resembles us.

Matthew tells us that Joseph was "a righteous man," a phrase many Christians would apply to themselves. The text continues by informing us that due to Mary's unexpected pregnancy, Joseph had decided to not subject her to public disgrace and divorce her quietly. The decision was made of course before Joseph had his encounter with the angel of the Lord. We often differ from Joseph, however, by deciding after our encounter with God to simply remain "righteous" while ignoring the duties that accompany such a declaration. Joseph was willing to lose his standing not only in his community and family, but his livelihood and possibly his life for the sake of answering God's call. The question that Joseph's life presents modern Christians is whether we can do the same ourselves?

When God speaks powerfully to our hearts are we willing to answer accordingly and forsake what we know and grasp the unknown? Can we honestly say that we would be willing to think and act and speak differently if it meant we would incur the ridicule of our friends and neighbors? Joseph would have been a righteous man that history would have never known if he had not been willing to risk it all to answer God's call. Instead, he became the male role model for the Son of God and a participant in God's plan to redeem the world from its sins. It seems like the role of a lifetime for some B movie actor now does it not? The decisions we make after we encounter God determine whether we will join Joseph in God's redemptive history or remain an insignificant bit player. I pray that as you sit amidst the twinkling lights and glittering garland this Christmas season, you recall Joseph's role in our celebrations and consider whether your faith matches his. I assure you that if it does, Christmas will twinkle and glitter more than ever before.

Merry Christmas,  
Marc

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)*

One of the things that people notice when they come to visit our house at night is how dark it is. We literally live in the middle of nowhere (8 miles from Burlington, 8 miles from Snow Camp, and 8 miles from Liberty). There are no street lights, no lights from businesses, and very little auto traffic on our road. At night it is quite dark.

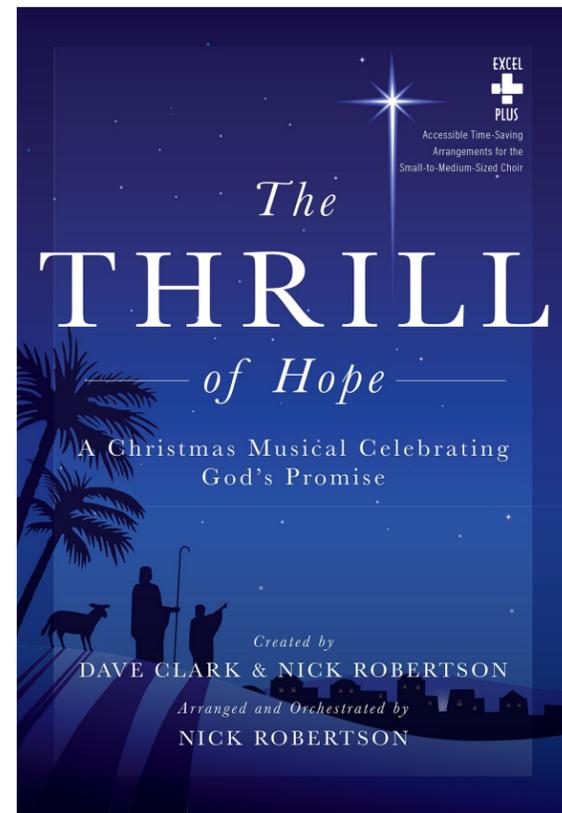
For Kim's birthday last summer, Joy and I bought her a solar garden. Now, on our patio, there are pots with flowers that have solar LED lights in different colors, and there are even a few gnomes holding illuminated welcome signs. It looks really cool, especially in the dark, and it's amazing how much light can be put out by a few dozen small LED's.

Friends, I don't have to remind you that we live in a dark world. Sometimes the darkness that we encounter in our communities and that we see in the news can be quite overwhelming. It seems like darkness is taking over the world.

When you feel surrounded by darkness, please remember the promise that is contained in John 1:5. *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* This promise is part of John's prologue to his Gospel, and the light he's talking about is Jesus. Jesus is the light who came into the world, and His light still shines through us. The darkness did not overcome it then, and the darkness will not overcome it now. You can hold on to that.

As you walk in this dark world, remember that you are carrying His light in you through the indwelling Holy Spirit. You can live with confidence that darkness cannot and will not overcome His light. You have the great privilege to let His light shine in you and through you into the darkness. The world surely needs it.

Walk in His light, and let it shine!  
Dale



The Sanctuary Choir will be performing "The THRILL of Hope" on Sunday, December 11th during the morning worship service at 10:00 a.m.



**American Red Cross  
Annual Burlington Holiday  
Blood Drive**

**Monday, December 19th  
9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
at Grove Park Baptist Church**

Make your appointment online at:  
[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org), sponsor code: Holiday  
or call 1-800-RED CROSS



**LESSONS AND  
Carols**

**January 01, 2023  
at  
10:00 a.m.**

The Women's Shelter is in need of 2023 calendars for their clients. This enables them to keep up with appointments, etc. If you have any that you will not be using, please drop them by the church office or leave on the table in the vestibule.



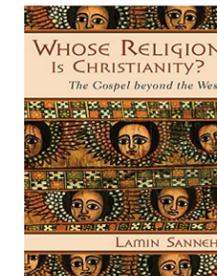
Our Alternative Christmas Market is currently underway. We offer gift options that further God's call to love mercy and to do justice as we walk humbly with God. Our format is the same as previous years. Catalogs and order forms are available in the church office and the vestibule. You can also view the catalogue on our webpage [www.groveparkchurch.com](http://www.groveparkchurch.com) and place your order online.



We hope you will shop our market so that you can share a gift with a loved one while also spreading the Gospel to the ends of the world.

**GPBC Book Club**

Our next book club will start in January. 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.

**The Longest Night Service**

For many who have lost a loved one, the Christmas season is far from a joyous and festive time. It is a time filled with heartache due to the fact that there is an empty seat at this year's celebrations. We wish to recognize these losses and, thru the power of community, to say that we grieve with you. The Longest Night Service is designed to remember those we have lost as we recognize that the birth of the Christ Child affords us the hope of a guaranteed reunion someday. We hope that you will join us as we lament, remember, and celebrate during our Longest Night Service on Wednesday, December 21st at 6:00 p.m. If you know someone for whom this is a difficult season because of loss, please invite them to join us.



(Our Known)

**December Birthdays**

Larry Snead	December 01
Don Moriarty	December 03
Sue Atkinson	December 04
Lois Dickerson	December 05
Beth Canada	December 12
Thomas Overby	December 13
William Overby	December 20
Brian Weatherman	December 20
Graham Parrish	December 22
Melanie Fitzgerald	December 31
Nancy McMillan	December 31




We are collecting our Lottie Moon Offering thru the month of December.

**Lottie Moon:**  
a life of radical obedience

**Ministers On Call for the Month of December:**

Dec. 01 thru 04	Deacon George Britton
Dec. 08 thru 11	Deacon Earl Hudson
Dec. 15 thru 18	Deacon Marian Brewer
Dec. 22 thru 25	Deacon Bob Webster
Dec. 29 thru Jan. 01	Deacon Joan Smith