

The Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of Grove Park Baptist Church | February 2023

Believers around the world will join together on February 22, Ash Wednesday, to begin the 40 day Lenten journey to Calvary and Easter's empty tomb. Lent is traditionally a time when the Church refrains from a multitude of things as we enter into deep introspection on the state of our souls. Liturgically, Lent is marked by an absence of "alleluias" during worship so that their impact of praise may be adequately felt during Easter morning celebrations. Our Catholic brothers and sisters will harken back to an earlier time when meat was a luxury and observe meatless Fridays as sign of sacrifice and self-discipline. Similarly, untold numbers of believers will forgo a multitude of things, be it chocolate, caffeine, or some vice, in an effort to gain some insight into Christ's sacrifice at Calvary. Other believers will use the Lenten season to add some new spiritual discipline, like daily prayer and Bible study, as a means to an enhanced faith experience.

Now, please do not think that my referencing these exercises imply that I find them less than laudable for that would be a grave mistake. I applaud every one's efforts, be they grand or humble, to grow in the wisdom and knowledge of God. However, I would like for us to ponder this question as we determine the trajectory of our individual Lenten journeys. What does God require of me? I think that we often silently articulate what we require of God—answers to our prayers, supply of our wants, err needs, and basically be on call for us every moment of every day. Yet, how often do we take a moment to ask what God requires of us and more pointedly, how often do we ask God what He requires of us? We can get off the hook if we leave such questions as solely an internal intellectual exercise, but we place ourselves in a vulnerable and uneasy position if we ask it of God because then we must decide whether to do it or not. Likewise, when we relegate the question to internal dialogue we can simply say that we are meeting what is required by obeying a list of dos and don'ts. Sadly, this consigns such lists to be very limited and narrow in scope.

Thankfully, we do not have to fret too much over what God requires of us as we already know it, it's the application that trips us up. Micah told us long ago that, "what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" The application of what God requires, by its very nature, drags us away from narrow lists and forces us to ask in every situation we find ourselves what does it mean to do justice here, how can I exhibit God's covenant love in this matter, how low is God walking here and have I humbled myself enough that we are walking side by side? These are difficult questions, I readily admit. They require us to be continually in a mindset that does not react from our humanity, but to see situations through God's benevolent mercy and grace. Inherently it means being present and thinking faithfully in every situation, something we often fail to do. Yet, this is what Scripture teaches God requires of us and I pray that you would make this part of your faith journey not simply for this Lenten sojourn, but beyond the empty tomb into great space of abundant life God has promised us.

Grace Abounds,
Marc

Alternative Christmas Market

Thanks to our Grove Park family, we had our best ACM in the five years it has been offered. Through your generous gifts, we collected \$8,512 and have been able, to name a few, provide:

36 children a weekend's worth of food from the GPALS program.

19 birthday bags for recipients of Meals on Wheels.

36 paperback editions of the Good News Bible to Yokefellow Prison Ministry.

Thru Church World Services, 17 children will receive a month's worth of emergency food rations, 17 families will receive four chickens to promote a well-balance diet, 1,000 baby fish will be provided to families for them to raise and help improve their family's diet, 7 families will receive water filters to equip their homes with fresh, clean water and 17 families will have access to a community water system in Kenya.

A substantial donation has been made to the Riggsbee Medical Mission to assist with travel to patient homes as well as purchasing needed supplies.

In Honduras, 13 families will be receiving baby care packages and 250 balanced Honduran meals will be provided to children.

Thru Plant With Purpose, 100 trees will be planted in Third World Countries to help stabilize the soil to prevent massive erosion.

Over 75 pairs of shoes with Gospel booklets will be sent to Africa.

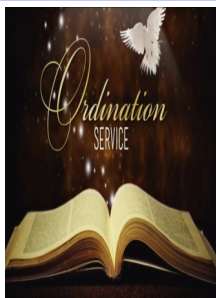
India Gospel League will provide 16 children with 1 year of discipleship training.

Baptist Children's Home will be able to provide grocery gift cards to 20 individuals and sponsor one child's bed for one year.

The Seniors in Action (SIA) are having a
Valentine Luncheon and Fun
on Tuesday, February 14th, beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board or you can
call the church office at (336) 227-2910 to sign up.

Caleb Warren was selected to be a deacon beginning in 2023. We will join together to ordain Caleb for Christian service during our morning worship service on Sunday, February 26. Please continue to pray for Caleb and all our deacons as they seek new ways to serve God's Kingdom.



Ministers On Call for the Month of February:

Feb. 02 thru Feb. 05

Deacon Bob Webster

Feb. 09 thru Feb. 12

Deacon Joan Smith

Feb. 16 thru Feb. 19

Deacon Jim Etheridge

Feb. 23 thru Feb. 26

Deacon Larry Dodson

(Our Known)

February Birthdays

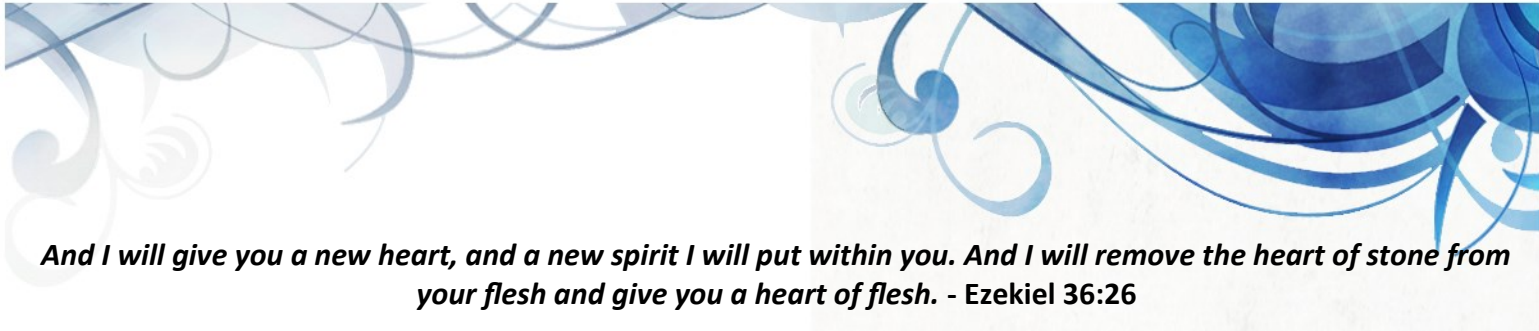
Dale Cain	February 01
Jacob Haithcock	February 01
Marc Sanders	February 03
Benjamin King	February 07
Daniel King	February 07
Randy McIntyre	February 07
Alvis Oakes	February 07
Myrtle Talbert (104th)	February 10
Ron Sapp	February 11
Bobby Andrews	February 12
Earl Hudson	February 17
Kathy Shambley	February 20
Audrey Snider	February 27



Service Opportunity

Be on the lookout for information about how we can serve our community and have some fun by deciding our Super Bowl picks. We will announce more information during our morning worship service on Sunday, February 5. If you have additional questions, please contact the church office.





And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. - Ezekiel 36:26

February is Heart Health Month. That's an important emphasis. Watching my dad deal with heart problems and coronary artery disease for six long, difficult years taught me how essential our hearts are to having a good quality of life. We need to take care of our hearts, so our bodies can work as efficiently as possible and we can enjoy our time on earth.

Of course, my main point isn't the health of our physical hearts, as important as they are. Even more important is the health of our spiritual hearts. In the core of our beings, we need to be soft, warm, and flexible - open to learning, growing, and allowing what God wants to do in our lives.

For many of us, that's harder to do than it seems. It's very human to become more rigid, more "set in our ways" as we age. We know what we like and what we despise, what we want and what we refuse. Stony hearts are easy to develop and hard to discard.

Fortunately, God promises to do that very thing for us. In Ezekiel 36:26, He says that He will give us a new heart and a new spirit. He will remove our stony hearts and give us soft, flexible ones in their place.

Of course, He does that through a partnership with us. A cardiologist might be able to repair some damage, but the patient also has to do their part by eating properly, getting an appropriate amount of exercise, and always watching out for new symptoms. In the same way, God promises to give us a new heart and a new spirit, but we have to be vigilant to make sure that we remain open to the working of His Spirit and willing to follow His leadership in our lives.

Let's take care of our new hearts this month, as we seek to follow Him!

Dale



We will set out on our Lenten journey during our Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 22, at 6:30 PM. It will be a service of reflection and repentance. Ashes will be imparted on all those who wish to receive them during the service.



Wisdom from
Ecclesiastes



Our new Tuesday Zoom study will begin on March 7 as we explore the book of Ecclesiastes.





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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays 5:00 p.m.

Mon., Wed., Thurs. Noon

Tuesdays 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

Thursdays 7:00 p.m.

February 01 Noon

February 05 6:00 p.m.

February 07 11:30 a.m.

February 13 7:00 p.m.

February 14 11:00 a.m.

Family Night

Devotional on Facebook Live

Bible Study on Lamentations via Zoom

Facebook Prayer Meeting

Zoom Prayer Meeting

Choir Rehearsal (unless otherwise noted)

GPBC Book Club

ROMEO's at Southbound Sandwich Shop

Deacon Fellowship

Widows/Single Ladies Luncheon meet in

Fellowship Hall

Finance Committee via Zoom

Seniors In Action Valentine Social