



Grove Park
BAPTIST CHURCH

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | JULY 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays	5:00 p.m.	Family Hour (unless otherwise noted)
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)
July 02		No Family Hour
	6:00 p.m.	Deacon Fellowship
July 04		Office Closed in observance of July 4th
July 12	Noon	ROMEO's at Southbound Sandwich Shop
July 24	10:30 a.m.	Properties Committee
August 4 & 5		Vacation Bible School

*Please note the Widows / Single Ladies with not meet in July.

I find myself writing this month during the interlude between two great declarations of freedom in American history—Juneteenth and Independence Day. Historically, this interregnum has been filled with further articulations securing various freedoms for more and more segments of society whether that be through legislation, such as the far reaching Civil Rights Act of 1964 which was signed on July 2, 1964, or the US Supreme Court announcing decisions, such as *Olmstead v. L.C.* which advanced the rights of the disabled, *U.S. v. Virginia* that further secured women's rights, and *Benton v. Maryland* which added to all of our rights. I have taken advantage of such an occasion to ponder the nature of freedom and how it relates to our inherent worth as bearers of God's image. I continue to be challenged by the fact that when we fail to advance freedom for all and particularly those on society's margins, we likewise fail to say to those same people that God calls them Beloved and desires a meaningful relationship with them.

Thankfully, I reside and worship in a tradition that was birthed declaring freedom and has achieved its greatest and most far-reaching impacts when it has fought for and secured those same freedoms. We Baptists have taken our Bibles and used them for centuries to declare unashamedly that within those sacred pages are found what Walter Shurden described as our "four fragile freedoms:" Soul freedom, Bible freedom, Church freedom, and Religious freedom. It has been a core conviction of Baptists for centuries that an individual must be free to come to terms with God on a strictly personal basis, hence believer's baptism, and that in doing so they learn of faith and grow in faith through the Holy Spirit guiding their interpretation of Scripture through a variety of ways. Such interpretations, we have long held, must ultimately be done through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Similarly, Baptists have staunchly held to the autonomy and freedom of the local church to make decisions for themselves on rule and practice. These individual freedoms of the soul working together with fellow image bearers through an autonomous local body have accordingly caused Baptists to strongly advocate for a strict separation between the Church and state. Indeed, the phrase "a wall of separation" arose in response to a plea for religious freedom from Baptists in Danbury, CT to Thomas Jefferson as they were a religious minority with no rights in the then recently enacted Connecticut constitution. In fact, our earliest Anabaptist forefathers believed in this separation to the point they held it impermissible to serve in government office.

As we rightly take time to celebrate freedom this month, let us also remember our obligation as Baptists and more pointedly as followers of Jesus to be vigilant in our defense of freedom at all levels of society. Let us be ever mindful that part of our witness of Jesus's life giving impact in a person's life is to defend and secure freedom for all and that when we fail to do so we impair our individual and corporate witness. Finally, may we all experience a new birth of freedom that compels us to feel free to share Jesus with all whom we come in contact.

Grace Abounds,
Marc

“But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.” 1 Corinthians 12:24b-25



Author’s Note: this is Part 2 of my Gardening series. The picture is the same one that I shared in last month’s *Messenger*; it’s too rainy right now to take a new one. Since this picture was taken, the garden has grown considerably.

As I said last month, we Cains are not expert gardeners. This is our first year doing a raised garden bed, and it has been a great learning experience!

On the left side of the bed, the green leafy plants are zucchini. They are at the point where we are getting to eat the fruits (or vegetables, as it were) of our handiwork. I’m not an adventure eater, but Kim found a recipe for zucchini bread that I really like.

On the right side of the bed, the tomato plants are booming. We have lots of small green tomatoes, and soon (I hope) they will get big enough and ripe enough to eat. There’s nothing better than a garden fresh tomato!

Now we get to the confession and the application of the Scripture text I noted above. In between the zucchini and the tomatoes, there are a couple of rows of carrots. Bless their hearts, they never had a chance. We had no idea the zucchini would get so big, but between them and the tomatoes, the carrots get no light, not enough water, and no room to grow. Sadly, I don’t think we’ll get anything edible out of them this season. Live and learn. Next year we’ll do 2 or 3 raised beds so we have room for everything to grow.

What’s the point? Churches are like raised gardening beds. We need to make sure that there’s room for everyone to grow. It’s important to make sure everyone is included in the church’s ministries, both as recipients and participants. Everyone needs to receive the spiritual (and physical, too) nutrition they need for growth. And, everyone needs a space where we can get involved in the work of Christ. Leaders need to make sure we spread the opportunities around, always looking for new people to involve. Members need to look out for ways we can use our gifts for God’s work. We’re all valuable, we’re all gifted, and we’re all necessary for the church to fulfill God’s call in His Kingdom. In His church, there’s a place for everyone!

Let’s grow! Dale

We continue to collect items for the Food Pantry. Our items requested for July are:
Canned Meats (Ham, Spam, Beef Stew, Chicken Breast), Green Beans, Corn, Collards, Stove Top Stuffing and Instant Potatoes.
These can be placed in the blue bin in the vestibule or dropped off at the church office. We truly appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

Hope For Appalachia
Item for July - Washcloths or Poufs
Our goal this year is 400 bags. This is not too big of a goal for us but we do need to start earlier for 2024. We are asking our Grove Park families to prayerfully consider a monetary amount that they could put towards Hope Boxes each month and spend that amount of money on whatever the item is for the month or on another item that you know is good for Hope Boxes. There is a blue collection bin in the foyer of the sanctuary for Hope Box Items.
Calling all bargain hunters - check clearance aisles when you go into stores and buy Hope Box items as you see them on sale. Watch for sales and other clearance events. Many pharmacies will give you reward points or dollars towards another purchase. Shop clearance after holidays especially for toy fillers, pencils, and body wash. Thank you for helping with this effort.

Vacation Bible School

August 4 (6:00 pm - 8:30 pm)
August 5 (9:00 am - 1:00 pm)

Wild Wonder is rooted in Psalm 104:24 (MSG):
“What a wildly wonderful world, God!
You made it all, with Wisdom at your side,
made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.”

All children age 3 through Grade 5 are invited to join us for a weekend of Wild Wonder. Students will explore the world that God made as they learn about nature and come to understand that we are caretakers of His Earth. Students will also learn how they can care for the Earth. Look for the bulletin insert on Sunday mornings that you can use as an invitation for families in your neighborhood.

We are in need of VBS workers and help setting up and breaking down. Set up will be on Wednesday August 2nd at 1 pm. Breakdown will be on Saturday August 5th right after VBS. Sign-ups are available on the bulletin board by the library. We are in need of individuals to help with food, crafts, games and group leaders willing to lead a small group of children on our wild wonder adventure.

Pre-register by scanning the QR code or calling the church office at 336-227-2910.

SCAN ME

Ministers On Call for the Month of June:

June 29 thru July 02	Deacon Bob Webster
July 06 thru July 09	Deacon Joan Smith
July 13 thru July 16	Deacon Jim Etheridge
July 20 thru July 23	Deacon Larry Dodson
July 27 thru July 30	Deacon Jason Bogart



(Our Known)
July Birthdays

Joshua Bogart	July 03
Sylvia Smith	July 03
Eddie Canada	July 04
Gail Shepherd	July 07
Jan Bouldin	July 08
Patsy Helms	July 08
Frances Bennett	July 09
Kenna Davis	July 09
John Moore	July 09
Kathy Fujiwara	July 10
Kim Cain	July 12
Gary Parrish	July 12
Jim Etheridge	July 13
Ann Kidd	July 15
Avery Miles	July 21
Alex Johnson	July 23
Matthew Byrd	July 24
Chloe Dunn	July 26
Brandon Kidd	July 28
Tiffany Dunn	July 29
Ken Davis	July 31

