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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | OCTOBER 2025

Recently, I have been reading Wright Thompson’s soul-searching account of the summer, 1955 late-night kidnapping and subsequent brutal murder of Emmett Till in Money, Mississippi. Thompson attempts to bring to light various aspects of a case where justice was not served due to the acquittal of Till’s murderers after 67 minutes of jury deliberations, so that some semblance of justice can now be rendered. Some may question why rehash all this after so long. After all, Till’s mother, Mamie, has been dead for over 20 years, and his murderers have likewise departed this world to receive God’s judgment. I pondered this during my recent trip across the Upstate of South Carolina and down in- to Georgia, through locations that have their own stories of similar injustices, some of which flashed across my mind as I drove down highways named after those who committed the injustice. Why should I be concerned about all of this since I did not commit any of these atrocities?

These thoughts continued to swirl around in my mind when God’s reply to Cain’s dismissive query of whether he was his brother’s keeper suddenly sprang to mind. Genesis 4:10 records God telling Cain, “The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground.” I may mistakenly think that all of this is ancient history, but these injustices still call out to God for redress. I may think myself absolved from any action in the present, but as a disciple of Jesus, I must seek out whatever justice can be rendered if I truly desire to grow more in the image of God, because God is always bending the moral arc of the universe toward justice. God still hears the cries, the cries of the departed and the cries of their families, for whom my history is still their present reality.

How then can we render justice when we are not part of the judicial system? It occurs to me that one of the easiest solutions is to listen to others’ stories and not be dismissive. Many of those who carry the memory of past injustices simply want their loved ones to be remembered and not carelessly cast aside. Emmett Till’s murderers literally cast him into the river like they would a piece of trash. When we hear his story and countless others, we declare that they mattered; they, too, were image bearers of God and should not be recklessly discarded. By doing so, we offer the empathy and compassion that were hallmarks of Jesus’s ministry and what attracted the lonely and forgotten of the world to him.

I am not ignorant of the fact that it might be difficult to hear these stories on two fronts. One, it forces us to re-evaluate and deidealize the past, which is never easy. However, after having to do this in my life on a variety of fronts, I have found it to be healing for wounds I knew about and, in some instances, for wounds I did not know I had. Quite frankly, Beloved, we should always strive for healing and wholeness. Secondly, we can learn from the stories of others by taking advantage of the plethora of accounts readily available to us. We are currently in the midst of Hispanic Heritage Month, and in November, we will celebrate Native American Heritage Month. Both groups have stories of injustices done to them that cry out to God for redress, and we should be aware of them. Our awareness enables others to experience the grace of healing, and healing allows for more grace to find its way into lives that may not know the reality of God’s saving grace, which is at the heart of why Jesus came with healing and hope. We are called to be peacemakers, literally to heal the wounds that divide us, and we must always be faithful to that task.

Grace Abounds,
Marc

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays	5:00 p.m.	Family Night
Mon., Wed., Thurs.		Devotional on Facebook Live
Tuesdays	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study (Isaiah)
Wednesdays	6:30 p.m.	Facebook Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Thursdays	7:00 p.m.	GPBC Book Club
Wednesday, Oct. 1	12:00 p.m.	ROMEOS @ Southbound Sandwiches
Friday, Oct. 3 & 17	3:30 p.m.	Feed the Team
Sunday, Oct. 5	10:00 a.m.	World Communion Day
Monday, Oct. 6	6:00 p.m.	Finance Committee Meeting
Sunday, October 19	10:00 a.m.	New Deacon Ordination
Thursday, Oct. 23	11:00 a.m.	SIA Fire and Fall Safety Program
Saturday, November 1	TBD	Fall Festival (We are asking for Candy Donations)

WE WILL BE PROVIDING LUNCH FOR THE TEACHERS AT TURRENTINE MIDDLE SCHOOL ON OCTOBER 28TH. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO ASSIST WITH THIS EVENT PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

WILLIAMS FOOTBALL
FEED THE TEAM

- OCTOBER 3RD
- OCTOBER 17TH

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH THESE MEALS PLEASE CONTACT JANICE BYRD.

WE ARE BEGINNING OUR WORK ON THE ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS MARKET FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON. IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS TO INCLUDE, PLEASE LET THE CHURCH OFFICE KNOW AND THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE WILL EVALUATE IT FOR INCLUSION IN OUR MARKET.



SIA WILL BE HOSTING A FIRE AND FALL SAFETY PROGRAM ON THURSDAY, OCT. 23TH AT 11AM. LUNCH AND FELLOWSHIP WILL BE AT NOON. PLEASE SIGN UP TO ATTEND.

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST. THIS WILL BE A FUN EVENT FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY. WE STILL NEED DONATIONS OF CANDY AND IF YOU ARE WILLING TO HELP PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD SIGN UP SHEET.

HOPE BOXES
are in need of bar soap THIS MONTH. PLEASE NO IRISH SPRING OR OTHER STRONG SMELLING SOAPS.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD
BOXES ARE IN THE MISSIONS ROOM IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE. ALL BOXES NEED TO BE RETURNED BY NOVEMBER 15TH .

OPERATION BIG THING
WE WILL BE PREPARING BOXES FOR PEOPLE IN NEED AGAIN THIS YEAR. WE ARE ASKING THAT YOU CONSIDER DONATING 6 OZ. BOX OF STOVE TOP STUFFING, 39 OZ. CAN OF GREEN BEANS, 40 OZ. CAN OF YAMS, AND 14 OZ. CAN OF CRANBERRY SAUCE. DONATIONS CAN BE TURNED IN AT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

BEFORE YOU CONTINUE READING THIS ARTICLE, TAKE A MOMENT TO READ PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11. THIS PASSAGE TALKS ABOUT HOW JESUS EMPTIED HIMSELF OF THE PRIVILEGES HE HAD IN HEAVEN AND CAME TO EARTH, TAKING THE POSITION OF A SERVANT AND GOING TO THE CROSS. IT'S SUCH A POWERFUL, HUMBLING PASSAGE!

REFLECTING ON THIS PASSAGE, MY MORNING DEVOTIONAL TODAY (BRIAN HEASLEY, LECTIO 365, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025) SAYS THIS:

"JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, BECAME A VULNERABLE, DEPENDENT CHILD, BORN INTO POVERTY, CRADLED IN AN ANIMAL FEEDING TROUGH, AND RAISED IN A HUMBLE VILLAGE. HE WORKED AS A CARPENTER, LIVING THE SIMPLEST OF LIVES, BEFORE SPENDING THREE YEARS TEACHING ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WHICH EVENTUALLY LED TO HIS CRUCIFIXION. IN THIS, HE EMBRACED THE WHOLE OF OUR HUMAN STORY. HE EMPTIED HIMSELF, LAYING ASIDE ALL HIS ENTITLEMENTS, CHOOSING INSTEAD TO SERVE.

"JESUS, HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOUR EXAMPLE. TAKE AWAY MY EGO, MY CRAVING FOR STATUS, MY UNNECESSARY NEEDS AND POINTLESS WANTS. HELP ME TO SERVE YOU AND OTHERS TODAY."

LET THIS BE OUR PRAYER AND OUR FOCUS TODAY AND EVERY DAY.
DALE

<u>MINISTERS ON CALL FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER</u>	
OCTOBER 2-5	DR. MATTHEW BYRD
OCTOBER 9-12	MS. MARIAN BREWER
OCTOBER 16-19	MR. BOB WEBSTER
OCTOBER 23-26	MRS. BETH CANADA
OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 2	MR. DEREK DENARD

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

OLIVIA TRULL	OCTOBER 01
NANCY WEBSTER	OCTOBER 03
JENNIE PALMER	OCTOBER 04
DONNA LAWSON	OCTOBER 06
BOB WEBSTER	OCTOBER 07
DEBBIE LOY	OCTOBER 07
SHARON KING	OCTOBER 10
JOAN SMITH	OCTOBER 11
LAUREN WILLETS	OCTOBER 13
JULIE BOGART	OCTOBER 21
DIANE STALLS	OCTOBER 24
WALLACE WOOD	OCTOBER 24
MITCHELL DENARD	OCTOBER 26
JEAN VINES	OCTOBER 26
GEORGE BRITTON	OCTOBER 27

