

Christmas

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**Return Service Request** 

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### **CONTACT US:**

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#### Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Check us out on:
Facebook.com/groveparkchurch
Instagram: groveparkchurch
YouTube: YouTube.com/@groveparkchurch





## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Sundays Mon., Wed., Thurs.	5:00 p.m.	Family Night Devotional on Facebook Live
Tuesday Wednesdays	7:00 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study Facebook Prayer Meeting Zoom Prayer Meeting Choir Rehearsal (unless otherwise noted)
Thursdays	7:00 p.m.	GPBC Book Club
Wednesday, Dec. 3	Noon	ROMEOS at Southbound Sandwich Works
Thursday, Dec. 4	2:00 p.m.	Candy Cane Kisses and Mistletoe Wishes (SIA)
Thursday, Dec. 11 Saturday, Dec. 13	6:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m.	Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert
Sunday, Dec. 14 Tuesday, Dec. 16	10:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m.	Christmas Cantata Red Cross Blood Drive
Wednesday, Dec. 17	6:00 p.m.	Longest Night Service
Wednesday, Dec. 24	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service
Thursday, Dec. 25		Merry Christmas
Sunday, Dec. 28	10:00 a.m.	Service of Lessons and Carols
Wednesday, Dec. 31		Happy New Year

For the month of December, Hope Boxes are in need of toys (\$5-\$10).



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | DEC 2025

So, I have a confession to make. For large swaths of my adult life, my most disliked holiday has been Christmas to the point that I dread Halloween because it signals Christmas' arrival in our current culture. Now, before you start throwing Little Debbie Christmas Trees at me, hear me out. First, only someone who has served in a church can adequately understand how much the busyness of the season takes away from the season's appreciation for those on the inside. There are a multitude of things that must be planned, prepared for, and attended during the Christmas season that are absent the remainder of the year and require an immense amount of forethought. For instance, I begin preparing for Advent the week after Easter and spend part of summer working on Advent devotion themes. Each year, kids have a running countdown on the number of days til Santa Claus comes, while I have a running countdown of how many services are still left to preach. It is not simply the church obligations, though, that take away my appreciation for the season. I stress about when we are going to fit in time to put up all our Christmas decorations, the bulk of which often gets shuttled to Eliza, and I for sure need anti-anxiety meds for when I have to go Christmas shopping. I not only stress about the crazy crowds, but I also get extremely anxious about whether I am buying the right gift. And so it is that when everyone else is "done" with Christmas, I am finally ready to start celebrating when I squeeze into the season after squeezing into a pew for Midnight Mass at the Episcopal church on Christmas Eve.

Something has happened this year, though. Whereas I normally boycott Christmas music on the radio until at least mid-December, I found myself researching when the holiday channels on satellite radio would begin. I began discussions with Eliza about our Christmas card way back in September; normally a December 1 convo. This year, I find myself actually pining for the Christmas season. Why?

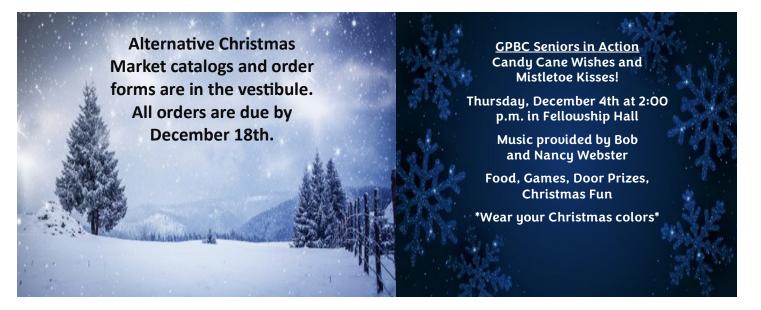
It is a good question and one that I have only recently begun to fully comprehend the answer to. First, I am tired. It has been an exhausting year personally, professionally, and nationally. It seems like just as I begin to come up for air, something else pushes me back below the waves. Chaos seems to reign every time I turn on the news to the point it is impacting me emotionally. I acutely need to heed the angels' message to set aside my normal responsibilities, cast my gaze on the manger in Bethlehem and the Christ child blissfully sleeping there, and find rest and peace. Secondly, my hope meter is running low due to all this fatigue. I desperately desire to hear afresh Gabriel's message to Mary that "with God all things are possible," and to know that the resolution of the multiple situations that fill me with hopelessness, because I can only see them spinning out of control, remains in God's able hands. Finally, I long for Christmas this year because, more than ever before, I need to be reminded that God loves me and that the love of God is present and active in the world. This is different from the providential care I previously mentioned. We all need to be reminded that love took human form and was dramatically displayed for all to see in the Christ child. We require this because we need to know afresh how much we are loved, and even more pointedly, we need to be reminded how to love in a society where the message of hate is so persistent. Beloved, are you like me, do you need Christmas this year? If so, join me in committing to learn the lessons of the Christmas season so deeply this year that we will be able to, like Scrooge of old, keep Christmas every day in the year to come.

Happy Christmas,

Marc



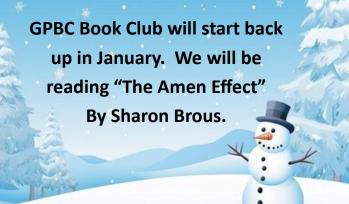
Each day's devotion can also be found on the GPBC website.



**American Red Cross Annual Holiday Blood Drive** Tuesday, December 16th 1:00 pm- 6:00 pm at Grove Park Baptist Church. Make your appointment online at: www.redcrossblood.org, sponsor code: Holiday



The Lottie **Moon Post** Office is now set up in the Missions Room.



### MINISTERS ON CALL FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

BOB Webster	December 4-
Beth canada	December 11-1
Derek Denard	December 18-2
MIKE BOULDIN	December 25-2

# December Birthdays

Larry snead DON MORIARTY STUART LATHAM SUE ATKINSON LOIS DICKERSON LILLIAN ANNE BYTD RUTH TYLER Beth canada THOMAS OVERBY WILLIAM OVERBY Brian Weatherman graham parrish Melanie Fitzgerald Nancy McMillan

December 03 December 04 December 05 December 10 December 11 December 12 December 13 December 20 December 20 December 22 December 31 December 31

December 01

December 03



The Alamance Chorale is pleased to invite you to their holiday concerts again this year. Join us December 11th at 6:30 p.m. or December 13th at 2:30 p.m. A reception will follow each concert. We need volunteers to be greeters. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you are able to help.