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Monday-Thursday
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Check us out on:
Facebook.com/groveparkchurch
Instagram: groveparkchurch
YouTube: YouTube.com/@groveparkchurch



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays	5:00 p.m.	Family Night
Mon., Wed., Thurs.		Devotional on Facebook Live
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Wednesdays	6:30 p.m.	Facebook Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Prayer Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	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	6:30 p.m.	Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert
Saturday, Dec. 13	2:30 p.m.	Alamance Chorale Christmas Concert
Sunday, Dec. 14	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Cantata
Tuesday, Dec. 16	9:00 a.m.	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

As we enter the Christmas season, I can't think of a more appropriate message than the lyrics to "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Till ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime, of peace on earth, good will to men.*

As we encounter all the hate that surrounds us in today's world, feelings of despair may enter our souls. To counter that, let us hold tenaciously to the message that God will prevail with peace on earth, good will to men.

Dale

Advent Devotionals

The first Sunday of Advent is November 30th. Once again, we will have a book of daily devotionals available for reflection during the Advent season. These will be available on or before December 1st. Each day's devotion can also be found on the GPBC website.

Alternative Christmas Market catalogs and order forms are in the vestibule. All orders are due by December 18th.

GPBC Seniors in Action
Candy Cane Wishes and Mistletoe Kisses!

Thursday, December 4th at 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Music provided by Bob and Nancy Webster

Food, Games, Door Prizes, Christmas Fun

Wear your Christmas colors

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.

GPBC Book Club will start back up in January. We will be reading "The Amen Effect" By Sharon Brous.



Ministers on call for the month of December

Bob Webster	December 4-7
Beth Canada	December 11-14
Derek Denard	December 18-21
Mike Bouldin	December 25-28

December Birthdays

Larry Shead	December 01
Don Moriarty	December 03
Stuart Latham	December 03
Sue Atkinson	December 04
Lois Dickerson	December 05
Lillian Anne Byrd	December 10
Ruth Tyler	December 11
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

Happy Birthday

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.