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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays	5:00 p.m.	Family Hour
Tuesday	11:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Tuesday Prayer Meeting (In the Fellowship Hall) Zoom Bible Study on Isaiah (We will start back on January 13th)
Wednesdays	6:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Facebook Prayer Meeting Zoom Prayer Meeting Choir Rehearsal (unless otherwise noted)
Thursdays	7:00 p.m.	GPBC Book Club
January 1		Office Closed. <u>HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!</u>
January 4	6:00 p.m.	Deacon Fellowship
January 7	Noon	Romeo's at Southbound Sandwich
January 15	7:00 p.m.	GPBC Book Club ("The Amen Effect")
January 17		NC Dental Bus



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | JAN 2026

Bifurcation. It's a word that kept appearing in a book I recently read. It's a word I quite honestly have never given much thought to, but I have come to understand it as one of the defining words of our lives. In case you are wondering, bifurcation is a noun that means "the division of something into two branches or parts." We live in a constant state of bifurcation, whether it is bifurcation of our choosing or not. There are clear divides in our lives, times often referred to as "before" and "after." We have experienced bifurcation when we have stood next to someone with whom we are to join our lives together as one, or when we have stood beside the grave of a loved one and said our farewells. Bifurcation happens with birth announcements, retirement parties, and first days of school.

Some bifurcations happen on regular schedules. For instance, a bifurcation will occur on January 1. It will not only mark the divide between 2025 and 2026, but it will also mean we are in the back half of this decade and have entered the second quarter of this century. The question for us is whether we choose to imbue this scheduled bifurcation with greater meaning. What would it look like if we resolved that, following this annual bifurcation, things would be different for us? What if instead of standard New Year's resolutions, we decided to use this time to impact our spiritual lives? What would it feel like if we committed to joining a Bible study or participating in one of our prayer gatherings? As someone who is continually amazed by how small changes can have huge physical impacts, I assure you the same is true in greater ways spiritually. Beloved, it is spiritual malpractice not to seize this moment in order to grow in the grace and knowledge of God. Furthermore, please think of how inspiring it will be to others! I have been immeasurably strengthened by those who tell me how encouraging my health journey has been to their personal journeys. This task of encouragement is one that Scripture continually calls us to, as seen in Hebrews 10:24-25.

I would be remiss if I did not encourage you to make this new year a bifurcation point as you think towards your "5." Beloved, apart from our own spiritual journeys, I cannot conceive of a more urgent task to warrant our attention. Darkness continues to abound in our world, and we must actively forestall its spread by amplifying the light of our witness. The surest way I know we can accomplish this is through intentionally inviting our friends, neighbors, and family members to attend an event at Grove Park, preferably a Sunday morning worship celebration. We must be willing to ask spiritual questions and acknowledge our personal struggles with some of the answers we offer those we are trying to reach. The gift of the Gospel is too great for us to leave it as an unopened and ungiven gift to those we love.

Finally, a gentle reminder. Bifurcation is defined as a divide. What do you need to leave behind as you go forward into this new year? What old struggles, old sorrows, and old habits do you need to leave on the other side of the divide? Just as we cannot retrieve time in 2025 once we arrive in 2026, we should leave behind those things that inhibit our growing in grace and love so that we may be all God is calling us to be in this new year. Endeavor to open the gift of bifurcation this new year.

Grace Abounds,

Marc

“The Gate of the Year” a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: “Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.” And he replied: “Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

So heart be still:
What need our little life
Our human life to know,
If God hath comprehension?
In all the dizzy strife
Of things both high and low,
God hideth His intention.

God knows. His will
Is best. The stretch of years
Which wind ahead, so dim
To our imperfect vision,
Are clear to God. Our fears
Are premature; In Him,
All time hath full provision.

Then rest: until
God moves to lift the veil
From our impatient eyes,
When, as the sweeter features
Of Life’s stern face we hail,
Fair beyond all surmise
God’s thought around His creatures
Our mind shall fill.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers...
- 1 Thessalonians 1:2 (ESV)

You may wonder why I chose this verse for the first newsletter of the New Year. After all, it hasn’t been that long since Thanksgiving and I didn’t talk about giving thanks then. (That doesn’t mean I wasn’t thankful!)

It’s important to thank people for the things they do. I’m personally thankful for all the people who have chipped in to help with the different projects that have gone on at Grove Park during this past season. Things like the Advent Devotional, Operation Big Thing, decorating the Sanctuary, the Alamance Chorale concerts (with the endless moving of furniture that goes along with that), the Sanctuary Choir cantata, the Longest Night service, Christmas gifts for GPALS students and Grove Park teachers, the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion, and the service of Lessons and Carols simply would not have been possible without you, and I’m grateful! (I'm probably leaving things and people out, but that doesn't mean I'm not grateful for you!)

I also want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for Nancy McMillan, who has been a rock on the piano and organ for 3 decades. Nancy, you have been a blessing to me, to the choir, and to the church, and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart!

It’s even more important to thank God for the people in our lives, making sure to include them in our prayers (as Paul says in the verse above). This year, let’s please make sure we are praying for each other with gratitude and with sensitivity to each other’s needs. (A good time to do this is during our Tuesday Prayer Meetings at 11:30 AM each Tuesday!)

With great thanks and many prayers,
Dale

GPBC Book Club will start January 8th. We will be reading “The Amen Effect” by Sharon Brous. Copies of the book are available on Amazon. The office will send out a Zoom link for the book club the afternoon of the 8th. We hope you will join us.



Choir Rehearsals will resume January 7th. We look forward to seeing everyone.

Hope Boxes are in need of hairbrushes and combs this month. These can be purchased in bulk on Amazon for cheap.

<https://a.co/d/gnXiMkr> (Brushes)

<https://a.co/d/5gwq3eb> (Combs)



NC Dental Bus

Please sign up on the bulletin board to help with this event on January 17th. See Emily Flack for details.

Ministers On Call for the Month of January

January 1-4	Bobby Andrews
January 8-11	Mike Bouldin
January 15-18	Eddie Canada
January 22-25	David McMillan
January 29-February 1	Shelly Sapp

January Birthdays

Cheryl Parrish	January 04
Janet Durham	January 06
Savannah Williamson	
Lambert	January 06
Emily Flack	January 07
Kim Wood	January 09
Linda Canada	January 13
Richard Shepherd	January 15
Debbie Hamlett	January 19
Irene Britton	January 20
Janice Byrd	January 21
John Evans	January 21
Matt Evans	January 21
Larry Dodson	January 22
Norene Ray	January 22
Mike Byrd	January 23
Rosemary Faircloth	January 25
Tricia Medford	January 25
Karen Banzhoff	January 27

