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THE MESSENGER



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GROVE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH | JUNE 2026

250 years ago this month, a thirty-something Virginian sat down in a rented Philadelphia room to pen what historian Walter Issacson has deemed to be the greatest sentence ever written. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Our nation has spent the intervening years attempting to fully embody these words with a mixed track record of success. As I reflect on these words in anticipation of our national birthday, some thoughts come to mind that I feel are important to share.

First, we should recognize that these words did not fly wholly from young Jefferson’s pen; it was a group effort. A committee of five was tasked with composing a list of grievances that necessitated American independence. Issacson shows that this history-shattering sentence was amended by both John Adams and Ben Franklin to create the line we know today. It is a lesson to us that we do our best work when we work in community rather than as lone wolves. This is why the first thing God does after Jesus ascends is send the Spirit to birth a community, which we now call the Church. The repair of the greater community in which we inhabit is at the heart of our call to be ministers of reconciliation. When America is at her best, it is when she remembers that we dwell as a community, rising and falling as one, rather than as self-created islands of self-sufficiency. We are at our worst when we repudiate the call to community and forget that we are all siblings created in the image of God. As members of the community of faith, are we always striving to be the community we should be in the world around us, or do we aid in building self-serving Islands?

Second, Jefferson’s advocacy for “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” is a subtle shift from the prevailing sentiment of the day. Philosopher John Locke had previously elevated “life, liberty, and the pursuit of property” as a worthy endeavor. Why should we make much of this shift? Quite simply, to pursue happiness in the mindset of the nation’s founders is to pursue the good of all. Franklin later wrote, “to pour forth benefits for the common good is divine.” In other words, the joy of life that always seems to be elusive due to the travails of our world is attainable when we put others ahead of ourselves and serve them and their needs. Joy occurs when we place ourselves second to the needs of others, knowing that God will supply all our needs, for to serve others is to serve God. This is at the heart of Hebrews 12:2-3, which tells us that Jesus was able to go to the Cross because of the joy that was set before him, our salvation, and then we are commanded us to go and serve accordingly. Beloved, what is the pursuit of your happiness as we journey to our commemoration of Jefferson’s famous words? If our pursuit is not loving others as we love ourselves and thereby pursuing their good, we will all flounder on the shoals of despair instead of clear sailing by the joyous winds of God’s grace.

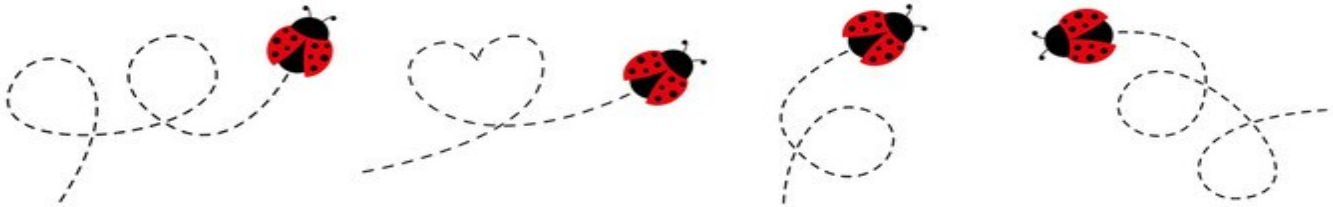
Our nation has a lot to celebrate as we move toward our 250th birthday this month, but it should also be a moment to pause as we reflect on how we have failed and continue to fail to live out these high ideals. To do any less would be to deny the self-evident rights afforded to us by our Creator, of which the Declaration committee wrote.

Grace Abounds,
Marc

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sundays	5:00 p.m.	Family Night
Mon., Wed., Thurs.		Devotional on Facebook Live
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study on the Psalms
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 on “The Serviceberry”
Tuesday, July 2	7:00 p.m.	Properties Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 3	Noon	Romeo’s at Southbound Sandwich
Thursday, June 4	5:00pm	GPES 5th Grade Graduation
Friday, June 5	5:00pm	Providence Montessori School Graduation
Sunday, June 14		Graduate Recognition Sunday
Sunday, June 21		Baptist Men’s Day
Saturday, June 27	8:00am	Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday, July 17		VBS (more details coming soon)***
Saturday, July 18		VBS (more details coming soon)***

Graduate Recognition Sunday is June 14th



Congratulations!
Class of 2026

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Dear God, we pray that you would give our children wisdom and direction in making decisions, and in each new situation and journey you have for them now. Teach them to listen closely to your voice, that they would have a heart to obey your Word and have a desire to make the right choices. We pray that these we love so much would walk faithfully and diligently in all your ways. We ask that you would make their footsteps firm, that your Word would be a constant lamp for their feet and a light to their path. May they sense the freshness of your Spirit over their lives in amazing ways, and may they be strengthened, instilled with hope, for the new roads you have in store. We ask for your wisdom and clear direction over their lives, that you would give them understanding beyond their years. We ask for you to open doors that need to be opened and close every one that should be shut tight. Allow every gift and treasure you have placed inside their lives to grow, develop, and flourish to bring

you glory.
Crosswalk.com

Avery Miles, Grandson of John and Donna Moore graduated from High Point University with a Bachelor of Business Administration.

Julian Nault, Grandson of Jim and Sue Etheridge is graduating from SUNY Maritime with a Bachelor of Engineering in Naval Architecture.

Anna Renee Overby, Daughter-In-Law of Benjy and Katie Overby graduated from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management

Benjamin Overby Jr., Son of Benjy and Katie Overby graduated from Campbell Law School with a Juris Doctor

Thomas Overby, Son of Benjy and Katie Overby graduated from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

William Overby, Son of Benjy and Katie Overby will graduate with a International Baccalaureate Degree from Walter M. Williams High School

SENIORS IN ACTION
PLEASE JOIN SIA ON THURSDAY, JUNE 11TH FOR “BE PREPARED” THERE WILL BE A SPEAKER FROM NCBAM AT 11:00AM AND LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT NOON. PLEASE SIGN UP IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.

GPBC will host the Grove Park Elementary School 5th Grade Graduation on June 04, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. After the graduation ceremony, we will provide a reception for the graduates and their guests. If you are willing to help with the reception, please contact the church office by e-mail.

Sunday, June 21 is Baptist Men’s Day.
Our Guest Speaker will be
Mike Bouldin.

Ministers On Call for the Month of June

June 4-7	Mike Bouldin
June 11-14	Eddie Canada
June 18-21	David McMillan
June 25-28	Shelly Sapp

June Birthdays

Nathan Byrd	June 02
Stanley Haithcock	June 03
Mark Reich	June 06
Candy Reavis	June 09
Jordan Bogart	June 11
Cynthia Willets	June 12
Hallie Davis	June 13
Ronnie Smith	June 18
Patricia Witt	June 19
Steve Reavis	June 21
Benjamin Overby	June 24
Kaden Reavis	June 26
Hunter Joplin	June 27
Jeanie Reich	June 27
W. N. Hamlett	June 28

