



The Messenger

A Newsletter of the
Murfreesboro Baptist Church

February 2026

FROM THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE...

It's been an unusually cold winter so far, compared to what winters have become like in eastern and northeastern North Carolina! The fact that we had a small snow in November, again in December, the recent ice storm in January, and as I write, the threat of a significant snowstorm, reminds me of when JoAnn and I lived and served in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Ancient peoples in the northern hemisphere learned to appreciate the lengthening of daylight hours in the late winter and early spring. It meant that warmer weather would soon come, and the longer daylight hours meant more time for their work.

From the early centuries of Christianity, Christians have prepared to celebrate Easter by observing a season that came to be known as "Lent." The name "Lent" probably came from the idea of the lengthening of the daylight. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday.

It's a period of 40 days, interspersed with six Sundays, leading up to Easter. The Sundays, ("little Easters" celebrating the resurrection), aren't included in calculating the 40 days that correspond to Jesus' 40 days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness. The season is a period of self-examination and penitence, prayer, and fasting. That's where the custom of "giving up" something for Lent comes from. The 40 days are "fast days"; the Sundays as "little Easters" are "feast days." The object of observing Lent is to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus Christ as his disciples.

Though for most of our history Baptists in general have given little attention to the Christian calendar (except for Christmas and Easter), in recent decades, a growing number of Baptists have begun to find great meaning in observing the rhythms of the Christian Year, especially the seasons of Advent and Lent. Just as Advent prepares us to celebrate Christ's coming and to look for his return, Lent prepares

us to remember his passion and sacrificial death and to celebrate the victory of his resurrection! Lent reminds us that Jesus calls us to deny ourselves, take up *our* crosses, and follow him through death to resurrection. I'm grateful our church observes the Christian Year!

Our Ash Wednesday Service this year will be on February 18 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary (in place of our regular Wednesday evening Bible study). In addition, as in past years, beginning on Ash Wednesday various churches will host Lenten Lunches during the noon hour (the schedule is elsewhere in this edition of *The Messenger*). The first lunch on February 18 will be at Murfreesboro United Methodist Church, and we will host the lunch on March 18.

As we move through Lent toward Easter, make time to take a spiritual inventory. Ask yourself frankly, and respond to yourself and to the Lord honestly, "As I follow Jesus Christ as Lord as a part of his church, in what areas of my life do I need to submit to him more fully and make adjustments to his will to be a faithful disciple?"

I invite you to join me in renewing our commitment to Jesus as his disciples. We just might be astounded at the difference it will make in our lives and our life together as a church.

Grace and peace.

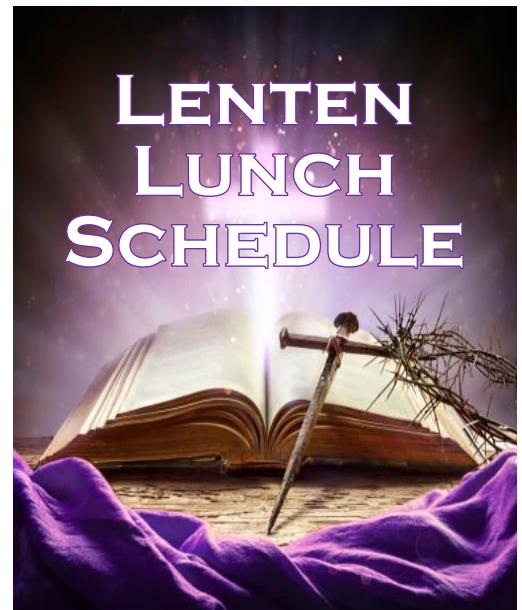
Mark E. Gaskins

BLESSING MINISTRIES FOODBANK OF THE ALBEMARLE

Volunteers are needed on February 17 by 1:30 p.m. in the church parking lot to distribute food.

FOOD PANTRY

As a reminder, if you have committed to help us keep our pantry filled, please remember to bring twelve of your selected items to the church by the 15th of each month. As always, any donations are greatly appreciated.



† February 18 (Ash Wednesday) Murfreesboro United Methodist Church

Dr. Elizabeth Tyson, Pastor
301 E. High Street, Murfreesboro

† February 25 Meherrin Baptist Church

Rev. John Porter, Pastor
519 Meherrin Lane, Murfreesboro

† March 4 Mt. Sinai Church of God

Dr. Arthur Clark, Pastor
913 Main Street, Murfreesboro

† March 11 First Baptist Church of Murfreesboro

Dr. Robert Richardson, Pastor
913 Main Street, Murfreesboro

† March 18 Murfreesboro Baptist Church

Dr. Mark E. Gaskins, Pastor
200 W. Main Street, Murfreesboro

† March 25 Nebo Baptist Church

Rev. James K. Brown, Pastor
10555 US-258, Murfreesboro

† April 1 Chowan University

Rev. Jason Fowler, Interim Campus
Minister



YOUTH GROUP

Hello everyone!

As we start to move toward Easter, our youth will begin spending time walking through the life of Jesus — reflecting on His ministry and journey as we prepare our hearts for the Easter season.

We're also hoping to plan more off-campus activities every couple of months, like a trampoline park, bowling, or a movie outing, and possibly partnering with the Methodist church Youth Group for a joint event. More details coming soon!

If you have a child or grandchild connected to our church who will be graduating from high school or college this year, please let us know so we can recognize and celebrate them during worship this spring.

Thank you and God Bless!
Kayleigh Lance

UPCOMING DATES IN FEBRUARY

February 4, 11, 18, 25

Kids' Club and Bible Study

February 10
Deacons' Meeting

February 14
Valentine's Day

February 17
Food Bank of the Albemarle

February 18
Ash Wednesday

February 25
Souper Bowl of Caring Deadline

KIDS' CLUB NEWS



MBC Kids' Club are once again participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring from now until Feb 25. As of Jan. 31, we have collected 159 cans. Our goal is 400 cans of soup. We will place the cans of soup in the church food pantry to be distributed to those in our community.



Kids' Club Meeting Dates and Times

Feb 4	6-6:45 pm
Feb 11	6-6:45 pm
Feb 18	Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm -No Kids' Club but join us for the service
Feb 25	6-6:45 pm

USING THEIR GIFTS TO SERVE

IN FEBRUARY

Deacon of the Month
Steve Fowler

Radio Ministry Sponsor
Bruce and Liz Brown

Opening the Church
Johnny Jenkins

Ushers

Colon Ballance, Armando Torres, Charlie Cole, and Charlie Aycock

Caregivers

Jan. 25-Feb. 7 T.K. Warren, III
Feb. 8 - Feb. 14 Diane Dixon
Feb. 15-Feb 28 Aldeen Gatewood

Sanctuary Flowers

Feb. 8 Diane Dixon
Feb. 15 Available
Feb. 22 Lent



MUSIC MINISTRY

The famous composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, said, "The aim and final end of all music should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul." Bach had one of the most brilliant musical minds and also wrote at the end of each composition, "Soli Deo Gloria" meaning "To the glory of God alone."

Our music ministry at MBC brings glory and honor to God through singing and instruments. The choir has been doing a great job of singing from their hearts every Sunday and are very much appreciated. Anyone is welcome to join us and help us lead in worship.

God bless each of you.
Paula Pressnell



CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY

February 5	Garth Faile
February 6	Mike Alston
February 10	Michael Bunch, II
February 11	Tracey Piper
February 12	Genivieve Broadhead
February 13	Tommy Forbes
February 17	Catherine Jenkins
February 17	Jon Royce
February 18	Betsy Coltrain
February 21	Mary Dilday
February 21	Mary Elizabeth Torres
February 24	J. E. Dilday
February 26	Snowlyn Higgins

Don't see your birthday? Please call the church office and let us know when your special day is.

CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Mark E. Gaskins
PASTOR

PAULA PRESSNELL.....ORGANIST &

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

KAYLEIGH LANCEDIRECTOR

OF YOUTH MINISTRY

TERESA MARTIN.....ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 am - 1:30 pm
252-398-3613 www.murfbc.org



Murfreesboro Baptist Church
200 W. Main Street
Murfreesboro, N.C. 27855

Return Service Requested