



FROM THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE...

Christmas is past, the new year has come. It's 2026, and we've entered the second quarter of first century of the third millennium AD!

The passing of one year and the beginning of another is always a good time to pause both to reflect and to look forward. God has blessed us wonderfully here at Murfreesboro Baptist Church. Though our church, like so many others, has faced some difficulties and transitions over the past decade, the Lord has seen us through them. The Lord continues to move among us, and for this I say, *Thanks be to God!*

As we journey through this year of our Lord 2026, we don't yet know everything it holds for us. But we do know that as a church, our mission is the same: to be on mission with Christ as we love God, follow Jesus, and serve others.

Look at the focal points of that statement: *God, Jesus, others.*

So often in church life, it's easy to focus on our needs or the survival of the institution—in this case, this institution of Murfreesboro Baptist Church. There are institutional matters that we do have to attend to so that the church can function properly. But we have to remember that from the perspective of the New Testament, the church is an *organism* even more than an organization. It is the living body of Christ, and each congregation is a local expression of that body and a microcosm of the church as a whole.

As the body of Christ seeking to love God, follow Jesus, and serve others, our focus then needs to be on God's reign in Christ, *the kingdom of God.*

What I mean is this. While we must care for the institutional needs that provide the structure for us to fulfill the mission God gives us (finances, staff and volunteers, buildings, technology, etc.), our primary focus must be the kingdom of God.

The Messenger

A Newsletter of
Murfreesboro Baptist Church

JANUARY 2026

2026



In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addresses how his followers should trust God to provide for their needs. He tells them not to worry about what they'll eat or drink or wear. God provides for the birds of the air and flowers of the field; his children are of much more value to him, and he knows what they need and will provide it as they trust in him! Then Jesus says, "But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33 NRSV).

I believe this principle applies to the church as well, that when our focus is on seeking or striving to live under and advance God's reign and his righteousness in our community and our world, he will provide everything we need to accomplish his purpose. In other words, when the kingdom of God is our primary focus, the institutional needs fall into place. It's another new year, with a whole new set of challenges and opportunities.

So here's my pastoral challenge to our congregation—may we truly above all else, both individually and corporately, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. As we do, my new year's wish and prayer for our church—that throughout this year and the years to come we will be on mission with Christ, obedient to and following him wherever he may lead us, trusting in the Father's will, the Son's heart, and the Spirit's power—will be fulfilled.

May we truly embody Christ's presence to those around us, near and far, as we love God, follow Jesus, and serve others.

Happy new year!

Grace and peace,

Mark E. Parker

We are Excited for the Return of
Community Cafe

Sunday, January 18 5:00 p.m.



Free to All!

Join us to enjoy Christian fellowship and a delicious hot meal.

Sign-up sheets are available on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Volunteers are needed for cooking, meal prep and clean-up.

Wednesday Evening



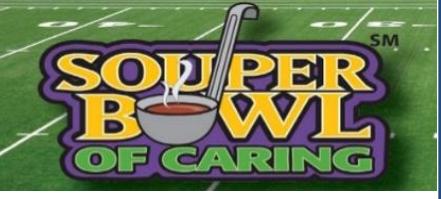
JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

We will resume Wednesday evening Bible study beginning on January 7 at 7:00 p.m. Our regular schedule will be at 7:00 weekly including Big Wednesday event dates.

Kids Club



MBC Kids' Club will once again participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring from now until Feb 8.



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.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Kids' Club	
Jan 7	6:30-7:15
Jan 14	6-6:45
Jan 21	6-6:45
Jan 28	6-6:45

USING THEIR GIFTS TO SERVE IN JANUARY

Deacon of the Month
Bardin Torres

Opening the Church
Colon Ballance and Wayne Brown

Ushers
Johnny Jenkins, Bob Lee,
Charlie Aycock, and Bob Turner

Radio Ministry Sponsor
Mike and Susan Alston

Caregivers
Dec. 28-Jan 10 Charlie and Dell Aycock
Jan 11-24 Booker Daniel
Jan. 25-Feb 7 T.K. Warren, III

Flowers
January 4 Sarah Davis
January 11 Grace Brown
January 18 Gene and Mary Etta Flowers
January 25 Available
To place flowers in the Sanctuary on dates available...Please contact the church office.

UPCOMING DATES IN JANUARY

Jan. 4 Epiphany Sunday
Communion

Jan. 7 Big Wednesday

Jan. 13 Deacons' Meeting
Jan. 18 Community Cafe

Jan. 19 Martin Luther King
Holiday
Administrative Office
Closed

Jan. 20 Food Bank of the
Albemarle

Jan. 25. Quarterly Conference

Church Office Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
252-398-3613

www.murfbc.org

Office Will Be Closed Monday, January 19th for
Martin Luther King Holiday

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES



The 2026 offering envelopes are available for pick-up in the church library. Names have been placed on the boxes. If you do not see a designated box with your name, please contact the church office.

COMMUNITY MISSIONS CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

Thanks to you, Murfreesboro Baptist Church provided 16 local children in need with gifts for Christmas. Our church may be small, but our members have hearts of gold.

FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Thank you to Ben McLean for organizing and to many of you who donated to the Fuel Assistance Program once again. \$2,500.00 was donated towards helping those in need of home heat, and the excess of donations was given to the MBC Missions Fund.

WHITE CHRISTMAS BOXES

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the White Christmas Boxes. With your donation, we were able to provide 16 families with the fixings for a wonderful Christmas meal.

FOODBANK OF THE ALBEMARLE

Volunteers are needed on Tuesday, January 20 by 1:30 p.m. in the church parking lot to distribute food.

FOOD PANTRY

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.



January 5 Don Johnson

January 8 Mamie Ballance

January 8 Jennifer Taylor

January 12 Jessica Torres

January 15 Jack Cole

January 15 Patty Joyner

January 18 Chris Sumner

January 23 Claire Revelle

January 30 Charlie Cole

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
& CHOIR DIRECTOR

KAYLEIGH LANCE.....DIRECTOR
OF YOUTH MINISTRY

TERESA MARTIN.....ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

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

Return Service Requested