



# The Messenger

A Newsletter from  
**Murfreesboro Baptist Church**  
 July 2026

## FROM THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE . . .

Independence Day – it's a time for celebration, not just picnics and fireworks! This year is our semiquincentennial, the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of our nation and a celebration of our freedom.

For us as Christians, it's an opportune time to think about our relationship with and our responsibilities to the state. Please allow me to remind you of some things I shared with you about this time last year, based on 1 Peter 2:13-17 (NRSV).

For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. Honor everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

The point of this text is clear: As Christians, we must relate responsibly to the state in light of our relationship with God and his kingdom. Peter tells us how to do that.

First, *we must accept governmental authority in appropriate ways for the Lord's sake.* Being model citizens bears a good witness for the Lord.

Second, *we must use our freedom in a responsible way.* Our society thinks freedom means doing anything we want without the accompanying responsibility and consequences. True freedom is never a pretext or cover-up for evil, but is always balanced by responsibility. When we live as servants of God, we use our freedom responsibly, respecting the rights of others.

And third, *we must put our relationships with God, the church, and the state into proper perspective.* Peter calls us to honor everyone by loving the church (the family of believers) and honoring the emperor (the state and its leaders). But above all, we must fear God (have a reverent awe for him). Our relationship with God takes precedence over all others, and our loyalty and allegiance to him and his kingdom over any earthly nation or kingdom.

Historically, Baptists have emphasized three principles in our relationship to the state as Christians: the Lordship of Christ, individual religious liberty, and the separation of church and state (meaning a free church in a free state, where the state

neither favors one church or religion above another [the establishment clause of the First Amendment] nor is antagonistic toward religion [the free exercise clause]). Baptists in America were instrumental in the passage of the First Amendment, guaranteeing freedom of religion and speech.

As a Christian pastor in the Baptist tradition, I must make a careful distinction between the kingdom of God and the United States of America. God has blessed this nation beyond measure and made it a land of incredible opportunity. *But no nation on this earth is the kingdom of God.* I love my country dearly and am deeply patriotic. I still get a lump in my throat and sometimes a tear in my eye when I see the Stars and Stripes waving, especially when it's being carried in a parade or in the presentation of colors by those who serve our country in the armed forces. But as much as I love the United States of America and pray for God's blessings on her, my first and ultimate allegiance as a Christian, and the first and ultimate allegiance of Christians from every tribe and nation, *must* be to the kingdom of God.

On the first Sunday of this month, July 5, we'll explore the principle of religious liberty more fully as I preach a sermon entitled, "Why Religious Liberty Matters." In the meantime, I hope you have a happy and meaningful Independence Day!

Grace and peace,

*Mark E. Perkins*



Happy summer and Happy July 4th! Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

I praise God for our church and for our choir. The choir will take a month off starting July 12th through August 2nd. I am excited about the folks singing solos or duets during our break. One of the soloists is a lifelong friend, Billy Briggs. Billy and I attended church together and when we had a little choir in fifth grade, I thought wow, he can really sing. He has blessed many folks through the years, and I am thrilled he said yes to singing for us on July 12th. Ladies, bring Kleenex! Also, I love our church choir and offer a huge thank you for all the work that you do. We practice hard and we also have a good time of fun and fellowship.



## Pancake And Sausage Breakfast

**Saturday,  
August 1, 2026  
8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.**

**Come Join Us...  
For a Delicious  
Breakfast & Fellowship!**

Proceeds Benefit  
Backpack Buddies of  
Hertford County  
Schools!



**Eat-In or Take-Out**  
 Adults....\$10    Children 12 & Under.....\$5

Anyone wishing to volunteer to cook, serve, or help with clean up, please contact the church office.

Get Your Tickets From Any Deacon and in the Church Office  
 Tickets Available In Advance and At The Door!

**Breakfast Located in  
Church Fellowship Hall**




## Hearing Assistance Devices For Worship Services



MBC has reactivated the hearing assistance devices for those in the congregation who need them. The devices are in the foyer. Once you pick up the device, you will need to cut it on and adjust the volume. A red light will come on when the device is on. If you have any questions, please let Sarah Davis know.

## NOTICE



As you leave the church, be mindful that the door you go out is tightly closed and locked. Some of our doors look closed and locked, but they are not. Thank you.




**CELEBRATING  
BIRTHDAYS  
IN JULY**

|         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| July 7  | Charlotte Cole    |
| July 9  | Yvonne Warren     |
| July 11 | Frances Cole      |
| July 12 | Mary Welch Gallop |
| July 12 | Linda Hassell     |
| July 16 | Ronnie Coltrain   |
| July 20 | Steve Harders     |
| July 31 | Lynette Bunch     |

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

**APPLY FOR A  
COLLEGE**



*Scholarship*

**ROBERT E. LEE, III  
SCHOLARSHIP  
AND  
DR. BRUCE E. WHITAKER  
SCHOLARSHIP**

Applications are now being accepted for two scholarships available to Murfreesboro Baptist Church Members and their children. The Robert E. Lee, III Scholarship is awarded to Chowan University Students. The Dr. Bruce E. Whitaker Scholarship is awarded to students attending any institution of higher education, with a preference toward those studying at Chowan. Applications are available in the church office and must be completed by July 31. The finance committee will award the scholarships and notify the recipients.

## IMPORTANT Committee Meetings

It is hard to believe that we are only a few months away from October and the start of a new church year, but it is that time. One key part of these preparations, as you've found in this newsletter is the work of the Personnel, Finance, and Nominating Committees.

The following committees should meet no later than the end of July so that we may begin work on the 2026-2027 church year.

### Personnel Committee

*Mike Alston, Chair  
Charlie Aycock, Frances Cole,  
Ronnie Coltrain, Carole Farnham,  
and Debbie Hill*

### Finance Committee

*Wayne Brown, Chair  
Charlie Cole, David Farnham  
Dell Aycock, Steve Fowler*

### Nominating Committee

*Jay Revelle, Chair,  
Sarah Davis, Mariah Gallop,  
Sara Frances Hill,  
and T.K. Warren, III*

Please notify the Church Office once these meetings have been scheduled so that we may put them on the office calendar.

*Thank you all for your willingness to serve our church.*

## BLESSINGS MINISTRIES

### FOODBANK OF THE ALBEMARLE

Volunteers are needed Tuesday, July 21 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 before the last Monday of each month. As always, any donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued support.

## USING THEIR GIFTS TO SERVE

### DEACON OF THE MONTH

Sarah Davis

### OPENING OF THE CHURCH

Sarah Davis

### USHERS

*July:* Johnny Jenkins, Bob Lee,  
Hunter Brown

*Aug.:* Colon Ballance, Armando Torres,  
Charlie Cole

### RADIO MINISTRY SPONSOR

Colon and Jane Ballance

### CAREGIVERS

*June 21 - July 4* Booker Daniel

*July 5 - July 18* T.K. Warren

*July 19 - August 1* David & Carole  
Farnham

## UPCOMING DATES

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| July 2  | 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Holiday - Church Office Closed |
| July 14 | Deacons' Meeting                                       |
| July 19 | Communion  |
| July 21 | Food Bank of the Albemarle                             |
| July 27 | MBC Food Pantry  |
| Aug. 1  | Pancake & Sausage Breakfast                            |
| Aug. 11 | Deacons' Meeting                                       |
| Aug. 18 | Food Bank of the Albemarle                             |

## CHURCH STAFF CHURCH STAFF

**Dr. Mark E. Gaskins**

PASTOR

PAULA PRESSNELL.....ORGANIST  
& DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

KAYLEIGH LANCE .....DIRECTOR OF  
YOUTH MINISTRY

TERESA MARTIN.....ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASST.

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

**Monday - Friday 8:30 - 1:30**  
252-398-3613      [www.murfbc.org](http://www.murfbc.org)

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

Return Service Requested