



MELROSE
BAPTIST CHURCH

The Messenger

February 2026

Something To Think About



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT: “LOOKING AT WHAT WE CAN’T SEE”

As I write these words, the sun is shining bright through my office window and the weather widget in the bottom corner of my computer screen has a snowflake on it. No, it's not trying to tell me that it is snowing now. Instead, it is trying to tell me what is coming. Times like this can feel awkward in our work and in our homes. We are told to make preparations for a winter storm that is coming even before the storm has formed. There is that mixture of anticipation (“Are we going to get a few days off from school???”) and hesitation (“They have been wrong before!”). Do we go to the grocery store or wait a few more days? Do we need to change our travel plans? I have heard and asked all of these questions in the last 24 hours....all while the sun is shining outside my window. It can be hard to know how to live in light of what we can't see yet.

In Genesis 15:5, Abraham is questioning how God's promise of descendants will be fulfilled since he and Sarah have no children and they are seemingly well past the age when having children will be possible. In response, God brings Abraham outside and says, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them. So shall your descendants be.” In this moment, God was working in Abraham's life to help him move beyond what had been or what his present reality was. God asked Abraham to look to the stars and begin to develop a heart for the not yet. As Abraham lifted his eyes to the sky, God was inviting him to look at what he couldn't see yet.

We are inviting our congregation to let the Spirit of God work in our lives to develop a “Heart for the Not Yet”. As part of the theme for the Baptist General Association of Virginia for 2026, I will be preaching a 6-week sermon series that will invite us to imagine the possibilities of what God wants to do with and through us and challenge us to move forward in uncertain times with hope and confidence in God's power and God's promises. As part of this series, each week we will be inviting the congregation to write a phrase or 1-sentence prayer in response to a specific prompt. We will collect these phrases

and prayers and our Creatives Ministry will create paper stars from these written prayers that will be part of a hanging mobile that will be displayed in our church and, ultimately, at the Baptist General Association of Virginia's Annual Meeting November 9-11 in Virginia Beach.

My plan had been I was going to start this series on Sunday, January 25. However, if the little weather widget in the bottom corner of my computer screen is right, you won't have heard that first sermon yet. Instead, I will start the series on Sunday, February 1.

Whenever the series gets started, here is what we will be talking about:

- “The Waiting Heart” (Hosea 11:1-11) - How do we synchronize with the heartbeat of God who waits, listens for and loves those who aren't even looking to come home yet?
- “The Edge of Belief” (John 4:16-26, 39-42) – How does God work in the space between doubt and faith?
- “The Church Becoming” (Acts 6:1-6) – How do followers of Christ learn to see those who we have never looked for?
- “The Work Before the Harvest” (Nehemiah 3:1, John 5:2-9) – How do we plant the seeds others will reap the harvest of?
- “The Mission Still Unfolding” (Romans 15:18-29) - How does our “not yet” become both the goal we strive for and the opportunity to do that which we can't imagine?
- “The Creative Heart of God” (John 1:1-18) – How will the next generation experience the beating heart of our loving God in their lives?

I invite you to spend time with these Bible passages in preparation for each Sunday's theme and to spend time in prayer each week asking God to help you look for that which you can't see but which the Lord is bringing forth. Could be a really good snow day activity!

- Pastor Mark

Being Gregarious



What day is it?

This is Holocaust Remembrance Day

On this date:

In 1880, Thomas Edison patented the electric incandescent lamp. In 1926, John Baird, a Scottish inventor, demonstrated a pictorial transmission machine called a television.

Need advice?

Although fancy pots may look pretty, the best kind of container to grow plants is an unglazed clay pot. It's porous, which allows the soil to breathe, and the hole at the bottom makes it difficult to over-water. Be wary of both plastic pots and decorative glazed clay pots.

LOL:

Country Preacher: "In hellfire, there will be weepin', wailin' and gnashin' of teeth!" Parishoner: "Parson, I ain't got no teeth."

Preacher: "False teeth will be provided."

Bu-dum-dum-chhh

Spiritual Nourishment:

Galatians 5:22-23 "The fruit of the Spirit is love, patience, kindness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law."

John Ausmus writes:

I love baseball. This is a sport that relies on a team for a successful outcome. Baseball is also the only American sport where, during a stoppage in play, a manager or coach can approach an umpire to dispute a rule or argue a call. Unfortunately, we've all watched a manager throwing a tantrum, kicking dirt on the plate, or verbally abusing an umpire. We've also seen the umpire retaliating in anger and sometimes losing control. It's hard to have someone yell at us or challenge our character in any setting, but especially in front of peers and spectators in a stadium.

The Apostle Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit produces self-control in those he indwells. We can't obtain this fruit by natural means; it is produced only when we look to Christ's control of our lives. Granted, our sinful nature wants to yell, get angry, show off, or get the last word. Even though I have been a Christian for twenty-five years, I have often forgotten to give control of my favorite game to the Lord. But when I've yielded my life – including baseball – to Him, I've been changed and have witnessed the fruit of self-control grow stronger.

When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we begin the greatest adventure of our lives: becoming like Him. Others will see a picture of Christ by our example, especially when the fruit of the Holy Spirit is formed within us. When He produces self-control in us, we are able to see our situation more clearly, control our emotions and actions, and allow Him to guide us in handling our circumstances correctly. Living a Spirit-filled life means living in harmony with the life God intended us to live and bearing fruit that will last.

1. In what areas of your life do you need more self-control?
2. How do you react when confronted?
3. What can you do today to allow the Holy Spirit to make you more like Christ?

(Information shared is borrowed from the following sources.)

- Victory 365
- The Big Book of Church Humor -or- Religious Humor
- Who Knew? 10,001 Easy Solutions to Everyday Problems
- 365 Trivia Twist Devotions

Children & Youth Updates



SAVE THE DATE: VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We are doing something new this year with VBS! We are consolidating all of the fun of one week into a 3 day extravaganza of fun! Children in pre-K thru completed 5th grade are welcome to join us June 8-10 from 9 AM- 12 PM. This year's theme is "Discovery on Adventure Island" and children will join Beacon on a 3 day quest to search for God's great light. Registration will begin soon so keep an eye on the church website and social media pages!



SIGN UP NOW- DISCIPLESHIP WEEKEND

Melrose Youth are invited to this year's discipleship weekend from February 27-March 1. During this weekend the youth will travel to the church's lodge at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg, VA with Pastor Greg to spend time together, deepen their faith, and explore their relationship with God. Youth can sign-up on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Any questions? Please contact Pastor Greg at greg@melrosebaptist.org!

Hymn of the Month

HYMN OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2026: "CREATOR GOD, CREATING STILL"

Our hymn of the month for February helps us align our thoughts toward the six-week sermon series called "A Heart for the Not Yet". Each week in the series, there will be a time in the service where people will write out a prayer or prayer request related to that Sunday's theme. Our staff will collect these and join our deacon prayer team in praying over them. Blair and the Creatives Ministry will be transforming the prayer statements into a visual presentation that will be displayed at the 2026 Annual meeting of the Baptist General Assembly of VA in November.

Given our creative prayers project, I have chosen "Creator God, Creating Still" as our hymn for the month of February, a hymn written by Jane Parker Huber in 1977. The hymn focuses on the renewing, dynamic, and creative work of each Person of our Triune God: Creator (Father), Redeemer (Son), and Sustainer (Holy Spirit). I remembered this hymn from the 1991 Baptist Hymnal where its text is matched with the "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" tune.

Jane was born in 1926 to missionary parents as they served in China, honoring the long line of Presbyterian leaders in her heritage. As a young woman, she returned to the States to attend Wellesley College in Massachusetts to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree. Later, she received an honorary doctorate from Hanover College in Indiana.

In addition to being known as a hymn writer of scores of hymns, she served in leadership coordinating the Presbyterian Women, a nationwide community of women supporting faith, missions, justice, and peace and supported by the Presbyterian Church, USA. Within her work for this body, she served on the nationwide council on Women and the Church, also serving on the Joint Committee on Women, Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit, and the General Assembly Council. In 1992, she and her husband, Bill, received an award from Hanover College once more: the Alumni Achievement Award. Later at age 76, Jane received the "Woman of Faith Award" from Presbyterian Women PC (USA). Outside the Presbyterian circle, Jane's gifts and advocacy earned her recognition by Church Women United as a "Valiant Woman."

Jane went to be with her Lord in 2002. For Jane's part, she was more concerned with authentic faith expression than titles. She wanted "fresh words to familiar tunes" so that they would be more accessible to people in worship. Written on her Woman of Faith Award is this citation: "Jane Parker Huber's creative renderings of "fresh words to familiar tunes" have inspired Christians to sing hymns with expansive, gender-inclusive

language and rethink all of the images used for God and people.”

Creator God, creating still by will and Word and deed:
Create a new humanity to meet the present need.
May it be so, indeed. Amen

- Pastor Connie

Ministry Updates & Upcoming Events



DARTBALL FELLOWSHIP HAS RESUMED!

Dartball Fellowship has resumed for monthly play on the first and second Monday of every month at 6:30 PM in the church Fellowship Hall. The next day of play is February 2. All levels of play are welcome to come and experience this unique game of baseball and darts!



MAKERS ON MISSION: DITTY BAG SEWING CLASS

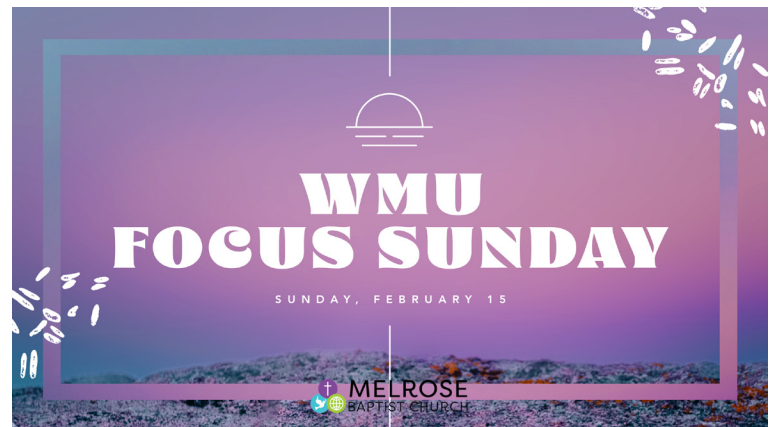
In March, the Melrose Baptist Women's Missionary Union will be traveling with the area WMU groups on a mission trip to Nickelsville, VA to hand out books and personal hygiene items to local school children. They place the hygiene items in handmade cotton ditty bags and ask area churches to help make new bags every year.

As part of our Makers on Mission series, we are hosting a

sewing class on Friday, February 13 from 10 AM- 1 PM to provide instruction and patterns on how to make these cotton bags. This class is being taught by Cindy Perdue, a local seamstress and quilter, and she has designed the class so that you do not need a sewing machine during the class. This helps those who are unable to travel with their sewing machine. During the class Cindy will demonstrate how to make and finish these bags and will provide a pattern to help cut out pieces to make bags on your own.

Registration for the class is requested by letting Blair (communications@melrosebaptist.org) know you are coming so we can properly prepare. The only thing you need to bring to the class is:

- Sewing machine (if you are able, if not, no worries!) with a full bobbin of neutral thread
- Scissors
- Pins
- Seam ripper
- Seam gauge or sewing ruler
- Marking pencil (or pen or chalk)
- Something to drink in a closed container
- Something small for lunch



WMU FOCUS SUNDAY

Join us for worship on Sunday, February 15 as we recognize the work that is done through our local Women's Missionary Union (WMU) groups. The guest speaker that morning is Rev. Laura Davis who is the Associate Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia. We will begin the day and welcome Rev. Davis to Melrose with a continental breakfast at 8:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome!

LAAF presents a musical performance by...

Ray Holley & Evelyn Conner

Tuesday, February 17 at 10 AM

Lunch: Wildwood Smokehouse
Mission Action Project: Items for Teen Challenge

Please bring donations of the following: glue sticks, scissors, decorative tapes, spiral notebooks, index cards, regular ink pens, colored Sharpies, brush or calligraphy pens, inexpensive \$1 calculators, scrapbook paper, stickers, regular tape, duct tape, craft paint brushes, drawing pencils, coloring books, Crayons, shampoo and conditioner, razors, face wash, deodorant, toothpaste, body wash, Dove or Ivory bar soap, tampons and pads, nail polish and remover, inexpensive makeup items, Chapstick

MELROSE BAPTIST CHURCH

LIVING ABUNDANTLY AFTER FIFTY

Those 50 and over are welcome to this month's Living Abundantly After Fifty (LAAF) gathering on Tuesday, February 17 at 10 AM. This month's program is a musical performance by Ray Holley and Evelyn Conner. Lunch will take place at Wildwood Smokehouse after the conclusion of the gathering. The Mission Action Project is a collection of items needed for Teen Challenge. Please bring donations of the following: glue sticks, scissors, decorative tapes, spiral notebooks, index cards, regular ink pens, colored Sharpies, brush or calligraphy pens, inexpensive \$1 calculators, scrapbook paper, stickers, regular tape, duct tape, craft paint and brushes, drawing pencils, coloring books, Crayons, shampoo and conditioner, razors, face wash, deodorant, toothpaste, body wash, Dove or Ivory bar soap, tampons and pads, nail polish and remover, inexpensive makeup items, Chapstick.

BUSINESS Meeting

IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING OUR CHURCH

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

This month's church Business Meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 18 at 6:15 PM. Pastor Mark's Bible study will not take place that evening.

THIS MONTH- MELROSE HONORS

We will be recognizing this year's Melrose Honor recipients during worship on Sunday, February 22. The recipients are nominated and chosen by the Deacon Fellowship.

The Sunday School Directors invite you to a...

Sweet Fellowship

Coffee, Doughnuts, & Conversation!

Sunday, February 22
8:30 AM
Fellowship Hall

MELROSE BAPTIST CHURCH

THIS MONTH: SWEET FELLOWSHIP

The Sunday School Directors invite everyone to join them for doughnuts, coffee, and fellowship at 8:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, February 22. This is a wonderful way to start your Sunday and get a fresh doughnut and cup of coffee before going to Sunday School.



**All blood types
are needed.**

Schedule your
blood donation
appointment today.

HELP SAVE A LIFE- DONATE BLOOD!

We are hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, February 24 10 AM- 2 PM. To sign up to donate, please visit the Red Cross website **HERE** to make your appointment. If you cannot make your appointment online, please contact the Red Cross donation hotline at 1-800-733-2767.



Journeying to Joy

Saturday, February 7, 2026
10 AM- 4:30 PM

RETREAT LEADERS



Dr. Jocelyn
Henry-Whitehead



Rev. Sara Hubble



Rev. Jocelyn Blount



Rev. Melissa Scott



Rev. Dr. Connie Cruze



Rev. Amy Hall



TAP Domestic Violence Services

Join us for this one-day retreat where Christian women can rediscover joy, rest in God's presence, nurture their spirit, and be renewed by God's love through care, compassion, connection, and creativity.

RETREAT ACTIVITIES

Worship

Breakout sessions

Catered lunch

Bible study

Service Project for Domestic Violence

For more information & to register,
scan the QR code below or go to
melrosebaptist.org/joy!



Melrose Baptist Church
3520 Peters Creek Rd. ♦ Roanoke, VA 24019
540-366-6631 ♦ melrosebaptist.org

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER

We welcome all to join us for dinner on Wednesday evenings at 5:15 PM. The cost is \$9.00 per person or \$20 for a family up to 4 people. Reservations are required and can be made by calling the church office at 540-366-6631, on the Melrose Baptist Church mobile app, or the church website **HERE**.

February Menu

- 2/4: beef tips with noodles, squash saute, pumpkin sheet cake
- 2/11: baked ham, macaroni and cheese, broccoli cauliflower salad, pistachio dessert
- 2/18: hamburger steaks, ranch potatoes, tossed salad, carrot pineapple cake
- 2/25: vegetable beef soup, cheese toast, croissant bread pudding

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Ushers

2/1: Don Slone, Debby Hill
2/8: Don Slone, Debby Hill
2/15: Rhonda Kessler, Missy Wickham
2/22: Rhonda Kessler, Missy Wickham

Courtesy Team

2/1: Danny Jarrett, Steve Kennedy
2/8: Tracie Conley, Allen Journell
2/15: Larry Hicks, Don Altice
2/22: Jeff Poore, Gary Dixon

Safety Team

2/1: Gary Dixon, Barry Wickham
2/8: Larry Hicks, Larry Wirt
2/15: Allen Journell, Steve Kennedy
2/22: Danny Jarrett, Jeff Poore

Youth Dinners

2/1: Norma Engel, Becky Tobey
2/8: Rhonda Kessler, Diana Hackworth
2/15: Katherine Pankey, Susan Matney
2/22: Joan Mullins, Mary Gilley

MEMORIALS

In Memory of June Caldwell by:
Bill and Judy Caudill
Bill Rice of Myrtle Beach, SC
Gerald and Faye Dolin
Michael and Patricia

THANK YOU NOTES

"Your thoughtfulness means so much more than words can say. Thank you so very much! So very appreciated!

My Love to you all,
Lee Ann"

"My Dear Melrose Family, What a wonderful and loving gift that Karen Mullins delivered. Her visit was so special. The pastries are so delicious. Thank you for remembering me during a difficult time. My Melrose family means everything to me.

In Christian Love,
Linda Madison"

"Thanks so much for all of your calls, texts, cards and prayers for us through Butch's heart surgery and Luanne's eye surgeries. We're especially grateful for Pastor Mark's visit with us at the hospital the day before Butch's surgery. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and support from our church staff and church family! Both of us are doing well now. We love you!
- Butch and Luanne Meredith"

MOST RECENT FINANCE REPORT- DECEMBER

December 2025

Total Income: \$101,659.60
Total Expenses: \$61,839.13

2025 Year End

Total Income: \$767,494.76
Total Expenses: \$765,836.50

February Church Calendar

Feb. 1- Feb 8

SUNDAY- 2/1

9:30 AM Sunday School
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship
12 PM Fork Fellowship
5 PM Children in Action &
Worship Arts
5 PM Seeds of Youth

MONDAY- 2/2

6:30 PM Dartball Fellowship

TUESDAY- 2/3

10 AM WMU Council
1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 2/4

10 AM Beth Calloway
1:30 PM Sunday School
Directors Meeting
2:30 PM Stitch & A Prayer
3:30 PM 5th Block
5:15 PM Wednesday Night Dinner
6 PM Youth on Mission
6:15 PM Bible Black Belts
6:15 PM Bible Study
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY- 2/5

6:45 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

FRIDAY- 2/6

10:30 AM Faithful Fitness

SATURDAY- 2/7

10 AM- 4 PM Journey to Joy
Women's Retreat
12-3 PM Conference Room in Use

SUNDAY- 2/8

9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Ibada
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship
12 PM Fork Fellowship

Feb. 9- Feb. 15

MONDAY- 2/9

6:30 PM Dartball Fellowship

TUESDAY- 2/10

6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 2/11

11 AM Staff Meeting
1 PM Staff Lunch
2:30 PM LAAF Council
3:30 PM SAM Council
3:30 PM 5th Block
5:15 PM Wednesday Night Dinner
6 PM Youth on Mission
6 PM Finance Meeting
6:15 PM Bible Black Belts
6:15 PM Bible Study
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY- 2/12

10:30 AM Alma Hunt
7 PM LaVora Sprinkle

FRIDAY- 2/13

10 AM- 1 PM Makers on Mission:
Ditty Bag Sewing Class
10:30 AM Faithful Fitness

SATURDAY- 2/14

9 AM- 4 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

SUNDAY- 2/15

9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Ibada
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship
WMU Focus Sunday
12 PM Fork Fellowship
5 PM Children in Action &
Worship Arts
5 PM Seeds of Youth

Feb. 16- Feb. 22

MONDAY- 2/16

10 AM Bible Study

TUESDAY- 2/17

10 AM LAAF
1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:15 PM Shalom Handbells
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 2/18

3:30 PM 5th Block
5:15 PM Wednesday Night Dinner
6 PM Youth on Mission
6:15 PM Bible Black Belts
6:15 PM Business Meeting
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY- 2/19

10:30 AM Sonshine Choir

FRIDAY- 2/20

10:30 AM Faithful Fitness

SUNDAY- 2/22

8:30 AM Sweet Fellowship
9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Ibada
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship
12 PM Fork Fellowship
5 PM Children in Action &
Worship Arts
5 PM Seeds of Youth

Feb. 23- March 1

MONDAY- 2/23

10 AM Bible Study
6:45 PM Deacons Meeting

TUESDAY- 2/24

10 AM- 2 PM Blood Drive
1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:15 PM Shalom Handbells
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 2/25

3:30 PM 5th Block
5:15 PM Wednesday Night Dinner
6 PM Youth on Mission
6:15 PM Bible Black Belts
6:15 PM Bible Study
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY- 2/26

10:30 AM Sonshine Choir
6:45 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

FRIDAY- 2/27

Youth Discipleship Weekend
10:30 AM Faithful Fitness
5:30 PM Creatives Night

SATURDAY- 2/28

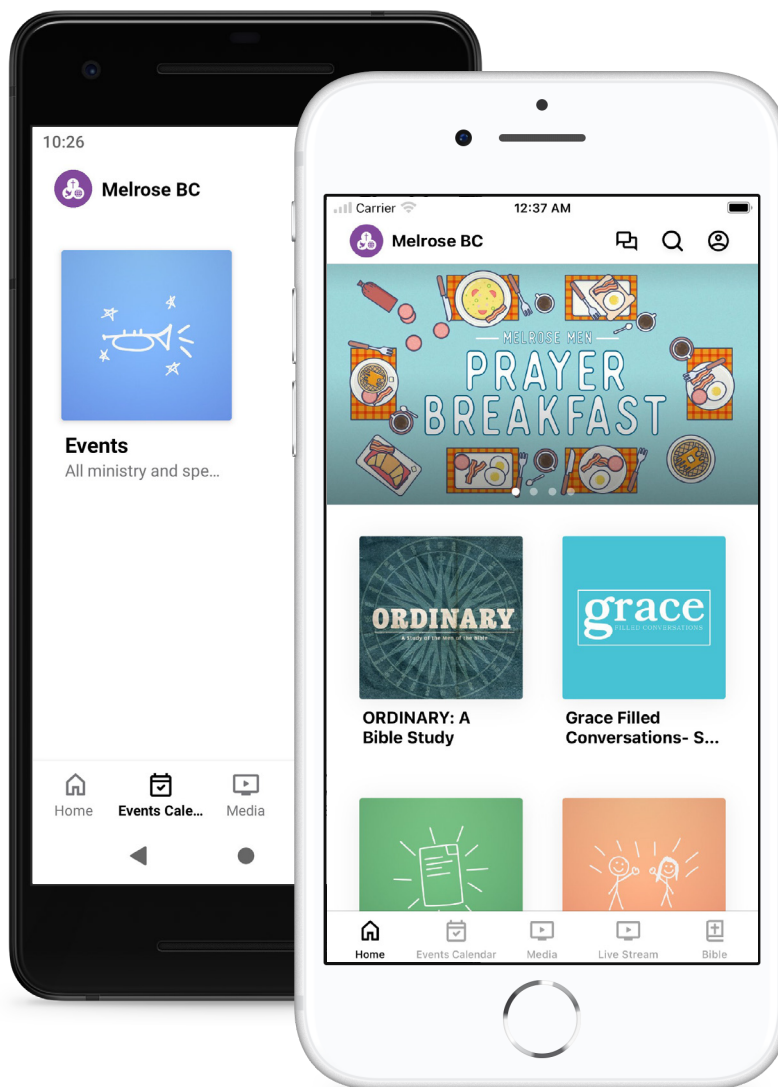
Youth Discipleship Weekend
9 AM- 4 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

SUNDAY- 3/1

Youth Discipleship Weekend
9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Ibada
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship
12 PM Fork Fellowship
5 PM Children in Action &
Worship Arts
5 PM Seeds of Youth

Melrose Baptist Church

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