



MELROSE
BAPTIST CHURCH

The Messenger

January 2026

Something To Think About



“GROWN UP CHILDREN’S STORIES”

I can still remember the Noah’s Ark sheets and mobiles that decorated the kid’s rooms when they were babies. Noah and a bunch of animals, all smiling as they sail in a boat under a rainbow painted on a blue sky. It was so cute, right?

Of course, the story of Noah and his ark doesn’t come across as “cute” when you read it in the Bible. In Genesis, we read a story of world-wide depravity, apocalypse, and a family struggling with what it means to be the last and first people on earth. I imagine that Noah and his family, were they with us today, would find it odd to see their likenesses on baby sheets and nursery wall hangings.

There are stories in the Bible that we sometimes selectively edit or leave out altogether when we are talking with our children. Stories like Noah’s ark or the binding of Isaac are hard enough sometimes to make sense of as adults. Other stories, such as Jesus healing a blind man, are far more impactful than the miracles that they detail but are too often treated like a simple recounting of Jesus’ daily schedule. In seminary I took a class where I didn’t know until the first day of class that our entire semester would be spent talking about 1 chapter of the Bible, Genesis 22. I walked out of that first class thinking this was going to be the most boring class I had ever taken. It ended up being one of the best. I came out of that class with an appreciation for how deep the treasure of Scripture is and how much we leave unexplored.

Starting January 7 at 6:15 PM, I will be leading a new Bible study called “Bible Stories for Grown-Ups”. In this study, we will look at 4 stories in the Bible that are perhaps more challenging stories than we often assume. We will spend 2 weeks with each story so that we can not just hear the stories as the Bible shares them with us but also give full consideration to how these stories speak into our modern world and modern lives. Some of these stories will be stories you know (or think you know). Some of these stories may not be as familiar to you. All of them are stories that deserve the attention of grown-up

eyes and minds.

Below is the schedule for this study, which includes a video component. I invite you to take time to read the stories ahead of time from your Bible and come with thoughts and questions.

- January 7 & 14: Noah and the ark – Genesis 6-9
- January 28 & February 4: The binding of Isaac – Genesis 22:1-19
- February 11 & 25: The parable of the talents – Matthew 25:1-30, Luke 19:11-27
- March 4 & 11: Jesus Heals a Blind Man – Mark 8:22-9:24

- Pastor Mark

Being Gregarious



What day is it?

This is universal human rights month.

On this date:

In 1809, wearing masks at balls in Boston was forbidden. In 1973, we received the first picture of a comet from space.

Need advice?

When watering houseplants, always use lukewarm water. Cold water may chill their roots.

LOL:

After my four-year old daughter concluded her prayer with "Amen," she looked at me and asked, "Why can't I say A-woman?"

Bu-dum-dum-chhh

Spiritual Nourishment:

Philippians 3:13b-14 "Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus."

Roy Helu Jr. writes:

I want to be a better representative of God on the field. I want to give the same effort on the first play of the game when

my body is fresh as I do on the 64th play when I'm dragging my feet and my body is telling me to give up. Accomplishing each of these goals requires constant prayer and focus throughout the game.

Jesus provided the perfect example of focus. He was single-minded about His mission on this earth and never let anything distract Him from fulfilling His calling. Even on the way to the cross, people spit on Him, whipped Him, and mocked Him. Jesus could have brought angels down to save Him and given up on His mission. But He was so focused on doing God's will that He refused to give in to His flesh.

As a Christian, my mission is to love God and to love others, but it's impossible to stay focused on this purpose without an active relationship with God through daily prayer and devotion. When things get tough – on the field or in life – looking toward that ultimate prize can truly keep us focused on what's really important.

What are some things that you can start doing today that will help you stay focused on your mission?

(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- YOUTH LOCK-IN

Pastor Greg is hosting a lock-in for Melrose youth on Friday, January 9 starting at 7 PM. Please eat dinner before you arrive! Youth are allowed to invite one friend to come to the lock-in. Registration is required to Pastor Greg to be able to participate in the lock-in so please let him know ASAP if you and a friend are coming!



PROGRAM RESUME DATES

After a short break for Christmas and the New Year, our children's programs and ministries will resume meeting on the following dates:

- Wednesday, January 7:
 - 3:30 PM: 5th Block
 - 5 PM: Bible Black Belts
- Sunday, January 11 at 5 PM: Children in Action & Worship Arts

THANK YOU!

Our children and youth wish to thank the Melrose Baptist family and friends for supporting their recent mission projects. The Children in Action program was able to provide diapers, clothes, and wish list items for children in the TAP Headstart Program. Our Youth were able to collect wish list items for 4th and 5th grade children who participate in the West End Center's after school program.

Ministry Updates & Upcoming Events

HYMN OF THE MONTH: BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY

Sometimes the seeds planted, grow in spurts. That was the experience of Bob Fitts. He moved his wife Kathy and their two young children to Kona, the big island of Hawaii, in the early 1980s in hopes of helping young people through the evangelism program called Youth With a Mission (YWAM). Despite the beauty of their surroundings, Bob and his family found pervasive poverty. He and his family were only able to find a place to live in a "coffee shack", a ramshackle construction on the edge of a coffee bean farm.

He was asked by a church to sing something special that gave God glory despite the dismal living conditions. He fashioned the song in his mind, but didn't even write it down. On his first presentation of the song, his memory failed, and was unable to complete it. He left the service in great dismay and a sense of failure. On the way home, however, the melody and words returned. He recorded it in his own shack-home, and sent the tune and words across the world to the many locations of YWAM across the globe. Its lyrics "We lift Your Name in all the earth" soon became quite true indeed even to 40+ years later.

Bob and Kathy call Singapore their home base church now, but still own a place in the Kailua-Kona area. Bob recalls one of his most humbling and astounding moments was listening to thousands in a stadium in South Korea singing "Blessed be the Lord God Almighty" in a language he couldn't even speak.

I have chosen this song of praise as our hymn of the month because it helps us also start the year off knowing that even as a new year has come, our Almighty God "who was, and is, and is to come" has plans for us and for His kingdom to grow in us and through us.

Amen. So let it be.

- Pastor Connie

CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE SONG NOW.

NEW YEAR- JOIN A MISSION GROUP!

If you are a female looking for a new way to get involved in the church, check out one of our Women's Missionary Union's mission groups. These groups meet once a month and are a great way to meet other women in the church, learn more about the missions of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and participate in mission projects to help our local community and the world. We have three mission groups that are always welcome to new members and visitors.

Come and check out the groups on the following dates:

- Beth Calloway- Wednesday, January 7 at 10 AM
Meets in the Joy Sunday school classroom.
- Alma Hunt- Thursday, January 8 at 10:30 AM
Meets in the Fellowship Hall.
- *LaVora Sprinkle- Thursday, January 8 at 7 PM
Meets at various locations.

**If you are interested in checking out the LaVora Sprinkle group, please reach out to Diana Hackworth or Rhonda Kessler before attending as sometimes this group meets at a different location than the church.*



CALLING ALL CROCHETERS AND KNITTERS!

Want to learn something new for the new year or do you crochet and knit and need a new outlet for your craft? Come and join our this unique mission group, Stitch and a Prayer, by attending their monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 7 at 2:30 PM in the Conference Room. Even if you are new to crochet or knitting, the group members are more than happy to teach others the basics and new techniques. This group makes items such as lap blankets, prayer shawls, hats, and mittens for those in need.

ALL ARE INVITED TO CELEBRATE DOTTIE'S 80TH BIRTHDAY!

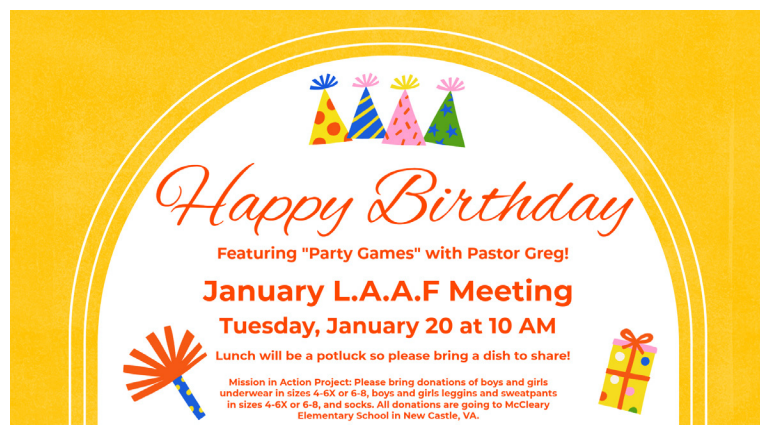
Dottie Overstreet wishes to invite her church family to join her in celebrating her 80th birthday on Saturday, January 10 from 12-2 PM. To RSVP please contact Tracie Conley. Dottie is requesting no gifts as she wishes to just be blessed by the

company of her church family members.



SAVE THE DATE- PRAYER BREAKFAST

The Baptist men invite everyone to join them for a home cooked breakfast on Sunday, January 11 starting at 8:30 AM. This event will also include a short devotion by Giles Gilley and a collection will be taken for Teen Challenge.



THIS MONTH'S LAAF GATHERING

Those 50 and older are invited to this month's Living Abundantly After Fifty gathering on Tuesday, January 20 at 10 AM. This month's theme is "Happy Birthday" and the entertainment will be party games hosted by Pastor Greg.

Lunch is potluck so please bring a dish to share! The Mission Action Project is a collection for McCleary Elementary in New Castle, VA.

Please bring with you donations of the following:

- Underwear for boys or girls sizes 4 to 6x or 6 -8
- Leggings or sweatpants for boys or girls sizes 4 to 6x or 6-8
- Socks

BUSINESS MEETING REMINDER

Please make note that this month's Business Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21 at 6:15 PM in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to attend this session but only church members are allowed to vote on motions.



JANUARY CREATIVES NIGHT- NEW MEETING TIME!

Creatives Night will resume this month and will be taking place at a new time! Starting this month, Creatives Nights will take place on the last Friday of every month at 5:30 PM in the church Fellowship Hall. We hope this new time will be more flexible for people to join us and it will let us utilize the Fellowship Hall on a regular basis.

This month's event will be on Friday, January 30 at 5:30 PM and this month's project is learning to make beaded succulent plants. This creative event is free and all supplies are provided. We do ask that you please register by letting Blair know via phone, text, or email if you are coming or by registering on the church website **HERE**.

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**.

January Menu

- 1/7: Grilled chicken, hashbrown casserole, lima beans, Oreo dessert
- 1/14: Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, banana pudding
- 1/21: Chicken bacon ranch pasta, broccoli, brown sugar pound cake
- 1/28: Chili beans, corn bread, cobbler with ice cream

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Ushers

1/4: Robin Bennett, Linley Hackworth
1/11: Robin Bennett, Linley Hackworth
1/18: Jack Engel, Bill Caudill
1/25: Jack Engel, Bill Caudill

Courtesy Team

1/4: Larry Wirt, Annie Richerson
1/11: Jeff Poore, Danny Jarrett
1/18: Billy Martin, Donnie Daniels
1/25: Gary Dixon, Gerald Willis

Safety Team

1/4: Larry Hicks, Steve Kennedy
1/11: Allen Journell, Jeff Poore
1/18: Danny Jarrett, Suzanne Moses
1/25: Gary Hurd, Jeb Wallace

Youth Dinners

1/4: No children and youth
1/11: Amy Crawford, Jan Heath
1/18: Chris and Sandy Sloane, Tracie Conley, Stephanie Cook
1/25: Connie Crowder, Karen Mullins

MOST RECENT FINANCE REPORT- NOV. 2025

Income- \$55,772.56

Expenses - \$62,423.34

YTD Income - \$665,835.16

YTD Expenses - \$703,997.37

January Church Calendar

Jan. 1-4

THURSDAY- 1/1

*Church Office Closed
Happy New Year*

SUNDAY- 1/4

9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Ibada
10:45 AM Sunday Morning Worship

Jan. 5-11

MONDAY- 1/5

10 AM Bible Study

TUESDAY- 1/6

1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 1/7

10 AM Beth Calloway
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 Prayer Meeting
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY- 1/8

10:30 AM Alma Hunt
7 PM LaVora Sprinkle

FRIDAY- 1/9

7 PM Youth Lock-In

SATURDAY- 1/10

12-2 PM Dottie Overstreet Party

SUNDAY- 1/11

8:30 AM Prayer Breakfast
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

Jan. 12-18

MONDAY- 1/12

10 AM Bible Study
1 PM RVBA Meeting

TUESDAY- 1/13

1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 1/14

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 Prayer Meeting
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

SATURDAY- 1/17

10 AM WMU Leadership Meeting
12:30 PM WMU Children's Camp Meeting

SUNDAY- 1/18

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

Jan. 19-25

MONDAY- 1/19

10 AM Bible Study

TUESDAY- 1/20

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

WEDNESDAY- 1/21

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

SATURDAY- 1/24

9:30 AM- 4 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

SUNDAY- 1/25

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

Jan. 26- Feb. 1

MONDAY- 1/26

6:45 PM Deacon's Meeting

TUESDAY- 1/27

1:30 PM Staff Meeting
6:30 PM Men's Bible Study

WEDNESDAY- 1/28

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 Prayer Meeting
7 PM Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY- 1/30

5:30 PM Creatives Night

SATURDAY- 1/31

10 AM Ibada Prayer Meeting
5 PM Fellowship Hall in Use

SUNDAY- 2/1

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