

Heartland

Baptist Church



Alex Melton, Senior Pastor

As I sit down to write this article, some of the ladies in the church are decorating the church with American flags with Independence Day just over a week away. As Christians, we often find ourselves navigating the tension between our love for God and our love for country. Is it right to be patriotic? Can we honor our homeland without compromising our faith? The short answer is yes—but with careful wisdom and biblical boundaries.

The Bible encourages a healthy sense of gratitude and loyalty toward the place where God has placed us. In Acts 17:26, Paul says that God “determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.” Our nationality, language, and homeland are not accidents. They are part of God’s providential plan. This means it is good and right to thank God for the blessings we enjoy in our country—freedom, peace, opportunity, and heritage. The Old Testament even shows examples of this: Daniel, though exiled in Babylon, continued to pray toward Jerusalem (Daniel 6:10). Nehemiah wept over the broken state of his homeland and worked to rebuild it (Nehemiah 1–2). Love for one’s country is a natural and biblical response to the gift of place.

Patriotism becomes a problem, however, when it turns into idolatry. This happens when national identity becomes more important than our identity in Christ. It happens when we trust in the strength of our nation more than the sovereignty of God. Scripture is clear: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD” (Psalm 33:12), not the nation that simply has the strongest economy or military. Jesus also made a powerful distinction in John 18:36: “My kingdom is not of this world.” His followers are citizens of a higher kingdom (Philippians 3:20), and our ultimate allegiance is to Him.

So how do we live this out practically? First, we can thank God for our country while praying for its leaders and citizens. Paul urges us in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 to pray “for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life.” Second, we can participate in civic life—voting, serving, and seeking the common good—to seek to influence society in the most honorable and truth-centered and God-honoring way. Third, we can humbly celebrate our nation’s strengths and acknowledge her faults. True love does not deny failure but seeks what is just, righteous, and good.

Finally, we must keep our worship centered on Christ alone. Symbols like the flag can be meaningful, but they must never replace the cross. National holidays like Independence Day can stir pride, but they must never outshine our holy days—especially the Lord’s Day. A Christ-centered patriotism does not demand we abandon our country, but it insists we view it through the lens of the Gospel.

In short, Christians can be patriotic—loving the nation where God has placed them—without making an idol of it. Our ultimate hope is not in a flag, a party, or a president, but in the risen King who reigns forever. Let us be faithful citizens of our earthly nation while living as ambassadors of Christ’s eternal kingdom.

Logan Staley, Pastor of Worship & Students

It’s July! Which means that it is a great time to engage new guests! Maybe, you remember the first time that you entered a new church for the first time, and you were nervous about it – even if you had been in church for a large portion of your life. It is scary to go into a new place with new people for the first time. Now imagine you had never been in church before, and the only thing that you knew about church was what you had heard others say about it! I imagine that you might be a little timid. This is why it is so important for us to love our neighbor by making each and every guest feel welcome. David Ollenbittle has a passion for this, and I have given him the room to lead out in this area of service with our First Impressions team. Our goal is that we would love guests better. We believe that by this being the culture at Heartland we will reach more people for the Gospel. You don’t have to be on the First Impressions team to greet, but if you feel the same as we do about this and want to join the team, please let David or I know. We must be faithful to steward new guests well that God sends our way.

Volunteer Schedule

Greeters

July 6:

Connectors: David Ollenbittle, Robin Shawback

Door Greeters: Sam Ollenbittle, Peter Pedersen

July 13:

Connectors: Jack Ollenbittle, Karen Harris

Door Greeters: Tim Pedersen, Hannah Pedersen

July 20:

Connectors: Ben Huggins, Miranda Rendleman

Door Greeters: David & Karen Hickerson

July 27:

Connectors: David Ollenbittle, Susie Kreitner

Door Greeters: Bev Vatoles, Karen Harris

Nursery & Kid’s Church

July 6:

Nursery 9:15am: Hannah Barnes, Kayla Staley

Nursery 10:30am: Candace Stutz, Lisa Pedersen, Carole Fredrick, Karol Hazelwonder, Davis Bertels

Kid’s Church: Sandy Stolze, Jack Ollenbittle

July 13:

Nursery 9:15am: Hannah Barnes, Kelli Melton

Nursery 10:30am: Karen Hickerson, Miranda Rendleman, LeAnn Parish, Sam Ollenbittle, Alliy Huggins

Kid’s Church: Jackie Parish, Davis Bertels

July 20:

Nursery 9:15am: Hannah Barnes, Megan Hart

Nursery 10:30am: David Ollenbittle, Karen Harris, Kim Collins, Susie Kreitner, Rylee Hart

Kid’s Church: Candace Stutz, Jack Ollenbittle

July 27:

Nursery 9:15am: Anna Drury

Nursery 10:30am: Nate Hart, Ronda Jolly, Hannah Pedersen, Evie Vatoles

Kid’s Church: Pam Barry, Paula Zugmaier

For more information or if you would like to volunteer please contact:

Nursery & Greeters: Pastor Logan

Kid’s Church: Jackie Parish at 618-789-2974



Deacon Ministry

If you have a need or know of someone who needs assistance, has become ill, hospitalized, or is in need of a ride to church please either contact the church office at 618-462-1276 or Ted Burleson at 618-462-3032.

This Month at Heartland

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE: Join us for our Coffee/Donut Fellowship at 8:45am followed by Small Groups at 9:15am and our Worship Gathering at 10:30am. Sermons are available online at <https://vimeo.com/hbcalton>. Our Worship Gathering is livestreamed on our Facebook page.

IMPACT GROUPS: Impact Groups meet on Sunday nights from 5:30-7 from late August through April. We have groups for all ages. Our Men meet in Room 39 and our Women meet in Room 48. Heartland Students (6th-12th grade) meet in Room 31, and Kids (PreK-5th grade) meet in the Children's Wing. Childcare is available in our Children's Wing for babies (age 0-2). Please enter the church through Door "A" (the office door) on Sunday nights. **Impact Groups will resume on August 17.**

LUNCH & PRAYER WITH THE PASTORS: Wednesdays at 11:30am. Bring a lunch and spend some time with our pastors as we eat, pray, and share from the Word.

GREAT COMMISSION TEAM MEETING: Thursday, July 3 at 6:30pm.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION (WMU): All ladies are welcome to attend WMU on Wednesday, July 9 at 6:30pm.

CULTIVATE—WOMEN'S EVENT: Ladies, Join us on Friday, July 11 at 6pm in the church Fellowship Hall for Cultivate. We will continue our topic on Becoming a Titus 2 Woman. This gathering will include a provided dinner, time of teaching, fellowship, and prayer. Youth girls are invited to join us! Invite a friend or neighbor. Please sign up at the Next Steps Table.

DISCOVER HEARTLAND: Sunday, July 13 from Noon-1:30pm. This is a free lunch for anyone interested in learning about Heartland and ways to be more involved. Please sign up at the Next Steps Table.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY MEETING: Sunday, July 13 at Noon in Room 39.

AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: The August newsletter deadline is Monday, July 14. Please email your announcements to office@hbcalton.com.

CENTRIKID CAMP: July 14—18 at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, MO. CentriKid is for completed 2nd grade through completed 6th grade students. Please see Jackie Parish if you have any questions.

BAPTISM SUNDAY: July 27—If you would like to learn more about salvation, or if you have made the decision to follow Jesus and would like to be baptized, please contact Pastor Alex or Pastor Logan.

POOLS FOR SCHOOLS: We will be collecting items for North Elementary and Alton High School from July 27 through August 10. More information is coming soon!

DEACONS' MEETING: Monday, July 28 at 6pm.

QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING: Wednesday, July 30 at 6:30pm

CHURCH COUNCIL: Church Council will not meet in July. The next meeting is Sunday, August 17 at 4pm.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Thursday: 8:30am—3:30pm. **The church office will be closed on Thursday, July 3 in observance of Independence Day.**

July 2025

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”

Ezekiel 36:26-27 ESV

 JULY
Birthdays

1	Darlene Hargiss	15	Brittany Gillis
2	Aiden Brooks-McGowen	15	Linda Witcher
3	Gene McGowen	16	Clayton Crane
3	Eli Melton	20	Jade Majors
8	Jody Lingow	22	Wade Barnes
9	Don Burger	23	Cheryl Robinson
9	Hannah Cline	25	Hunter Thomas
11	Mary Burger	28	Ted Burleson
12	Bradley Hart	30	Ilene Bowman

COMING UP IN AUGUST

YOUTH VBS DAYS
August 4-7 from Noon-3pm

FAMILY NIGHT AT GLAZEBROOK BALL FIELDS
August 10 at 4pm

IMPACT GROUPS RESUME
Sunday, August 17 from 5:30-7pm

VBS AUGUST 3-7 6-8 PM



MAGNIFIND!
PSALM 34:3
DISCOVERING THE BIGNESS OF GOD
IN THE SMALLEST OF THINGS

Please pre-register at hbcalton.com/vbs



AHG PRICELESS
Matthew 13:45-46

AHG PARENT INFORMATION MEETING
August 18 here at Heartland
New Families—6pm
Returning Families—7:15pm
Questions? See Miranda Rendleman

Church Staff

Alex Melton, Senior Pastor
alex@hbcalton.com

Logan Staley, Pastor of Worship & Students
logan@hbcalton.com

Sarah Neuhaus, Office Coordinator
office@hbcalton.com