

AUGUST 2025

Dates to Remember

- * 4th-8th - Worship Arts Camp (WAC)
- * 13th - BOP Luncheon at 11:00 AM
- * 14th - Pastor's Book Club at Smyrna - 11:30 AM
- * 23rd - Smyrna Fellow"Shop" in the gym 9 AM- Noon
- * 24th - Baptisms at Nottoway River following service
- * 25th - Deacon's Meeting @ 6:30PM
- * 27th - Dinner on the Grounds @ 5:30 PM

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SMYRNA SCROLL

PASTOR'S CORNER



As many of you know, John MacArthur went home to be with the Lord last week. It is no secret to those of you who have attended Smyrna for any time that Pastor Robert and I both have been profoundly impacted by this faithful man's ministry. John pastored Grace Community Church for over 50 years! In that time, he preached verse by verse through the entire New Testament and, in so doing, has provided the church with a lasting treasure of faithful, biblical exposition that will endure for generations to come.

In honor of John, I decided it would be appropriate for me to read one of his works this week as I reflect upon this man and give God glory for his influence for the Kingdom. I chose a book that is, admittedly, somewhat obscure. The work is entitled "The Vanishing Conscience". It was written over 30 years ago and has generated much less response over the years. Nevertheless, I have found a treasure trove of solid, biblical instruction on the important topic of the conscience.

When was the last time you stopped to consider the fact that God has given you a conscience? A conscience is defined as God's "monitor" system. It speaks to us, in our innermost being, about our actions. A faithful conscience is educated by Scripture and because it is guided by the Word of God, it becomes a fantastic guide as it communicates with our spirit when we are pursuing that which is wrong and harmful.

Unfortunately, many people today believe that the conscience is a bad thing! In fact, there is a whole movement in our world to alleviate us from our consciences by claiming that the "guilt" we feel is universally unwelcome and to be eradicated. To be sure, the world has come up with all kinds of reasons for our guilt, but the most common cause of guilt (our sin) is rarely, if ever, spoken about. The result is destructive. As personal responsibility, and therefore personal culpability, is eradicated there must be a substitute or a scapegoat for the consequences! Over the years, psychologists have come up with all kinds of "reasons" for our sin. Sometimes we sin because of "trauma", other times our sin is caused by unwholesome environments and, sometimes, we sin simply because of chemical imbalances! All of these explanations seem possible, but the most likely cause is our sinful hearts.

The problem with this kind of thinking is that it effectively separates man from the only source of hope he has to overcome sin which is the Gospel. You see, if sin is never my fault, then I have no reason to repent and if I have no reason to repent then I have no reason to pursue salvation and if I have no reason to pursue salvation then I have no motivation to embrace the Gospel of Christ. John puts it this way, "Disavowing our personal culpability can never free us from a sense of guilt. On the contrary, those who refuse to acknowledge their sinfulness actually place

themselves in bondage to their own guilt and remove the possibility of salvation. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He specifically said that He had NOT come to save those who want to exonerate themselves (Mark 2:17). Where there is no recognition of sin and guilt, when the conscience has been silenced, there can be no salvation, no sanctification and therefore no real emancipation from sin's ruthless power."

Dear church family, sin might not be the most enjoyable topic, and the conscience may not always allow us to feel rosy but aren't you thankful for the grace of knowing that you need salvation? While it might seem loving to deny or exonerate a sinner of his sin, the most loving and grace-filled act we can undertake is to speak the truth so that the soul can run to the only One who has the cure for our transgression.

Blessings,

Pastor Aaron

abobo@smyrna1897.org

A MESSAGE FROM ROBERT ROWLAND, EXECUTIVE PASTOR OF CARE

Dear Smyrna Family,

As I consider the month of August and what it means in the life of the church, I think of wrapping things up in order to begin again refreshed, energized, and excited about a brand new church year. I am considering September as the beginning of the new church year from a ministry perspective. In that month we will restart AWANA, our music ministry rehearsals, Wednesday night Bible studies, Youth fellowships and study, as well as Wednesday night dinners. It all gets fired back up soon.

This year, I find myself grateful for the "break", but also very excited to spend our Wednesday evenings in fellowship and Bible study. It is here that we will strengthen relationships with one another and grow in wisdom and stature with our Lord. It is work but it is worth it. It isn't just work for those of us who will be serving in various ministries, but it is also work for you who, in many cases, work all day and then choose to give a couple more hours to the church even if it is just to be fed spiritually and physically around the table. Either way, you have to make a sacrifice of time and other activities in order to be here. Why would you do such a thing?

I want to challenge those of you who have done this for years and are wondering if you want to step back in for 9 more months. Please let me encourage you to do so. There is still much to be learned and experienced as children of God. Don't ever allow yourself to think for a minute that you have learned enough or all that you can of God and His Word. Even the apostle Paul said, "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own...forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14). Please don't come up short and miss wonderful truths and experiences to be learned and known at this point in your journey.

Then there are those who have never committed to Wednesday evening activities. Dear ones, please take that next step in your own personal walk with the Lord. I urge you to consider the value in "sowing to the Lord." Paul said to the Galatians, "Whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8). I implore you to think about all that there is to gain in pursuing Christ a little more this church year. Praise God that He has made Himself known to you and that you have made worship and church attendance a part of your normal routine on Sundays, but

don't fail to remember how easily the world and all of its demands knock you down and suck the life right out of you by the middle of the week.

Wednesday evening is a great time to enjoy some good food, fellowship with some really awesome people, and then to either be fed in mid-week Bible study or be blessed by serving in an area of ministry. I will leave that up to each of you. I know this personally, the middle of the week refueling helps me maintain my walk with the Lord which strengthens me to remain faithful, joyful, and peaceful in this crazy world. I hope to see each of you at our first Wednesday evening activity starting on September 10. In the meantime, enjoy August and finish your summer well.

Devotedly,
Pastor Robert
rrowland@smyrna1897.org



FROM THE DESK OF DANIEL WATSON, PASTORAL RESIDENT

For the Month of July, I was assigned to read Christ-Centered Preaching by Bryan Chapell. It is a work that is filled with numerous helps that relate to sermon preparation and delivery. While the majority of this book is geared towards pastors to help them develop as preachers, there are many helpful insights that are beneficial to every believer.

One important point that Chapell brings to light is to remind us that Jesus is the central, overall focus of the Bible. Chapell recounts the words Jesus spoke in Luke 24:27, "Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself." The importance of this passage is explained this way, "Jesus stated the redemptive focus of all Scripture when he walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection." One of the easiest ways to remember this truth is that Jesus was saying the Old Testament is all about Him!

There are tons of places in the Bible where we can see God acting to help His people. For instance, we see God providing deliverance to His people during the time of the judges. We also read of God setting His people free from the Babylonian captivity. Earlier in the Old Testament He gives Israel the sacrificial system in order for them to have coverings for their sins and access to Him. In these few incidences, and numerous others in the Bible, we see God meeting certain needs of His people. Even though God did intervene in these specific historical events, these events were not the end of His work. He provided real forgiveness and real rescue but if His work stopped there it would be incomplete, and we would be hopeless.

One way to develop a Christ-Centered focus of the Bible is to look for ways the Old Testament points forward to Jesus. When we read of God delivering His people, our focus should begin to move forward and see how Jesus is the ultimate deliverer. He delivers us from sin, death, and hell. When we encounter the sacrifices in the Old Testament we should be reminded of the greater, ultimate and final sacrifice of Jesus for our sins. When we read the Bible this way we do not deny that God has acted in specific, real ways in history; however, we see how these events point to Jesus and His greater work. We see that Jesus really is the focus of all of Scripture.

Sincerely,
Daniel Watson
dwatson@smyrna1897.org

I sit in my office both decompressing and marveling at God's grace in moving during our VBS week. It is a great joy and privilege to be able to pour into the next generation and while there are many logistical challenges (and behavioral issues!) with small people, there is great joy in my heart as I consider the harvest that will be reaped in the years to come.

Speaking of that harvest, I want to draw your attention to the firstfruits of the Gospel efforts of a slightly older generation. I don't know if you noticed, but our VBS was well staffed and greatly served by many in our youth ministry! I had the privilege of serving with my bride and two wonderful, godly high school students and I have heard many stories from some of you regarding the blessing of our high school and even middle school students who were in the trenches alongside you last week. In an age where so many of their contemporaries are wandering into foolishness and sin, Smyrna continues to stand as a beacon of hope and evidence that God still saves and sanctifies His children.

Folks, I have so much hope for this generation of young people at Smyrna. I marvel at the many (emphasize MANY) godly young men who are so unlike their lost peers. I am almost overcome with anticipation as I consider what God may do through them in the days to come. Furthermore, I am thankful for so many faithful and maturing young ladies who are growing through their relationships with godly adults (particularly parents) and I pray the Lord continues to mold them into faithful servants for His glory.

As we look around the church and see teenagers who are growing disciples, the question we should ask is why? The answer, I believe, is that they are connected to godly adults. This has always been God's design (see Titus 2) and as we continue to invest in structures that encourage parents to be the primary disciple makers of the home and other godly adults to come alongside of parents in their endeavor, we are seeing fruit.

I write this because I fear that some of our congregation still doesn't really see the goal here. I've had a few of you ask why we don't operate more like a "traditional" student ministry. I would quibble with the word "traditional" as the church operated for some 1900 years without this tradition! Regardless, the reason why we are pivoting away from a dedicated student minister and a structure that separates students from their parents and from most of the comings and goings of the church is precisely because we see no biblical support for the arrangement! Instead, the result of this kind of ministry has become clear over the past 50 years or so... students who are not disciplined by their parents and plugged into the larger life of the local body leave the church once their time in their segregated group is complete (usually at graduation if not before) and they do so at an alarming rate. Conversely, those who grow in their fellowship with the body and have meaningful, disciple-making relationships with their parents first and other mentors as well grow roots that produce fruit for a lifetime.

Why do I say this? Two reasons:

- I pray that you will observe what is happening around you and see the wisdom of God in His plan for the church. We are seeing students saved, we are seeing them grow, we are seeing them stay connected to the body of Christ as they pursue higher education, we are seeing them able to stand against the lies of the age with biblical truth. Isn't this what we want? Why would we desire a night club atmosphere that merely replicates the nonsense that the world has to offer when we could produce godly disciples that don't look anything like the world?
- Parents, I pray that you continue to see our need for your help! Our ministry is structured so that all of us take some of the responsibility in discipling these young people. That responsibility includes planning fellowship events, pouring into students during the Sunday school hour or on Wednesday night and looking for strategic ways to encourage and empower our students to be on mission. Last year, there were over 40 parents involved in student ministry! This trend needs to continue.

If you are a parent of a student and don't yet know how you might assist our ministry, we have a meeting just for you! On Sunday, September 7th, we are going to be gathering after church for a brief time of organizing for the following ministry year. There will be many opportunities to serve, would you join us to hear about them and prayerfully consider how the Lord might be leading you to serve our student ministry?

Blessings,
Aaron Bobo

A MESSAGE FROM WORSHIP MINISTRY



**Our Worship Ministry
team would love to
add your voice or
musical talents to
our group.**

**Worship Ministry
practice begins
September 10th.**

**There are two
practice times to
choose from:**

6:30 PM or 8:15 PM

COME JOIN US!

For more information about our Music Ministry,
contact Melodie Parsons or Brad Perkinson.

Hi Families,

August has arrived — that beautiful in-between month where summer still lingers, but the school year starts knocking on our door. As routines shift and backpacks fill up, I want to pause and reflect on something truly special we experienced together this summer...

Vacation Bible School was nothing short of amazing. And that's because of you!

What an *incredible* week we had at **"Magnified!"** Thank you for making this year's Vacation Bible School such a **joyful, faith-filled success!** Whether you volunteered your time, brought snacks, helped decorate, or simply entrusted us with your child, we are so grateful. It was a week filled with laughter, worship, games, and—most importantly—reminders of how deeply loved we are by God.

📌 VBS Recap: Magnified Moments

- Over **190 kids** attended on average each day!
- Over **120 passionate and gifted volunteers!**
- Kids raised **\$1,758.86** for the food pantry.



So again, **thank you** for being part of something eternal. We don't take lightly the honor of walking alongside your family, and we're still celebrating all that God did during that beautiful, wild, unforgettable week!

Now, as we turn our eyes toward a new school year, it's easy to feel overwhelmed — especially in seasons of transition. Transitions can be exciting *and* overwhelming—for *kids and adults*. Whether your child is starting preschool or middle school, remember **God goes before them and with them**. And He is with *you*, too.

You don't need to have all the answers. Just keep pointing your child to the One who does. You've got this—and we're walking alongside you in prayer and support.

📌 Promotion Sunday – August 24

It's time to move up! On **Promotion Sunday**, children will "graduate" into their new classes based on their upcoming school grade.

📌 **Special Recognition for Kindergartners** during the service — we'll honor and pray over these little ones as they begin their school journey! Don't miss this sweet milestone moment.

📌 New classroom assignments and pickup details will be posted at check-in. Volunteers will help guide children and parents to the right rooms.

📌 How You Can Pray:

- For children starting school — especially our kindergarteners!
- For families to stay connected to Jesus during the busy season.
- **For protection and health** throughout the school year and ministry events.
- For renewed energy, joy, and wisdom for all volunteers and teachers.

Please know I'm praying for you and your family as you step into a new season. If there's any way I can walk alongside you more personally — don't hesitate to reach out. We're in this together, and I'm so grateful to be part of your child's journey of faith.

With joy and deep gratitude,
Erica Chaplin

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
 9:45 am - Sunday School
 11:00 am - Worship Service

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BIRTHDAYS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Faith Driggers	2 Emma Kennedy
3 Diane Burton Ted Scott	4 Kathy Miles Naurice Wells	5 Tyler Adams Bonnie Slayden	6 Amelia Servis	7 Layke Montgomery	8 Kristine Sohn	9 Bemmie Scott
10	WORSHIP ARTS CAMP (WAC) - 9:00AM - Noon					16 Jim Harris
11 Tiffany Harvey Andrew Jones Janelle McCoig	12 Lucas Lane	13 BOP Luncheon @ 11 AM Phylise Lewis	14 Pastor's Book Club - 11:30AM @ Smyrna Kris Brooks	15 Billy Cizek Kim Conley Carol Morgan Gabi Perkinson	16 Jim Harris	17 "Free" Indoor Yard Sale in the gym 9AM-12 Bill Chavis Robert Mayer
18 Brett Clary Ryan Clay Ashley Perkinson	19 Joshua Servis	20 Tony Lunsford	21 Jann Etheredge James Kester Blakely Perkinson	22 Kristin Clay Brady Neville Brad Perkinson	23 "Free" Indoor Yard Sale in the gym 9AM-12 Bill Chavis Robert Mayer	24 Baptisms at the Nottoway River 1:00 PM Amie Davila
25 Deacon's Mtg @ 6:30 PM Bubbie Bowers	26	27 Dinner on the grounds @ 5:30PM Wirt Wills, Jr.	28 Heather Leshner Piotr Rusek	29	30 Dakota Cloninger Grayson Hoverstock	31





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MISSION STATEMENT

Smyrna Baptist Church exists for the purpose of building up a community of fully equipped believers who give glory to God with every aspect of their lives.

August 2025 - Children's volunteer schedule

DATE	9:30 - 10:45		10:45 - 12:15				
	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	1 & 2'S	3'S	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
3 rd	Angie Adkins	Amelia Servis	Alison Adams	Leah Pierce	Chris & Brooke Dimiao	Burke & Christy George	Derrick & Carla Temple
10 th	Jason Collins	Gina Perkinson	Chuck Page	Johanna Rowland	Kristen Berry	John & Kristin Clay	Kurt & Ashley Jones
17 th	Kim Davis	Sharon Long	Kim Davis	Sabrina Rusek	Hucky & Lindsay Miller	James & Megan Wells	Ricky & Ashley Elder
24 th	Scotty Leshar	Holly McCaffity	Audrey Erdmann	Mary Tucker	Kyle & Alyssa Pitcock	Mike & Allie Lewis	William & Lori Chappell
31 st	Terri Driskill	Laura Hoyle	Pamela Reynolds	Holly McCaffity	5th Sunday Family Worship - No children's classes today - only nursery available		



August at a Glance

2025

AUGUST 4TH - 8TH

WORSHIP ARTS CAMP
9:00 AM - 12 NOON



AUGUST 24TH

PROMOTION SUNDAY & RIVER BAPTISMS



AUGUST 27TH

DINNER ON THE GROUNDS



Books, Clothes, Housewares, Toys & SO MUCH MORE!

SHOP FOR FREE!!!

Saturday August 23rd
9am-noon
Smyrna Baptist Church
youth room and gym

Let's fellowSHOP

All remaining items will be donated