

SMYRNA SCROLL



SMYRNA BAPTIST CHURCH
building community • equipping believers • serving Jesus

PASTOR'S CORNER

I write this entry with a bit of a clouded mind and heavy heart as I consider the state of our society in the year 2026. Many of you have probably heard something about the church service that was interrupted by protestors in Minnesota this past Lord's Day. There are many disheartening components of that particular story. It grieves me to see the impact of those unruly men and women on children who were brought to church to worship. It pains me to think that our world is so divided that such an action might seem justified to many but the thing that saddens me most is what is not being discussed.

In all the news articles and social media commentaries I have read, the most important transgression has not been mentioned. Those protestors did not ultimately disturb men and women; they made a mockery out of the gathering of the saints to worship a holy God. Transparently, I am aware that I may be reading too much into this story and its implications but, I don't think so! Church family, something is sincerely wrong with a world that has no concept of the sacred. Something is deeply amiss with a generation of people that have no respect for the Lord and His worship. To walk into that service (in the middle of the assembly of the saints) and totally disrupt the worship of a glorious God with no consideration of the gravity of such an action says so much about how the world views our Lord.

God will not be mocked. He deserves the worship of His people. His assembly is not a stage upon which we should be able to score political points. In fact, one could convincingly argue that the very act itself demonstrates the foundation of the problems we have as a country and society.

My prayer is that we would be aghast at such an action and reminded that our coming together on Sundays is about something far greater than ourselves. Worship is not about us! This is why personal preference (music, attire, order of worship, etc.) is not the ultimate consideration at Smyrna. I am reminded of the story that is told about a church member coming to a worship leader with complaints about the music on a given Sunday. When the member finished their critique, the worship leader said, "that's ok, we weren't singing to you anyway!" What a profound statement! Sunday is not a day for us; it is a day that is set aside to worship the Risen King. Somehow, we have lost that truth as a nation and this is the fundamental reason why riots and unrest are going on in places like Minnesota.

Blessings,

Pastor Aaron

abobo@smyrna1897.org



FEBRUARY 2026

February:

- * 1st - Discover Smyrna Classes begin @ 9:45 am
- * 8th - Baptism Sunday
- * 19th - Pastor's Book Club at Smyrna-11:30 am
- * 21st - Middle School Youth to Surge Adventure Park - 1:30-7:00 pm
- * 22nd - Kids Volunteer Training Luncheon following worship service
- * 23rd - Deacon's Meeting @ 6:30 pm

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Dear Smyrna Family,

I know we all struggle with the question that I pose today even if we haven't put it into words. How shall the human heart be freed from its *love* for the world? How can we overcome those tendencies and weaknesses that plague us? I know you are like me in that you wish you were a better person. You wish you were more like Christ and that sin didn't have such a hold on you in some areas of your life.

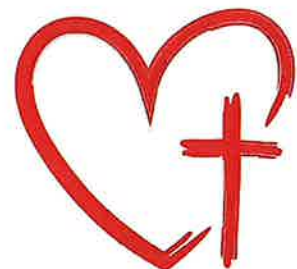
The tendency of the human heart is that it must have something to lay hold of — and which, if taken away without the substitution of another something in its place, would leave a void and a vacancy as painful to the mind, as hunger is to the stomach. Here is a question to consider: What would be the most effective way to get all the air out of a glass jar? You might ponder the possible ways to suck the air out and create a vacuum. Eventually, we might realize the simplest answer is to fill it with water.

Thomas Chalmers, a 19th century scientist, geologists, and pastor wrote, "It is futile to try to suck sinful pleasures out of the human heart with the pump of fear, if we do not put a better pleasure in their place. One might think that humans have the capacity to use willpower and resolve to stop loving the world. Even the strongest resolve is not enough to dislodge an affection by leaving a void." He went on to state that our inclination to commit sin by giving into the flesh is not a matter of duty. He said it is a delight that one prefers. It is an affection of the heart. This was the thought process behind his famous writing on "The expulsive power of a new affection."

There is a right way and a wrong way to battle the flesh and sin nature within each of us. The wrong way is to simply try to get rid of the sin without replacing it with a greater desire, love, or affection. John wrote in 1 John 2:15 these words, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." What drives you dear one, a love of the world or a love of the Father? The way we must seek to remove this controlling affection from the heart is to experience that God is vastly more worthy of the heart's attachment, thus awakening a new and stronger affection that displaces the former affection for the world. This corresponds to pouring water into the jar to displace the air. Hence "the expulsive power of a new affection."

Consider the parable Jesus taught in Matthew 13:44: "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then *from his joy* he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." This verse assumes that until this man found the treasure of the kingdom he was enjoying "all that he has." He discovers a reality that awakens a new affection. This new affection expels the old affections. His enjoyment of "all that he has" loses its dominion because of "the expulsive power of a new affection." Dear church family, I know you want to "do better" this year. My advice to you today is to take your mind off of you and put it wholeheartedly on Jesus and His ways. Start by growing to love Jesus more, not by trying to love other things less. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you fall more in love with Jesus and the things of earth will lose their luster.

Devoted and Hopeful,
Pastor Robert
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During the month of January, I had the opportunity to read Brothers, We Are Not Professionals by John Piper. While I have heard sermons and conference messages by Piper, as well as Q&A's and podcasts, this is the first book that I have read by Piper. This work is a passionate plea for pastors to remember the calling they have been given by God.

The format of this work looks more like a devotional book. However, it still has solid content and depth to it. The chapters are short, but the ideas Piper writes about are still good to meditate on throughout the day. In this book, Piper is reminding pastors of rich biblical truths and practical ways to use them in their pastoral ministries. While he does this, he continually draws their attention back to delighting in God in all they do.

One of the major themes that Piper has focused on during his ministry is the glory of God. Early on in this work I read these words, "He will not let us settle for wonderful and happy thoughts of self. Not even a glorified self. He will not let our glory, which He Himself creates and delights in, replace His glory as our supreme treasure." As is common with Piper's teachings, he does not want us to be satisfied with lesser truth, even when it is a good truth. He is constantly pointing his readers towards God as he teaches them how to be satisfied in God in all areas of their lives. Piper has a unique way of unpacking the layers of biblical and theological truth for us to understand. His purpose in doing this is to help us develop more reasons, and deeper reasons, to praise our great God. The more we seek to know God and understand His works, the greater our praise will be. Piper is a guide who helps us along the way in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Daniel Watson

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MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH
JOIN US FOR FUN AT

SURGE
ADVENTURE PARK

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST
1:30 - 7:00 PM

Looking for an exciting way to unleash your energy and have a blast? Register for our Middle School trip to Surge Adventure Park in Henrico. Registration deadline in Feb. 12th.

\$24 PER PERSON

YOUTH

A few years ago, we began taking some Wednesday evenings to “worldview” analysis. This might sound complicated but, in reality, the goal has been to help our students think biblically. Every person has a worldview meaning that all of us have a paradigm through which we interpret and understand the world. The problem in every secular culture is not the presence of a worldview but the foundation of that worldview.

Our society demonstrates the chaos and dysfunction that arises when men and women base their convictions and actions on something other than Scripture. Furthermore, our culture tempts and catechizes our children and youth to think in accordance with their carnal views! Every day, our children are confronted with abhorrent worldviews (think “all love is love” or “my body my choice” or “privilege” and the like).

Our worldview analysis effort takes examples of these kinds of ideas (typically in the form of social media posts or news articles) and examines them through a biblical lens. Our goal is to teach our children to: define terms, understand presuppositions that may not be stated but form the foundation of an assertion and compare the sentiments being expressed to clear, biblical teaching.

My purpose in writing this little entry today is twofold. First, if you have a student, make sure they join us! The ability to think biblically is paramount to developing Christian character and standing in this drifting world. Second, I want to encourage you all to consider how you can equip your students at home in the same manner. Do you have discussions with them about the nonsense that pervades our society? Have you helped them to see the false premises that lead to rotten, sinful thoughts? Do you help them use their Bibles to arrive at solid, biblical conclusions about life’s issues? If not, I want to encourage you to start and, if you need some help, Pastor Robert and I are always willing to talk!

Aaron Bobo

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A FREE EVENT

KIDS MINISTRY CONFERENCE

MARCH 7 @ 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Swift Creek Baptist Church, Midlothian

Please contact Erica Chaplin if interested - (804) 894-0442

What a joy it was to finally present our Christmas music on Dec. 21! I'm so grateful for the flexibility of everyone to adjust their schedules in order to worship our Savior through the music that we had worked hard on for months! God's sovereign plan was for the music to be presented that day even though we missed some of our choir members due to illness this year. We are so grateful for our band, instrumentalists and our sound and media team that made the day even more special!

We will kick off 2026 making plans for Easter music, which is earlier this year on April 5. That means the date for our Easter music will be on Palm Sunday, March 29. That being said we need to get started as soon as possible. Wednesday, January 7, will be a great time for anyone considering being a part of the choir to start rehearsals that evening at 6:30 p.m. or 8:15 p.m. The children's choirs start back up the same evening at 6 p.m.

I recently ran across an article written by Ryanne Molinari for The Gospel Coalition, a musician and worship director. In the article she makes the following points: "Ephesians 5:19 call Christians to address one another in song, The word translated 'addressing' in that verse refers to speaking, telling, preaching, and even boasting. We're to sing not only with but to one another with boldness and vigor." She points out ways to do that, which we incorporate many times in our worship services. Here are some excerpts from her article and my own thoughts on ways we sing to one another.

- Include question-and-answer songs. A couple of examples of this is Andrew Peterson's "Is He Worthy", which is more conversational, leaders ask questions that the congregation answers. ("Do you feel the world is broken – we do). An example of a well know hymn with the question/answer format is "Nothing But the Blood" (What can wash away my sin – nothing but the blood of Jesus)
- Feature a cappella sections. We do this many times singing a verse or chorus without any instrumental accompaniment.
- Gender specific verses. An example of this is "Behold Our God" where the men sing the bridge by themselves, the ladies sing their bridge themselves and then we join together. (Men-He will reign forever, Ladies-Let His glory fill the earth). A verse of a song can be sung by men first then the next verse by the women, and even the next by children!
- Change the point of view. Not use I/me/my exclusively in a worship song, but include we/us/our. Second-person pronouns, you/your/yours, makes it clear that our singing isn't just vertical but horizontal; we glorify God as we acknowledge one another.
- Use of a choir. Having a group of singers stand facing the congregation provides a greater sense of reciprocity than a single leader or band alone.
- Singing beyond Sundays. Sing the Doxology after a Bible study or opening a prayer meeting with a song. Incorporate singing into weekly events makes addressing one another in song on Sundays more comfortable.

We look forward to joining our voices together each week as we address one another and exalt our great God!

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Colossians 3:16

Singing His Praises,
Melodie Parsons



February may be short, but it often carries its own kind of weight. Winter routines are in full swing, schedules feel full, and the newness of the year has settled into real life. And yet—even here—there are moments of grace, growth, and reminders that God is faithfully present.

I've just returned from two long days of travel with Hunter and Brianna for Hunter's three-year bone marrow transplant follow-up. As many of you know, that transplant ultimately failed. Revisiting that season stirred a mix of memories and emotions—reminders of what has been lost, what still feels uncertain, and how little control we sometimes feel as parents. Add to that the familiar realities of parenting on the road—heavy traffic, long waits, close quarters, tired bodies, and even more tired hearts (and yes, more snacks than anyone planned for)—and it became a setting where patience had to be chosen intentionally!

In moments like these, I'm deeply grateful for the way Scripture and prayer surface right when they're needed. Sometimes it's a verse brought back to mind; other times it's the simple, grounding question: *How would Jesus respond?* Allowing Him to lead our words and actions doesn't remove the difficulty, but it steadies our hearts in the middle of it.

I don't share this as a picture of perfection, but as encouragement. Being rooted in God's Word matters. There is beauty in preparation—in being studious—because when hard moments come, we don't have to search for truth; it meets us there!

Feeling helpless as a parent is one of the hardest emotions to carry. Left unchecked, it can spiral into guilt, shame, or a sense of failure. But with Christ, we are reminded that we are not alone—and we are not failures. The same Spirit that raised Christ lives in us, strengthening us when we feel weakest.

Looking ahead, we're reminded that some seasons invite patience more than answers. While future medical decisions may come in time, we're grateful that right now there is space—space to live fully in today, to pray, and to trust God's guidance without urgency. For this season, we're choosing to rest in the gifts right in front of us, confident that God will make the next steps clear when the time is right!

If you're a parent walking through a hard season—especially medical challenges—please know you're not alone. I'd love to talk with you and support your family however I can. Sometimes a simple conversation can make all the difference!

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." - John 3:16

With gratitude and hope,

Erica Chaplin, Children's Director

echaplin@smyrna1897.org

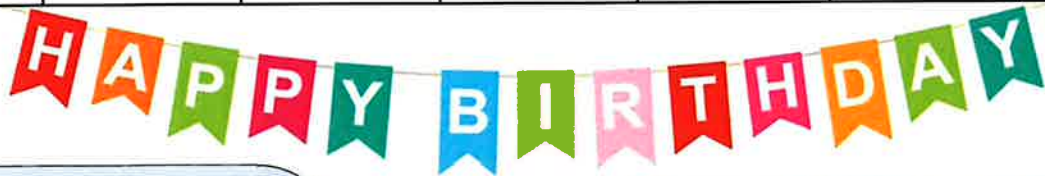
**Calling all
Children's Ministry Volunteers!**

**Volunteer
Training**

**FEBRUARY 22 - 12:30
YOUTH ROOM**

**Join us for a required training
designed to equip, encourage,
and align our team as we care
for and disciple our kids.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 New Members Classes begin @ 9:45 AM (4 weeks) Sarah Moore	Anna Dirienzo Jimmy Johnson Chloe Rusek	Bernadine Blount Brianna Chaplin Aubrey Gabriel	Matthew Goodwin Caleb Morini	Bryson Poarch	Lorraine Arnett	Kayson Glasper
 Tim Morini, Jr.	Peyton Adams James Servis	Chuck Page	BOP Luncheon 11:00 am Janna Cobb Levi Mitchell	Amy Brooks Michael Demaline Chuck Johnson Dianne Jones	JoJo Bowers Jacob Lowery Carl Sims	Caleb Leshar Mary Tucker
	Kimberly Day	Mike Demaline, Sr. Hunter Shifflett	Greyson Tench	Pastor's Book Club @ 11:30 AM at Smyrna Brooke Daniels	Alyssa Pitcock Carl Shell Tabitha Watson	Middle School Youth - Surge Park 1:30-7:00 PM
Children's Volunteer Training @ 12:30 John Clay	Deacons Meeting @ 6:30 PM	Olive Barchanowicz Michelle DiRienzo	Kevin Day Haliza Sims	Belle Harvey Brenda Olgers	Annette Perkinson	Colton Ivey



SUNDAY SCHEDULE
 9:45 am - Sunday School
 11:00 am - Worship Service
 6:00 pm - Smyrna 'U' classes

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE
 5:30-6:15 - Dinner
 6:00 - 6:30 - Kidz Choir
 6:30 - 7:30 - Mid-Week Bible Study
 6:30 - 8:00 - AWANA, Youth, & Worship Ministry Practice
 8:15 - 9:00 - Worship Ministry Practice




Discover Smyrna
 New Member's Class
 begins Sunday, February 1st
 @ 9:45 am

A 4-week class that will help you understand the faith claims, history, ministries and vision of Smyrna Baptist Church.

Sign up sheets are at the Welcome Center desk and Children's desk or you may contact the church office.



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building community • equipping believers • serving Jesus

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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.

February 2026 - Children's volunteer schedule

DATE	9:30 - 10:45		10:45 - 12:15				
	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	1'S & 2'S	3'S	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
1 st	Angie Adkins		Alison Adams	Becca Mize	Brooke & Chris Dimiao	Christy & Burke George	
8 th	Jason Collins	Gina Perkinson	Erica Chaplin	Johanna Rowland	Kristin & Drew Berry	John & Kristin Clay	Kurt & Ashley Jones
15 th	Kim Davis	Catherine Parson	Kim Davis	Sabrina Rusek	Hucky & Lindsay Miller	Diana Neville	Ashley & Ricky Elder
22 nd	Scotty Leshar	Holly McCaffity	Audrey Erdmann	Mary & Avery Tucker	Laura Foley	Allie & Mike Lewis	Lori & William Chappell


AT A GLANCE

FEBRUARY

FEB 8th BAPTISM SUNDAY 11 AM 

FEB 19th PASTOR'S BOOK CLUB @ SMYRNA 11:30 AM

FEB 21st MS YOUTH TRIP TO SURGE TRAMPOLINE PARK 1:30 - 7:00 PM

FEB 22nd KIDS VOLUNTEER TEACHER TRAINING LUNCH 12:30 PM  



SS Class Dinner Schedule

- ◊ 4th - Parents R Us
- ◊ 11th - Melting Pot
- ◊ 18th - Middle School Youth
- ◊ 25th - Families in Fellowship