

Welcome, Advent!

"So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." – Matthew 24:44

The countdown to Christmas has begun! Curiously, as part of the reflections for the first week of Advent, the lectionary surprises us with a passage of apocalyptic tone (Matthew 24:26–44): "the Son of Man will come like a thief in the night," "it will be as it was in the days of Noah," "one will be taken and the other left"... I did not see that coming. Right where I expected Christmas-themed Bible passages, I found allusions to the final judgment! However, once I got past my confusion, I began to see the connections: whether we are talking about the birth of the Savior or his second coming, the emphasis is on how we wait for those events, on how we make the most of the time (Ephesians 5:16), on how we live in expectation.

This reminds me of Phil (Bill Murray) in the movie *Groundhog Day*. For reasons never explained, Phil is forced to repeat the same day over and over again (which is why, in Spanish, the film was titled *Hechizo en el tiempo* -"Spell in Time"-). At first, Phil relives the day in a selfish way, trying to take advantage of others or to have fun without consequences. But little by little, he discovers that the only way out of monotony, frustration, and meaninglessness is to grow as a person: to learn, to care for others, to love without manipulating, and to transform routine into service and creativity. There is a lot of this in the everyday life of a Christian.

The line "As it was in the days of Noah... people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" centers not so much on people's evil actions as on their banality and lack of perception: a life focused entirely on the everyday, absorbed by normality, so that "they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away." Thus, the "days of Noah" represent ordinary life that fails to perceive God's *kairos*.

And yet, the *kairos*, God's time, is today! The Messiah has been born and has promised to return. Something has happened that breaks the normality of our existence. Advent trains us in a spiritual attitude that is very rare today: not letting ourselves be swallowed up by the everyday. Certainly, some days will be busier than others. We don't need to feel guilty about that. But the inertia of daily life is real, and it can become a force that lulls us to sleep and gets us used to living on "autopilot."

In the face of this danger, Advent invites us to ask: Is there time in my schedule to walk alongside others and do good? Do I make space to remind myself that I am in the Lord and that he is in me? From what attitude do I approach my daily tasks: from mere inertia, or from faith, hope, and love? May this Advent season wake us up, pull us out of indifference, and teach us to recognize, in the concrete "today" of our tasks and relationships, the quiet yet real coming of the Lord.

Blessings, Alejandro, Duke Intern

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Mary Martha Busy Ladies' Christmas Luncheon

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.

Homestead Steakhouse

205 Frank Timberlake Road

Timberlake, NC 27583

Please RSVP to Debbie Wagoner (919-971-5227) by December 7th

Music Ministry Update

Can you believe that Christmas is less than 3 weeks away?

Worship Choir Music Program – December 14th during 10:30am service

The Worship Choir will present the musical, "A Child Is Born...All Is Well" on Sunday, December 14th. The songs and readings will take you back to the moment when everything changed...the moment that brought hope, peace, joy and love into our world...the moment the world could finally say, "A Child Is Born...All Is Well". You are invited to join us as we rejoice and celebrate His birth once again.

Hallelujah Kid's Christmas Program – December 21st during 10:30am service

The Hallelujah Kids will present the Christmas musical play, "The Mystery of the Missing Manger" on Sunday, December 21st. This energetic group is set to decorate the church for Christmas. They've got the Christmas tree, the lights, the ornaments, the wreath, the presents and even some extra costumes, but there's one thing missing. They can't find the manger!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – December 24th

We will have our annual Christmas Eve service with candle lighting and communion. There will be **one** service at 7:00pm.

4th Sunday Christmas Songs and Stories on Sunday, December 28th

On Sunday, December 28th, during the 10:30am worship service we will be singing some of your favorite Christmas carols and telling the backstory behind each one. Please join us for this special time of worship.

For more information, contact Leigh McFalls at 919-818-3317 or leighmcfalls@gmail.com.

Youth Christmas Party

All youth are invited to the Youth Christmas Party. It will be in the church fellowship hall on Sunday, December 14 from 6-7:30pm. You are welcome to bring a friend or friends that are youth age. Please RSVP by Sunday morning (Dec. 14) so we have enough food for that night. We will have pizza, salad, a hot chocolate bar, gingerbread decorating competition and a few minute to win it games. Bring a \$5-\$10 gift for white elephant game as well.



Tithes and Offerings

We now have five ways to give to our ministries. If you would like your offering to be allocated towards a specific ministry, please indicate it in the memo of your check or you will be prompted on the website.

1. Give during our weekly Worship Services.
2. Mail in a check to 7215 Walnut Grove Church Road, Hurdle Mills, NC 27541.
3. Use our church [website](#). Click GIVE in the upper right corner.
4. Use our "My Church" mobile app. Click GIVE in the lower right corner.
5. Use our Vanco QR Code, which you can find on the back of the Sunday bulletins or right here in the weekly *In A Nutshell*.

Budget News as of November 30, 2025

Year to Date Income: \$ 217,750.94

Year to Date Expenses: \$ 282,619.25

Difference: \$ (64,868.31)

Matthew 25:35 Fund Balance: \$ 3,085.76

Harvest Festival Fund Balance: \$ 39,267.00

Vanco QR Code

As we continually adapt to the gift of technology, Walnut Grove now has a Vanco QR code provided on the back of the bulletin and in the Nutshell for online giving. Simply hold your phone or tablet's camera over the code for the link to Vanco. You may also access the link on our website for convenient giving. Alternatively, cash or check contributions continue to be accepted through our tithes and offerings. Your generosity helps us continue serving Christ and reaching out to our community in mission and faithful witness.



JOYS & CONCERNS

Prayer List

- Rev. Meg Hoffman, battling cancer. She is the director of Seeds of Life at Camp Chestnut Ridge.
- David Leonard having complications from surgery. He is the dad of a friend of Faith Parker.
- Timmy Parker with serious health issues. He is Barry Parker's brother
- Worth Miller with serious health issues. He is a friend and neighbor of Jimmy and Brenda Berry.
- Neil Donnelly with health issues.
- Helen Miller with serious health issues. She is the aunt of Pat Beck's brother-in-law.
- Leo Brooks Populorum (7 Months old), from Pittsboro, has very serious health issues. Leo is the grandson of John and Judy Guibert who are friends of Beverly Huey.
- Katherine Huey, with health issues. She is Rick Huey's mom.
- Ben Lloyd, Cheryl Humphrey's father, with serious health issues
- Gilbert Lee in Prince George, VA, who recently had surgery for cancer. He is Richard Lee's father
- Herbert and JoAnn Cates, both with health issues. They are members of Walnut Grove UMC.
- Jerry Forrester, bilateral lung cancer
- Liz Matthews, friend of Katie Whitaker
- Debbie Langdale diagnosed with stage 5 kidney disease, waiting for transplant. Friend of John and Brooke Sherron
- Kelly Schoch, with brain cancer. She is co-worker of Erica Nading
- Kathy Kimrey with health concerns. She is the sister-in-law of Lorraine Hines and Pam Kimrey.

Quilts

Tommy Mangum from Durham who has been diagnosed with cancer. a Friend of Barry Parker.

Rev. Mandy Neil from Concord, NC who is facing colon surgery to remove a mass. She is a friend of Rev. Laura Dunlap.

Melinda Hester from Hurdle Mills who is suffering with serious back issues. She is a friend of Betsy Parker.

(The prayer quilts will be at the front of the sanctuary on Sunday. You're invited to tie a knot and say a prayer before or after the service.)

Birthdays

Friday 12/5 – Phil Hines, Hunter Preston

Saturday 12/6 – Cheryl Ray, Robin Williams

Sunday 12/7 – Adam Gates

Monday 12/8 – Joshua Rogers, Darryl Clayton

Tuesday 12/9 – Lynwood Clayton, Cameron Ray, Casey Young, Gwen Hall-DiFabio

Wednesday 12/10 – Caden Robinson

Friday 12/12 – Ricky Triplett

Saturday 12/13 – Gardner Latta

If your birthday is incorrect or missing, please contact Kim at the church office at 919-732-5722 or by email at office@walnutgroveumc.org so we can update our records.

STAYING CONNECTED

[WG YouTube](#)

[WG Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

Serving in Worship

December 7th

Acolytes: Kinsleigh Dillard/Gracie Hall

Ushers: Faith Parker/Mary Emma Roberts

Nursery: Cathy Boling/Judy Butler/Kennedy Dunlap

Communion Servers: Scott & Cheryl Humphrey

Greeters: Stacey Spake/Ashley Parker

Scripture: Lorraine Parker

Financial Rep: Brenda Berry

Trustee Open/Close: Jacob Blankenship

December 14th

Acolytes: Samantha Johnson/Magnus Kemnitz

Ushers: Barry & Cheryl L Parker

Nursery: Debbie Donnelly/Sharyn Gates

Greeters: Phil & Lorraine Hines

Financial Rep: Lou Rutledge

Trustee Open/Close: Mike Roberts

NOTE: If you're unable to serve in your role listed above, please find someone to serve in your place and notify the church secretary of the change. This will allow us to have an updated listing to publish each week.

Upcoming Happenings

Fri-Sat., December 5-6 Walnut Grove Crafters

Sunday, December 7 9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

Wednesday, December 10 11:00am Mary Martha Busy Ladies – Lunch at Homestead
7:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

Saturday, December 13 9:30am – Worship Choir Final Rehearsal (Christmas)

Sunday, December 14 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service – Worship Choir Program “All is Well”
 4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
 6:00pm - 7:00pm Youth Christmas party

Tuesday, December 16 7:00pm Men’s Group

Wednesday, December 17 6:30pm Worship Band
 7:00pm Worship Choir

Saturday, December 20 9:30am Hallelujah Kids Final Rehearsal
 Birthday party for Jesus following rehearsal

Sunday, December 21 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service
 Children’s Program “The Mystery of the Missing Manger”
 3:00pm – 4:30pm Christmas caroling for shut-ins

Wednesday, December 24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 25



Sunday, December 28 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service – Christmas songs and stories

Wednesday, December 31 6:00-8:00pm New Year’s Eve at the Grove



See You Sunday!!