

Radical Authenticity

*"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else,
Jesus told this parable"*

-Luke 18:9-

In the parable the lectionary brings us this week, Jesus contrasts the intentions of a Pharisee and a tax collector. The first confesses before God as a good person, relying on the righteousness of his deeds. The second confesses himself a sinner before God, doubts himself and his rectitude. As we know, Jesus praises the tax collector and sets him forth as a model of piety.

This was shocking not only to people of his time but even to us today. Don't actions weigh more than intentions? Isn't this subverting a society's good values? What are Jesus's intentions in saying such things? Fortunately, the text reveals those intentions. Jesus addresses the parable "To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else."

This shows us that Jesus seeks to remedy a society in which we do not usually see others as equals, even though we are all sinners and share the same weaknesses. It is true that there are people, like the tax collector, who do social wrong, but a sense of moral superiority will not help such people improve, nor will it enable our society to be morally rehabilitated. Jesus understood this very well and, through the tax collector who is justified before God, gave us a lesson: the life of faith requires a sincere and radical authenticity.

The lack of authenticity appears in small things: we nod to avoid conflict even when we disagree; we laugh at a joke that didn't amuse us; we post only the "presentable" on social media and hide our fatigue; we say "it's fine" when it hurt; we offer compliments out of obligation or hit "like" out of reciprocity; we pretend to be fine so as not to worry others. And of course, as in the parable, we tend not to acknowledge mistakes, not to confess sins, not to say "I was wrong," in order to avoid the discomfort of a rebuke or confrontation. These may seem like minimal, trivial gestures, but together they train us to live more for approval than for truth and mutual understanding.

Jesus invites us, on the contrary, to show ourselves as we are, even if that means showing our weakness. Moreover, the authenticity we can cultivate in the intimacy of prayer can also become a public and relational habit. In a page of his journal titled "Four Resolutions," John Wesley made a vow to God: "To use absolute openness and unreserve with all I should converse with." I believe this resolution invites us to embody the spirituality of the tax collector whom Jesus praised, in order to create networks of relationships that can welcome the conversion of sinners and rehabilitate people socially in a spirit of equality and fraternity.

Alejandro Rivas, Duke intern

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Harvest Festival

Thanks to all that donated items for the auction and for the This and That Table. We have some unsold items from the This and That table in the hallway. If you want your item back, please take it after Church on Sunday. **Any items left will be donated.** Thank you for supporting Harvest Festival 2025.

Trunk or Treat, Oct. 26

Candy! Costumes!
Competition! Join us
for an afternoon of
trunk-or-treating fun
on October 26th! We
encourage EVERYONE
at church to join in for
this event, by
decorating a trunk
and/or by bringing
your family to
participate in the
activities. This year,
we'll have a
competition and prize
for the best decorated
trunk, so show up
with your most
creative ideas!



Music Ministry Update

October is here, and that means it's time to learn some Christmas music!

The **Worship Choir** has recently started learning this year's cantata, "All is Well". We will present this on Sunday, December 14th, during the 10:30am worship service. If you are interested in participating with us (singing or speaking), join us on Wednesdays at 7:30pm (starts Oct. 29th) and/or Sundays at 6:00pm (starts Nov. 2). Youth are welcome to participate too!

The **Hallelujah Kids** also have some new Christmas music waiting for them to learn. We will start practice on Sunday, October 19th at 4:45pm. The title of this year's program is "The Mystery of the Missing Manger". We will present this on Sunday, December 21st during the 10:30am worship service. Children K through 5th grade are invited to participate in the singing and acting parts. We will also have some opportunities for the younger children as well. Join us on Sundays at 4:45pm!

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

Pull Tabs For Ronald McDonald House

I am collecting **ALL PULL TABS** (drinks, cat food, vegetables/fruit cans-etc.), for the Ronald McDonald house. A collection bag will be hung on the fellowship hall bulletin board, with their explanation of the purpose. Thanks for contributing.

Carol Gerbracht



OCIM Update

Brenda and Jimmy Berry dropped off 198 pounds of goods to OCIM so far this month. Thank you all so much for donating to this very worthy cause.

They are in need of:

Food items: canned fruit, jelly, soups, beef stew, spaghetti sauce, mac & cheese, cereal, rice (small bags).

Non-food items: toothpaste, laundry pods, toilet paper, diapers (size 4)

Thank you to all who have donated money as well as the actual cans of food and veggies, plus the above items. Thank you all so much for your participation.

Be A Disciple

There are several UMC courses offered on BeADisciple.com. Share this opportunity with someone you know who might benefit from extra guidance during the upcoming holiday season. If you are a church member and need assistance (partial or full scholarship), please let Pastor Laura know. Don't let cost be a hindrance for this opportunity!

<https://beadisciple.com/online-christian-courses/grief/efd374-bridge-to-surviving-grief-during-holidays/>

New Plants Coming Soon!

Walnut Grove UMC has been selected as a recipient for two grants: from Backyard Butterflies and from the 39th Annual Azalea Celebration. This means we will have lots of new flowering plants and azaleas around our campus in the upcoming weeks! Chuck Davis and his team will be working to excavate overgrown or unhealthy shrubbery to make space for these new plants. This work will not conflict with Harvest Festival. We're excited for some fresh blooms to bring color and beauty to our church grounds!

Sunday Night Meal RSVP:

If you want to enjoy a meal this fall at Sunday night Bible study, you need to sign up!

[RSVP HERE](#) for which meals you and your family plan to eat.

OCP Upcoming Fall Events



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*.

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

- Family of Terry McPhail who recently passed away. He is Pastor Laura's uncle.
- 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.
- Mary Lou Smith-very dear friend of Carol Gerbracht
- Carol Gerbracht recovering from recent surgery
- 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.
- Joan Bickel from Dallas, TX. She has been diagnosed with brain cancer. She is Erica Nading's aunt.
- Ben Lloyd, Cheryl Humphrey's father, with serious health issues
- Iris Tilley, recuperating from a recent fall
- Gilbert Lee in Prince George, VA, who recently had surgery for cancer. He is Richard Lee's father
- Maria Guerrero, mother in-law of Alejandro Rivas, Duke intern, as she deals with terminal illness.
- 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.

Send A Card

Frances Walters, (Thinking of You), Springview Assisted Living, 1032 N Mebane Street, Burlington NC 27217

From The Mailbox

Hello Ladies, I want to thank you for the lovely prayer quilt you made and sent to me. It's a comfort to use, knowing the prayers and work that went into it. Every time I see it, I am reminded of the kindness of complete strangers and how, even though we have never met, we are all part of God's family.

I have just finished the chemotherapy treatments and am now letting my body recover.

Thank you for using your talents and time to make and send my beautiful quilt. It has been a blessing to me. May God Bless you for your kindness.

Paula Gordon

Birthdays

Friday 10/24 – Faith Parker, Walter Schrift

Saturday 10/25 – Layney Harris

Sunday 10/26 – Anna Robinson, K.T. Metcalf, III, Barney Hall

Monday 10/27 – Angela Wimberly, Jennifer Davis

Tuesday 10/28 – Karen McCulloch, Morgan Walker, Tanner Wagoner

Wednesday 10/29 – Jenny Blalock, Amy Phelps

Thursday 10/30 – Tanner Morgan

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

October 26th

Acolytes: Samantha Johnson/Kinsleigh Dillard

Greeters: Barry & Cheryl L Parker

Ushers: Chris & Cathy Boling

Scripture: Kara Roberts

Nursery: Sharyn Gates/Pam Kimrey

Trustee Open/Close: Gary Spake

Financial Rep: Brenda Berry

November 2nd

Acolytes: Magnus Kemnitz/Michael Roberts

Greeters: Clay & Cheryl S Parker

Ushers: Margaret Anne Dow/Grace Dunlap

Scripture: Brenda Berry

Nursery: Courtney Humphrey/Ashley Parker/Aubrey Nading

Trustee Open/Close: Johnny Clayton

Financial Rep: Ashley James

Communion Servers: Cheryl Humphrey/Kennedy Dunlap

PM Nursery: Cheryl L Parker/Mandy Kemnitz

Mowing Schedule

October 25- Todd Harris

November 1- Mike Parker

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., October 24-25 Walnut Grove Crafters

Sunday, October 26 9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
10:45am Children's Church
4:00-6:00pm Trunk or Treat

Wednesday, October 29 6:30pm Worship Band
7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, November 2 **DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS (CLOCKS FALL BACK)**
9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service/Communion/All Saints Sunday
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
5:30pm Dinner
6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Adult Bible Study, Nursery
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

Monday, November 3 6:30pm Worship meeting

Tuesday, November 4 7:00pm Men's Group

Wednesday, November 5 6:30pm Worship Band
7:00pm Worship Choir

Fri-Sun, November 7-9 Youth at Pilgrimage

Sunday, November 9 9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
10:45am Children's Church
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
5:30pm Dinner
6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Adult Bible Study, Nursery
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

Wednesday, Nov. 12 6:30pm Worship Band
7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, November 16 9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
5:30pm Dinner
6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Adult Bible Study, Nursery
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)
7:00pm Charge Conference at Cedar Grove UMC

Tuesday, November 18 7:00pm Men's Group

Wednesday, Nov 19 6:30pm Worship Band
7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, November 23 9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
10:45am Children's Church
4:00pm Decorate Church for Advent
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
5:30pm Dinner
6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Adult Bible Study, Nursery
6:00pm - 7:00pm Youth online safety training with Tyler Smith
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

Thursday, November 27



Sunday, November 30 9:00am Doughnuts/Coffee for everyone!!
 (provided by Men's Group)
9:30am Sunday School Opening - Joint Sunday School (Adults)
10:30am Worship Service - First Sunday of Advent / Hanging of the Greens
4:45pm Hallelujah Kids
6:00pm Worship Choir (Christmas)

See You Sunday!!