

We are on day five of the ecumenical Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, this week, January 18-25. Duke Divinity school shares that for more than 100 years of history, this annual observance has involved Christian communities around the world, unified in prayer and devotion. Here is the World Council of Churches webpage with the Link for More Information about Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I'm mindful of the Buddhist monks that are making a walk peace through NC this week with many stopping to cheer them on and wish them well. It saddens me that there have been those who have called themselves Christian insulted and ridiculed the monks on this journey across the United States. Likewise, it saddens me that in news out of St. Paul protestors interrupted a worship service and filmed it with the sensationalism that it stirred up. Yes, as Christians we are called to justice. We as Christians are also called to peace. Nonetheless, the methods of supporting justice and offering peace matter. We are Methodists after all! We pray for unity, and we pray for peace giving thanks for joy of the journey to walk in Christ, the Prince of Peace, who guides us in His perfect light. May we be intentional about how we walk in peace too!

Week of International Prayer for Christian Unity

Here Is the reflection from Day 3 from Duke Divinity School – The bond of peace

### **Verse for the day:**

Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (cf. Ephesians 4:3).

### **Additional Scripture passages:**

Isaiah 11:6-9

Psalms 86:8-13

John 14:27-31

### **Reflection:**

Peace is a crucial factor in maintaining unity within the Church. In Ephesians 4:3, the "bond of peace" signifies a vital and active principle that not only connects but also sustains the unity of the Christian community. Christ, the Prince of Peace (cf. Isaiah 9:6), preached peace and reconciliation. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), both a gift and a result of the Spirit at work. The "bond of peace" is an active force that maintains church cohesion, holding diverse members together, despite differences in background or opinion. Peace fosters meaningful relationships, allowing believers to interact harmoniously and more readily forgive one another. Paul highlights the fact that true unity requires ongoing commitment to peace. It calls for active cultivation and promotion of peace among members.

### **A question to consider:**

How does St Paul's teaching that peace is a fruit of the Spirit impact our daily interactions and relationships within our communities, especially where there is need for reconciliation or forgiveness?

### **Prayer:**

Lord Jesus Christ,

you are the Prince of Peace.

Strengthen the bond of peace among us and in our troubled world.

Change the hearts of all who make war; touch the wounds of all who are afflicted by war.

We pray especially for the people of Armenia and Artsakh,  
and their kindred throughout the world.

Let the light of your love shine in all the dark places of our world  
and hasten the day when all peoples may dwell in peace with justice. Amen.

~Pastor Laura

## **NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **Valentine's Dinner**

**You are invited to Walnut Grove's Valentine Celebration on Saturday, February 7th. The doors will open at 5:30pm and the meal starts at 6:00. Please RSVP by February 1st. The cost of the meal is by donation. The menu is lasagna, or chicken alfredo, salad, bread, and homemade desserts. There will be entertainment and great fellowship. We will have a friendly competition as individuals decorate their own table and guests vote on their favorite theme. Please contact Tina Walker (919-619-1971, Judy Butler (919-971-5689) or Lorraine Hines (919-619-1090) to let us know as soon as possible if you can come and will also be willing to decorate a table. Sign up sheets are also available in the fellowship hall on the bulletin board. All proceeds will go to the new carpet in the fellowship hall.**



The poster features a central photograph of a dining table set for a meal. In the center is a white plate with a floral pattern, topped with a white napkin that has a purple heart with a cross inside. Surrounding the plate are several lit candles in glass holders, a glass of red wine, and silverware. The background is a soft, warm glow.

*Valentine's Day  
Dinner Fundraiser*  
TO HELP OFFSET THE COST OF NEW  
CARPET IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

**THIS EVENT IS BY DONATION**  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2026**  
DOORS OPEN AT 5:30PM  
DINNER AT 6:00PM  
FOLLOWED BY ENTERTAINMENT  
MENU: LASAGNA OR CHICKEN ALFREDO,  
SALAD, BREAD AND HOMEMADE DESSERTS

Walnut Grove United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall  
7215 Walnut Grove Church Road in Hurdle Mills

## 2026 Lake Junaluska Music and Worship Arts Week

### Monday, June 22 to Friday, June 26

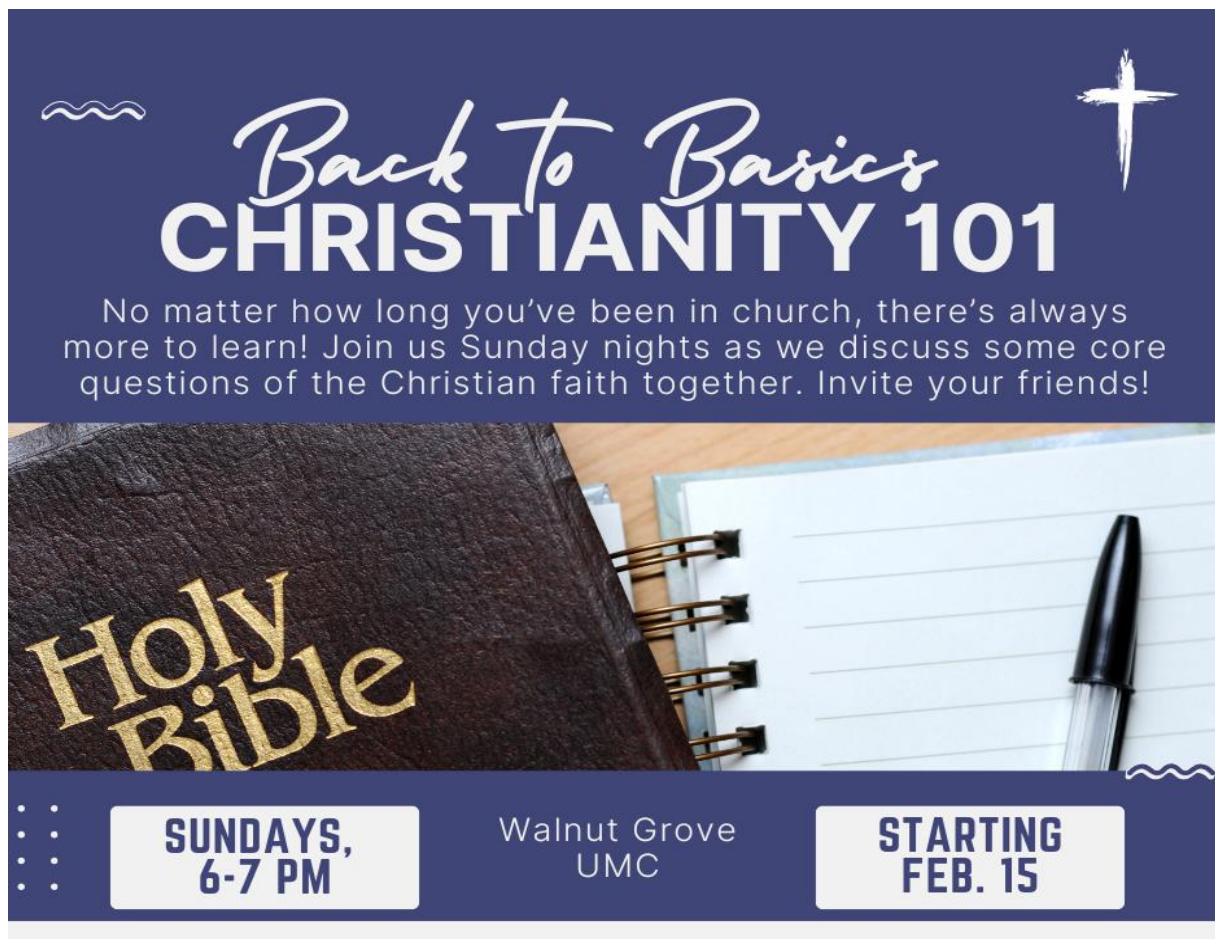
Let's talk summer with the warmth and beauty of the North Carolina mountains! Registration is now open for this year's music week at Lake Junaluska Assembly. This is an annual event designed for worship leaders, pastors, musicians, and singers of all ages. We will leave from the church on Sunday afternoon, June 21. Worship services and rehearsals start on Monday, June 22. Children who have completed the 3rd grade, youth, and adults are welcome to attend. Chaperones are also needed.

Activities and events include worship services, choir rehearsals, youth talent show, crafts/games, recreation (swimming, etc.) We will stay in a large house overlooking the lake. If your child, youth, or you are interested, let Leigh know at 919-818-3317 or [leighmcfalls@gmail.com](mailto:leighmcfalls@gmail.com)

### Sunday Night Meal Sign Up

We are looking for five people or groups to sign up to cook a meal for Sunday nights. Sign up here!\_

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4CA4AE23A7F9CE9-61773370-sunday>



*Back to Basics*  
**CHRISTIANITY 101**

No matter how long you've been in church, there's always more to learn! Join us Sunday nights as we discuss some core questions of the Christian faith together. Invite your friends!

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⋮  
⋮

**SUNDAYS,  
6-7 PM**

Walnut Grove  
UMC

**STARTING  
FEB. 15**

## Permission to Pause

A couple of extra words alongside the previous message from me about the Women's Retreat. If cost is a hindrance, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Scholarships are available. Also at church, Kara Roberts, Sue Powell, and our Minister of Discipleship, Lauren Birch, will be helping with the planning so you are welcome to ask me or these dear sisters questions as well. Make sure to register, invite a friend, and keep this retreat in prayer as we move closer to our retreat time together. Peace! -Laura

[Link to Register for Permission to Pause](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

February 20-21, 2026



PERMISSION TO PAUSE

A women's retreat focused on Sabbath,  
rest as resistance to a hurried life,  
and restoration by God's grace.

Open to ages 13 & up.  
\$25 registration fee includes 3 meals and an art project.

LOCATION:  
Walnut Grove United Methodist Church  
7215 Walnut Grove Church Road Hurdle Mills, NC 27541  
www.walnutgroveumc.com 919-732-5722

Scan to register or use  
link below



[bit.ly/wgumcp2p](https://bit.ly/wgumcp2p)

## Important Health Information

Flu season is upon us. Numbers are high. Several members of our congregation have already had it...and more are likely to get it. There are things we can do to decrease our risk of getting it and to decrease the risk of complications if we do.

- Stay home if you're sick! A general rule of thumb for returning to gatherings is that you should be fever-free for at least 24 hours WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medication (acetaminophen, ibuprofen) and feel well enough to resume activity. Even though you may feel like returning sooner, please think of the high risk and especially vulnerable people in church that may end up in the hospital with complications.

- WASH YOUR HANDS! Many folks just do not understand how important this is. For a while, I'm encouraging that we abstain from handshaking. If you shake hands with someone who just shook hands with 3 other folks, it's like you're shaking hands with all 4. (Personally, I don't like shaking hands at all. Many things other than flu are spread through handshaking.)
  - Increase cleaning of commonly touched surfaces (doorknobs, faucets)
  - Consider masking if you're going to be in a group. Masks do reduce the transmission of respiratory viruses. Hopefully we'll be making some masks available in the back of the sanctuary for a while. Feel free to pick one up and use it (and please take it with you when you leave 😊).
  - Get a flu vaccine. Though the strains in the '25-'26 vaccine aren't a great match for the circulating flu strains, some people will get some protection. It improves your chances of not having serious complications even if you do get sick...and it's better than nothing.
  - Stay hydrated! If well-hydrated you can better handle these illnesses if you get them. Things that we do to reduce our risk of flu help with the transmission of other respiratory illnesses as well.
  - COVID is alive and well...making us feel lousy and unwell. Vaccine is available.
  - RSV is a real issue for young children often putting them in the hospital. Let's protect these babies by getting ourselves vaccinated if 75+ years old OR 50-74 but high risk.
  - PNEUMONIA can hit any of us. Any of respiratory viruses and other bacteria can lead to pneumonia. No one needs pneumonia. The more things you prevent, the better your chance of not getting pneumonia. Also check into getting a pneumonia vaccine if you're 50 or older or younger and have high-risk conditions.
  - We have at least 2 schools in our end of the county experiencing PERTUSSIS (WHOOPIING COUGH) right now...there may be more. I don't know about you, but coughing for 100 days and coughing until I throw up is not my idea of a good time. Kids are vaccinated as infants with a booster dose given at 7th grade entry....then we should all get boosters (Tdap) at least every 10 years. Pertussis frequently puts young kids in the hospital. They can't be fully vaccinated until they've received 4 vaccine doses given between 2 months and 18 months of age. We need to prevent pertussis in ourselves to protect them.
- MEASLES is near and it won't be surprising, at all, if we get cases. South Carolina has 434 confirmed cases so far...and hundreds exposed and in quarantine. Quarantine for unvaccinated persons exposed to measles lasts from around Day 5 after exposure to Day 21 after last exposure. This means no school, no work, no visitors for at least 16ish days. Fortunately, our vaccine compliance numbers are good (as measured by kindergarten entry data). But we do have pockets of folks who have chosen not to vaccinate and if measles enters those communities, it'll go on for weeks. Even fully vaccinated persons can get measles with enough exposure. Measles complications can last a lifetime.

Measles is the most infectious disease known. If a person with measles is in a room, the virus remains in the air for 2 hours just waiting to jump on an unvaccinated person. Children are usually vaccinated at 12 months-of-age and again at 4-5 years-of-age. People born before 1957 are generally considered to be immune to measles because we probably had the disease...I know I did...I remember it. If born after 1957 and don't know your immunization status, get the vaccine unless you're pregnant or immunocompromised. 1 dose gives good protection, but 2 doses give great protection.

These are interesting times...and scary times for those of us in Public Health and other healthcare-related fields. Please pay attention, seek valid information sources and help us all look out for each other.

Stay well!!

~Judy Butler

## Seeds of Faith – Lent-a-Palooza

**Your family's Lenten journey starts here.**

Join us for Lent-a-Palooza on  
Sunday, February 22 from 12:30pm  
– 3:30pm at  **Chestnut Ridge**  
Camp and Retreat Center

Ever wondered how to mark the sacred season of Lent at home with kids? Come join us! You and your kids will create tools you can use at home for prayer, scripture reading, service, and other spiritual practices throughout Lent.

This FREE event includes:

- Lunch
- Crafts & Activities
- Storytelling

SCAN HERE



## 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

- Rosalind Hill with health issues. She is Gary Spake's mother.,
- Rick Johnson with health issues. He is friends with Judy Butler and many other church members.
- Locklynn Gribble, preemie in NICU. Her mother is a friend of Judy Butler.
- Paul Beck, with health issues. He is a member of Walnut Grove UMC.
- Rev. Meg Hoffman, battling cancer. She's the director of Seeds of Faith 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.

**Prayer is powerful and we love praying for one another!! If you have a request on the prayer list, we would be grateful for any updates needed. This helps us know how to continue praying and when requests may be removed or celebrated. Please let us know how we can best pray for you and your loved ones.**

### Quilts

Kelly Kiser from Roxboro who is having health issues. She is the daughter of Brenda and Nat Williams and cousin of Judy Parker.

Locklynn Gribble from Statesville, NC who is a newborn with health issues. Locklyn is the daughter of Haley and Sean Gribble. Locklynn's grandmother is a friend of Judy Butler.

(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 1/23 – Katherine Berezny

Saturday 1/24 – Caylen Quigley

Sunday 1/25 – Baylee Patten

Monday 1/26 – Amber Roberson

Tuesday 1/27 – Michelle Lee, Debbie Vuolo

Wednesday 1/28 – Todd Harris, Wesley Milton

Thursday 1/29 – Zachary Creech, Jack DiFabio

Friday 1/30 – Lorraine Hines

Saturday 1/31 – Devon Metcalf, Grey Harris

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](mailto:office@walnutgroveumc.org) so we can update our records.

## STAYING CONNECTED

[WG YouTube](#)

[WG Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

### Serving in Worship

#### January 25th

Acolytes: Samantha Johnson/Ellen Johnson

Greeters: Kennedy Dunlap/Grace Dunlap

Ushers: Phil & Lorraine Hines

Scripture: Kennedy Dunlap

Nursery: Margaret Williams/Mary Emma Roberts

Financial Rep: Tyler Smith

Trustee Open/Close: Michael James

## **February 1st**

Acolytes: Max Kemnitz/Michael Roberts  
Greeters: Phil & Lorraine Hines  
Ushers: Scott & Cheryl Humphrey  
Scripture: Lorraine Parker  
Nursery: Judy Butler/Grace Dunlap  
Financial Rep: Emma Beckham  
Communion Servers: Krystal Robinson/Stacey Spake  
Trustee Open/Close: Patty Maseth

**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**

Sunday, January 25	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church
Monday, January 26	6:30pm Covenant Council meeting
Wed., January 28	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Fri-Sat., January 30-31	Walnut Grove Crafters
Sunday, February 1	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service
Tuesday, February 3	7:00pm Men's Group
Wed., February 4	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Saturday, February 7	5:30pm Doors open for Valentine Fundraiser 6:00pm Dinner and Fellowship
Sunday, February 8	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church
Wed., February 11	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, February 15	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Adult Confirmation
Wed., February 18	6:15pm Soup Dinner 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service Worship Choir (following Ash Wednesday Service)
Friday, February 20	6:00pm – 9:00pm Women’s Retreat – Permission to Pause
Saturday, February 21	8:30am – 3:00pm Women’s Retreat – Permission to Pause
Sunday, February 22	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children’s Church 12:30pm – 3:30pm – Lent-A-Palooza at Camp Chestnut Ridge 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm - 7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Adult Confirmation
Wed., February 25	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Fri-Sat., February 27-28	Walnut Grove Crafters

See You Sunday!!