

In a Nutshell September 25, 2026

I have a friend in seminary who always wears this big cross around his neck. One of the first things I asked him when we became friends was, "Why do you wear that cross?" He gave me a really good reason, and honestly, I haven't thought much about it since. But the other day, I saw him again, and I noticed the cross around his neck. I was in the middle of my own grief, carrying things that felt heavy, and a thought suddenly came into my mind:

"Doesn't that cross ever get heavy?"

At first, I was thinking about the physical weight of the cross around his neck. But the longer I sat with the thought, the more I realized I was putting my own weight onto my friend, and somehow, onto that cross around his neck. I was looking at the cross through the weight of my own grief. That made me stop and ask a different question: What does the cross actually mean for us as believers?

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God."

The cross is not simply a symbol of suffering. It is the place where we see the depth of Christ's love, His obedience, and the power of God to make all things new.

Paul says in Galatians 6:14, "As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is a strange thing to boast about. The cross was an instrument of death, shame, and suffering. Yet Paul sees it as the very thing that has changed everything. Because of the cross, he says, "my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died." The cross changes what we live for. It reminds us that our identity is no longer found in what the world can give us, what we can accomplish, or how we are perceived by others. We belong to Christ. And Paul continues, "What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation." The cross is not merely something Christ endured for us. It is also the place where our old way of living is put to death and a new life begins. Then Philippians 2 takes us back to Jesus Himself. "He humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross."

Jesus did not stumble into the cross. He willingly humbled Himself and obeyed the Father. And perhaps this is where my question about the cross being "heavy" begins to change. Yes, the cross was heavy. Jesus carried the weight of suffering, rejection, sin, and death. Scripture does not minimize that weight. But Jesus did not carry it because He was powerless beneath it. He carried it in obedience and love.

Colossians 2 gives us another glimpse of what happened at the cross. Paul says that God "disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities" and "shamed them publicly by his victory over them through the cross."

What looked like defeat was actually victory. What looked like weakness was the power of God. What looked like death became the doorway to new life. And maybe that is what I needed to remember when I saw my friend wearing that cross. I had looked at it through my grief and thought, Doesn't that cross ever get heavy? But the cross was never meant to tell me that I have to carry everything by myself. The cross tells me that Christ has already carried what I never could.

My grief is real. My burdens are real. There are things in this life that feel unbearably heavy. But the cross reminds me that I do not have to make my own suffering into my savior. I do not have to carry the weight of the world on my shoulders. Christ carried the cross. And because He did, I can bring my burdens to Him. The cross calls me to surrender, not to pretend that suffering isn't heavy, but to remember that I am not the one who ultimately has to bear it all.

So when I see that cross around my friend's neck again, maybe I will think about it differently. I may still see a piece of wood or metal hanging there. But I hope I will see something more: a reminder of Christ's humility, His obedience, His sacrifice, His victory, and the new life He gives us. The cross was heavy. But Christ was faithful. And because of the cross, I don't have to carry my grief alone.

Emily Phenice, Duke Intern

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Looking Ahead to Sunday Worship

Scripture for Sunday: Luke 10:38-42 and John 12:1-8

Sermon Title: *Three Spirits of Legacy*

As we look ahead to Sunday, I encourage you to read the scripture ahead of time as part of your devotional time and preparation for Sunday. One passage of scripture can easily take us in many directions. Use the sermon title to help guide your reflections. Spend time in Lectio Divina with the scripture as part of your daily devotions. There are lots of videos on YouTube on how to participate in Lectio Divina. Here is a meditative video that is instructive to be a resource to you –

Meditative How To - Lectio Divina

Save The Date – Charge Conference -- Sunday, October 11!

Charge Conference is Sunday, October 11th at 3:00pm. Walnut Grove UMC will be hosting this year. This is open to all members of the church! Please join us as we continue to grow together in Christ!

OCIM Update

Thank you for your generosity and support for the Food Pantry at OCIM (Orange Congregations in Missions). On August 31 and on September 8 our church donated 213 pounds and 111 pounds of food. Our total for the year is 2583 pounds of food since January.

There is still a need for canned fruits, apple sauce, pork & beans, canned potatoes, jars of spaghetti sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise, and personal items such as shampoo and dishwashing soap.

Once again thank you for your continued support of the Food Pantry of Orange Congregations in Missions (OCIM).

~Brenda and Jimmy Berry

Legacy Building Sunday

Spread the word! This **Sunday, September 27**, we will celebrate Legacy Building Sunday with Rev. Lynn Benson, Director of Legacy Giving at the NC United Methodist Foundation preaching in Sunday worship and offering a free estate/wills workshop following church. Free lunch and childcare will be provided.

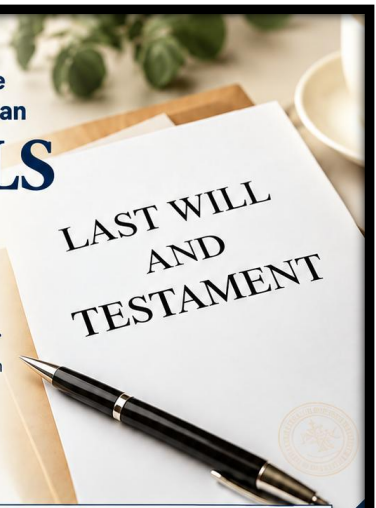
The Estate/Wills Workshop will be held right after church on Sunday, September 27th. As the brochure indicates, a lawyer and CPA will be available to answer questions. For those of us reaching (or well embedded in) our golden years, a fresh will and estate plan insight can be very helpful at avoiding costly pitfalls.

To learn more valuable reasons to have a will, please join us as the United Methodist Foundation leads an

ESTATE/WILLS Workshop

While knowing your state's laws is key, you don't have to be an expert to write your will.

Rev. Lynn B. Benson, Director of Legacy Giving from your United Methodist Foundation, will lead this workshop as you begin to craft your wishes into a legal document. A local estate planning attorney and CPA will be included in the Q&A panel discussion during the workshop.



**WHEN:**
Sunday, September 27
11:45–1:10 PM

**WHERE:**
Walnut Grove UMC
7215 Walnut Grove Church Rd
Hurdle Mills, NC 27541

**COST:**
FREE

**WHAT:**
A light meal and beverages will be offered

REGISTRATION:
Please register by contacting the church office by **Tuesday, September 22, at 12 PM.**

 Email the church office at
office@walnutgroveumc.org

 Sign up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall

 Call the church office at
(919) 732-5722



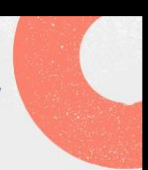
THE UNITED METHODIST
FOUNDATION
OF NORTH CAROLINA

For more information, please contact
office@walnutgroveumc.org

Chess Club

Walnut Grove Monthly

CHESS CLUB





4 PM

STARTING OCT. 4
ONCE A MONTH

SEE DANIEL JOHNSON FOR MORE DETAILS

All are welcome to this once-a-month chess club. Bring a friend. Come if you are an expert chess player or don't know how to play at all. We'll gather once a month on the first Sunday of the month starting Oct. 4 at 4 PM in the church fellowship hall! We can't wait!

Sunday Night Gatherings

Our Sunday Night Gatherings are starting back up on October 4th and we need your support! There are several opportunities left to serve our Walnut Grove families too! All proceeds from our Sunday night meals go into our Sunday night meal fund. Receipts for the Sunday night meal submitted to the church office using the reimbursable form will be reimbursed from the Sunday night fund. Sunday school classes, committees, and other groups are welcome to sign up. We need your help! Use the sign up genius link below to help us fill up the meal calendar.



[Sign Up to Cook Meals for our Fall Sunday Night Gatherings](#)

Fall Bible Study



SUNDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

TOPIC: ARMOR OF GOD
RESERVE YOUR BOOK TODAY FOR \$10 EACH
STUDY RUNS FOR 6 WEEKS
STARTS SUNDAY, OCT. 4.
DATES INCLUDE OCTOBER 4, 15, 22
AND NOV. 1, 8, & 15
FROM 6-7 PM
PLEASE SIGN UP TO ORDER YOUR BOOK BY EMAILING
LDUNLAP@NCCUMC.ORG

Join us for our fall Bible Study! For this particular study, the book has sections for you to write in, so the book will be yours to keep. Each book costs \$10. If the cost is a hindrance, please let Pastor Laura know, and we'll make it available for free.



Walnut Grove UMC HARVEST FESTIVAL

Saturday
October 17th

***This & That pre-priced table
10:30-1:30**

***Lunch & Take Out: 11:30**

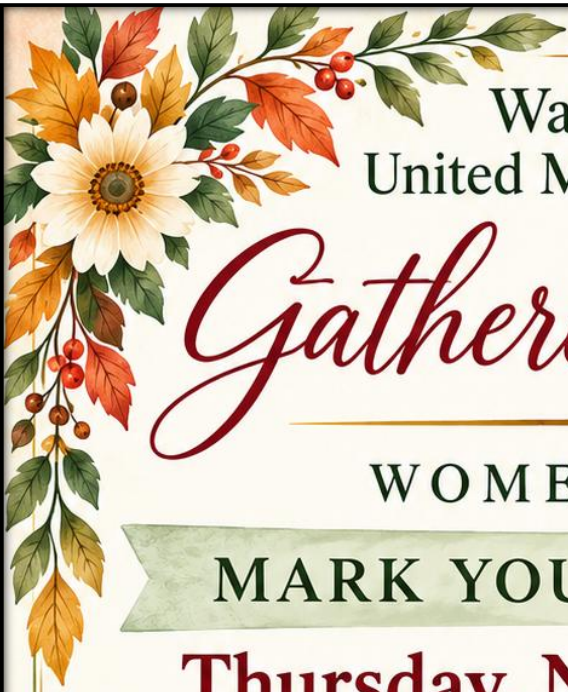
***Live Auction: 1:30**

**BBQ: \$12.00 lb.
Stew: \$12.00 qt.**

**LUNCH PLATES INCLUDE:
BBQ, STEW, SLAW, HUSHPUPPIES,
DRINK AND A DESSERT**

**ADULT PLATE: \$15.00
CHILD'S PLATE: \$6.00
8YRS AND YOUNGER**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
7215 Walnut Grove Church Road**



Walnut Grove
United Methodist Church

FAITH
FRIENDSHIP
FELLOWSHIP
SERVICE

Gathered in Grace

WOMEN'S GROUP

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Thursday, November 5, 2026

Two Gatherings – Choose the Time That Works for You

10:00 a.m.

or

7:00 p.m.

A Gathering of Gratitude

Our November gathering will focus on
GRATITUDE — taking time to recognize
God's blessings, encourage one another,
and give thanks together.

More information to come!



RSVP by 10/31 to Sue Powell

at suepowell0504@gmail.com
text or call 919-819-0344

*"Give thanks
to the Lord,
for he is good;
his love endures
forever."*

PSALM 107:1

ALL ARE WELCOME!



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. Your generosity helps us continue serving Christ and reaching out to our community in mission and faithful witness.



JOYS & CONCERNS

Prayer List

- Frances Walters with health issues
- Sebastian Anderson with health issues
- Jenna Davis and family in the loss of her grandmother. Jenna is a member of our church family.
- Family of Keegan Brooks from Durham. He is the 9-year-old who was hit by a car while riding his bike and passed away. His sister is a friend of Erin Dillard and his niece is a friend of Kinsleigh's.
- Timmy Parker with health issues. He is Barry Parker's brother.
- Tom Rutledge, in rehab with health issues. He is a member of our church family.
- Jean Mangum, recovering from a fall. She is a member of our church family.
- Rodney Overcash who is having health issues. He is Jolinda Overcash Swiggett's brother.
- Herbert Cates, health concerns. He is a member of our church family.
- JoAnn Cates with health issues. She is a member of our church family.
- Rev. Meg Hoffman, battling cancer. She's the director of Seeds of Faith at Camp Chestnut Ridge.
- John Hougom from Hurdle Mills, who is being treated for lung cancer. John is the brother of Sonja Tilley and brother-in-law of Wesley Tilley.
- Rev. Pat Sykes and Rev. Mike Sykes with health concerns
- Gene Parker who has ongoing health concerns and was recently discharged from the hospital. His wife, Kay Parker, is a member of WGIMC.
- Jaxson Bates injured in a traffic accident. He is a friend of Mary Emma Roberts.
- Scott Moore, diagnosed with leukemia. He is the brother-in-law of Emma Beckham.
- Merrill Messick, who is Beverly Huey's father and Mary Dietz, her aunt.
- Scott Hackler with cancer diagnosis. He is a friend of Jolinda Swiggett.
- Linwood Lovitte, who is a member of our church family.

- Jessy Privette from Wendell has been diagnosed with cancer. Jesse is the girlfriend of Jeffrey James, who is the son of Anita James and brother of Michael James.
- Leo Brooks Populorum from Pittsboro, has very serious health issues. Leo is the grandson of John and Judy Guibert who are friends of Beverly Huey.
- 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
- Liz Matthews, friend of Katie Whitaker
- 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.

Send A Card

Jenna Davis (Sympathy), 7200 Mary Hall Road, Rougemont, NC 27572

Prayer Quilts

Erin Whitaker from Greenville, SC who is a 1-year-old girl with eye cancer having treatments to try to save her eye. She is the great granddaughter of Jean Mangum.

David Hesslmeyer, a fire Captain in Buies Creek's fire department and works in Emergency Preparedness, has had 2 brain bleeds. David is making progress at this time. He is a friend of Judy Butler.

Henry Ashley from Durham who is recovering from a fall. He is a member of Walnut Grove UMC and the husband of Iris Ashley.

(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.)

From The Mailbox

Dear Prayers & Squares Ministry,

When Bennett brought the prayer quilt for our son, Eric, who is recovering from burns sustained working on a structure fire last month, we felt truly blessed. Prayers have kept him and all of us moving forward. Tim & I have tied our knots and knowing that prayers are physically covering him is such a comfort to our hearts & minds.

Thank you for reaching out and covering those in need of prayer's healing power. God Bless You.

The Godsey Family – Eric, Bobbi, Tim & Paula

Dear Brenda/Prayers & Squares Ministry,

Thank you so much for your wonderful gift. I keep it near me at all times. I'm sure it will be part of my healing process. Mary has been my wife's dearest friend for life and always knows the best way to heal. I hope to visit you one day soon so I can share a day at your church. Thank you again for your kindness, Peter Laurence

Birthdays

Friday 9/25 – Anita James, Emily Privette

Sunday 9/27 – Cathy Boling, Claiborne Roberts, Jackson Rogers

Tuesday 9/29 – Marcia Compton, Sara Beth Campbell

Wednesday 9/30 – Amy Holleman, Amy Paarker

Thursday 10/1 – Mandy Kemnitz, Ann Creech, Duane Tilley

Friday 10/2 – Patricia Johnson, Tommy Blalock

Saturday 10/3 – John Oakley

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

September 27th

Acolytes: Isabella Conway/Samantha Johnson

Greeters: Phil & Lorraine Hines

Ushers: Scott & Cheryl Humphrey

Scripture: N/A

Nursery: Pam Kimrey/Ashley Parker/Grayson Nading

Trustee Open/Close: Dan Bledsoe

Financial Rep: Brenda Berry

October 4th

Acolytes: Ellen Johnson/Kinsleigh Dillard

Greeters: Beverly Huey/Courtney Humphrey

Ushers: Barry & Cheryl L Parker

Scripture: Emma Beckham

Nursery: Debby Donnelly/Mary Emma Roberts

Trustee Open/Close: Cheryl Humphrey

Financial Rep: Rick Huey

Communion Servers: Fred & Erica Nading

PM Nursery: Cathy Boling/Ashley Parker

Mowing Schedule

September 26 - Jimmy Berry

October 3 - Bruce Richardson

October 10 - Todd Harris

October 17 - Mike Parker

October 24 - Clay Parker

October 31- Barry Walker

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

Upcoming Events

Fri-Sat., September 25-26 Walnut Grove Crafters

Sunday, September 27 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service
 10:45am Children's Church
 Legacy Building Sunday following church service
 United Methodist Foundation (Lunch & presentation)

Wed, September 30 6:30pm Worship Band
 7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, October 4 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service
 4:00pm Chess Club
 5:15pm Dinner
 6:00pm KidsKrew/Youth/Bible Study

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

Sunday, October 11 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service
 10:45am Children's Church
 3:00pm Charge Conference
 5:15pm Dinner
 6:00pm KidsKrew/Youth/Bible Study

Wed, October 14 6:30pm Worship Band
 7:00pm Worship Choir

Friday, October 16 8:00am Harvest Festival potato & onion prep

Saturday, October 17 **HARVEST FESTIVAL**



Sunday, October 18 9:30am Sunday School
 10:30am Worship Service
 5:15pm Dinner
 6:00pm KidsKrew/Youth/Bible Study

Wed, October 21 6:30pm Worship Band
 7:00pm Worship Choir

Fri-Sat., October 23-24 Walnut Grove Crafters

Sunday, October 25	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 3:00pm SPRC Meeting
Wed, October 28	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Saturday, October 31	3:00-5:00pm Trunk or Treat

See You Sunday!!