

Refuge

*Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.
~ Psalm 62: 8*

Trust comes first. Then the heart pouring.

At my church's youth winter retreat, which just happened this past weekend, there is always a candlelit service on Saturday night. It is a beautifully contemplative, worshipful environment after a very full day of activities. This year we had an especially seasoned group of adult volunteers going, with, collectively, decades of experience in working with youth. The young people seemed to sense this, and there was a lot of reaching out to the adults during the service, with teens asking for prayer and hugs, as well as being comfortable with close companionship while sitting silently.

Trust comes first. Then the heart pouring.

A lot of quiet conversation goes on during this service. A teen might be sitting alone and an adult sits quietly beside them, and if they feel led, the adult might ask, *how's it going*, and the teen might feel comfortable actually saying how it's going, and a conversation might take place in which the young person unburdens themselves and the adult, praying in their head for guidance all the while, responds to the best of their ability and provides compassionate listening and loving encouragement.

Trust comes first. Then the heart pouring.

We trust God, or we try hard to trust God, and we pour out our hearts to God and tell God everything, and God holds tenderly that which we share, and we feel less alone, and that helps us trust God more, which leads us to more sharing, and the cycle perpetuates itself. God is our refuge, our safe space.

We provide that same refuge for others. Trust grows, we grow, and love perpetuates itself.

Thanks be to God for this love. May we receive it; may we give it; may we be it.

~ Lindy Thompson

Pray

God, we thank you for being our trusted refuge. May we be the same for others, in your name and for your sake. Amen.

~ Shared by Leigh McFalls

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Safe Sanctuaries Training

What is Safe Sanctuaries? Safe Sanctuaries is an overt expression in making congregations safe places where children, youth, and elders may experience the abiding love of God and fellowship within the community of faith.

Why do I need to come? - Even if you have been trained in the past, this time will be a refresher. If you haven't been, you'll want to come learn procedures and best practices we will have in place to keep our church family safe.

For Whom? If you volunteer in youth, chaperones, VBS, or plan to volunteer (this includes all activities), please make every effort to attend.

When? - Jan. 21st from 3-5 PM in the church fellowship

Our Duke pastoral intern, Lauren Birch, will be leading the session. If you have questions, please contact the church office.

Calling All Committee Chairs in January

Friends,

We are needing to change the time of our meeting on the 28th to 4:30 to set the calendar. The SPRC will be at Camp Chestnut Ridge until 4 for a gathering and we will need some to drive back! Thanks for understanding. Mark your calendars! –Laura

Please check out opportunities to learn and grow in January in your leadership roles! Make every effort to have a meeting with your committee in January and brainstorm priorities, ideas, and commitments for the year. Please set dates for committee meetings for the 2024 year at your January meetings. We will meet together as a church to put everything on the calendar on Jan. 28th at 4:30PM, so please plan to attend this meeting along with our first covenant council meeting of the year on Monday, January 29th, at 7:00 PM.

The Church Needs YOU!

Do you have an interest in serving within the church? We would love to have you! The nursery needs volunteers to watch children during the 10:30 service, Sunday Nights Together (6:00pm when in session) and at various times during church events.

We also need volunteers during worship to greet, usher, read scripture and serve communion.

To sign up or if you have questions, let the church office or Stephanie Smith know. Once signed up, Stephanie will give you a quick tutorial.

Newly Forming Evangelism Team

Are you interested in evangelism? Want to reach out to others and visitors we have at church? Want to help with follow-up when we have guests and share ideas to help us to continue to grow? Please see Pastor Laura. We are hoping to form a team soon and would love for you to be a part of this new work!

2024 Mowing Schedule

We are in the deep freeze of winter at this writing, but soon Spring will arrive and the grass will begin to grow! If you are interested in signing up to mow the church yard, please contact Cheryl Humphrey at cherylhumphreydesign@gmail.com or text 919-730-9365 by 3/15/24. The cemetery and old parsonage yard are mowed professionally so this is just the areas around the church and fellowship hall. We begin the first weekend of April and mow weekly through the last weekend in October. You will need to provide your own mower, weed eater and blower, if used. Thanks for helping to keep our beloved Walnut Grove beautiful!

Sunday Nights Return in February

We are starting back Sunday nights in February after a month of planning in January. We'll meet at the same time 5:30-6:00 dinner, 6:00-7:00 Kids Krew, Bible Study, and Youth Group. Nursery will be provided during the 6-7 hour for families with preschoolers and infants. Come join in on the fun! If you can't make it every week, no worries-we're happy to have you when you are able. We'll start back Feb. 18th and go to March 17th for the winter/spring time. Make sure to add Sunday Nights Together to your calendar as we grow closer to God and grow together as a church family!

We need your help! Sign up to help lead Kids Krew (a lesson will be provided). Please click the link below if you want to help with Kids Krew: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044FAFAD29AFFF2-46901879-kids>

Also, please consider signing up to bring food one night. Meals could be provided by families, Sunday school classes, or leadership teams. For questions about the meals, contact Lorraine Hines at 919-619-1090 or lhines0130@gmail.com. You can sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044FAFAD29AFFF2-sunday1>

Lake Junaluska Music and Worship Arts Week

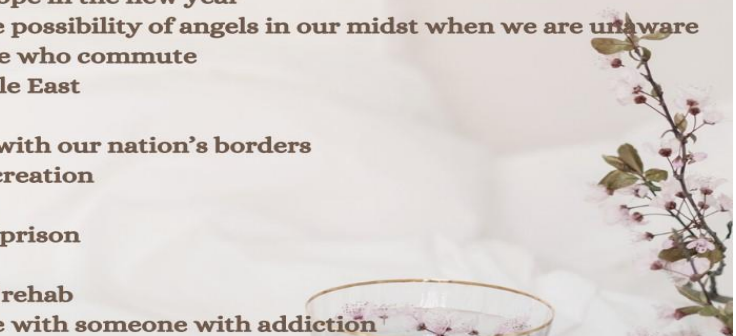
It's never too early to make summer plans! We still have a couple of spaces left to attend this action-packed week of music and worship (even though the early bird registration deadline has passed). Children (rising 4th graders and up), youth and adults are eligible to attend. Lake Junaluska Assembly is located in the mountains of North Carolina near Waynesville. We will leave on Sunday, June 23rd and return on Friday, June 28th.

This is an annual event designed for worship leaders, musicians, pastors, and singers of all ages. We attend worship services, choir rehearsals, concerts a youth talent show and music-related classes to name a few. There are activities for children and youth including crafts, games, swimming, walks around the lake and, of course...the ice cream shop! Our group will stay in a large house overlooking the lake. If you or your child/youth is interested in attending, contact Leigh McFalls at 919-818-3317 for more information.

Prayers

We know the power of prayer in our lives and in our world. God continues to heal, perform miracles, and offer grace and mercy in unexpected ways. We give thanks for the ways the Holy Spirit moves among us. Provided below is a prayer list for the month of January. We'll have a new list each month with prayer prompts for us each to grow in our intercessory prayers and broaden our circles to those we might not consider in our daily prayers. Use this list, pass it on, and let it guide you closer to others and to God in 2024!

January Prayers

- 1st Those preparing for new beginnings.
 - 2nd Those who are expecting a baby in the new year.
 - 3rd Teachers returning to school.
 - 4th Students returning back to school
 - 5th- Bus drivers that keep children safe to and from school.
 - 6th- For God to be revealed in our lives as we celebrate the gift of Jesus as the magi did years ago.
 - 7th- Coaches on sports team
 - 8th- Life coaches and counselors
 - 9th- New friendships to be formed
 - 10th- To be supportive to friends and family
 - 11th - Our church family
 - 12th- Our shut-ins
 - 13th -Those who are sick and facing surgery
 - 14th- Those who are starting new jobs
 - 15th- Those returning to college/higher education
 - 16th- For all those dealing with Flu, COVID, or RSV
 - 17th- For our homes to be places of peace
 - 18th- For those who are experiencing homelessness
 - 19th- For God to be our peace in the new year
 - 20th- For God to guide us in hope in the new year
 - 21st- For God to open us to the possibility of angels in our midst when we are unaware
 - 22nd- For safe travels for those who commute
 - 23rd- For stability in the Middle East
 - 24th- For refugees
 - 25th- For guidance in dealing with our nation's borders
 - 26th- To be good stewards of creation
 - 27th- For those in prison
 - 28th- For those coming out of prison
 - 29th- For those in rehab
 - 30th- For those coming out of rehab
 - 31st- For families that struggle with someone with addiction
- 

Tithes and Offerings

We have four 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 online giving app "Vanco Mobile".

JOYS & CONCERNS

Prayer List

- Herring Family (Linda and husband Dortch), Dortch has been in Duke Hospital for 3 weeks with dementia while they try to find him a permanent facility to go to. Dortch is Jane Sparks' brother-in-law.
- Betty Sue Hyder (cancer treatments), Margaret Williams' sister and Sharyn Gates' aunt
- Pat Sykes
- Debbie Haywood (cancer treatments), friend of Ann and Bruce Richardson.
- Dana Kimrey. He is the brother of Lorraine Hines.

Send A Card

Sarah and Ben Barber (Recovering from a miscarriage), 114 Sarver Avenue, Madison, TN 37115

Quilts

Nick Wimmer from Winston-Salem who ruptured an artery in his leg and has had multiple surgeries to save his leg. The quilt is requested by Tricia Grubbs who is one of our crafters.

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

Upcoming Birthdays

Friday 1/19 – Sara Bordeaux, Owen Merritt

Saturday 1/20 – June Bumgarner, Michael Dow, Matt Roberts

Sunday 1/21 – Pam Rodgers

Tuesday 1/23 – Katherine Berezny

Wednesday 1/24 – Caylen Quigley

Thursday 1/25 – Baylee Patten

Friday 1/26 – Amber S. Roberson

Saturday 1/27 – Michelle Lee, Debbie Vuolo

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](#)

[Sign UpHere! For Online Sign-Up](#)

Serving in Worship

January 21st

Acolytes: Isabella Conway/Kennedy Dunlap

Greeters: Margaret Anne Dow/Dale Smithson

Ushers: Jimmy & Brenda Berry

Nursery: Stephanie Smith/Cheryl L Parker

Scripture: Kara Roberts

Trustee Open/Close: Sharyn Gates

January 28th

Acolytes: Isaac Conway/Magnus Kemnitz

Greeters: Pat Beck/Jenny Blalock

Ushers: Cathy & Chris Boling

Nursery: Faith Parker/Margaret Williams

Scripture: Cheryl L. Parker

Trustee Open/Close: Jacob Blankenship

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 21	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 3:00pm – 5:00pm Safe Sanctuary Training – fellowship hall
Wednesday, January 24	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Friday-Sat., Jan. 26-27	Walnut Grove Crafters
Sunday, January 28	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church 4:30pm Calendaring session for committee chairs
Monday, January 29	7:00pm Covenant Council meeting

Wednesday, January 31	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Sunday, February 4	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service
Wednesday, February 7	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Saturday, February 10	5:30pm Valentine's Dinner
Sunday, February 11	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church
Wednesday, February 14	11:00am Mary Martha Busy Ladies 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service Worship Choir (following Ash Wednesday Service)
Sunday, February 18	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 4:30pm Worship Choir (Easter) 5:30pm Dinner 6:00-7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Bible Study, Nursery
Wednesday, February 21	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Friday-Sat., Feb. 23-24	Walnut Grove Crafters
Sunday, February 25	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church 4:30pm Worship Choir (Easter) 5:30pm Dinner 6:00-7:00pm Kids Krew, Youth, Bible Study, Nursery
Wednesday, February 28	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir

See You Sunday!!