

A sixth-grade girl sings with all her heart the Meghan Moroney song, "Beautiful Things." Her powerful voice and presence make you wonder: where else will this young lady sing someday? Dressed-up students huddle around microphones, waiting for their turn to sing. A full auditorium cheers the students on with love and support. Meanwhile, their beaming chorus teacher plays the selected music on the piano while mouthing the words to the songs so the students can follow her lead.

It's just one glimpse into her daily faithfulness as a teacher. After the concert, this beloved teacher shares the joy of teaching her students, some for the semester and some for the year. "I've been teaching for forty years," she says to a room full of applause. A Monday night middle school auditorium is filled with grateful parents for this teacher's gifts. This teacher instills a love of learning as God calls her to this public school.

Teachers, we are grateful for you! Whether you are just starting out in your first decade of teaching, mid-career, or near the end, there are ways you live into your calling that often go unseen. Kids are not always angelic. Parents might be demanding. Hours can be long and stress-filled. Then there are broader challenges.

Recent discussions about teachers' salaries in NC include a proposal for an eleven percent raise for new teachers. This is a step in the right direction for recruiting teachers in NC, a state that currently ranks near the bottom nationally in teacher salaries. Still, more is needed to retain and support our more seasoned teachers. We want schools to have proper funding regardless of zip code too.

Why is this a concern of the church? We are called to love our neighbors and care for the vulnerable. This includes children. We want all of God's children to thrive and for teachers and school staff to thrive. Our baptismal vows call us to join in where God is already at work, to be steadfast in sharing justice and mercy. As people called to social holiness, we are known by our missional heart.

To quote our historic support of public schools as United Methodists from our Book of Resolutions, "The public school is the primary route through which most children enter into full participation in our economic, political, and community life. As a consequence of inequities in our society, we have a moral responsibility to support, strengthen, and reform public schools." (*Resolution 3165*) When schools and teachers are under-supported, it becomes not just a local issue but a matter of justice.

Loving our neighbor is not a private affair but part of our public faith. When we speak up, we share our support for our teachers and public education. Addressing this moral matter will impact classrooms today and generations to come.

Sometimes truth is captured in unexpected places. Megan Moroney's lyrics sung by a talented sixth grader make me think of education as a *beautiful thing*. The chorus gets to the challenge –

*Words can make a mockingbird forget they're born to sing
Lies can break a fragile heart
And doubt can crush your dreams*

But, honey, just take it from me

The world is hard on beautiful things. (Lyrics from Megan Moroney's "Beautiful Things")

Education is indeed a beautiful thing. It is worth protecting. I encourage us to take action. Contact your representatives by email, letter, or phone call in support of teachers and public education. This week, I am writing to our representatives to express gratitude for the proposed increase for new teachers while also addressing concern about salaries for teachers with more years of service. Below are some resources for further engagement and ways to take action. Let's get to work, faithful servants of Walnut Grove UMC!

<https://www.ncae.org/about-nae/media-center/press-releases/north-carolina-ranks-dead-last-51st-public-school-funding-report>

<https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/resolutions-adopted-by-general-conference-charlotte/united-states-public-education-and-the-church-3165>

<https://www.ncae.org/advocating-change/2025-26-legislative-priorities>

<https://guides.library.unt.edu/gic-politics-elected-officials/Letter>

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Members/CountyRepresentation/Orange>

~Pastor Laura

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Celebration of Lauren Welch Birch's Ministry, May 17th

Join us after Sunday morning worship on May 17th for a church cookout to celebrate and say farewell to Lauren Welch Birch and her family. Hotdogs and hamburgers provided, please bring a side dish or dessert to share!



**OBITUARY WRITING
WORKSHOP**
HOSTED BY: SARA WILLIAMS

**MAY 28
6PM**

Endswell
A MODERN FUNERAL HOME

The advertisement features a background of a textured, abstract painting in shades of blue, brown, and yellow. The text is overlaid on this background. The main title 'OBITUARY WRITING WORKSHOP' is in large, bold, brown letters with a white outline. Below it, 'HOSTED BY: SARA WILLIAMS' is in white, bold, sans-serif font. In the bottom right corner, the date and time 'MAY 28 6PM' are written in large, bold, brown letters with a white outline. In the bottom left corner, the logo for 'Endswell A MODERN FUNERAL HOME' is displayed, featuring a stylized white flower icon above the text.

Worship with us in May



Sunday School:
9:30am



Worship:
10:30am

Join us each Sunday as we celebrate,
worship, and grow together.



May 3 – Homecoming Sunday

Worship as we welcome back Rev. Gordon Christen
and his family.

*Stay for lunch after service and
bring a covered dish to share!*



May 10 – Children's Sunday (Mother's Day)

A special service led by our children!
They will sing, serve as liturgists, and
share the good news of Jesus Christ.



May 17 – Celebration Sunday

Honoring Lauren Welch Birch, our beloved
Minister of Discipleship.

This will be Lauren's last Sunday at Walnut Grove.

Join us after worship for a cookout with
hotdogs & hamburgers.

*Please bring a side dish or dessert to share as we
celebrate Lauren, Andrew, and Lenora.*



May 24 – Pentecost Sunday

Wear RED to celebrate!

We will also honor our graduates and give thanks
for the gift of this milestone in their lives.




May 31 – Trinity Sunday

Fifth Sunday Fellowship!

Join us for one combined Sunday School class
at 9:30 AM in the fellowship hall for a
fun time of learning together!



Walnut Grove UMC

All are welcome – come as you are! 

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

- Jaxson Bates injured in a traffic accident. He is a friend of Mary Emma Roberts.
- Family of Julian Combs who passed away in a traffic accident. He is a friend of Mary Emma Roberts.
- Family of Karen Dunlap, friends of Carol Gerbracht
- Family of Stephen Luzinas, friends of Carol Gerbracht
- Barb Atz from Hopwood, PA who recently had triple by-pass surgery. She is a friend of Emma Beckham.
- 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.
- Sam Woods, who is facing health issues.
- Wayne Berry, who is facing health issues.
- Family of Tyler White who died tragically in a car accident.
- Wayne Dewberry, who is facing surgery after a recent fall.
- Scott Hackler with cancer diagnosis. He is a friend of Jolinda Swiggett.
- Angela Lloyd from Efland, NC who has been diagnosed with breast cancer. Angela is the wife of Craig Lloyd and is the sister-in-law of Cheryl Humphrey.
- Herbert and JoAnn Cates, particularly JoAnn at this time, but both have health issues. They are members of our church family.
- Lynwood Lovitte, who is a member of our church family.
- Katherine (Kitty) Robinson Hawkins from Hurdle Mills who is having health issues. She is the wife of Lathan Hawkins and friend of Judy Parker.
- 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.
- Carolyn White, complications due to extended chemotherapy treatments.

- Rick Johnson with health issues. He is friends with Judy Butler and many other church members.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- Jerry Forrester, bilateral lung cancer
- 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.

Birthdays

Friday 5/8 – Jamie Dean

Saturday 5/9 – Worth Sparks, Sheldon Perkins

Sunday 5/10 – Brian Rath, Mac Cole, Debbie Gates

Tuesday 5/12 – Cynthia Berry Horton

Thursday 5/14 – Randall Benton

Friday 5/15 – Julie Sparks

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

May 10th

Acolytes: Isaac Conway/Ellen Johnson

Greeters: Grace Dunlap/Kennedy Dunlap

Ushers: Callie Smith/Charlotte James

Scripture: The Kids of WGUMC

Nursery: Cheryl L Parker/Cathy Boling

Trustee Open/Close: Patty Maseth

Financial Rep: Lou Rutledge

May 17th

Acolytes: Wyatt James/Gracie Hall

Greeters: Jenny Blalock/Margaret Anne Dow

Ushers: Courtney Humphrey/Kennedy Dunlap

Scripture: Emma Beckham

Nursery: Ashley Parker/Krystal Robinson/Grayson Nading

Trustee Open/Close: Michael James

Financial Rep: Emma Beckham

Mowing Schedule

May 9 - Jimmy Berry

May 16 - Bruce Richardson

May 23 - Todd Harris

May 30 - Mike Parker

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

Sunday, May 10

9:30am Sunday School

10:30am Worship Service - Mother's Day – Children's Sunday

Monday, May 11

7:00pm Scholarship Committee meeting

Tuesday, May 12

7:00pm Methodist Men

Wednesday, May 13

6:30pm Worship Band

7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, May 17

9:30am Sunday School

10:30am Worship Service

11:45am Celebration Cookout for Lauren Welch Birch

Wednesday, May 20

6:30pm Worship Band

7:00pm Worship Choir

Sunday, May 24

9:30am Sunday School

10:30am Worship Service and Graduate Recognition

10:45am Children's Church

Tuesday, May 26

7:00pm Methodist Men

Wednesday, May 27 6:30pm Worship Band
7:00pm Worship Choir

Fri-Sat., May 29-30 Walnut Grove Crafters

Sunday, May 31 9:00am Doughnuts/Coffee for everyone!! (provided by Methodist Men)
9:30am Sunday School Opening - Joint Sunday School (Adults)
10:30am Worship Service

See You Sunday!!