

Winstead Connection



Pastor Patrick Murphy

Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. -1 Corinthians 15:58

"New year, new me," some say. But truth be told a lot stays the same. Most of us don't wake up on New Year's Day an entirely changed person. Perhaps we wake up with some renewed motivation and anticipation for what 2026 can be, but the world is much the same as it was in 2025. Not every wound is healed. Anxiety persists about the state of things. Regrets and grief linger. Some things change; a lot stays the same. Life goes on.

As Christians we don't flinch at this reality. Why? Because Christians do not despair time. We don't live naïvely as if a sudden 180 or stroke of genius or act of holiness will awaken the world to God. If that were the case, it would've happened before now!

Instead the Church believes that God gives us all the time we need to live the faith of Jesus in our personal and public lives. We covenant to strive daily, yearly, to take up the cross and follow him. To put it another way the truest witness we give to Jesus is by being as Paul commands the Christians in Corinth to be: "steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

Sometimes it may feel as though little we say or do brings change around us, even within ourselves. But the change of Christ, the change the Church is called to embody, is incremental. It's a series of small adjustments and transformations over the course of a lifetime that matters most.

It's all too easy to wish for a big transformational moment or gift that will change our circumstances and make things better. "If only," we say. "Once we get over this hump," we tell ourselves, *then* we can get back to making a difference or growing or whatever.

Wrong! *Now* is the time to be steadfast. *Now* is the time to assert who we are as Christ's Church. Because the only time we have in which to live the way of Jesus is *now*.

Friends, change is inevitable. So is the realization that a lot stays the same. It's how we *respond* to those realities that matters. And about how deeply we trust the Lord to be with us through it all. Much depends on God, but God has also entrusted this life and its work to us.

We can choose *right now* what kind of year 2026 will be for Winstead United Methodist Church. Why don't we resolve to labor for deeper relationships, a greater love for the Bible, a more dedicated rhythm of prayer, a sincerer commitment to serving our community and the poor here in Wilson. Let's enter 2026 "steadfast, immovable, and resolved to excel in the work of the Lord."

I'll see you out there!



*Marty Johnson,
Minister of Children & Youth
336-402-5000*

4th Annual Silent Auction

I wish to thank everyone in our church family for your great support of our fourth annual Christmas Basket Silent Auction. As usual the auction was a huge success. This is one of the youth's major fundraisers. We were blessed by your generosity and raised over \$2,400. The youth are so blessed and grateful for your generosity!!

A special thank you to everyone who created a gift basket. Each basket obviously was filled with love, faith and blessings!

Again, thank you so very much for your generosity and Happy New Year from the youth and children!

Here are the winners of the Christmas baskets:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Outdoor Travel | Fred Hight |
| • Beach House | Randy Marshburn |
| • Christmas Quilt | Debbie Williams |
| • Grow Where You Are Planted | Denise Lamm |
| • Have Tea With Me | Karen Rowley |
| • Christmas Basket | Linda Lane |
| • Christmas Night With Santa | Zane Ruotolo |
| • Peanut Brittle | Jake Wolfe |

Annual Christmas Party

A very special thank you to all who were involved and brought finger food or desserts for our annual church-wide Christmas party. Make sure you see the pictures from the party on page 3.

We started the evening with food, fellowship and a final time for making your bid on a Christmas basket. At 5:00 pm sharp, the bidding ended and the Christmas party began with Christmas carols in the sanctuary.

After singing some Christmas carols, the music turned to more festive favorites with "Jingle Bells," "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and the ever popular "12 Days of Christmas." And there were several games – some involving reindeer.

During the singing of "Rudolph," we began to hear some sleigh bells... and lo, and behold, Santa Claus showed up.

The evening was highlighted with the telling of the Christmas story from Luke: Chapter 2. Thank you to everyone who participated and thank you to Dwayne Jones, for reading and sharing the true Christmas story of the birth of Christ!

Blessings to all and to all a good night!!

Christmas Cookie Walk

Thank you so much to all who brought cookies for our annual Christmas Cookie Walk. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to raise \$324.25 to help with the cost for the Books for Vick this year. The Youth and Hand in Hand Ministry wish to thank you so much for your help in spreading joy to the lives of these children!

Blessings To All!!

ECHO YOUTH SCHEDULE

January 4

No Youth

January 11

5:30 - 7:00 pm

After Christmas Christmas
Party @ West Nash

January 18

5:30 - 7:00 pm

@ West Nash

January 25

5:30 - 7:00 pm

@ West Nash



Women of Winstead by Sanda Hight

WOW (Women of Winstead) continues to provide help for church activities as they arise. The WOW basket for the youth silent auction, which was titled "Have Tea with Me," was a delightful collection of tea-related items. Funds raised by the youth silent auction will help to support youth activities in the new year.



Please remember to pick up your copy of the Upper Room devotional guide, which can be found in the narthex. The Upper Room is provided for the congregation by WOW.

The next WOW meeting will be held on Saturday, January 17 at 10:00 at the church. All women of the church are encouraged to attend.

Grace Notes by Joyce Wolfe

Grace Notes is looking for a few good ~~men~~... ringers!

This empty spot can be yours!



Come join a fun group of folks dedicated to making music in praise to God. Can you count to 4? (6?) You're in! Music reading not required! Talk to Joyce (252-299-0981) or any of the current ringers. Show up at the next rehearsal Jan. 7 @ 5:30 pm. Oh, and did we mention the *huge* benefits of participating in a musical ensemble? ☺

We look forward to welcoming new ringers!



Thank You!

To Winstead friends:

Many thanks for your Christmas gift of appreciation. Participating in the music ministry of our church has been a blessing & I cherish the time spent making music for the worship of our Lord.

Joyce

I am deeply grateful to the church for the generous monetary gift I received for Christmas. Your thoughtfulness and kindness mean more than words can express. I am truly thankful to be part of such a caring and supportive church family, and I appreciate the love and generosity shown during this season.

With sincere thanks,

Sandy

MUSIC MINISTRY

Where Faith Finds Its Voice



Sandy Pittman, Minister of Music
music@winsteadumc.org

Winstead United Methodist Church has a rich tradition of music as an integral part of worship. Through song, prayer, and instrumental sound, music proclaims the story of our faith and invites the congregation into deeper reflection and praise.

Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir will begin the new year with a Choir Retreat on Saturday, January 10, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. This retreat will focus on preparing musical offerings for the coming season and beginning work on the cantata *Who Is Jesus*. New members are always welcome. Weekly rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, January 14 at 7:00 pm in the Music Room.

Orchestra

Our newly formed Orchestra enhances worship through instrumental music that supports congregational songs. This growing ensemble offers instrumentalists a meaningful way to serve worship and deepen their connection to the faith community. If you have played an instrument, we invite you to dust it off and join us. All experience levels are welcome as we grow together in worship through music. Weekly rehearsals will resume on Sunday, January 11 at 5:00 pm.

Worship and Music (WAM)

Children (Grades 1–5)

Worship and Music (WAM) invites children to grow in faith through music, movement, and worship leadership. Through singing and learning their role in worship, children discover how music tells God's story and shapes our response to God's love. Weekly rehearsals will resume on Sunday, January 11 at 5:30 pm in the Music Room.

Music at Winstead United Methodist Church is a shared offering, and there is always room for new voices and willing hearts. Whether singing, playing, ringing, or supporting behind the scenes, we invite you to listen, to join, and to discover how God may be calling you to serve through music.

OUTREACH

by **Priscilla Morello, Chair**

OUTREACH AND GRANT FOR 2025

Thank you to all who have participated in the many and varied ministry events and ways to ensure that Winstead United Methodist Church is reaching out to our community in meaningful ways.

We have come to the end of our second year of the New Initiatives Grant from the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. With the conclusion of this grant we are no longer able to apply for a third year of funds. We may be able to apply again in a couple of years for new ministry areas of work. In the meantime, it is my honor to share with the congregation that a family from our church has donated funds in the amount of \$5,000 to help continue our important outreach efforts. This sacrificial giving speaks to just how loving and committed our congregation is to our call to reach out to those who are in need and to find new ways to reach out to those in our community who do not have a church home. Our thanks go to this family who has expressed their faith in such a wonderful way.

In December, we completed our monthly grant ministry that helped families of Vick Elementary School receive help on their utility bills. The last two families of the year had \$100 each paid on their December light bill. They were parents Jazmin S. and Rameek D. and both were so thankful. Below are pictures of three of the families we helped earlier this fall. I am so proud of our

church and your willingness to reach out to families beyond our church walls. Thank you.



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH THE **HOLE LOTTA LOVE** MINISTRY! We had a number of folks who came to church on Christmas Eve day to help box up the donut holes into smaller boxes that were delivered to numerous nursing homes, businesses, police and fire departments as well as the hospital. We had 15 volunteers altogether to make the deliveries. Here are some pictures from the deliveries made:



(Continued on page 7)

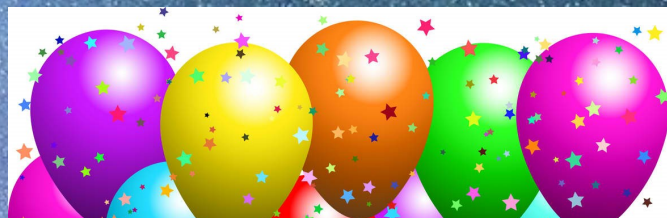
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All those who received donut holes were pleased to receive some love and recognition as they fulfilled their Christmas Eve work responsibilities. Thank you, Pastor Rachel Kwashe, for instituting this simple yet meaningful way to reach out to our community.

And thank you, Winstead, for supplying non-perishable food each month along with monetary donations that help those who are hungry. Thank you, Winstead, for the way you responded to help with the Easter Eggstravaganza earlier in the year and the Fall Festival/Trunk or Treat and Pumpkin Patch efforts this past fall. Thank you, Winstead, for making the church available every week so that seniors can participate in Emmy Isbell's Fitness Class. Thank you, Winstead, for participating in the Lighthouse Friends program at the beginning of the year. Thank you, Winstead, for making the Christmas in July event possible by supplying items and volunteering to put together Project Agape boxes. Thank you, Winstead, for helping pack 20,000 meals in May for Rise Against Hunger.

For all the ways you reach out as a church and individually, to make a difference in community... Thank You!



January Birthdays

Bill Rowley	1
Vicky Harper	8
Jay Mercer	8
Penelope Bass	14
B.J. Parker	14
Chris Pittman	25
Helen Kirby	27
Dennis Rutter	27
Joyce Wolfe	30

January Anniversaries

Fred & Sanda Hight	16
John & Claudine Perkins	26

Finance Report

By Linda Lane, Chair

Please take time to review the financial state of our church. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Gretchen Hunt or Linda Lane.

General Budget Totals

November	
Expenses	22,277.08
Income	<u>17,713.60</u>
Budget Shortage	\$ (4,563.48)
YTD Expenses	214,739.67
YTD Income	<u>175,113.19</u>
YTD Budget Shortage	\$(39,626.48)

Clarence Proctor



Clarence Simmons Proctor, 97, of Wilson, passed away Sunday, Dec. 9, 2025.

His funeral service was Friday, Dec. 12, at Wilson Memorial Service, The Rev. Paul Dunham officiated.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Jean Proctor; daughter Sandy Tyndall and husband Paul of Wilmington, NC; daughter Karen Sledge and husband Bill of Farmville, NC; grandchildren Taylor Benham and husband Adrian of Denver, CO, Peyton Harrell and husband Ryan of Charlotte, NC, Josh Tyndall and wife Taylor of Wilmington, NC; great grandchildren Slate, Blakeley, Henry, Viv, and Wynn; and many nieces and nephews.

Clarence was preceded in death by his parents, Offie Proctor and Addie Jones Proctor, his sister, Clara Proctor Skinner, and his brother Clinton Offie Proctor, Sr.

The family requests in lieu of flowers please consider making a donation, in his name, to your favorite charity.

Hand in Hand by Sanda Hight, Chair



December was packed with activities to support Vick Elementary School. Along with Prayer Partner cards and birthday cards for the staff, the Hand in Hand Committee provided a light lunch for the staff on December 18, which was the same day that approximately 430 books for "Books for Vick" were delivered. Each staff member received a gift card from the conference grant funds as a thank-you for their work. Each student took home a grade-appropriate book from our congregation as an effort to support literacy. The students are always excited to receive a wrapped book to enjoy at home. Also, thanks to all who participated in the book-wrapping party on Saturday, December 13. Thanks to the donations from groups within the church, from individuals, and from the NC Community Foundation grant, we were able to fund "Books for Vick" again this year. A special thank-you goes to Sandy and Denise Lamm, who delivered all the books to the school on the morning of December 19.

Please plan to sign Prayer Partner cards for January in the narthex from January 4-11, and consult the newsletter, worship bulletin, and other news for ways to support Hand in Hand in 2026.

JANUARY AT WINSTEAD

See the online calendar for the most current information - winsteadumc.org/events

Thursday, January 1

Office Closed

Sunday, January 4

9:30 am Sunday School for Adults
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship

Monday, January 5

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, January 6

9:00 am Worship Team
10:00 am Wellness Class

Wednesday, January 7

5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal

Thursday, January 8

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Saturday, January 10

10:00 am Choir Retreat

Sunday, January 11

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Drive-In Food Drive
5:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal
5:30 pm ECHO Youth @ West Nash UMC
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Tuesday, January 13

10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study

Wednesday, January 14

5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 15

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Saturday, January 17

10:00 am Women of Winstead

Sunday, January 18

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
5:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal
5:30 pm ECHO Youth
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Monday, January 19

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, January 20

10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study

Wednesday, January 21

5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 22

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, January 25

Newsletter Deadline

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
5:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal
5:30 pm ECHO Youth
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Tuesday, January 27

10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study

Wednesday, January 28

5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 29

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Pastor Patrick is in the office
Monday - Wednesday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Thursday 9:00 am - 11:00 am
Email: pmurphy@nccumc.org



1851 Airport Blvd. W
Wilson, NC 27893

Pastor

Rev. Patrick Murphy

Minister of Children & Youth

Marty Johnson

Minister of Music

Sandy Pittman

Organist & Handbell Choir Director

Joyce Wolfe

Church Musician

Faye Jones

Office Administrator

Gretchen Hunt

Lay Leader

Sandy Lamm

Come, grow closer to God with us!

The Winstead Connection

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1851 Airport Blvd.
Wilson, NC 27893
252-237-3709

WinsteadUMC@gmail.com
www.WinsteadUMC.org

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Sunday Schedule

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
5:30 pm ECHO Youth
5:30 pm WAM (Children's Choir)

Pastor: Rev. Patrick Murphy
Email: pmurphy@nccumc.org

Sunday, January 11
Leave your items on the table
in the foyer.



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