

Winstead Connection



Pastor Patrick Murphy

A Holy Lent

I wonder what comes to mind when you think of the word “Lent.” Giving up chocolate? Alcohol? Another kind of indulgence? It’s where most of our minds go. For many Christians Lent provides a disciplined season to remove an unhealthy habit or activity from our lives, so that (hopefully) it will create space for a holier habit that points us outward from ourselves to God and neighbor. It doesn’t always, but the hope is that the shift will last. But to what end?

What if I told you that Lent means more to the church than temporarily abstaining from something we typically consume and will again?

Lent was first observed in the early church as a forty-day season of repentance and formation for those desiring baptism. After forty days of preparation, candidates would be baptized during the liturgy of the overnight Easter Vigil. Since the medieval period Lent has evolved into a season of intentional self-denial, reflection, and recommitting ourselves to the way of Jesus—the downward way of the cross.

During these forty days the church takes stock of whether we are truly following Jesus and the way of the cross. We confront sin and mortality, and long for the absolution that Jesus’s passion and crucifixion bring.

To that end giving up something unhealthy and taking on something new can be part of Lent. But the moment we make Lent about self-improvement or treat it as a kind of reset or glow-up for our health or spirituality, we’ve lost the plot. Though we may seek it, the goal of Lent isn’t closure, improvement, resolution, or getting life back under control.

The goal of Lent is *interruption*. Lent interrupts our fantasies about being in control of life and being able to save ourselves by any other way than Jesus’s cross. It presents us with our limits and implores us to embrace our limitations as part of what it means to be human. We are dust, creatures with beginning and ends, just as God made us. Lent’s interruption gets us honest about the fact that we can’t change that reality. Lent’s good news is that God meets us in that reality in the face of Jesus.

Jesus invites us to become part of a new community, not one of self-improvement but of discipleship, and discipleship is never something that can be done on your own.

Some of the best wisdom in our tradition comes from the first Christians to venture into the deserts of Egypt and Sinai. We call them the desert fathers and mothers. In the first ever monas-

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A Holy Lent

teries they sought closeness to God in communities of intense discipleship. Their most enduring gift is that of formation in community; Christian faith can't be lived apart from people who faithfully embody it. Early monastics practiced faith together using a *rule of life*, an order to their living that wasn't a magic formula for holiness or checklist of rules but a constellation of practices that nurtured their awareness of Christ and his love for the world.

Their witness reminds us that Christianity is less about fixing life and personal spiritual improvement and more about the formation of a people capable of loving the world as Christ has loved us. Sounds like Lent to me.

Every now and again we need to be interrupted and reformed. We need reminding that we are limited but loved, sinful but saved by grace, not our own but God's, Christian not by our efforts but by the cross of Christ.

Interruption and reformation. Grace upon grace. That makes for a holy Lent.

Communion Offering Schedule

Each week the communion offering will benefit different groups. Here's the list of recipients:

- 1st Sunday: Pastor's Discretionary Fund
- 2nd Sunday ODD months: Barnes Chapel Food Pantry
- 2nd Sunday EVEN months: .. Rise Against Hunger
- Third Sunday:Books 4 Vick
- Fourth Sunday:Outreach Committee
- Fifth Sunday (when they occur):Seeds of Hope

Trustees Report

by Fred Hight, Chair

The new directional signs were posted throughout the inside of the church. Thank you, Barry Shultz, for the installation.

We are hoping that we will be able to see a playground for the kids on the church property by May of this year. Most of the details have been worked out, and we need warmer weather to get started.

Donate Online

If you would like to give your tithes and offerings online, please scan this QR code.



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

CHILDREN & YOUTH



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



Children & Youth Sunday School

Our theme for this semester in Sunday School is the Beatitudes. Each Sunday, as we gather for assembly we will be working through the eight Bs of the Beatitudes.

We invite all youth and children to come and join us. The children will continue working through the New Testament stories of the Bible in S. S. class, while the youth will be learning more what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in their S. S. class.

Please be in prayer for our teachers and students as they grow in knowledge and favor of our Lord, Jesus Christ through the study of God's Word!

If you would like to help teaching or assisting our children and youth in Sunday School, please contact Marty Johnson or Jodi Ruotolo.

Sunday School Luncheon

On Sunday, March 1, we will have a Soup Luncheon after the worship service. This luncheon is to celebrate and promote Sunday School.

The youth & children of our church will be preparing a variety of soups for our congregation and their guests that Sunday.

We are encouraging all of our congregation to invite someone to Sunday School and church. The cost of the Soup Luncheon is free, however, there will be a donation bowl for anyone who wishes to give money towards Sunday School materials, mainly for curriculum. Please make sure that your guests do not pay or donate any money. They are our guest and their presence is their donation.

Please go out of your way to invite someone to church that Sunday as we promote Sunday School in our church as a way of growing closer to Christ!

Whether you invite someone or not you are very, very welcome to our Soup Luncheon. Please start even now praying that God will put someone

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ECHO YOUTH SCHEDULE

March 1	
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Youth @ West Nash
March 8	
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Youth @ West Nash
March 15	
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Youth @ West Nash
March 22	
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Youth @ West Nash
March 28	
1:00 - 3:00 pm	Eggstravaganza
March 29	
5:30 - 7:00 pm	Youth @ West Nash

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on your heart and that you will invite them and make them feel welcome at Winstead UMC.

Blessings,

Jodi Ruotolo, S. S. Superintendent

Marty Johnson, Youth & Children Minister

Annual Eggstravaganza 2026

Our Eggstravaganza 2026 will be Saturday, March 28, from 1 pm - 3 pm.

We need your help! We need people to help with:

- **Donate plastic Easter eggs filled with individually wrapped candy**
- Games
- Easter egg hunt
- bunny craft
- Bunny photos
- Food preparation
- Set up and clean up

If you would like to help in any of these areas, please contact Marty Johnson. If you have other areas you would like to help with, or questions about our Eggstravaganza, please contact Marty Johnson.

Thank you so much. WINSTEAD UMC for your support of this outreach to our children & youth and their families!!

Marty Johnson, Minister of Children & Youth
Office hours: Tuesdays, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Email: martykeithjohnson@gmail.com or
Cell phone: 336-402-5000

Hand in Hand

by Sanda Hight, Chair

We will continue to send cards to the Vick Prayer Partners for March, April, and May. Cards for March will be in the narthex for signing on March 1-8. We encourage all in our church family to send greetings and love to Vick. We are hoping to participate again this year in Vick's observance of Read Across America, but we are not sure at this time if we will be called to read to classes.



The Hand in Hand Committee will continue a tradition of providing a potato bar lunch for the staff in March. The potato bar lunch will be on Friday, March 20. The menu will be baked potatoes, chili, and a number of other delicious fixings, all of which have been popular with the staff in past years.

The students, staff, and parents are working hard to do their best to make the school experience safe, happy, and academically successful. Let us all be thankful for the opportunity to continue our partnership with Vick Elementary School and to keep all those associated with the school in prayer.

The next Hand in Hand Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 3 at 2:00 at the church.

WOMEN OF WINSTEAD

by **Sanda Hight**

"HATS OFF TO WOW!" was the theme for the February WOW meeting, which was held on Saturday, February 21 at 10:00. Priscilla Morello hosted the meeting at the Carolinian on Airport Boulevard. Karen Rowley called the meeting to order. Seven members gathered to make plans for upcoming events. The meeting began with a time of sharing concerns of church members, family, and friends.



Denise Lamm reported on the WOW treasury and also the status of the Upper Room devotional guide that is available to the congregation. Large print and regular print copies are available in the narthex.

Valentine cards were sent to approximately 20 church members a few days before Valentine's Day.

Further plans for the spring chicken salad sale were discussed.

- Set-up for preparing the chicken salad will be at 9:00 on Wednesday, April 22. Preparation of chicken salad will take place on Thursday,

April 23 at 9:00 and continue with a second shift around noon.

- Orders will be available for pickup at the church kitchen at these times:
 - ◆ Thursday, April 23 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm
 - ◆ Friday, April 24 from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
 - ◆ After worship service on Sunday, April 26
- The cost is \$10 per pound container and is payable at pickup.
- Order forms will be available at the church office and from WOW members. You may place order forms in the offering plate, drop them off at the church office, or order online using the QR code on the order form. You may also call Karen Rowley or Sanda Hight to place an order.
- Look for information on the worship slides starting the last Sunday in March.
- All orders must be placed by Monday, April 20.
- Profits from the sale of chicken salad will be used for church and community outreach projects.
- A SIGNUP LIST FOR DONATIONS OF COOKED, DICED, CHICKEN WILL BE IN THE NARTHEX NEAR THE END OF MARCH. PLEASE DONATE CHICKEN IF YOU CAN.

WOW will also have another chicken salad sale in November. Please look for information on that sale as the time approaches.

All women of the church are invited to be a part of WOW (Women of Winstead) to take part in fellowship, study, and service. Please consider joining and being a part of WOW. The next WOW meeting will be held on March 21 at 10:00 at the church.

Community Lenten Services

Please plan to join us for our community Lenten worship services and fellowship meals. Services start at 12:10 pm, and should be about 30 minutes. The host church will provide lunch after the service. Meals are \$7.00.

	<u>Host Church</u>	<u>Preaching</u>
March 4	First Christian Church 207 Tarboro St. NE	Rev. Patrick Murphy Winstead United Methodist Church
March 11	St. James Christian Church 1739 Martin Luther King Pkwy.	Rev. Andre Green St. John's AME Zion Church
March 18	Ascension Lutheran Church 2512 Nash St. N	Rev. Heather Herrin Wong West Nash United Methodist Church
March 25	Howard Chapel at Barton College Whitehead Ave. NE	Rev. Morgan Daughtry First Christian Church

The Good Friday service will be at 2:00 pm.

April 3	First Baptist Church 311 Nash St. N	Rev. Daniel Pinell La Guadalupana/St. Mark's Episcopal Church
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March Birthdays

Tonya Ferrell.....	3
Peggy Wilson	7
Pam Marshburn.....	10
Harry Barker.....	13
Zane Ruotolo.....	16
Steven Bennett.....	17
Ann Baker	18
Ryan Kirby	25
Fred Hight	27

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

	January	
Expenses		21,748.46
Income		<u>10,797.10</u>
Budget Shortage		\$ (10,951.36)
YTD Expenses		21,748.46
YTD Income		<u>10,797.10</u>
YTD Budget Shortage		\$(10,951.36)

MARCH AT WINSTEAD

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

Sunday, March 1

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Soup Luncheon (pg. 3)
5:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal
5:30 pm ECHO Youth @ West Nash UMC
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Tuesday, March 3

9:00 am Worship Team
10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study
2:00 pm Hand in Hand Committee (pg. 4)

Wednesday, March 4

12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch (pg. 6)
5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 5

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, March 8 - Daylight Saving Time Begins

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)

Monday, March 9 - Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, March 10

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

Wednesday, March 11

12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch (pg. 6)
5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 12

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, March 15

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, March 17

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

Wednesday, March 18

12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch (pg. 6)
5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 19

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Saturday, March 21

10:00 am Women of Winstead (pg. 5)

Sunday, March 22

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, March 24

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

Wednesday, March 25 - Newsletter Deadline

12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch (pg. 6)
5:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 26

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Saturday, March 28

1:00 pm Easter Eggstravaganza

Sunday, March 29 - Palm Sunday

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, March 31

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



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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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 Orchestra Rehearsal
5:30 pm ECHO Youth
5:30 pm WAM (Children's Choir)

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



Looking for a Bible study? Join the Tuesday afternoon Bible study at church. See Marty for details.



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