

This Week at Wilkesboro UMC...

Share the Good News of Jesus Christ, Comfort the Troubled, Embrace God's Love

Worship News:

We have been exploring all the post-resurrection stories of Jesus. This past week we looked at the Gospel of John's recounting of the gift of the Holy Spirit - discovering how Jesus commands and empowers us to be sent out into the world as faithful witnesses to all that God is doing. You can read the attached sermon or watch the entire service on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).

Upcoming Events:

No Bible study this week

Sharing the Flame - Wilkesboro UMC's Relay for Life Team thanks everyone who came out to support their mission.

We have some items to rehome

We have a variety of items that we need to clear out to create more space for ministry. We have wooden chairs, desks, old folding tables, a desk, some scrap wood, some old pool noodles, etc that need to find a new home. Feel free to ask Pastor Karen or John Mabry for details.

Stewardship Update:

Everything we do—worship, outreach, care for one another, and our presence in the community—is made possible through your generosity. If you are able, we invite you to prayerfully consider how you might continue or deepen your support in this season.

We are grateful for the efforts to catch us up on our recent shortfall. We can see a difference but we still have ground to make up.

Thank you for the many ways you already give—through your time, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness. Together, we trust that God will continue to provide for the work we are called to do.

Celebrating Progress:

Have you noticed our bell tower looks a bit different? We are excited that the damaged louvres in the bell tower are being rebuilt. Did you know that due to the age of our sanctuary, each louvre was handmade and a slightly different measurement - requiring custom work. We love our beautiful, historic church building - even when it makes repairs a challenge.



Prayer Requests

Family of Susan Allen

Family of Peter Daniel

Family of Kailey Everette

Family of Dan Parks

Phyllis Austin, **Chuck Byers**, Wade & Brenda Church, Margaret Cooper, Brenda Dale, Amy DeSouza, Hendrix DeSouza, Charles Drum, Hal Emery, Jimmy Epley, Kyson Farley, Ronnie Farley, Craig Freas, Charles Gambill, Terry & Anne Garwood, Cade Gibbs, Jennifer Gibby, Troy Harmon, Sherry Harrold, Kay Hayes, Kimberly Hughes, Francoise Hughes, Shannon Hughes, Mark Johnson, Max Joines, Brenda Kilby, Pam King, Tom Kinlaw, Barbara Kitchen, Aislynn Ladouceur, **Becky Lakey**, **Mike Mabry**, Bubby McEntire, Janice McHolland, Joe McMillan, **Ricky Moretz**, John Nobles, Glenda Pierce, Adam Randolph, Debbie Reeves, Mary Jane Rich, James Rizoti, Mary Sallie Styers, Gerald Stierwalt, Mary Summerford, Keith Summerford, Amber Thornton, Donnie Thornton, Bob Taylor, Lee Tedder, Kim Tetzlaff, Cecil Walters, TA. Welborn, Dorothy Wilcox, Edgar Wilcox, Derrick Wilson, **Becky Wilson**, Seth Wilson, Ernie Winslow, Gavin Young, Hispanic neighbors, Ukraine, our planet in crisis, for God to bring Peace, for our government, for law and order.

SENIOR LIVING FACILITIES: Brenda Dale (Wilkes Health and Rehab), Cathy Freeman (Harmony at Brookberry Farm/Winston), Wanda Garwood (Rose Glen Village), Barbara Groce (Wilkes Assisted Living), Troy Harmon (Yadkinville Nursing Center/Magnolias), Caroline Randolph (The Pines in Davidson)



*Rev. Karen H. Roberts,
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Sermon: When the Wind Blows
Scripture: John 20:19-31

April 12, 2026
Rev. Karen H Roberts

On Friday, I took a little road trip to see my dad. I love driving to his house because the route takes me across my ancestral lands. I am the 7th generation great granddaughter of William Wiseman. For a long time, that was just a name of my family tree - it didn't mean much to me. Then I started to research him.

When he and his brother were teenagers in London, they snuck aboard a ship that was setting sail for America. I'm not sure they had a plan, other than to come to this new world of opportunity. But just before the ship landed in America, the brothers were discovered. The angry captain demanded that the brothers work off the cost of the passage by becoming his indentured servants, which they did for a time. Then they escaped. They made their way to what is now Mitchell County, North Carolina and they settled down. They claimed land. They started their homesteads. William opened a small mercantile.

I love the drive because the road literally cuts across his farm. The store still stands beside the road. His grave is actually under the roadway...though they relocated his headstone to a grove of trees just beside the road. I say hi when I drive over him. On paper, it can look an idyllic immigration story, but nothing was easy about his journey. William eventually dealt with the grief of losing his wife, losing a child, And still—he stayed. He built. He endured. And when I drive across that land, I can feel something of the spirit that shaped him - a life formed not by comfort...but by the journey itself. Because that is really what a journey should do - it should shape us in some way - it should make us what we are. Hopefully it will make us what we want to be if we persevere.

The disciples are finding this to be true. They did not get to Easter without some pain along the journey. Easter is a day of joy but the road to get there has been paved over the years with pebbles of grief and misunderstanding and fear...mingled with hope and joy and resilience. So, we find the disciples are not standing in confidence or clarity in the aftermath of Easter. They are gathered behind closed doors - uncertain, afraid, unsure of what comes next.

My preaching professor used to say that every pioneer eventually becomes a settler - They weary of the journey and decide it should come to an end, so like my 7th great grandpa Wiseman, they settle down. Maybe our disciples are there. The journey has proven too dangerous. Yes, the tomb is empty ...but they don't yet know what it means for them. They only know it feels safest to lock the door and hide...to be silent until they can figure it all out. And we understand this. We worry about being witnesses for Jesus because we don't know how to explain it all - We don't have all the answers. So it is easy to hunker down behind the walls of the church and keep to ourselves. We know what we believe and maybe the journey to convince others is too much. Let's just join with others like us, keep our heads down and our mouths shut and hope for the best. This has been the plan of the Church for far too long, I fear.

This seems to be the disciple's plan. And it is there - in that space - that the risen Christ comes to them. Not just to comfort them...but to begin shaping them for what lies ahead. Because, whether they can see it yet or

not - there is a road ahead. Jesus makes this clear when he says: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." and he breathed upon them a fresh breath of the Spirit.

In the language of Scripture, the word for Spirit is the same word for breath... and for wind—*ruach*. From Genesis it is the breath that gives life... In Ecclesiastes and the Psalms it is the wind that cannot be contained... In John it is the presence of God that moves through us and reshapes us.

Which means when Jesus breathes on the disciples... This is creation... happening again. Something new is about to enliven them.

Breathing in the Spirit of the risen Christ means that Easter doesn't mark the end of the journey for the disciples - it marks the beginning of a new phase. Up until this moment the Gospel story has been about Jesus' purpose - but with the gift of the Spirit, the journey becomes about their purpose - it becomes about being sent out there in order to transform the world.

This, friends, is where we find our mission as the United Methodist Church. We exist to make disciples for the transformation of the world. If we decide to settle. If we decide to stay hidden behind our walls - we will never live into that purpose. Jesus doesn't say, "Stay here. I'll send you visitors and hopefully you can convince them to stay." Jesus says, as I was sent - so I send you.

You want to know what will kill the church? Complacency. Settling within the walls and refusing to be sent out. Settling behind our doors and ignoring the fresh wind of the Spirit that stirs around us and tries to create new breath and new life. We worship a living, regenerative God. The Church should reflect that None of us want Jesus to waste his breath. We want the Spirit wind to mean something powerful in the world - to be a breath of the everlasting in moments that feel so temporal.

Along the coastline, we often notice trees like the one on the cover of our bulletin - growing low, bent at an angle away from the shore, branches gnarled. These trees are shaped by the winds that constantly blow off the ocean's surface. That unseen wind determines how they grow... and how they survive. They lean. They stretch. They adapt. Not because the wind is trying to destroy them - but because the wind is a given. And over time, the trees become something strong... something resilient... something shaped by what they could not control.

I think Jesus invites us to be like these trees - disciples willing to be shaped by the breath he offers, the Spirit he sends, the *ruach* that creates and transforms. Because when we receive that Spirit, we are not just comforted - we are sent.

Sent into a world that is changing, sent into places that are uncertain, sent not because we have all the answers... but because we have been shaped by the One who does.

And maybe that's what our faith really is - not something we hold tightly and protect... but something that is carried in us, shaped in us, and then *sung* through us - our profound alleluia. A life shaped by the wind of God becomes a witness to the love of God.

So may we not settle. May we not stay hidden behind our four walls. But may we be a people who are willing to be shaped... willing to be sent... willing to become whatever God is forming in us next.

And so we pray - melt us... mold us... shape us in your love.

Spirit of the living God,
breath of creation, wind of new life—
move among us now as we lift our concerns to you.

We pray for your world, O God—
for places where the winds of change feel more like storms than promise.
Where there is conflict, violence, and fear,
breathe peace.
Where there is division,
send your Spirit to mend what is broken.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for leaders of nations and communities—
that they may not resist the movement of your Spirit,
but be guided by wisdom, humility, and courage.

Where power is misused,
redirect the winds of justice.
Where decisions affect the vulnerable,
let compassion lead the way.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for our community—
for those who feel stuck,
for those who are weary,
for those who long for a fresh start.

Breathe new life into places that feel tired.
Stir hope where it has grown still.

And send us—
not to remain behind closed doors,
but to be present, attentive, and compassionate neighbors.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those in need of healing—
in body, mind, or spirit.

Like a gentle wind,
surround them with your comfort.
Like a steady breath,
sustain them through each moment.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for your Church—
that we may not settle into comfort,
but be stirred by your Spirit.

Shape us into a people who are ready to be sent,
willing to be changed,
and bold enough to follow where your wind leads.

Make us instruments of your love,
bearers of your grace,
and witnesses to your transforming power.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray this in the name of Christ,
who breathes peace into our fear
and sends us in love. **Amen.**