

Winstead Connection



Pastor Rachel Kwashe
(phone) (252) 408-3894

*Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,
step from the past and leave behind
our disappointment, guilt, and grieving,
seeking new paths, and sure to find.
Christ is alive, and goes before us
to show and share what love can do.*

*This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.*

At the beginning of my time at Winstead in 2021, we sang *This is the Day of New Beginnings* as the Gathering Music. It's a fitting song for the season after Easter, which is why it has been our Gathering Music again throughout the month of May. As I think about the words I want to leave you with, I find that the last two stanzas of this song encapsulate my hope for you as a church.

When I arrived, the story I heard about the church was this:

Winstead experienced a painful division in the church over the issue of homosexuality. Those who remain are faithful, committed, and strong in faith and heart. Winstead had big dreams to build a church in a new location, which had been in the works for many years but never materialized. That hope remained.

I could feel the grief of what had been lost in the past two years before I came. I could feel the anxiety over the sale of the building after another contract had fallen through. But most of all, I could feel the love you had for God and the love you had for one another. That is a love that you have shared with me.

As I think about the story of the church that you share with your next pastor and those who come to the church, my hope is that it will go beyond the past and focus on the good work you are doing here and now and the hope that you have for the future.

I am the only pastor who will know what the church building at Tarboro St. was like and what our church at Airport Blvd is like. From here on out, your future pastors will only know this new phase in the life of our church. I encourage you to lean into that. Don't talk about who you were, claim with joy who you are now. You are a church with a desire to welcome all people to come and grow closer to God with us. You do that through taking part in discipleship opportunities for all ages. You share your gifts in worship through music, reading, ushering, and more. You are generous with time and resources, making it possible for the ministry of the church to thrive and grow.

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PASTOR RACHEL (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 1)

You are hospitable, making people feel welcome and loved. You are missional as evidenced through your commitment to local and global outreach and community involvement. You are worth celebrating as you are and as you will be. You have a hope-filled future and I need you to believe that. Look to Christ. He will not lead you astray.

A couple weeks ago, I shared a story in my sermon of the first time I felt that I did not belong in a church.

My primary point of telling that story was to show that we all have stories of inclusion and exclusion. God is glorified when we love in such a way that borders and walls are broken down and when we look beyond the labels or divisions that hinder us from deeper relationships with others. The story of the Gospel is the greatest story of God's desire for everyone to be part of a beloved community. That is something that I hope all Christians live out, especially in the church.

There was also a secondary point in that story that you might have caught as well. Here is that story again:

The first Sunday at a new church when I was six, my family was given a gift bag before worship. My mom told me that it was my job to choose where we would sit during worship. I chose the second row of the left side. I set the gift down in that chosen spot and we went and talked to people before coming back into the sanctuary for worship.

We took our seats in that second pew a little bit early. As others came in, I noticed that everyone was walking past us to go to their seats on the right side of the sanctuary. As the prelude began, I decided to turn in the pew to look behind me. To my 6-year-old horror, it was empty. Every single pew behind us was empty. Everyone who walked past us as they entered the sanctuary had taken their seats on the other side of the aisle. I did not think that this was strange. I did not think of them as a funny church for having a whole sanctuary and only sitting on one side. I thought in that little brain of mine, "I picked wrong." My mom had trusted me to pick the right spot and I had not. Now, for the whole worship service people would be staring at us. Our presence on the wrong side of the sanctuary would be a reminder that we were not from here and we did not belong here. That center aisle never felt so big. The church knew to sit on the right side and to them that was the right side. We were not "the church." We were just the new pastor's family.

In the weeks after, a couple brave people who I still can remember by name came and joined us on the left side of the sanctuary sitting around us. But in that week and the one after that and the one after that, no one ever invited us to sit with them in their pew and no one ever offered to sit next to us.

There are people in that church I am still in touch with today. But even as a young child, I

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PASTOR RACHEL (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 2)

could feel the sentiment of many adults who had not wanted their previous pastor to be reappointed and who were not happy that we were there.

It was a significant time of feeling like there was an "us and them." And right as I would start to feel like I was part of them, the cycle would repeat itself somewhere else.

My secondary point of that story was about how a church welcomes a new pastor. My dad was appointed to that church when I was six and left that church when I was nine. My parents did not like to talk about that church after we left. This was not a story of exclusion that I heard, it was one that I felt and perceived even at a young age. The next church we were at, we were welcomed warmly. What I remember about that church was that I was angry about moving and unkind to people, and they responded with grace upon grace.

I am writing this on May 25 in a hotel in Portland, Oregon and I have no clue who your next pastor is. It's hard to love and trust someone when you know nothing about them. It's even harder, when it is not a change you asked for. But I believe that God has His hand in whoever that will be. Be open to the gifts that they will bring. You welcomed me through gifts of furniture, help moving in, and food. They may not need furniture but they may need help unpacking. They may not have a dog, but they might have children. Ask them what would be most helpful for them. And if they have

any family that they bring with them, please ensure that they never sit alone.

Your words of affirmation have been a gift to me. Share that gift with your next pastor through affirming and encouraging them. Let them know that you love them as they are and are committed to supporting them in any way that you can. You do not have to tell them what I did. I will ensure any information they need from me, they will have. What I really want is for you to tell them what YOU have done and what you hope to do with God's help in the future.

When it is hard to get past the grief or anxiety over the past, I remember these words of St. Teresa of Avila:

Let nothing upset you, let nothing startle you.

All things pass; God does not change.

Patience wins all it seeks.

Whoever has God lacks nothing:

God alone is enough.

We are about to get to Pentecost, when we remember and celebrate the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on all people. The Spirit is still moving today! The Spirit is moving among you and will be moving with and through your new pastor. This is a season of change but in change, we have the greatest constant in God. Don't get discouraged. God is still making all things new.

Pastor Rachel's last day in the office will be June 19 and last Sunday will be June 22.

CHILDREN & YOUTH



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

Sunday School Teachers

Thank you to all the Sunday School teachers who taught during the 2024/2025 school year.

A very special thanks to Ryan Kirby, who was our Sunday school superintendent through 2024. And a very big thank you to Jodi Ruotolo, who is our new Sunday school superintendent for 2025.

If you have any questions or concerns or, especially if you have any suggestions for Sunday school with our children and youth, please see either me or Jodi. We would love to have your input!

Vacation Bible School 2025

Summer of Service Abundance Orchard

"Where Faith Grows and Hungry People are Fed"

This year's Summer of Service will be June 18 through 21, 6:30 - 8:00 pm Wednesday to Friday. On Saturday we will meet from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

On Wednesday, we will have breakfast with Jesus. On Thursday, we will have lunch with Jesus. On Friday we will have dinner with Jesus.

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

On Saturday, we will celebrate and give praise for what Jesus has done for each of us! Come and join us at these tables and let us learn from Jesus what it means to be a Disciple!

We are calling all children, young and old: those who are a part of your family, those who are a part of your neighborhood, those you know who live in the Wilson area. Please invite them to Summer of Service 2025 "Abundant Orchard."

If you would like to be a part of this wonderful ministry, please see me or Jodi Ruotolo!

Blessings, Mr. Marty

ECHO Youth

Winstead youth group, along with West Nash youth group, enjoyed a great time of fellowship and fun as we had Bible studies and devotions.

Here is our schedule for June.

ECHO YOUTH SCHEDULE

June 1	
6:00 - 7:30 pm	Family Night @ Winstead
June 8	
6:00 - 7:30 pm	Fun Night @ Winstead
June 15	
No meeting	Father's Day
June 22	
6:00 - 7:30	Pastor Rachel's Last Day @ Winstead
June 29	
6:00 - 7:30	Mystery Day



Trustees

by Fred Hight, Chair

As you can see, the sign near the road is operational. Gretchen has some further experimenting to do with the messages that are displayed. We have a price on removing the backflow converter. Two of the three trees near the sign will have to be removed. We are looking into sodding the lawn in front of the church entrance because it gets wet each time it rains.

The Trustees continue to work hard to take care of the physical needs of the church.

Women of Winstead

by Sanda Hight

WOW (Women of Winstead) met on Saturday, May 17 at Cracker Barrel for the last meeting before the summer break. Denise Lamm, Treasurer, reported that this year's chicken salad sale had a profit of over \$1,000. The profit will be distributed to service projects for the church and community.

WOW will coordinate the going away celebration for Pastor Rachel, which will be held on Sunday, June 22 after the worship service.

WOW will have the next scheduled meeting in September. All women of the church are encouraged to become a part of WOW for study, fellowship, and service to the church and community. There is much work to be done to spread the love of Christ to our church and community. We extend a warm invitation to all women of the church to take part in WOW. If you would like more information, please contact Karen Rowley, President of WOW.

Staff Parish Relations Committee

By MaryEllen Bass, Chair

Celebration for Pastor Rachel!

Everyone, please join in our luncheon celebration for Pastor Rachel on June 22, immediately following worship service. We want to honor her for her service as our Pastor since 2020 and to wish her well as she moves to her new Pastoral position in Cary. Everyone is welcome to share remarks and well wishes for Pastor Rachel.

History Corner

By Sanda Hight

This is a reminder of the announcement in the May newsletter about a funeral for a member of the extended Winstead family in the Winstead Cemetery. The funeral will be on June 10 at 10:00 am at the Winstead Cemetery, which is on the property of the former Parkwood Mall on South Tarboro Street across the street from the original Winstead United Methodist Church property. Members of the family will be present.

Our church is the trustee of the cemetery property. We want to honor the family and also our church history during the service on June 10.

Pastor Rachel is in the office
Tuesday - Thursday 9:30-12:00.
She works remotely on Mondays
but can be contacted if needed.
Fridays are her Sabbath.
Email: rkwashe@nccumc.org or
cell phone: 252-408-3894

HAND IN HAND MINISTRY

By Sanda Hight

As the 2024-2025 school year is near the end, we have much to celebrate with our partnership with Vick Elementary School. Thanks to all who signed Prayer Partner cards for nine consecutive months, including those for May, which have been delivered. We have sent birthday cards to all the Vick Prayer Partners during the school year. Thanks to all who helped provide meals and treats to the staff and to those who volunteered to help with picture day and other events. We once again thank everyone who helped with "Books for Vick" last December. What a delight this big project was as students received their books to take home. The Hand in Hand Committee recently celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week with strawberry shortcake and peanuts for the staff, and they will provide an end-of-the-year treat for the students as they leave on the last day of school.

We have three special celebrations to mention concerning the Vick staff. First, Mrs. Annette Faison was named Wilson County Principal of the Year. We are so proud of Mrs. Faison's innovation and leadership to move Vick forward in so many ways.

Also, we celebrate with Dr. David Lott, Assistant Principal, who recently completed the Future Ready Leadership program from the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals Association.

Finally, we celebrate with Vick music teacher, Jana Winders, who recently received the North Carolina Symphony's Maxine Swalin Award for Outstanding Music Educators. We are so proud of these three Vick staff members and all the others

who tirelessly work for the students and families at Vick.

Finally, our congregation celebrates the opportunity we have had for 23 years to be in partnership with our public schools. Almost every member of our congregation has made a contribution to our Hand in Hand outreach over the years. We continue to be thankful for this golden opportunity.

The Hand in Hand Committee will meet in August to begin planning for the 2025-2026 school year. Please continue to be in prayer for the Vick staff, students, and families.



*Mrs. Faison, Wilson
County Principal of
the Year*



*Dr. Lott, Future
Ready Leadership
Program*



*Music Teacher
Jana Winders,
Outstanding Music
Educator*

Outreach

by Priscilla Morello

Thanks to all who participated in the Rise Against Hunger event held at the beginning of May. We had 12 volunteers altogether and it was great to be a part of the team that assembled 20,000 meals to go to those in need.



Christmas in July

Our next outreach project will be the Christmas in July event to be held on Saturday, July 26th from 10:00 – 12:00.

In May we collected crayons, markers and combs. For June we will continue col-



lecting those items plus socks, toothbrushes, and a small toy. We are trying to collect items to make up 50 boys' boxes and 50 girls' boxes

Please bring items to church and place in the Christmas in July Collection Box. And thank you for all you do for others!

These are the items needed to make up Agape Boxes for boys and for girls ages 3-6.

MALE AGES 3-6

- 1 Cap or Toboggan
- 1 pair Mittens or Gloves
- 3 pair Socks
- 1 Comb or Brush
- 1 Toothbrush
- 1 Small Book
- 1 Coloring Book
- 1 Box of Crayons (24 pack)
- 1 Pack of Washable Markers (8-10)
- 1 Notepad
- 1 Stuffed animal or Beanie Baby
- 1 Ball
- 1 Car
- 1 Toy or game

FEMALE AGES 3-6

- 1 Cap or Toboggan
- 1 pair Mittens or Gloves
- 3 pairs of socks
- 1 Comb or Brush
- 1 Toothbrush
- 1 Small Book
- 1 Coloring Book
- 1 Box of Crayons (24 pack)
- 1 Pack of Washable Markers (8-10)
- 1 Notepad
- 1 Stuffed Animal or Doll
- 1 Toy or Game

June Birthdays

Tex Brown.....	5
Tassie Jones.....	5
Butch Tedder.....	8
Cathy Griffin.....	10
Jake Wolfe.....	13
Nathan Jenkins.....	16
Amelia Kirby.....	21
Paul Miller.....	22
Don Taylor.....	24
Dr. Andrew Preston.....	25

June Anniversaries

Scott & Mandy Jenkins.....	14
Danny & Peggy Wilson.....	15
Larry & Linda Lane.....	21

JUNE AT WINSTEAD

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

Sunday, June 1

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
6:00 pm ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM

Tuesday, June 3

10:00 am Wellness Class
11:10 am The Grand Sweep Bible Study

Wednesday, June 4

7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, June 5

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, June 8

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Drive-In Food Drive
6:00 pm ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM

Monday, June 9

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, June 10

10:00 am Winstead Family Funeral (Winstead Cemetery) (pg. 5)
10:00 am Wellness Class
11:10 am The Grand Sweep Bible Study
6:30 pm Church Council

Wednesday, June 11

7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

June 12 - 14 Annual Conference

Sunday, June 15 -

Happy Father's Day

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

Tuesday, June 17

10:00 am Wellness Class
11:10 am The Grand Sweep Bible Study
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

June 18-21 - Vacation Bible School (pg. 4)

Saturday, June 21

10:00 am VBS Celebration (pg. 4)

Sunday, June 22

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Celebration for Pastor Rachel (pg. 5)
4:00 pm Hymn Festival
6:00 pm ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM

Monday, June 23

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, June 24

10:00 am Wellness Class
11:10 am The Grand Sweep Bible Study

Wednesday, June 25 - Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, June 29

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
6:00 pm ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM

On the Calendar

Remember to let the office know about committee or group meetings (scheduled or canceled for the summer) so that they are reflected accurately on the online calendar and in the bulletin.



1851 Airport Blvd. W
Wilson, NC 27893

Pastor Rev. Rachel Kwashe
Minister of Children & Youth Marty Johnson
Minister of Music Sandy Pittman
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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Winstead United Methodist Church
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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
6:00 pm ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM (Children's Choir)

Pastor : Rev. Rachel Kwashe
Email: rkwashe@nccumc.org

Sunday, June 8
Leave your items on the table
in the foyer.



Find us on:
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