

Winstead Connection



Pastor Patrick Murphy

Coalescing

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

-Romans 15:4-6

Unboxing the Nativity scene and arranging its many parts has become a kind of liturgy for my family, a “together act” that focuses us on the season’s main event: the incarnation of Jesus.

As we unwrap each figure we talk about their significance. Mary, the girl whom God chose to carry and birth the messiah Jesus into a broken world. Joseph, who guarded Mary’s divine purpose with devotion and deference against the expectations of both religion and culture. The angel, who announced to the world that Jesus was born. Then the sheep, whose presence symbolizes the kind of savior Jesus would be. And the dogs... I’ll admit, the other animals require a bit more creativity to tease out their significance, but you get the idea.

Over the years our Nativity scene has grown to include even some out-of-place characters. We have a figure of the prophet Isaiah, for example, who lived centuries before Jesus was born. Yet his placement matters because the voice of the prophets signaled a future in which God would rectify injustice and its wounds through the coming of an appointed messiah.

Then there’s John the Baptist, fully grown ahead of his time, covered in camel’s hair and wearing a leather belt (no locusts, thankfully). He hauls a satchel of wheat on his back, preparing the way for Jesus, who would soon burst onto the scene to separate “the wheat from the chaff,” and announce God’s Kingdom.

These out-of-place characters remind us to look backward and forward from the Nativity to consider the ways God has always been faithful and present to God’s people. The idea is that we would consider how God has been faithful in our own lives and for the world.

Until that holiest of nights, however, one figure remains notably absent. Can you guess which?

Yes, Jesus. Until Christmas Eve the manger remains empty, reminding us to watch and wait for Christ’s coming so that, as Paul writes in Romans, “by steadfastness and encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.” That evening after worship we place Jesus in his humble cradle,

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From the Pastor

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contemplating how he came to us vulnerably and unexpectedly.

I love that our scene has become such a coalescing of biblical characters and periods of time. After all that's what the coming of Christ is: a coalescing of time and divine purpose. As the hymn says, "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight."

As we journey through Advent and prepare for Christmas, my prayer this year is that we would contemplate the cosmic significance of the incarnation of Christ, how it is a coming together of time and divine purpose. For in Jesus the longings and hopes of the world took on flesh in a vulnerable baby enthroned in a manger in a small town tucked away in an insignificant corner of the world. Even in times like these, where the world seems a mess, and attending to our lives feels heavy, even here, even now Christ comes.

Pastor Patrick is in the office
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Thursday 9:00 am - 11:00 am
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Christmas Basket Silent Auction

You still have time to prepare a basket our fourth annual Christmas Basket Silent Auction!

All groups in the church WOW, UMM, choir, handbell, bible study group, Sunday school class, youth group or individuals may prepare a Christmas basket for our silent auction. The money for this fundraiser supports our youth and their programs throughout the year.

Bring your Christmas basket anytime you would like and leave it in the Narthex. We would ask that you bring your basket as soon as possible! At our Church-Wide Christmas Party on December 14th from 4:30 to 5:00 you can put in your last bid for any basket!

We will have refreshments and finger food during this time of fellowship and bidding! At five o'clock, we will head into the sanctuary and have our annual Christmas Party with singing, games and fellowship! At the end, we will announce the winning bids of the Christmas Baskets.

If you have any other questions, feel free to text or call me (Marty Johnson).

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Children & Youth

Church-Wide Christmas Party

Everyone is welcome and invited to our Church-Wide Annual Christmas Party on Sunday, December 14 at 4:30 pm.

This is a great time for fellowship and conversation while wishing all blessings and a Merry Christmas.

At 5:00, we will head into the sanctuary for a time of singing, celebration, games, great fellowship and a few surprises.

We will end the evening by announcing the winners of the Christmas Basket!

I hope everyone will come and enjoy the time together as we celebrate this most wonderful and sacred season of the year!!

If you have any questions or you would like to help out with setting up or cleaning up, please let me know!

Christmas Cookie Walk

Our annual Christmas cookie walk will be on Sunday, December 21 right after the 10:30 worship service.

ECHO YOUTH SCHEDULE

December 7

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

December 14

4:30 - 6:00 pm

Church-Wide Christmas Party

December 21

No Youth Group Meeting

December 28

No Youth Group Meeting

We ask everyone who would like to, to make one or two dozen cookies for the Cookie Walk. Bring them Sunday morning, December 21 and leave in the church kitchen.

After the morning worship, you may purchase a cookie box for a \$5 or \$10 donation that goes to the youth fund. Then fill your box with cookies!

Refreshments and Christmas music will be playing for a great time of fellowship. Thank you in advance to all of those who donate home made cookies.

Christmas blessings to all from Mr. Marty and the Winstead Youth Group!

Finance Report

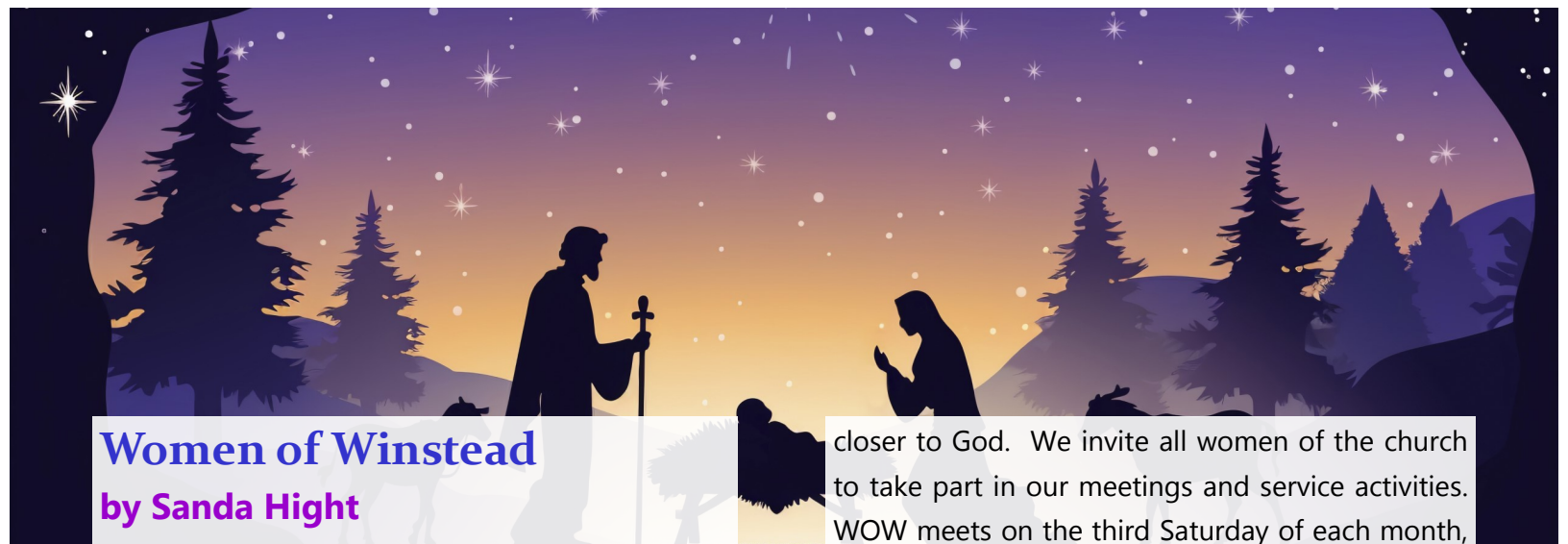
By Linda Lane, Chair

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

October

Expenses	23,068.65
Income	<u>14,351.12</u>
Budget Shortage	\$ (8,717.53)
YTD Expenses	192,462.59
YTD Income	<u>157,399.59</u>
YTD Budget Shortage	\$(35,063.00)



Women of Winstead

by Sandra Hight

WOW (Women of Winstead) will end this year with two activities: Preparing a basket for the youth silent auction and a Christmas tea for women of the church and their relatives and friends.

First, the theme for this year's basket for the youth auction is "Have Tea with Me." A festive basket will be available for the silent auction during the first two weeks in December. The winner will be announced at the church-wide Christmas party on Dec. 14. The basket will be filled with all things tea, including a variety of tea bags and loose tea, sweet treats, a number of additional items, and a few surprises. If a basket of tea things is your "cup of tea," get in on the auction list, and remember that money raised will go toward youth activities for next year.

Also, the Women of Winstead invite the women of the church and friends and girls in the family to attend a Christmas tea on Sunday, Dec. 7 at 3:00. A tradition at Winstead, the tea will be a time of sharing and celebrating the joy of the Christmas season and the gift of Christ to the world. WOW will provide a variety of hot tea flavors and finger food treats, decorated tables and a program as we celebrate the joy of friendship and family. PLEASE SIGN THE SHEET IN THE NARTHEX IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.

Women of Winstead are committed to fellowship, study, and service as we work toward being

closer to God. We invite all women of the church to take part in our meetings and service activities. WOW meets on the third Saturday of each month, excluding summer months. The next meeting will be on Saturday, January 17 at 10:00 at the church. We hope to see you then.

Grace Notes

by Joyce Wolfe

Grace Notes have been invited to ring at Fike High School Chorus' Christmas Concert on Friday, December 5 at 7:00 pm. They will join the Chorus on "I Heard the Bells" (A Song of Peace) by Laura Farnell.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the poem "Christmas Bells" on Christmas Day in 1863 during personal grief and national turmoil. His wife had died and his son was wounded in the Civil War. When he heard church bells ringing with the message of "peace on earth, good-will to men", he was inspired to write a poem that moves from despair to a triumphant hope for a better future. Longfellow's poem was later set to music.

The free concert will be held at Fike High School, 500 Harrison Dr N, Wilson. The public is invited.

Hand in Hand

by Sanda Hight, Chair



Hand in Hand activities have been busy. Picture day at Vick Elementary School was on Nov. 13. Mary Ellen Bass, Denise Lamm, Claudine Perkins, and Peggie Shultz helped supervise and line the students up for their school pictures. It was a great time to mingle with the students, encourage them to smile, share our church's love, and help the photographers with their task.

The Hand in Hand Committee helped the Vick staff celebrate American Education Week on Nov. 20 by providing chicken biscuits, grapes, and cookies, along with a table sign celebrating education and educators at Vick.

Most of the books for this year's "Books for Vick" project have arrived and will be wrapped and delivered before the Christmas Holidays. Thanks to a C4C grant, generous monetary gifts from the Peanut Committee, Women of Winstead, and other donations from individuals and groups within the church, we have almost enough to fund this year's book gift to each student at Vick. However, it is not too late to make a donation by placing a gift in the offering plate or taking it to the church office. The children at Vick will be so happy when

they receive a book to take home. Please look for an announcement about a book-wrapping celebration soon. All are welcome to help wrap books and take part in our outreach to Vick.

Prayer Partner Cards for January will be available for signing on January 11-18. Please take part in this opportunity to send your love to the Vick staff.

Hand in Hand meetings will be on Tuesday, Dec. 2 and Tuesday, January 6 at 2:00 at the church. Please continue to keep students, staff, and families at Vick in prayer for safety and success.



December Birthdays

Chad Ferrell.....	11
Mary Walston.....	17
Marty Johnson.....	19
Griffin Parker	19
Mary Smith.....	19
Diane Watts-Barker.....	20
Beatrice Boykin.....	21

December Anniversaries

Ryan & Helen Kirby	8
Sandy & Denise Lamm	30

DECEMBER AT WINSTEAD

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

Tuesday, December 2

9:00 am Worship Team
10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study
2:00 pm Hand in Hand

Wednesday, December 3

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

Thursday, December 4

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, December 7

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
3:00 pm Women's Christmas Tea
5:30 pm ECHO Youth
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Monday, December 8

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, December 9

10:00 am Wellness Class
2:00 pm Bible Study
6:30 pm Church Council

Wednesday, December 10

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

Thursday, December 11

9:30 am Bible Study (Wolfe home)

Sunday, December 14

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Drive-In Food Drive
4:30 pm Churchwide Christmas Party

Monday, December 15

Cooking Peanuts

Tuesday, December 16

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

Wednesday, December 17

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

Sunday, December 21

9:30 am Sunday School for All
10:15 am Fellowship Time
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Cookie Walk
5:30 pm WAM (Worship and Music)

Wednesday, December 24

TBA Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 25



Newsletter Deadline

Office Closed

Sunday, December 28

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



1851 Airport Blvd. W
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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 ECHO Youth
6:00 pm WAM (Children's Choir)

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

Sunday, December 14
Leave your items on the table
in the foyer.



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