



# Murphy First

United Methodist Church

April 2026



Dear Murphy First,

As I type this, we are in the final days of Lent, already leaning into Holy Week and then Easter. My computer has open files for several worship services and checklists for upcoming events. You'll find more information about those services and events in the next several pages—and I hope that you will come, and also be intentional about inviting a friend to come with you.

Lent is marked by certain disciplines/rhythms: prayer, fasting, self-denial, alms-giving. The Easter season, also, comes with its own practices, including celebration.

Richard Foster, in *Celebration of Discipline*, writes: "Celebration is at the heart of the way of Christ... [it] brings joy into life...Often," he writes, "I am inclined to think that joy is the motor, the thing that keeps everything else going. Without joyous celebration to infuse the other Disciplines, we will sooner or later abandon them. Joy produces energy. Joy makes us strong" (191).

I don't know about you, but the way my mind works, it's easy for me to live in the mental land of evaluation and continuous improvement, and to start thinking about what's next before the present thing/moment is even over (much less celebrated!). Not all bad, but it can be, and I'm sorry for ways those tendencies have at times colored my leadership.

So while I don't want to get ahead of the season we are in, I do want to begin to invite you into the discipline of celebration by pointing to several things from this past season I am celebrating:

- **Lenten Devotional book** – What a joy that has been! For the thoughtful and wise contributions, and the ways it helped me feel even more connected to you all.
- **Committees** – FUMC is a church full of brilliant, hard-working, and thoughtful leaders and servants. I am amazed by all the projects our Trustees have made happen; the behind-the-scenes work our Communications team have done to bring us a new website, app, and database; our Children's Leadership team that is increasingly organized, invitational, and intentional around deepening our children's faith...including a new opportunity for our 3rd - 5th graders (ROOTS). This is just to name a few of the bright spots among our committees.

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- **Soul Table** – This ministry that started out as 1x/month is now every week! In a team meeting, we learned that because of the generosity and stewardship of the church and leaders, the average meal costs somewhere around \$2/person. \$2 for bangers and mash, greens, cornbread, and a dessert?! Wow! Can you put an extra \$2 in every now and again to pay it forward and put a fresh plate of grace on the table?
- **Parking Lot and Harshaw Chapel** – These are projects that have been years in the making, even decades. How marvelous that gravel is being spread as I type! The new lot is about more than parking—it's about accessibility, safety, and another venue where a community can gather. I've been in the Chapel a handful of times already this week—I can't wait for you to go in too, and to hear the bell ring!

I wonder what you would celebrate also? On Easter morning, one way we express the joy and vibrance of the day is bringing flowers for the cross that will be out front. Bring flowers, and bring a friend.

On the journey, Pastor Wil



Connecting Neighbors, Loving God,  
Rebuilding Lives and Homes

Disaster Ministries: Hurricane Helene  
Western North Carolina Conference  
The United Methodist Church

## Summer Mission Trip

Below are our tentative plans for a summer mission trip to continue the post-Helene recovery work.

**When:** July 12-17

**Where:** West Jefferson, NC

**Who:** Youth (14+) and Adults

**How Much:** Suggested love offering of \$10 -15 per person per night for lodging. \$15.00 per team member for the background check. Cost of food for team TBD. Total ~ \$250/person

**What:** Volunteers will help get families back in homes that are safe, sanitary and secure. The people we serve were impacted in different ways, so the work we will do is varied and can change daily.

While some homes were flooded, others incurred damage from fallen trees, wind and landslides. Our typical work can include drywall, flooring, roofing and debris removal.

Sign up or learn more by contacting Paul Schutes ([pschutes@me.com](mailto:pschutes@me.com)) or David Lamb ([Caneitbetru@yahoo.com](mailto:Caneitbetru@yahoo.com)). Our goal is to have a final roster by the end of April so that we can gather as a team in May in order to get to know each other and get ready.



The **Harshaw mowing crew** will be in action again this year. The **2nd and 4th Thursdays** of the month starting at **8am**. We will probably be starting after the spring cleanup day. We have a new group called Harshaw Crew that you can request to join if you are willing to help out. You can find it under Groups in the app. We will use this to communicate schedules, etc.



# Worship Help

**Worship** is the “work of the people.” It amazes me to look out and see all the people it takes to make Sunday morning possible. If you’ve ever wanted to try one of the following areas of service, please reach out to the coordinators listed in parentheses:

- o Ushers (Freddy Lochaby – [freddylochaby@yahoo.com](mailto:freddylochaby@yahoo.com))
- o Greeters (Pastor Wil – [pastor@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:pastor@murphyfirstumc.org))
- o Liturgist (Pastor Wil) – the folks who lead the Call to Worship and Opening Prayer
- o Worship Leader (Pastor Wil) – lead the Creed and Prayers of the People
- o Acolyte (Pastor Wil)
- o Carry in the Cross (Pastor Wil)
- o Musician (Suzanne – [music@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:music@murphyfirstumc.org))
- o Sound and Streaming (Kevin Mendoza – [kevinnbmendoza@gmail.com](mailto:kevinnbmendoza@gmail.com))



This April we’ve got a good line up of going deeper in service, fellowship, and our relationship with God! Check out the schedule below. If you are interested in helping with our youth group—providing/sponsoring a meal, helping lead a service project, or hosting a fellowship event, reach out to Pastor Wil at ([pastor@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:pastor@murphyfirstumc.org)).

Here’s our schedule for April:

**4/5 – Easter Sunday!** NO youth, enjoy time with your family and friends

**4/12 – Service Sunday.** Instead of meeting that afternoon, youth will be working together on one of the projects for Service Sunday right after worship

**4/19 – Youth @FUMC** at 4pm. We’ll meet at church to keep exploring how we can notice and turn to God in our daily lives

**4/26 – Sunday Funday!** 4-6pm. We’re Bowling at the UltraStar Multi-tainment Center. Meet and pick up there.



Through March 19th, we have welcomed a total of 460 guests, at the New Weekly Soul Table, averaging 38 guests each week. This meaningful work would not be possible without our incredible volunteers — 143 individuals have given their time, with an average of 12 volunteers showing up each week. The generosity of our congregation extends beyond time alone: donated desserts have contributed \$646.40 in value, and our volunteers' time represents \$10,350.00 in value (calculated at \$15.00 per hour). The cost of meals has totaled \$1,457.00 for the season, averaging just \$121.50 per week. Combined, the total value of donated time and goods reaches \$10,996.40 — a true testament to the heart of our Church.

As Cobby and Diane Barfield prepare to conclude their time serving as Soul Table cooks, we want to take a moment to honor their legacy. Soul Table was originally started by Cobby as a once-a-month, hot sit-down meal open to anyone wishing to eat. Over time, the program expanded to twice a month, and on January 1st, 2026, it grew again to every Thursday. The Barfield’s dedication and faithful service have been the heartbeat of this ministry, and we are deeply grateful for all they have poured into it. We are hopeful to share that soon, a new cook will be stepping into the kitchen to carry this work forward.

# SOUL TABLE PICS



Many thanks to chef Johnny Walker and his first Soul Table meal! He even provided all the produce!



# 2026 Grand Re-Opening Schedule



Celebrate renewal, resilience, and community  
as we reopen our restored chapel. All events open to the public.

## Thursday April 30th

Shuttle service from Murphy First UMC Lot	6-7 pm
Worship service - Harshaw Chapel	7-8 pm
Reception at Harshaw	8-8:30pm
Shuttle service back to FUMC	8:15-9pm

## Friday May 1

Location: Harshaw Chapel	
Restoration and Reopening Ceremony	10 am
Open House	10-2 pm
Cemetery Tours	11 am and 1 pm

## Saturday May 2

Location: Harshaw Chapel and Harshaw Cemetery	
Decorating Day Events	10 am
and Open House	10-2 pm
Cemetery Tour	11 and 1 pm
Gravestone Cleaning Demonstration	12 pm

Free flags available to put on veteran's graves.

For more information please contact Rev. Marji Hill 828-371-5520



**Young Adult Sunday School** meets at 9:45am in Room 301 in the Education Building.

**Seekers Sunday School** meets at 9:45am in the Library.

**The Nursery** (Room 202) is available for children aged 0 yrs to Kindergarten from 9:45am-Noon.

**Children's Sunday School** meets in the Education Building at 10am.

**Worship Readiness** (Room 304) for children aged Kindergarten through 5th grade meets during worship after the children's moment.

Children are welcome in worship and will then be released after Children's Time to return to their nursery or Children's Church. Older children (5th grade+) should remain with their parents in worship.



- 04/02—Mary Lou Sharkey
- 04/03—Wally Avett; Barbara Hughes
- 04/06—Lea & Nathanael Posey
- 04/07—Reid Francis
- 04/10—Jude Simons
- 04/11—Brittany Martin; Jane Payne;  
Mark Poncin
- 04/13—Kellee Watson
- 04/16—Karen Lawrence
- 04/19 —Lydia McNabb
- 04/23—Liz Pipes; Suzanne West
- 04/25—Maggie Corrigan
- 04/26—JoAnn Moore
- 04/28—Harper Hughes

**If your birthday does not appear above, we do not have a valid date for you. Please contact Maggie in the church office to correct this.**



- 04/08—Kyle & Alex McClure
- 04/25—David & D'Anna Liber

**If your anniversary does not appear above, we do not have a valid date for you. Please contact Maggie in the church office to correct this.**

**Trustee on Call  
for April  
Blake Hughes**

# KICKBALL AT KONEHETE PARK

MAY  
17

3-5 PM

JOIN US FOR THIS FUN  
AND  
INTERGENERATIONAL,  
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
EVENT!

ICE CREAM AND LOTS  
OF LAUGHS PROVIDED  
FOR THOSE WHO  
WOULD RATHER WATCH  
THAN PLAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT KENDRA FOKAKIS 601-466-3089 OR PASTOR WIL



KONEHETE PARK FIELD # 699 CONNAHETTA ST. MURPHY NC

# Outdoor Furniture Sale

Saturday, April 18, 2026

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Handcrafted, locally made Adirondack-inspired outdoor furniture and accessories will be on sale on the church green with all profits going to Soul Table a ministry of First United Methodist Church, Murphy.




## Save the Dates! — June 5-7 WNCC Pilgrimage to Cherokee

You have a wonderful opportunity to experience the Pilgrimage to Cherokee on June 5-7, 2026. There will be an option to stay there for Friday and Saturday (June 5-6) only. You will be able to hear stories, narratives, and experiences of the Cherokee people, to hear about their reality, pain, and hope, and to honor them by listening to them. Please save the dates. Link to register:

[https://wnc-reg.brapp.com/  
PilgrimageCherokee](https://wnc-reg.brapp.com/PilgrimageCherokee)





**WE NEED YOUR HELP**



# **VBS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**JULY 19-23RD, 2026**

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HAVING A GREAT TIME AND BLESSING MURPHY'S CHILDREN THIS SUMMER? WE NEED YOU FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! REACH OUT TO BRIDGET MILLIAN, 828-541-1222, OR PASTOR WIL FOR MORE INFORMATION.



We are grateful for the generosity of the church. Your generosity in giving allows ministry to continue to happen. Check the bulletin for weekly giving updates. We want to highlight that we were able to provide a quick response to the urgent need of replacing the oil tank for the boiler. This was made possible because years ago people saw the need to start and support our church foundation fund. Between those financial gifts and the diligent work of the Trustees we were able to accomplish this. Thank You.

**Jackie Moser, Marsha Jones, Rick & Penny Dieffenderfer, Dennis & Paula Widstrom**



**Roots345**- The first monthly gathering for children in third-fifth grade for a time of spiritual formation and fellowship will be at the Posey's house on 3/29 from 4-6 pm. Contact Kendra Fokakis, 601-466-3089, for more information. Save the date for the second gathering on April 19. More information to come!

**Easter**- potluck breakfast at 9:45, egg hunt at 12:15 on the playground,

**Sunday school**- no Sunday school for kids on Easter morning or 4/12 for service Sunday; Sunday school will resume on 4/19

**Children's Choir**- no choir practice on 4/1 or 4/8

**Save the Date** for Kickball at Konehete Park on 5/17 from 3-5



# SUNDAY CHILDREN'S TIME





## **PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE**

Sanctuary

Sunday, March 29, 11 a.m.



## **MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE**

Holy Communion and Foot/Hand Washing

Sanctuary

Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m.



## **GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE**

Sanctuary

Friday, April 3, 12 Noon



## **EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE**

Harshaw Chapel, 150 Church St.

Sunday, April 5, 7 a.m.



## **POTLUCK EASTER BREAKFAST**

Fellowship Hall

Sunday, April 5, 9:45 a.m.



## **EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE**

Sanctuary

Sunday, April 5, 11 a.m.



## **EASTER EGG HUNT**

Playground, adjacent to Educ. Building

Sunday, April 5, 12:15 p.m.



# United Women in Faith

Before each meeting, we speak, "United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities." In 2026, it is our intention to lean into this, focusing on the four listed requirements to produce the predicted outcome.

**March 18th**, we met a half hour early to share a productive meeting when our new committees made their first reports. Then we had a very lucrative White Elephant Sale. So grateful to Dottie and Vera – love these people! The money shared will fund the Easter Basket project. Nancy Jo has arranged them to be assembled Monday, March 30th at 9:00 am in Fellowship Hall.

**March 21st**, Nancy Jo and Sarah June attended the quarterly district meeting in Waynesville, NC and are excited to bring back our take-way on the meeting.

**March 28th**, 2pm Service. We will/have hosted a reception honoring Dell Douglas in which we hope to affirm our belief – when we shall see her again.

**April 15th**, 11:30am NEXT MEETING AT HARSHAW CHAPEL, Parking at church and shuttle service will be provided starting at 11:00 am.

So looking forward to Spring and the promise of growth, join us if you can share in our growth!

## **SAVE THE DATE: MAY 2nd SPRING FLING**





The Mission Team will sponsor the annual Service Sunday on April 12. Sign up sheets will be inserted into the bulletins. Please choose a project and sign up to serve our community. Lunch will be served before everyone goes out to work. Projects include weeding at the Homeless Shelter, planting vegetables at the Senior Center, cleaning store fronts and leaving blessing cards, picking up trash. For those who do not wish to be outside, the greeting card ministry will be making cards with Sharon Francis. There will also be rock painting for children! Please sign up so there will be enough food provided.

Soul Table: Soul Table continues to thrive and grow. At the end of May, the Barfields will be bowing out. If you or anyone you know is interested in taking over the meals on first and third Thursdays ( or if you could just do one of those a month) please contact Grant Corrigan as soon as possible. Soul Table is all about making our neighbors feel warm and welcome and showing them Jesus in the way we love them.

The Mission Team would like to thank the church for all the support as we continue to help local organizations such as Reach, The Homeless Shelter, The Senior Center, Hinton Center, Ministerial Association, and others. We also continue our sponsorship of a class of students in the Zoe Empowers program in Liberia.



### Keep the following in your thoughts and prayers:

Ukraine and its people;  
Bill and Barbara Hughes;  
Carl Auvil; Teresa; Lori;

Emma; Alice & Ron Lewis; Cindy; Carolyn; Carl & Christy Osborn; Joe Hartman; Michee Leone; Earl Riggs; Cissy Dyer; Marion Forsyth; Rex Odom; Rosemary Vicknair; Gary Hall; Alden Rohen; Susan Lee; Bob Parker; Eric Brant; Keisha Licata; Grant Corrigan; Members of the Armed Forces.

**Prayer Team:** [prayfumc@gmail.com](mailto:prayfumc@gmail.com).

*In an effort to have room for all prayer requests we will rotate off the names every 3 weeks unless indicated, either by a notation on the blue prayer request card or by calling the church office.*

**828-837-2718 or email:**

[admin@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:admin@murphyfirstumc.org)

***Prayer Requests can be submitted through our mobile app, on our Facebook page, YouTube live stream or by calling the church office.***

# Contacts

Pastor Wil Posey

[pastor@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:pastor@murphyfirstumc.org)

Suzanne West—Director of Music

[music@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:music@murphyfirstumc.org)

Maggie Corrigan—Admin Asst

[admin@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:admin@murphyfirstumc.org)

Jack Frahmann—Treasurer

[treasurer@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:treasurer@murphyfirstumc.org)

Bridget Esterhuizen—Preschool Dir.

[preschool@murphyfirstumc.org](mailto:preschool@murphyfirstumc.org)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>29 PALM SUNDAY</b> 9:45am Sunday School 10:55am Worship 11:15am Children's Church 4pm ROOTS 4:30pm AA Dinner Mtg	30 8am Preschool 10:30am Yoga 11:30pm Chair Exercises <b>12:00 Lenten Lectio Divina</b>	31 9am Tax Prep. <b>12pm Centering Prayer Group</b> 5pm VRR	<b>1</b> 8am Preschool 10am Worship Mtg 11:30pm Chair Exercises <b>1:00pm Bible Study</b> <b>4:30pm Wesley Ringers</b> <b>5:30pm Chancel Choir</b>	<b>2 MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> <b>9:30am Mom's Morning</b> 10:00 Quilters <b>11:30 pm Soul Tb.</b> <b>7pm Maundy Thursday Svc</b>	<b>3 GOOD FRIDAY</b> <b>8am Pre-school</b> 11:30pm Chair Exercises <b>12:00 Good Friday Svc</b>	<b>4</b> 9:30am AI Anon
<b>05 EASTER SUNDAY</b> <b>7am Sunrise Svc</b> <b>9:45am Easter B'fast</b> <b>10:55am Worship</b> <b>11:15am Children's Church</b> <b>12:15pm Easter Egg Hunt</b> <b>4pm ALPHA</b>	<b>06</b> <b>10:30am Yoga</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>07</b> 9am Tax Prep. 5pm VRR	<b>08</b> <b>10am Worship Mtg</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises <b>4:30pm Harshaw Com.</b> <b>4:30pm Wesley Ringers</b> <b>5:30pm Chancel Choir</b>	<b>09</b> <b>9:30am Mom's Morning</b> 10:00 Quilters <b>11:30 pm Soul Table</b>	<b>10</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>11</b> 9:30am AI Anon
<b>12 SERVICE SUNDAY</b> <b>10:55am Worship</b> <b>11:15am Lunch and Service Projects</b> <b>12pm Alpha</b>	<b>13</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10:30am Yoga</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>14</b> 5PM VRR <b>5:30pm Trustees</b>	<b>15</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10am Worship Mtg</b> <b>10:30am Greeting Cards</b> <b>11:30am Willing Hands</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises <b>1:00pm Bible Study</b> <b>3:15pm Children's Choir</b> <b>4:30pm Wesley Ringers</b> <b>5:30pm Chancel Choir</b>	<b>16</b> <b>9:30am Mom's Morning</b> 10:00 Quilters <b>11:30am Soul Table</b> <b>5:30pm Finance Committee</b>	<b>17</b> <b>8am Pre-school</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>18</b> 9:30am AI Anon
<b>19</b> <b>9:45am Sunday School</b> <b>10:55am Worship</b> <b>11:15am Children's Church</b> <b>4pm ALPHA</b> <b>4pm ROOTS345</b>	<b>20</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10:30am Yoga</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>21</b> 5pm VRR	<b>22</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10am Worship Mtg</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises <b>3:15pm Children's Choir</b> <b>4:30pm Wesley Ringers</b> <b>5:30pm Chancel Choir</b>	<b>23</b> <b>9:30am Mom's Morning</b> 10:00 Quilters <b>11:30 pm Soul Table</b>	<b>24</b> <b>8am Pre-school</b> 11:30am Chair Exercises	<b>25</b> 9:30am AI Anon
<b>26</b> <b>9:45am Sunday School</b> <b>10:55am Worship</b> <b>11:15am Children's Church</b> <b>4pm ALPHA</b>	<b>27</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10:30am Yoga</b> 11:30pm Chair Exercises <b>5pm SPPRC</b> <b>Deadline for Newsltr Input</b>	<b>28</b> 5pm VRR	<b>29</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> <b>10am Worship Mtg</b> 11:30pm Chair Exercises <b>1:00pm Bible Study</b> <b>3:15pm Children's Choir</b> <b>4:30pm Wesley Ringers</b> <b>5:30pm Chancel Choir</b>	<b>30</b> <b>9:30am Mom's Morning</b> 10:00 Quilters <b>11:30 pm Soul Table</b>	<b>01</b> <b>8am Preschool</b> 11:30pm Chair Exercises	<b>02</b> 9:30am AI Anon

