



THE BEACON

December 2025

Brookstown

United Methodist Church

Rev. James T. (Chip) Webb, Jr.

A Message from Pastor Chip

**"I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree."**

~ Joyce Kilmer, 1913

Trees provide shade; sequester carbon and produce oxygen; bear food; provide fuel for warmth, light, and cooking; produce elements for medicines and materials for shelter. Some contend that trees "communicate" with each other. Trees certainly spoke to Joyce Kilmer. They speak to me. **Only God can make a tree.**

***"A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray"***

One of the prominent features of Brookstown Church's observance of the First Sunday in Advent are our trees! A highlight of the **Hanging of the Greens Service** is the lighting and placement of **Chrismons** on our Sanctuary Christmas Tree. Our tree is big, beautiful, historic, and occupies an upfront position in our seasonal decorations. The other **Brookstown Christmas Tree** occupies a valued position on our property at the corner of Yadkinville and Lewisville Vienna Roads. On November 23, we hosted the annual Community Thanksgiving Service, and held the **Annual Tree Lighting Service** afterwards, in celebration of the One who is the Light of the World. I am partial to the outdoor Christmas Tree, as the **Lighting** marks the beginning of the Season and the **Tree** serves as a daily "beacon" for all who pass our way. But mostly, I am partial to this tree because it is **a living tree, with roots.**

***"A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast"***

The tradition of our **Annual Tree Lighting Service** gains a bit more historical prominence with each passing year. The Brookstown Tree was planted several years ago as a family memorial to Pete and Jo Thomas, but in years to come will become the oldest and most significant public **Christmas Tree Lighting** for the Vienna Community. On the corner of highways that get busier and busier, our beloved living Christmas Tree bears witness to the **Light** which cannot be overcome by the darkness. May it continue to grow upward as its roots extend deeper and wider.

Brookstown Church celebrates the diversity of our **Family Memorial Trees** (each of us serves as a family memorial to our family trees)! Some of our trees have been local for a long time, while others have become local only recently. Our people originated in different countries and cultures, but we all share **ancient spiritual roots**. In Advent, our roots become more exposed as we remember those through whom we have descended. Easily remembered are our parents and maybe, grandparents; but the reality is that we come from a long unbroken line of God's people going way back! All the way back!

(continued on next page)

A Message from Pastor Chip (continued)

Advent focuses our minds and hearts on preparation, judgment, repentance, mercy and redemption. The roots of our faith remind us of God's redemptive work in His people, in us, throughout human history. But then, in Advent, there is the **STUMP!**

"Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ~ Luke 3: 9

In the New Testament, the axe is often a symbol of God's judgment; but the stump, the consequence of God's judgment in the Old Testament, is also a symbol of God's redemptive and restorative power through His people.

The prophet Isaiah did not have a Christmas tree. He had a stump, from which a shoot emerged. The stump "spoke" to Isaiah, and Isaiah spread the good news to the world:

***"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." ~ Isaiah 11: 1***

The season of Advent is the darkest season of the Christian year, with the year's shortest day and longest night. Advent is a season of waiting, contemplation, self-reflection, and preparation for people of faith; but it is also a season of expectation of blessing, anticipation of God's work in and through us, and hope in the One who delivered us from darkness to Light. God created light from nothing. For nothing is impossible with God.

And from a family **stump**, God brought us the **Light of the World!**



Advent: Breathless Anticipation

"During December, silence can seem elusive. But if you concentrate just for an instant, far off in the depths somewhere, you can feel the beating of your heart. For all its madness and lostness, not to mention your own, you can hear the world holding its breath."

~ Frederick Buechner

Christmas Eve Drop-In Communion

5:30 – 7:00pm

***Come by the church sanctuary
to receive the Sacrament
of Holy Communion.***

Love Feast

Sunday, December 28

The birth of the Christ-Child will be celebrated at each of our three services the Sunday after Christmas Day, with our annual Love Feast. Join us for this timeless tradition of sharing a meal to honor and welcome the newborn Messiah.



Children & Youth Ministry News

The Children and Youth welcomed us beautifully into the Advent season during the Hanging of the Greens service on November 30th. Our church is now glowing with holiday cheer, rich greenery, stunning poinsettias, and bright lights - all of which remind us of the hope and love of Christ. As we celebrate the light of Jesus, we seek to share that same love with our community.

You're invited to help us spread Christmas joy through caroling on December 14th. We'll meet at Brookstown at 4:00 p.m. before heading out together. We also hope you'll join us for Breakfast with Santa on December 20th, a morning filled with fellowship and cheer for all ages! See details about these events below.

During Sunday lessons, our teens continue their deep dive into Scripture. We are journeying through the entire Bible, from beginning to end, and taking time to understand both the context and meaning, as we strengthen their relationship with God's Word.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for our annual Ski Trip on February 22nd. More details will be shared soon!

~ Jonna Lasley, Youth Ministry Coordinator

If they see God's love lived, they learn to live God's love.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 14 at 4pm

Everyone is invited to go caroling on Sunday, December 14 at 4pm. We will meet at Brookstown and take the bus to visit beloved church members, and end with a caroling performance for Vienna Village Assisted Living. No experience or preparation is required. Come join the fun!

*Music is the language
spoken by angels.*

~ Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow



Children's Christmas Play

Sunday, December 21 at 11am

Please join us for Worship at 11am on the 21st, and enjoy the Children's performance of their Christmas play. We'll have fun sharing the news of Christ's birth. Bring a friend too!

~ Marsha Campbell,
Children's Ministry Coordinator



*"Christmas, children,
is not a date.*

It is a state of mind."
~ Mary Ellen Chase

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 20, 8:30-10:30am

Come and enjoy a delicious sausage and pancake breakfast with Santa! The cost is \$2.50 for children, \$5 for adults. Children aged 1-100 can visit with Santa, tell him their Christmas wishes, and have pictures made with him by our professional photographer, Benita VanWinkle – pets can too! Photos are \$5 each, and will be sent out digitally to the purchaser.

Proceeds will support the BUMC Children & Youth Ministries. So, come and support our young people and enjoy wonderful food and Christmas fellowship!



*"One of the most glorious messes in the world
is the mess created on Christmas Day.*

Don't clean it up too quickly."

~ Andy Rooney

"Christmas, my child, is love in action.

*Every time we love, every time
we give, it's Christmas."*

~ Dale Evans



*"Christmas began in the heart of God.
It is complete only when it
is in our hearts."*

~ Anonymous

*"The
Advent mystery is the
beginning of the end of all
in us that is not yet Christ."
~ Thomas Merton*



*"Christmas
is not as much about
opening our presents as
opening our hearts."
~ Janice Maeditere*

United Women in Faith

We are blessed to have an active and growing unit of United Women in Faith at Brookstown. Considering that we were just organized in April last year, we have done much to "turn faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth." This is especially true of our monthly work in the community kitchen at the Second Harvest Foodbank of NWNC. If you're not already involved, we encourage you to come and visit at our next meeting.

Our December meeting will be Wednesday December 17 at 11am, with a pot luck luncheon in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a copy of the recipe for the dish you share, and we will print them for all to enjoy. The program will be "The Greatest Gift: How Are You Defining and Living Love."



Job Opening



The BSSC Board is looking for a Director of the Before and After School Care and Summer Programs at Brookstown UMC. Margarita Burton is retiring at the end of December; we appreciate her hard work with this program for many years and wish her well!

Job Requirements

- Minimum of 2 years' education and/or 4 years' experience working with elementary-age children
- CPR-certified or willing to become so
- Strong communicator and problem-solver, with excellent group-management skills
- Good computer skills
- Licensed to drive a bus or willing to learn
- Available for the hours of 6:30-8:00 am, and 2:30-6:00 pm, with flexible time to shop for supplies, starting on January 5, 2026. Summer hours are 6:30 am-2:00 pm.
- Background check and 3 references

Job Description

On a daily basis during the school year, the Director prepares the group of around 35 children for school with a light breakfast, ensuring they get on the bus to Vienna Elementary. In the afternoon, the children have a snack, get help with homework, and take part in games and activities. During the summer, the Director oversees breakfast, snacks, and lunch, as well as outings and activities.

The Director is responsible for the hiring and training of staff, around 2-5 people. She/he is responsible for the safety and discipline of the children, as well as contributing to their growth and development in a Christian environment. The Director should be responsive and respectful to the families, and reports to the School Care Board. The church facilities must be used in a careful manner.

Salary will be based on experience, with benefits negotiable.

Contact Susan Jameson at svjameson@msn.com by December 5, 2025.



*Blessed Infant, nestle near my
heart and live in me forever.*

Blood Drive

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Red Cross Blood Drive held November 5 in the Brookstown Fellowship Hall. We had a great day and collected 18 pints of blood. We appreciate the Red Cross, all our volunteers, and especially our donors. Our next drive will be in January; details will be published!

~ Tim Lasley, Brookstown Blood Drive Coordinator

*"In the wilderness prepare
the way of the LORD!"
(Isaiah 40:3, NRSV).*

*May we also prepare our hearts
for the Messiah's coming.*

*"Let us now go to Bethlehem
and see this thing that has
come to pass, which the Lord
has made known to us."
(Luke 2:15, NKJV).*

National Day of Giving

National Giving Day, also known as Giving Tuesday, is an annual global day of charitable giving that occurs on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. It is a "generosity movement", designed to counteract the commercialism of shopping events, like Black Friday and Cyber Monday, by encouraging people to donate their time, money, or skills to non-profits and causes they care about.



UMC Giving Tuesday

December 2

"The needs of this moment are many and we need to do all we can to respond. Together, let us welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, and heal the sick."

~ United Methodist
Communications

Discover how you can help at:
www.ThisMomentMatters.org

The Giving Tree

A big thank you to everyone who helped support the Giving Tree this year! The response to our Christmas missions this holiday season has been a blessing and your generosity will be far-reaching!

With our first round of tags on the tree, we collected items for our senior citizens through Senior Services of Winston-Salem. All those tags disappeared so fast, we then collected gifts for the Marines Toys for Tots Program. Then, we put tags on the tree for items to send to our neighbors in Minneapolis, North Carolina, who still need our help while recovering from Hurricane Helene. If you would like to donate money, please make your check to BUMC and note in the memo what it's for. Brookstown will send one check to purchase gift cards at their local grocery stores. If you would like to donate groceries, these non-perishable items are needed:

- **Canned goods:** Chili, ravioli, green beans, tuna, chicken, Beanie Weenies, corn, apple sauce (canned or snack size).
- **Other items:** Ziploc bags, pancake syrup, ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard, fruit cups, oatmeal, Crystal Light powdered water flavorings.
- **Any other non-perishable items** you think they might need.

All donations for Minneapolis, NC need to be in by December 11.

There's also a "**Birthday For Jesus**" donation table in the Fellowship Hall by the exit door. Donations help the Gideons International provide Bibles across the globe. There's a Gideon ornament in each donation envelope to hang on your Christmas tree in honor of Jesus' birthday.

Gideon donations are always accepted, so there is no deadline for your gifts.

Thank you! ~ Roberta Lasley

*"Jesus did not come to make
God's love possible, but to
make God's love visible."*

~ Author Unknown

Crisis Control Ministries

Gift of the Month: Spices (Salt, Pepper,
Cinnamon, Basil, Flavoring, etc.)

Cocoa Mix for Kids

*There are bins at the church entrances
for donations. Please help fill them for
those who are in need.*



The CCM Holiday Honor Card

Crisis Control Ministry's Holiday Cards are the perfect way to spread holiday cheer while giving back to the community. All proceeds from the holiday card donations are used locally to help our neighbors in Forsyth and Stokes Counties meet essential life needs.

For a minimum tax-deductible donation of \$5 per card, Crisis Control Ministry will beautifully hand-sign, address, stamp with a holiday stamp, and mail cards of your choice to the special people on your holiday card list, or they'll send them to you to complete.

Choose from a catalog of beautifully designed cards by local artists. Quantities are limited.

Order early for the best selection. Visit:

www.crisiscontrol.org/ways-to-give/hhc-orderform.html



*"Making a
Difference"*

*by
William
Mangum*

Annual Conference Update

The Council of Bishops announced on November 5, 2025, that each of the four Constitutional Amendments voted on at Annual Conference in June, 2025, passed with more than 90% support worldwide.

These amendments will become part of our Book of Discipline in 2028, but they go into effect immediately. Please see Bishop Carter's letter at this link from the WNCC website:

<https://www.wnccumc.org/newsdetail/19437351>

~ Rick Cain,

Lay Delegate to Annual Conference

Born to Be the Bread

*Thinking back upon
Your humble birth;*

*such an unpretentious entrance,
as Your life began on earth.*

*Growing in wisdom
as You grew to be a man;
knowing Calvary loomed ahead.
This was God's plan.*

*You were born to be the Bread.
You were born to be the
Bread of Life to my soul.*

~ Ruth Elaine Schram



DECEMBER

Merry Christmas

ANNIVERSARIES

James & Lisa Locklear	4
Jim & Jonna Lasley	11
Mike & June Hayes	30

*Gentle, joyous,
lovely season...
fill us with your
peace.*



*"The hinge of history
is on the door of a
Bethlehem stable!"
~ Ralph Sockman*

2026 Flower Chart

The 2026 Flower Chart will be in the narthex the first Sunday of December. Select your special Sundays throughout the year to honor and remember loved ones and happy occasions!

Birthdays

Karen Swart	1	Bill Sheely	11
Tyron Mendenhall	1	Laura Brown	11
Carol Jackson	2	Mackie Jackson	17
Capri Powers	4	John Jameson	17
Siena Powers	4	Betty Shanks	17
MaeLena Apperson	6	Shannon Craft	18
Faith Greenwood	8	Nathaniel Norman	19
Jo Ann Easter	10	Christopher Ziglar	25
Diane Byers	10	Kevin Procter	26
Margil Conrad	10	Lydia Burton	31
Greg Saylor	10		

A Christmas Blessing

*May you have
the Spirit of Christmas,
which is Peace;
the Gladness of Christmas,
which is Hope;
the Heart of Christmas,
which is Love;
the Gift of Christmas,
which is Christ.
~ Ada Hendricks*

*December 25
Happy
Birthday
Jesus*

*"In the depth
of every mystery,
Jesus put a Face."
~ Nathan M. Pusey*



Church Contact Information

336-945-3029
brookstown@triad.twcba.org
www.brookstown.umcchurches.org
Like Us on Facebook

Flowers for Worship Services During Advent

Poinsettias
In Memory & In Honor of
Loved Ones
Large Poinsettias
arrangements placed by
Carol Jackson



The Birth of Jesus from the Gospel of Luke

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David); to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Many Happy Returns

*Somehow, not only for Christmas,
but all the long year through,
the joy that you give to others,
is the joy that comes back to you.
And the more you spend in blessing
the poor and lonely and sad,
the more of your heart's possessing
returns to you glad.
~ John Greenleaf Whittier*



Peace
On
Earth

What Is Christmas?

*Christmas is belief in the past, courage for the present and hope for the future.
It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessing,
rich and eternal, and that every path
may lead to peace.*