



# WEST END PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

275 Knox Lane, West End NC • [www.westendpres.church](http://www.westendpres.church)

## WEPC Newsletter

February 2024

- The Lenten Season & Ash Wednesday
- Words from the Pastor
- Lenten Spiritual Practices & Study Opportunities
- Words from the Director of Christian Education
- Mission Team Update
- Worship Team
- Transitions Update
- February Calendar

REMEMBER:  
THOU ART DUST  
AND TO DUST THOU SHALT  
RETURN

### This Wednesday, February 14th, is Ash Wednesday

and it marks the beginning of the season in the church year known as Lent. Lent is indeed a time of fasting and prayer.



However, the deeper purpose of all Lenten practices is two-fold. First, it is the one time during the church year we are called to remember that we are human beings, imperfect, sinful and fully dependent on God. We are dust and one day, we will return to the dust. Second, we are called to remember the new life offered to us through Jesus, and all the possibilities opened to us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Why a two-fold focus we might ask? The answer is because each of these practices reminds us who we are, and to whom we belong. Our Lenten practices help us remove all obstacles that keep God from working through us and in us.

If we choose to observe a Holy Lent with spiritual practices, what we choose will be unique to each of us, and open us up to self-examination. For some, giving up something we enjoy might be a way we remember our mortality and dependence on God, or a way to remember those who go without. Practices can also be taking something on, like scheduling prayer and reading scripture each day, or serving in the mission field. This is a solemn but holy season because we are invited to walk alongside Jesus as he makes his way to the cross. As we walk with him, let us acknowledge to him our shortcomings, and take the path towards our own repentance. Our journey towards Easter and resurrection must begin with accepting that we are dust and to dust we will return. On Ash Wednesday, we wear the sign of ashes on our forehead. Wearing Ash is a biblical symbol of mourning and penitence and an ancient sign of the fragility of human life. It marks the penitence of the community of faith while also pointing towards the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

The sanctuary will be open for prayer and meditation Ash Wednesday from 9-5:30. The pastor will be available in the office for those who would like to partake of communion or imposition of the ashes.

Church Office Hours: 9:00-4:00 Mon-Thurs Church Secretary Hours: 9:00-12:30

Church Secretary: Carol Moss Phone Number (910)400-4080 Email: [admin@westendpres.org](mailto:admin@westendpres.org)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 13 • West End, NC 27376 • Church Address: 275 Knox Lane • West End, NC 27376



# Words from the Pastor

*Reverend Natasha Blackwood*

Dear WEPC,

I cannot express how wonderful it is to begin communicating once again in a church newsletter. Just a few weeks after my arrival at WEPC, there were many unexpected challenges. There seemed to be a great deal of loss as well. However, the Holy Spirit leads on and we have many things to be grateful for that grew out of these challenges. For me, today, I am so very grateful we have found Carol Moss, who in the short time she has been with us, has been a wonderful addition to our church staff. Even as we are grateful for what God has done, we can agree these challenges have made the transition in leadership very difficult. Getting to know a new pastor and getting in step together in ministry is never easy. Transitions of any kind are difficult but transitions that involve building relationships takes patience, time, and prayer. In my studies I read this little example of church/pastor expectations....

**“Church Member describing the ideal pastor:** is 29 years old, has 30+ years of experience, loves the older folks of the church, visiting them regularly, spends all of his/her time with the young people of the church, is always available to anyone who drops by for a friendly conversation, gives all her/his attention to the ill and shut-in, is always in the church office when you need to find him/her, is always at the hospital seeking to comfort the sick and afflicted, never misses any church activity and on and on.

**A Pastor describing the ideal church member.** The member: is 29 years old, has degrees in law, accounting, business, personnel management, and vocal performance, has a high-paying career and pledges 25 percent of income to the congregation, sings in the choir, but has no need to solo, respects the pastor’s knowledge and never questions the pastor’s wisdom, pays attention during sermons and laughs at the right places, nods sagely at the right places, and goes home remembering all three points and applies them during the week, gives all her/his attention to the elderly, ill, and shut-in, never needs a pastoral call for sickness, spiritual counseling, or personal problems, always says yes to serving on committees when asked, never misses any church activity and so on...”

WEPC, like all pastors, I wish I could be everything to everyone. I wish I could be at every event, every meeting, every difficult moment, and every celebration. I wish I was liked if not loved by everyone, able to heal every wound, sooth every broken heart, nurture every meet every need, say the right thing every single time. I may wish I could be all these things but I know, I cannot. My role as pastor is actually to point to Jesus who is all those things and more. And, while I may wish, at times, for the perfect, know-all, do-all church member, the truth is I see new gifts, talents, and possibilities in each one of you every day— just as you are.

Building relationships together in ministry is a commitment that ultimately brings about the kingdom of God in the world by way of flawed individuals— by the saving grace of a perfect Savior.

Grace and Peace, Rev. Blackwood

**Monday**– Out of Office, available for emergencies

**Office Hours:** Tuesday-Thursday

**Phone:** (910)400-4080

**Email:** [natasha@westendpres.church](mailto:natasha@westendpres.church)





## A Word from the Director of Christian Education

Elizabeth Nix



### Lent 2024: Rooted in God's Love

Lent starts this year on Valentine's Day, February 14th. Though Valentine's Day isn't a religious holiday, the convergence is significant. Lent is a time of dedication to the Lord. What does it mean to anchor yourself in love and in God this Lent? As we think of Lenten discipline we might naturally associate it with shadows, emptiness, and suffering. Yes, these are elements of the Lenten journey, to be sure, but so is love. How will you take on a Lenten practice that is rooted in love this year? Here are three ideas for you.

1. Lovingkindness Meditation - You can do a simple search to find many scripts for this, but the basic idea is to think warmly first toward yourself, then toward someone you love, and finally toward an enemy. A few minutes per day makes a significant difference.
2. Practicing Self-Compassion - Every morning say to yourself "I am God's beloved child. God loves me unconditionally." — Sounds simple, but how often do we neglect to extend love and hospitality to ourselves? Children seem to be better at this, though they too can struggle. If we are to remind them of their worth, we must see it in ourselves first.
3. Scripture Memorization - Many of us know the beautiful and familiar words of 1 Corinthians 13 that begins "Love is patient. Love is kind." This love is not referring, specifically, to romantic love, but rather God's perfect love. Perhaps you'll want to memorize the whole chapter this Lent? How would that change your spiritual practice? (Source: [www.tracismith.com](http://www.tracismith.com))

**Director of Christian Education:** Elizabeth Nix

**Email:** [dce@westendpres.church](mailto:dce@westendpres.church)

**Phone:** (910)400-4080

# West End Presbyterian Church Worship Team

## Flower Sign Up For Worship 2024

We invite you to sign up to supply flowers for worship in the upcoming 2024 Worship year. You may sign up to bring flowers by calling the church office or you may go to the church website [www.westendpres.church](http://www.westendpres.church).



## CALLING FOR VOLUNTEERS



We are looking for usher volunteers to assist during worship. If you would like to volunteer or learn more please contact Louise Thomas at [lthomas3353@gmail.com](mailto:lthomas3353@gmail.com)

EASTER LILY  
PURCHASE  
FORMS WILL  
SOON BE



## February Special Services & Communion Dates

Sunday February 11th– Transfiguration of the Lord

Ash Wednesday February 14th– Pastor is available in the office for communion and imposition of the ashes. Sanctuary available for prayer.



## The Mission Team Update

During Lent, members, committees, leaders and everyone involved in ministry at West End Presbyterian Church will be working together to gather money to support this local ministry to end Local Homelessness in Moore County. This ministry is called TEAM WORKZ. Each Sunday during Lent, we will collect money during worship to support this ministry. Currently, Moore County has no shelter for homeless men. TEAM WORKZ is raising money specifically to provide this much needed shelter for homeless men in Moore County. Let's work together West End Presbyterian Church and help TEAM WORKZ end local homelessness.

### WE'RE ON A MISSION TO END OUR LOCAL HOMELESSNESS

We assist locally qualified homeless individuals, including veterans, families, and vulnerable individuals, by removing typical barriers. We offer a helping hand through our Cold Weather Relief Program, providing emergency support with limited shelter, food, and basic



Additionally, our Sponsorship Program helps qualified homeless individuals achieve stable independence by providing access to limited shelter, transportation, job placement, and affiliated programs for clothing, food, and counseling, subject to resource limitations.

## Officer Training Information-

The General Presbyter of Coastal Carolina Presbytery, Jerrod Lowry, will be leading our Officer training during the month of March. Once the date is set all officers will receive detailed information. If you have any questions that please feel free to contact the pastor.





# February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10:30 Staff Mgt	2	3
Scout Sunday 4 10am SS 11am Worship 6-7:30pm Valentine's Dinner Fundraiser	5	6 10am PW Circle 2:30pm Tues Tutoring 6pm Deacons Mgt	7 2:30pm WOW 6pm Cub Scout Mgt 6pm Mission Committee Mgt	8 10:30 Staff Mgt	9	10
Super Bowl of Caring 11  10am SS 11am Worship NO Youth Group	12 10am Membership 1:30 Music and Worship Mgt	13 2:30pm Tues Tutoring 7pm Christian Ed Mgt Zoom	Ash Wednesday 14 10:30am Prayer Shawl 1pm Bldg and Grounds Mgt 2:30pm WOW 6pm Cub Scout Mgt	15 10:30 Staff Mgt	16	17
First Sunday of Lent 18 10am SS 11am Worship and Congregational Mgt  5pm Confirmation 6pm Youth Group	19	20 2:30pm Tues Tutoring	21 2:30pm WOW 6pm Cub Scout Mgt	22 10:30 Staff Mgt	23 Youth Group Ski Trip	24 Youth Group Ski Trip
2nd Sunday of Lent 25 10am SS 11am Worship No Youth Group	26 Youth Group Ski Trip	27 2:30pm Tues Tutoring	28 2:30pm WOW 5pm Session 6pm Cub Scout Mgt	29 10:30 Staff Mgt	March 1	March 2 10am-1pm PineWood Derby



## Congregational Meeting February 18th

To attend to the annual meeting of the corporation. This is a brief meeting that will take place immediately following worship.

## Birthdays for February

Charlie Cunningham 2/12

Fred Allen 2/13

Julia Holderfield 2/17

Jerry Phipps 2/20

Jean Schmidt 2/20

Scot Brown 2/23

Joanna Perkins 2/26

Mike Berry 2/27

## Anniversaries for February

Kathy and Bob Hess 2/16

Ron and Sue Shepard 2/25

Nancy and Ron Workman 2/25

