

## MLK Jr. Celebration Events Begin Thursday

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Planning Committee is inviting the community to come together for a series of events honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose leadership helped transform the civil rights movement and shape the nation's ongoing pursuit of equality, justice, and peace. The annual MLK Jr. Celebration will feature multiple events throughout the week, encouraging reflection, fellowship, and community unity.

Dr. King, a Baptist minister and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, is remembered for his commitment to nonviolent activism and his powerful vision of a nation where people are judged by the content of their character rather than the color of their skin.

His work continues to inspire communities across the country to come together in service, dialogue, and action.

The week's events will begin on Thursday, January 15 with Community Table Talks at local churches. These discussions are intended to foster meaningful conversation and reflection on Dr. King's teachings and their relevance today.

- United Methodist Church (Morven) - 5 p.m.
- Harvest Ministries (Wadesboro) - 6 p.m.
- New Popular Springs (Burnsville) - 6 p.m.
- Flakes Chapel (Ansonville) - 6 p.m.
- Deep Creek Baptist Church (Wadesboro) - 6 p.m.

On Friday, January 16 the celebration will continue with MLK Jr. Jazzy Night featuring Nygel Graham at HOPPLA in Morven. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m., with food served. Tickets are \$35 and may be purchased by contacting HOPPLA directly. The website is [www.HOPPLA.ws](http://www.HOPPLA.ws), and the telephone number is 704-851-3144.

Saturday, January 17 will feature the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast at the Lockhart-Taylor Center beginning at 9:00 a.m., offering a time for prayer, inspiration, and fellowship.

The week will conclude on Monday, January 19 with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Events. The MLK Jr. Commemorative March will begin at 8:00 a.m. from the Anson County Department of Social Services parking area, followed immediately by the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Event at the Lockhart-Taylor Center.

The Lockhart-Taylor Center is located at 514 North Washington Street in Wadesboro.

In Anson County, community members are encouraged to come together in the spirit of unity and purpose to help make Dr. King's dream a reality for all Americans.



Dr. Andrew Tran D.D.S.  
Dr. Brian Hoang

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## Church

**JANUARY 21 - 23**

### **Winter Revival**

At Johnson Chapel Holiness Church, 7pm nightly. Wed-Pastor Terry Little; Thu-Bishop Walter Ellerbe; Fri-Pastor Roman Henry. Everyone is invited.

**JANUARY 24**

### **Collard Sandwich**

**Sale** At Rocky Mount AME Zion Church, Grassy Island Rd in Ansonville, 11am-5pm. Also fish, chicken wings & hot dogs.

**JANUARY 25**

### **Building Fund**

**Program** At Madison Grove Church 11am with Pastor Fred Leak & 2:30pm with Pastor Freddie Little from Cedar Creek Church.

### **Pastor's Aide**

**Program** At Henry Grove Baptist Church at 3pm with Pastor Blanch Williams of Fairly Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Laurinburg.

### **Appreciation**

#### **Service**

For Elder Mae Robinson at Johnson Chapel Holiness Church, 11:45am with Elder Pandora Little. Everyone is invited.

**FEBRUARY 7**

### **Men's Breakfast**

At New Grove Missionary Baptist Church, 10am. All males, any age are invited. It's a call to be saved, to be renewed in the Lord. Come fellowship & hear inspiring words.

**FEBRUARY 8**

### **Family & Friends**

**Program** At Madison Grove Church, 11am with Pastor Leak & 2:30pm with Min. Carlos Melton from Johnson Chapel Church.

## Events

**JANUARY 15**

### **Free Food**

**Anson Mobile Food Market** 10:00 a.m. on the Square in uptown Wadesboro, at the corner of Wade

& Greene Streets.. Fresh veggies, fruit & bread if available. Blood pressure checks, along with healthy living topics & booths. Nothing required to receive food, just come! Volunteers will help you with the bags. Sponsored by Anson Extension Service.

**JANUARY 20**

**Board of Commissioners Meet** 6pm in the Board Room, Suite 209, in Government Center, 101 S Greene St in uptown Wadesboro. Meetings are available online at [youtube.com](http://youtube.com), search for Anson Commissioners. To appear, sign up prior to meeting. Info 704-994-3201.

**JANUARY 22**

**Beekeepers Meet** At Extension Office, 501 McLaurin St. in Wadesboro, 7pm. Wade Turner will speak about the upcoming state spring meeting and ACBA President Rodney Allen hosts question and answer session about interest/involvement/goals about honeybees. Learn more about the local chapter, beekeeping educational programs, or if you need a beekeeper to re-home a visiting swarm. Info Facebook page, "Anson Beekeepers Association."

**JANUARY 26**

### **NAACP Meeting**

They invite you to attend. 6:30pm at Ebenezer Baptist Church, located at 612 Salisbury Street in Wadesboro. They welcome everyone. Meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month. For info: Sinic Marsh [mrshs6@yahoo.com](mailto:mrshs6@yahoo.com) or 704-254-0630.

## Governor Stein Holds Teacher Roundtable Highlighting Impact of Cell Phone-Free Classrooms

On Tuesday, January 13 Governor Josh Stein visited East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte to hear directly from teachers about the impact of cell phone-free classroom environments and how the change is shaping student learning.

Last summer, Governor Stein signed legislation establishing cell phone-free classrooms, a law that officially took effect January 1, 2026. With its implementation, North Carolina joined 32 other states that restrict cell phone use during instructional time.

"Cell phone-free classrooms enable students to focus on social studies instead of social media and strengthen relationships with their peers," Governor Stein said. "The teachers I met today are doing their all for their students, making every effort to set them up for success. We must value our incredible educators by raising starting teacher pay to the highest in the Southeast."

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Superintendent Dr. Crystal Hill echoed the benefits of reduced classroom distractions. "When classrooms are free from cell phone distractions, students can fully immerse themselves in learning," Hill said. "It gives them the chance to focus on ideas, connect with peers and engage in meaningful discussions, which helps them build confidence and curiosity — important skills that will serve them well beyond school walls."

In December, the Governor's Advisory Council for Student Safety and Well-Being released its annual report and accompanying video highlighting the positive impact of limiting wireless communication devices, including cell phones, during instructional time. Governor Stein created the council in April to develop solutions aimed at fostering safe, welcoming, and inclusive school environments.

During the visit, Governor Stein also toured East Mecklenburg High School's automotive and culinary education programs, which are offered in partnership with Central Piedmont Community College. The visit followed last week's announcement that North Carolina was ranked the Top State for Workforce Development for 2026 by Site Selection Magazine, citing the state's strong public schools, community colleges, universities, and innovative workforce development programs.

Governor Stein continues to urge the General Assembly to pass a comprehensive state budget that invests in public education. His proposed 2025-2027 budget includes raising starting teacher salaries to the highest in the Southeast by increasing average pay by 10.6 percent, reinstating master's degree pay, expanding access to school nurses, counselors, and social workers, and providing free breakfast for students in public schools.

## Rockingham Woman Wins \$1.4 Million Jackpot

What started as a quiet Wednesday night at home on January 7 turned into a life-changing moment for Melinda Murphy of Rockingham when she hit a \$1.4 million jackpot while playing a digital instant game through the North Carolina Education Lottery.

"I was shaking and crying," Murphy said. "This is literally the biggest blessing you can ever imagine."

Murphy said she almost missed the moment altogether. "I wasn't even paying close attention, but out of my peripheral vision I saw stuff happening on the screen," she laughed. "I was like, 'This can't be real.'"

She wagered just 50 cents and won the top-level Epic Jackpot in the Bison Bonanza digital instant game. The progressive jackpot can be won at any time, though the odds of hitting it are 1 in 62 million. "I was in disbelief," Murphy said. "I still kind of am."

Murphy claimed her prize at lottery headquarters and, after required federal and state tax withholdings, took home \$1.01 million. "It's kind of surreal right now," she said.

She plans to use her winnings to pay bills, invest, and possibly purchase a new Honda Passport — a practical reward for an extraordinary stroke of luck.

In the Bison Bonanza digital instant game, players can wager from 50 cents to \$30.

Digital instant games are played exclusively online through the lottery's website at [nclottery.com](http://nclottery.com) or on the NC Lottery Official Mobile App.



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**FEBRUARY 8**

### **Lay Council**

**Program** At Rocky Mount AME Zion Church, Grassy Island Rd in Ansonville, at 2pm with Rev. Donnie Bennett of Mt. Sinai Baptist Church in Rockingham.

### **Appreciation Service**

For 1st Man Bro. Robin at New Grove Missionary Baptist Church, 2:30pm with Rev. Terry Little of West Deep Creek Church.

### **ONGOING**

**Saturday Services** Lighthouse Ministries holds services every Saturday at 11am. Located at 311 Birchwood Dr in Wadesboro. The Pastor is Terry Taylor & Assistant Pastor is Lawanda Rodgers.