



# THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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April 2019

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## *Steve's Slant*

Dear friends,

Please mark this date on your calendar: Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, for a fellowship event following worship that you won't want to miss. (More on this in a moment.)

Two weekends ago, our Session and the key leaders of our ministry teams gathered for a retreat at William Black Lodge in Montreat.

The purpose of the retreat was three-fold: Three years into the launch of our ministry plan, we gathered 1) to assess the things we have done well in working to realize our goals, 2) to review areas where we still have room for improvement and 3) to set some new and specific goals for ourselves for this year (and beyond).

And we did just that. So, first, let me share with you a summary of the things we felt like we have done especially well over the last three years:

- Our Congregational Life team has done a wonderful job of caring for our members, and of planning and hosting receptions and other fellowship events, large and small.
- Our Community Engagement Team continues to expand the communities we serve, and the ways we serve them, especially in the area of social justice.
- Our Faith Development and Spiritual Nurture Team has done a particularly impressive job of growing and supporting our children's ministries.
- Our Church/College Relations Team continues to expand the ways we serve and support the campus community, including (but not limited to) launching a new tradition of hosting a community-wide, and very popular (!), Thanksgiving dinner in our Fellowship Hall.
- Our Worship Planning and Liturgical Arts Teams have worked together with our staff to greatly enrich our worship services.
- Our Communications Team launched our new church website, built out our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, and acquired and installed new church management and communications software.
- Our Administration Ministry Team focused on developing a sustainable operating fund budget supported entirely with annual donations from congregants.

Again, this is merely a summary of the more noteworthy progress we've made in reaching our goals. (For a detailed description of the goals we set for ourselves as listed in our Ministry Plan click [here](#).)

(Continued on page 5 and 6)

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**PRAYERS FOR:** Ray Stock; Ron Wilson; Barbara Higgins; Dr. Steven Williams and Mary Moorrees.

**Church contacts:** Church Office 298-9092  
 Church Administrator; Donna Eagle Joslin 771-2097 e-mail= [deagle@Warren-Wilson.edu](mailto:deagle@Warren-Wilson.edu)  
 Minister; Rev. Dr. Steve Runholt 712-7803 e-mail= [srunholt@Warren-Wilson.edu](mailto:srunholt@Warren-Wilson.edu)  
 Associate in Ministry, Rev. Grace Boyer 713-1491 e-mail= [graceeboyer@gmail.com](mailto:graceeboyer@gmail.com)  
 Interim Director of Music, organist; Dr. David Foster  
 Treasurers; Leslie Sayyar, 333-8867 e-mail= [treasurerwwpc@outlook.com](mailto:treasurerwwpc@outlook.com)  
 Jack Ballard, 777-6156 e-mail= [Joballard67@gmail.com](mailto:Joballard67@gmail.com)  
 Assistant Treasurers; Alisa White 298-6778 e-mail= [aliswht@yahoo.com](mailto:aliswht@yahoo.com)  
 Book Keeper; Barbara Escalante e-mail= [bookkeeperwwpc@outlook.com](mailto:bookkeeperwwpc@outlook.com)

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**April Birthdays!**

Eloise Murchison	April 4	Molly Hamilton	April 10
Claudia Nix	April 21	Ken Murchison	April 24



The Warren Wilson Book Group will meet Thur. April 11th at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Corise Gambrell is leading the discussion of "Before We Were Yours" by Lisa Wingate. Bring your lunch and join in the discussion.

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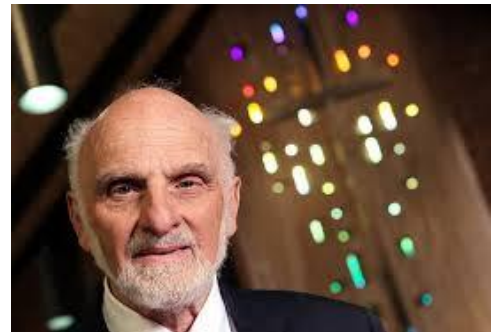


**A Big Thank You from all the children and youth  
 for all the donations you so generously provided to the  
 Sunday School!**

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**Adult Education**

Lenten Study March 10-April 14. The class will be reading *Sabbath As Resistance: Saying NO to the Culture of Now*, by Old Testament Scholar Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann. He writes that the Sabbath "is about becoming a whole person and restoring a whole society." See Grace about books.



**Camp Grier Work Day**

April 6th, 2019 9AM-5PM

Join us for a day of staining decks, cleaning up trails and helping camp come to life in the summer! Lunch and refreshments provided. Register online at [www.campgrier.org](http://www.campgrier.org)



## WWPC Has Been Recertified as an Earth Care Congregation for 2019

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has a program to encourage the “greening of Presbyterian churches” and to help our churches become better stewards of the earth God has given us. Churches that have met the requirements for this program are certified as “Earth Care Congregations.” This program started in 2010. To maintain this recognition, churches must submit an application for recertification annually between 1 January and 15 February.

Our initial application for certification was approved for 2018. We got word in early March of this year that our application for recertification was approved, thus we are again recognized as an Earth Care Congregation, now for 2019.

The recertification application has a total of just over 130 questions divided among four categories to which a church responds. The categories are Worship, Education, Facilities, and Outreach. The questions are asking for particular things a church has done in the last year where each positive answer or action is assigned a point value. For an application to be approved, a minimum number of points must be earned in each of the four categories (minimum of 5 points in each category), but the total points must sum to at least 50. Our scores were: Worship = 62, Education = 30, Facilities = 54, and Outreach = 36 for a total of 182 points. Thus our approved application was well over the minimum score.

A fairly small percentage of PCUSA congregations are designated as Earth Care Congregations. If we look at just the Presbytery of Western North Carolina for example, our Presbytery has just over 100 congregations, but only 8 are certified as Earth Care Congregations.

Of course, we are pleased our status as an Earth Care Congregation has been renewed. However, in addition to continuing to do the things we have done for 2018 and 2019 that counted toward our applications being approved, our goal for renewal for future years should include identifying and implementing new actions by our congregation to protect our planet.

The WWPC Earth Care Congregation team that worked on the recertification application for 2019 included Kristen Williams, Lisa Mallory, Donna Eagle Joslin, Grace Boyer, Steve Runholt, and Bob Gambrell. Each of these people evaluated our efforts and actions in 2018 for application questions in one or more of the four categories. If you would like to join the WWPC Earth Care Congregation team this year for the 2020 recertification application, or, if you want more information or want to offer suggestions for additional things our church could be doing, contact Bob Gambrell. If you would like to have a copy of the 2019 recertification application, contact Bob also.

Bob Gambrell  
828-357-5064 home  
225-603-9866 cell  
gambrell4@charter.net

## Community Worship Services During Lent

Sponsored by the Swannanoa Valley Ministerial Association



The Swannanoa Valley Ministerial Association is sponsoring Community Worship Services for the Wednesdays of Lent and on Good Friday. Each service begins at noon and lasts for about 30 minutes. A light lunch follows each service (with the exception of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday). An offering will be taken at each service for the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministries' "heating fund." All are invited to these services which help us to prepare ourselves for our holiest day of Easter. The schedule is as follows:

- April 3 - Warren Wilson/Black Mountain Presbyterian churches (at Black Mountain Presbyterian)
- April 10 – First Baptist Church Black Mountain
- April 19 - Good Friday Service, First Christian Church (No Lunch)

Each event will begin at 12:00 pm. We welcome everyone to walk the Lenten journey with us.

### HOLY WEEK



### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Palm Sunday**                      **April 14, 10:55** meet in front of the Chapel

**Maundy Thursday**              **April 18, 7:00 pm** in the Chapel.

**Good Friday**                      **April 19, Community Lenten Service at noon**  
First Christian Church (no lunch)



**Easter**                      **April 21, Easter Breakfast,**  
**9:30 Fellowship Hall**

**Egg Hunt, 10:15 in and**  
**around Fellowship Hall**

**Easter Service, 11:00 am in the Chapel**

*Steve's Slant cont...* As for specific areas of focus in 2019, we agreed to the following:

- Develop a specific plan to welcome and gather contact information from visitors, and train a team of greeters to implement that plan and follow up on this information.
- Reboot the Communications Team and work to improve the way we tell our story, both among our own members and, especially, among visitors and the wider community.
- Plan an intergenerational retreat -- a day of fun and fellowship -- for later this summer.

We also agreed on the importance of a broader, overarching goal: if we believe in the mission of this church, and if we want to remain a vital presence in this valley and this Presbytery (which of course we all do), then we need to invest specific and intentional time and effort on growing our membership.

To that end, we noted that in 84% of cases, people who visit a church for the first time attend because they are invited.

But what are we inviting them to? Yes, it could be to our worship service. But it can also mean inviting them to fellowship events, or to join us for service opportunities, or to attend educational programs, or to bring their kids to programs for our children.

Another question immediately follows: if someone were to accept such an invitation and to attend one of these events, what messages are we sending when they get here?

For example, imagine your neighbor has agreed to come to church with you and she visits here for the first time.

What kind of messages are we sending with where we sit in the sanctuary? If she stops in the narthex or the parlor before entering the sanctuary, what messages is the art on those walls conveying?

It turns out we don't have to imagine this scenario. Our retreat facilitator, Tommy Brown, visited here for the first time, with his wife, as part of his preparation to lead our retreat. And he was kind enough -- and courageous enough -- to share what that experience was like, and the impressions he and his wife took away from their visit.

He noted that when they first entered the sanctuary, the empty spaces in our pews -- the obvious distance we keep from one another -- conveyed the impression that we might not like one another very much, and that we might not value community.

He noted that the artwork on the walls of the narthex and the parlor all tells a story about who the church was in the past, but there are no visual cues anywhere about who we are now, at this moment in our life together:

- Nothing about the many ways we care for our members, or about the wonderful fellowship we enjoy with one another (Think potlucks and picnics and pancake suppers.)
- No pictures of children, and no descriptions of our thriving children's education and music programs.
- Nothing about the ways our members are engaged in serving the campus community and the wider community. (No photos of Habitat houses, for example, or of our new Thanksgiving dinner, or of Cookies and Carols).

Tommy went on to share that, in the end, he did get a clear sense of who we are. But it was only after church, at coffee hour, that he experienced us as a warm, vital and welcoming congregation, filled with people (including lots of children) who know each other well and enjoy one another.

While he enjoyed that experience, and commented favorably on it, he noted that if a visitor comes and perceives (incorrectly) that we're not a welcoming congregation, they may not stay long enough for us to correct that impression and to experience who we really are.

And if that happens, we've lost them. They will almost certainly not return. (Cont. on next page)

So other questions follow: How do we make the worship experience seem more intimate and how do we convey a stronger sense of community when we gather in the sanctuary?

And how do we tell a more vibrant story about who we are right now, at this juncture in our history, starting from the moment visitors walk through our doors into our narthex?

Which brings us full circle. On Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, our Session and the leaders of our Ministry Teams would like to invite you to join them for a catered lunch following worship. We will then continue this conversation, as we think together about how to take the next step on our shared journey to a bright, hopeful future.

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## Camp Grier

Happy Spring from our camp family to yours!

*We have a lot of incredible projects currently underway. We are currently building a dock that will be the new home to our canoes and great focal point of our lake. The horse pasture is expanding and we are in the process of creating a riding arena! Thank you to those have supported us and have helped Camp Grier blossom into the beautiful place that it is! (828-668-7793) Call or go online for more information. [www.campgrier.org](http://www.campgrier.org)*

Work Day

April 6th, 2019

9AM-5PM

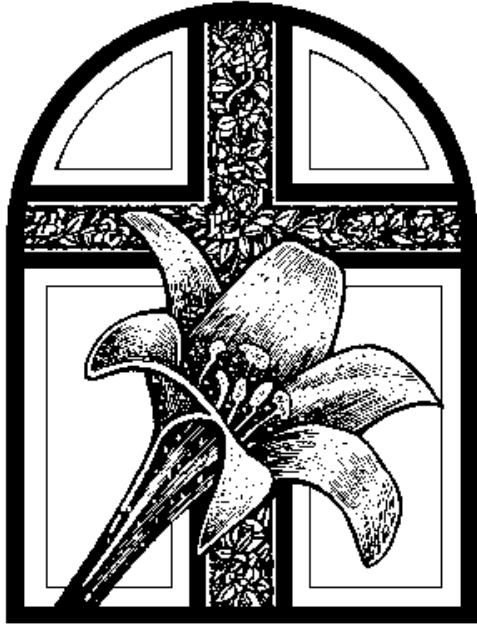
*Join us for a day of staining decks, cleaning up trails and helping camp come to life in the summer! Lunch and refreshments provided.*



Highlights from the Mad Hatter's Tea at Highland Farms!



Thanks to all who made this happen!



## HOLY WEEK

At Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church we are mothers and fathers, single and married, gay and straight, young and old, black and white, prosperous and poor, uncertain and sure, broken and whole-and everything in between.

Together we are the many faces of humanity, yet as a joyful, caring and loving community of faith, we are committed in our diversity to be one in Christ!

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church  
CPO 6355/PO Box 9000  
Asheville, NC 28815-9000  
01-0001-1320

*The Extended Family* ◻