



THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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November/December 2019

Steve's Slant

What are you thankful for? I'll admit, it's a standard question, the one you would likely expect this time of year, as the Thanksgiving holiday steadily comes into view.

For reasons I'll touch on immediately below, I still think it's important to ask it. Plus, it's not the only question I would like to put to you in this newsletter.

The question of what we're thankful for is important, perhaps even essential for such a time as this, because gratitude -- thanksgiving's fraternal twin -- is a key nutrient in a healthy spiritual life. Identifying and naming the things for which we are thankful helps prevent spiritual malnutrition -- scurvy of the spirit, as it were.

So, what are you thankful for? I would genuinely like to know. By which I mean: I would love it if you might email me or drop me a note and tell me what it is you're thankful for. I'm asking because, if you'll indicate that you're okay with my doing this, and if I promise to keep the replies anonymous, I would like to build some of your replies into my sermon on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

To that end, let me also say this: family and good health are two obvious things for which most of us are thankful. And with good reason. The care, companionship and support of our loved ones, and the ability to get up out of bed in the morning and live a full life, these are among life's most precious gifts.

But this year, let me invite you to go a little deeper. Think about the whole scope of your life. What, or who, makes your life easier, better? What gives you joy? What would you not want to be without? If the most valuable things in life are not things, what items -- or people, or experiences -- are on your list?

If you'd be willing to take a few minutes to jot down some of your answers, and then send those to me (and please feel free to do so anonymously), well, I would be most grateful.

Now, a brief prelude to the other question I'd like to ask.

Donna is due to go out on Monday to have a second hip replacement surgery. This surgery requires her to be out of the office for six weeks. So, first, I invite you to keep her in your prayers.

Also, because she is so essential to the management of our administrative life, we are going to streamline a few things. Joel has graciously agreed to come into the office in the mornings and answer the phone. He has also agreed to help produce our bulletins every week. I will also be answering the phones during the afternoons -- when I'm here.

So, if you need to phone the church, it would be helpful if you were able to do that in the morning. But if you have something time-sensitive, or otherwise important you'd like to discuss outside of that framework, please feel free to call me on my cell phone. (It is in the church directory.)

Also, if you stop in during the afternoon and no one is here, it likely means I'm either visiting someone in the hospital or in their home, or attending a meeting on campus or otherwise offsite. You can leave a message on the white board on Donna's door, letting us know you were here and I will get back to you asap.

(Continued on page 9)

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November/December Birthdays!

Kay Stockdale Nov. 3, Bob Cook Nov. 12, Tom Eller Nov.12, Susan Daugherty Nov. 16,
Ernst Laursen Nov. 24, Sally Broughton Nov. 26, Pat Laursen Nov. 27, Kathy Rouse Nov. 27,
Steve Runholt Nov. 29.

Hythe Hamilton Dec. 5, Doug Orr Dec. 9, Jon Hettrick Dec. 12, Darrell Spencer Dec. 14,
Emily Pulsifer Dec. 15, Liz Lesesne Dec. 17, Joanne Lincoln Dec. 30, Sandy Brauer Dec. 31,
Derron Daugherty Dec. 31



The Warren Wilson Book Discussion Group will meet at noon, November 14th in the Fellowship Hall of the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church. Judi Repman will lead the discussion of "The Widows of Malabar Hill" by Sujata Massey. Sue Wilson will provide dessert. Bring your lunch and join the discussion.

The group will meet again at noon, December 12th in the Fellowship Hall of the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church. Susan Taylor will lead the discussion of "Educated" by Tara Westover. Dessert will be provided... bring your lunch and join the discussion.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Nov 3-Nov 24 For Such A Time As This....

People, events, and issues in history and what they have called forth from people of faith and the Church.

Nov 3 Alex McNeill, executive director of More Light Presbyterians, will speak about **LGBTQ** ministry and his own journey as a transgender man in ministry.

Nov 10 Steve Runholt will share about the work and context of **C.S. Lewis** and invite those who attended the CS Lewis symposium in Montreat to share from their experience.

Nov 17 Fitz Legerton will be interviewed about his time as a young pastor in Atlanta during the **Civil Rights** movement.

Nov. 24 Shannon Spencer director of the **Asheville Poverty Initiative** and chaplain at the Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women, will share about her work with 12 Baskets Cafe.

Hunger Walk 2019

The SVCM Hunger Walk was a successful event. Many thanks to Salyna Morgan for her organizational skills!



Clerk's Report

At its stated meeting in October, the session took the following actions:

1. Approved the challenge budget for 2020.
2. Granted the church administrator an additional ten days of leave for 2019 to assist her recovery from hip surgery and offered her the opportunity to use one week of her 2020 vacation leave in 2019.
3. Named Steve Runholt, Ken Murchison, Leslie Sayyar, and Mike Levi as a commission to make plans to cover the duties of the church administrator during her leave and to spend not more than \$2500 from the general endowment for that purpose.
4. Approved adding a flexible spending account option as a benefit for all employees.
5. Accept the audit report for 2018 and expressed its thanks to the team that prepared it.
6. Approved the use of Spiritual Nurture endowment earnings to pay registration for youth attending the middle school retreat sponsored by the presbytery.
7. Approved the hiring of Beatrice Feay as a probationary nursery employee until her background check is completed.
8. Authorized the moderator to call a congregational meeting when the nominating committee notifies him that the committee is prepared to present its report to the congregation.



Ken Murchison, Clerk of Session

Report of Giving to Presbytery of Western North Carolina

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina recently sent a report itemizing our giving to the work of the wider church through September 30. It showed that our congregation has given more than \$6000 in gifts beyond our commitment to the unified giving that supports the regular presbytery budget. The largest of our gifts were \$1540 to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, \$1250 to Gifts of the Hope Campaign, \$1101 to the Five Cents a Meal Offering, and \$1025 to the Christmas Joy Gift offering.



2020 COMMITMENTS Steve's sermon challenged us to begin thinking about stewardship for Such a Time as This. Then, the stewardship team mailed you a letter explaining our stewardship campaign for this year together; it included the 2020 Challenge Budget and the commitment card for next year. We hope you will return your commitment card before Dedication Sunday on November 10. You may put your card in the box in the narthex, place it in the collection plate, or mail or deliver it to the church office. On November 10, we will bring the commitment card box forward with our offering for the day. Together, we can move Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church forward in Such a Time as This.

A Once a Month Rewarding Lunch

You may not know this, but for many years a small group of our church members and occasionally a friend or family member, has spent about three hours at ABCCM's Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ) once a month preparing and serving lunch to the veterans there.

Established many years ago after a homeless veteran froze to death on a street in downtown Asheville, the building, a former motel at 1329 Tunnel Rd, provides a residence for homeless veterans needing transitional housing and support while they find work and independent housing. Services for them include case management, education and training programs, job placement and links to veteran's benefits and peer support.

Volunteers on our "Lunch Cook Team" arrive around 9:30 a.m., or whenever they can get there, on the fourth Friday each month, and do things like grilling chicken, hot dogs or cheese sandwiches, cooking French fries, chopping and dicing vegetables for the salad bar, making salad dressings and sack lunches for veterans who are away at lunch time.

Then, precisely at noon, the men come through a cafeteria line to get their lunch. They are old and young, black and white, in good health or struggling with health, and they are always most appreciative for the support we give, and tell us that. That makes it a most rewarding lunch for the volunteers, and after the residents have been served, we are always invited to sit down and enjoy lunch too.

We have had as many as 10 volunteers on a day, and as few as 3. The ideal group for this is about 6 to 8. Our next three dates to prepare and serve lunch are Nov. 22, Dec. 27, and Jan. 24.

Volunteers are not expected to help every month, but as often as they are available to. If you have questions or would like to know more about this, talk to Barbara or Larry Griswold, Anne or Jamie Dale, Derron Daugherty or Ned Guardenier. Your help from time to time would be most welcome and you would find it a most rewarding lunch.



Church members Larry Griswold and Derron Daugherty dicing celery for the salad bar under the watchful eye of kitchen manager Ron Abraham at the Veteran's Restoration Quarters

The New Playground is finished!



The Playground Action Team (Brent Roberts, Tacci Smith and Derron Daugherty), helped turn our dream of a playground into a reality.
As you can tell by the picture above everyone loves it!

Trunk or Treat 2019 Special Thanks go out to:

Grace and the Spiritual Nurture Team for their support of Trunk or Treat. Susan Laney and Sandy Brauer deserve a special word of thanks for setting up and hosting a pumpkin-decorating/refreshment station on the portico outside the front doors of the Chapel.

Everyone who came and decked out their cars, cause that's always the main thing that not only makes this event possible -- it also makes it fun for everyone!

The youth get a special shout out for providing a huge help with the Haunted Hospital -- to Lizzy Newman for the idea and for help with the set up. Allee and Evan Williams, Samuel Mallory, Anne and Evva Hamilton, and Cadence Cowell also get big props for helping out with the set up. And a special thanks to my wife, Robyn, for overseeing the whole shebang.



Caring Groups are off and running

The Caring Groups kick-off began with a bring-you-own-bag lunch gathering for all who had signed up and indicated an interest in being part of this 9-month-long fellowship program.

Having been randomly assigned to one of five groups, 9 members gathered around numbered tables to share introductory stories, "identify themselves", select a coordinator, and begin the process of laying out their future together.

Here's their news:

First off there's the "The Nifty Nine +1" (we had decided on Nifty Nine, but gained another member once we started thanks to Milt joining us) which met for the first time on October 11 at Sandee Butterworth's home. We had a nice "pot-luck" style meal, where everyone got to contribute, and we spent time on their covered porch getting to know one another and enjoying the fantastic weather and mountain views! We decided to try to meet up monthly, and it seems will probably be centered around some sort of meal since we all really enjoy food. Our next meal-event will take place at Fran and Burnace Roberts' home on November 8.

The second group, coordinated by Corise, is called "Dinner with Friends". They shared dinner at the Pulsifer's on Oct. 21 and will share dinner again at the Gambrell's on the third Monday of November. They are considering doing some kind of project together.

The "Nine Pins" decided they would meet on varying weekday nights, and jumped right in with their own service project to bring a meal for Room In The Inn on Wed., Sept. 25 – that was creative! Those that didn't need to dash off to choir also assisted the clergy with preparing the Stole Project on that evening. On October 29, the 9 Pins minus Beth had a delightful evening at Post 70 restaurant with delicious plates. After 8 PM they had music by a young man on the cello. Next gathering is Nov. 12, 6 PM for game night at the Daugherty's.

Caring Group 4 met Sunday, October 20 after church with a sandwich lunch in Fellowship Hall. They report that they are happy to have already made some connections they would not have made!!

Group 5 - The "Proximity People" – those of you who studied Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson with the adult Sunday morning class may recognize the reference. The group discussed the name "Caring Group" in the context of reaching out to someone who may need some caring attention. One member will contact the Congregational Life Team for names of congregants who might enjoy contact from the group's members. They'll also explore the possibility of attending one of the Welcome Table lunches in the Swannanoa Valley, to share a meal that puts them in proximity with people whose paths they may not otherwise cross. At its initial meeting the group decided that the hosts will select a topic for the night. They met on Oct. 20 at the Eagle-Joslin home for a pot-luck dinner. The hosts chose to enjoy the meal first then introduce the group to a communication game called "Vertellis" which was developed in the Netherlands to promote less small talk and more genuine conversations. The evening which began at 5:00 went on until 8:00pm with the group feeling like they knew each other more deeply through their stories and discussion. They have decided to meet on Sunday evenings once monthly if possible at different homes. Their next dinner will be November 24 at the Broughton/Ives home.

Submitted by each groups point person and edited by Sally Broughton



THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Have you ever wondered how our church's Thanksgiving tradition began?

"All is safely gathered in, now let the winter storms begin" words to a familiar Hymn has set the tone for 85 years the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Bernhard Laursen, a Dane who had immigrated to Boston and became a citizen, came to teach and work at Asheville Farm School in 1931. He began the tradition of "gathering in" for the Church's Thanksgiving service in 1933. At that time, the school was holding its church services in the parlor of Sunderland, the men's dormitory. He brought in a shock of corn, several grains, potatoes, apples, and other produce grown on the farm as a display for the service, the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

As the farm manager, he felt that sharing the visual aspect of the harvest would add to the air of thanksgiving. He continued the tradition until his retirement in 1956 and his son Ernst became the farm manager.

Ernst continued the tradition until his retirement in 1996. The students on the farm crew were always involved in the "gathering in from the fields", the gathering of animals and the creation of the display each year.

Beginning in the 1940's the Churches of the Swannanoa Valley met together in the decorated chapel for services Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving with the different churches taking part in the service. This practice continued until the mid 1960's.

This year, we continue to "gather in" on **November 24 at our 11:00** service of worship. We would ask all who would like to bring items to place at the front of the church during the offertory, to bring canned goods that will be distributed to the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry.

Join us for this special gathering in the sanctuary, and make sure to thank the student crews for all their hard work!

For the past two years, WWPC has hosted a **Community Thanksgiving meal** for our church and college community. We will once again celebrate Thanksgiving on **Thanksgiving Day, November 28 at 1pm.**



We invite all of you to attend. Bring your family! Bring your out-of-town guests! Bring LOTS of food to share.

Looking for members to donate two cooked turkeys, one ham, and a vegan protein dish (there are a lot of vegetarians/vegans among us). The rest of us are asked to bring YOUR family's favorite side: dressing/stuffing; hot vegetable; salad; bread; and of course, pumpkin pie! Or pecan! Or chocolate cream!

Look for signup sheets in the Narthex starting soon. For more information or questions, please call Diana Sanderson at 828.712.6222 or email dsanderson@warren-wilson.edu

SPONSORING "OUR" FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS

We have an opportunity to sponsor the family in the Warren Wilson Hope for Tomorrow apartment for Christmas, through the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry's Christmas program.

"Our" mom works at Givens Highland Farms. She has three children. The oldest, a boy, is a Senior at Owen High School. One girl is a Freshman at Owen. The youngest girl is in the Fifth Grade at Black Mountain Elementary.

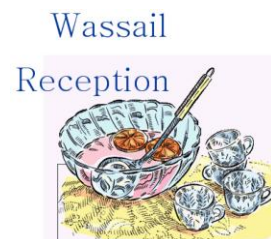
If you would like to make a financial contribution, you can give money to Sarah Anne Eller or Corise Gambrell. If you wish to shop, email either of us, and we will share more information. Eller.sarah@gmail.com or corisegambrell@gmail.com



Come and help us! On Friday, December 6 at 2:30 help us decorate the church for the Advent Season. Bring cuttings from your property that can be used to decorate the Chapel and Fellowship Hall. Come have hot cider and treats while bringing in the Christmas Cheer. Then, at 5:30 move into Fellowship Hall for pizza and fun crafts at the Christmas Party!

WASSAIL The lights, sounds--and smells--of Christmas are in the air!

And what better reminder to the Warren Wilson community, than the annual steaming wassail bowl and the fellowship which surrounds it. Once again, Fran and Gina will be preparing the wassail and invite all of you to bring your favorite appetizer to fill the table. Come for this special Christmas gathering after worship on **Sunday, December 8 in Fellowship Hall.**



COOKIES AND CAROLS will be held on Wednesday December 11 at 8 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. (Date may change) Anyone who plays an instrument is invited to come and play along. For those of you who don't know, this is the night we offer up cookies to the students and invite the community in for a Christmas Carol sing-and-play-along! Come join the fun!



Please join Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church for our annual Christmas Eve Candle Light *Lessons and Carols* Service. Anyone who has attended knows how special this service is.

The service will begin at 8:00p.m. in the Chapel
All are welcome!

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

- December 6:** **Hanging of the Greens**, at 2:30 p.m. (Chapel)
- December 6:** **Christmas Party**: 5:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)
- December 8:** **Wassail**: after worship (Fellowship H.)
- December 11:** **Cookies and Carols**: 8:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall).
- December 24:** **Christmas Eve**: Lessons and Carols will begin this year at 8:00 p.m. (Chapel).



Our Advent services begin at 11:00 am
Service of Hope, December 1 (The first candle is lit)
Service of Peace, December 8 (The second candle is lit)
Service of Joy, December 15 (The third candle is lit)
Service of Love, December 22 (The Fourth candle is lit)



PLEASE HOLD THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS: Jamie & Anne Dale; Pat Crumpler; Donna Eagle Joslin and family; Ray Stock; Dr. Steven Williams; and Mary Moorrees.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS *(continued)*
Dec 1-22 Advent Study O Come, O Come, Emmanuel:
Reflections on Four Seasonal Hymns

This curriculum by Dr. Mel Bringle & Beverly Howard examines "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus", "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence", "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel", and "In the Bleak Midwinter".

AN INVITATION DURING THE HOLIDAYS

"God has a habit of showing off", writes Kathy Izard, author of The Hundred Story Home: a memoir about finding faith in ourselves and something bigger. Her book chronicles her journey away from God and her upbringing in the Presbyterian faith, to finding God and faith again through her work to bring homes to the homeless in Charlotte NC. She invites people to listen for where God is whispering in their lives. You are invited to read this book over the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays, and then meet on Monday January 6, 2020 at 1:00 pm to share where God is whispering in your lives as we begin the new year. If you need help getting a copy of the book, contact Grace Boyer. (Am pondering meeting at Givens Highland Farms, but location TBA.)

Steve's Slant continued...

Now, in the spirit of streamlining our operations for the next six weeks, this newsletter is going to serve double duty, as the November and December edition of the Extended Family.

Which leads me to my second question. A friend of mine recently observed that in the religious tradition with which he most readily identifies, Advent is a season of penitence -- a point of emphasis that is reinforced by the use of purple as the official liturgical color of Advent.

Here at Warren Wilson Presbyterian and in the PC(USA) more generally, Advent is typically not understood as a season of penitence, per se. But it is understood as a season of internal reflection, a time of watching and waiting, of hope and preparation, as we anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth.

So here is the second question I would like to invite you to ponder in the weeks ahead. Once we flip the page on the calendar from Thanksgiving into Advent what expectations might you have for the season, for our church, for your family, for yourself?

What might your best hopes be, for such a time as this?



November



December

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!

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The Extended Family