

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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June 2020

Steve's Slant

How do we do church, and be church, in times like these?

I have been turning that question over in my mind, and regularly asking it out loud, ever since the COVID-19 crisis forced us to reimagine everything we do: from gathering for worship, to teaching our children, to breaking bread together, to loving and serving our neighbors, to enjoying fellowship with one another.

Asking that question and developing workable, practical answers was already challenging enough, given the one-two punch that has hit our world so forcefully: a dangerous global pandemic and a devastating economic crisis.

But as we all watched the events of the past ten days unfold, that same question became both more difficult and more urgent.

How do we do church, and be church, when innocent black lives continue to be snuffed out by overzealous white police officers; when, in response, our streets become flooded with anguished protesters and our cities start to burn?

I honestly do not know the answers yet. But I do believe we have to wrestle with the question.

Last night, equipped with a mask and careful to keep as much distance as I could, I joined the protest that has been taking place for the last several nights in downtown Asheville. (Last night's protest was entirely peaceful, and the group complied with the mayor's declaration of an 8:00 p.m. curfew.)

I went because I wanted to add my voice to cry of lament for the death of George Floyd (and many other innocent African Americans before him), and to the call going out across the country for a better America.

As always at such protests, sign abounded, one of which struck me with particular force: "White silence equals White violence."

You may disagree with that claim. Or you may find it troubling. I know I did.

But I think one of the lessons this moment in history is teaching us -- or at least teaching those of us who are white -- is that we don't get to say what white silence means or doesn't mean.

That privilege belongs to the people who are directly affected by white silence, to members of the marginal and minority communities who have suffered because their voices have been actively silenced, often against their will and without their consent, and who are often without any allies to speak for them.

Which is another reason I went: because I believe that when justice is in question, when our neighbors' humanity is being denied, silence is, in practice, a type of complicity. And because I think that speaking out for justice is what love asks of us.

In the changed landscape, the dramatically changed reality, we now inhabit, we have already taken several meaningful steps as a congregation to make our love for our neighbors visible.

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During this **STAY HOME** period, the church office phone will be checked remotely several times per day. Feel free to call 298-9092 and leave a message.

June Birthdays!

Emma Eagle Joslin	June 1	Marc Mullinax	June 2
Fran Roberts	June 13	Nancy Garrison	June 16
Anne Dale	June 17	Fitz Legerton	June 20
Gina Marvin	June 22	Kristin Williams	June 25
Jackie Wintle	June 25	Steven Hamilton	June 27



The Warren Wilson Book Group will be meeting via Zoom at 11:30am on Thursday, June 11th. The group will discuss, "The Giver of Stars" by Jojo Moyes. Judi Repman, our member who is currently sheltering in Las Vegas, has graciously arranged Zoom for our discussions.

Accepting lunches and sandwiches for the homeless on Thursday's at the Collin's





PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS: Jon Hettrick and his family; Jack Cole, on the death of his brother Mac in May, and his brother Boyce in February; Joel P. Rogers; Sara Wilcox; Ginnie Stevens; Fitz Legerton, doing well following a minor medical procedure; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison; Sandy & Paul, dear friends of Carolyn Cole, and Pat Crumpler.

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING HEALTH CARE WORKERS, AND PEOPLE WORKING AT MEDICAL FACILITIES, IN YOUR PRAYERS: Carolyn Cole; Jack Ballard; Richard Riddle; Laura

Bethany Riddle; Kristin Williams; Blake Joslin; Lisa Mallory; Stacy Balzano, Toby & Sally's niece; Mika, Sandy Stanford's niece, and all those working to provide medical care to others in this time when both need and risk are great.

PLEASE KEEP THOSE WORKING ESSENTIAL SERVICE JOBS IN YOUR PRAYERS: Natalie Cowal; Carla Presnell-Smith; Susan Daugherty, and all those helping to keep essential services open for all of us.

Until further notice, Warren Wilson College has closed its campus to all visitors. Only employees and a few students are allowed on the campus grounds.

April 13 - May 31, 2020 Pentecost

The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world.

A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and address the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

You may mail your donation to Warren Wilson Presbyterian church, 101 Chapel Lane Swannanoa, NC 28778 with Pentecost Offering on the memo line.

Thank you!

Members and Friends of Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church,

The last two months have been uncertain in many ways. For those responsible for the finances of Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, the transition to online worship services and meetings presented another one: whether our giving would be sufficient for us to pay our staff and to continue our ministry during the health and economic crisis.

We should have been more confident of your faithfulness and generosity! Despite a rather abrupt transition to online worship in March, you continued to support our ministry with your checks and our new online giving portal. Because several of you had made substantial gifts early in the year, we ended the first quarter slightly ahead of our budget projections.

Your giving in April was even more impressive. Your checks and online gifts amounted to slightly more than we need each month to meet our budget. In addition, you gave more than \$1200 to the One Great Hour of Sharing; and you gave \$155 to the Nickel a Meal offering that we collect once a month.

Because the church continued to employ its staff during the pandemic crisis, it was eligible to apply for a loan under the Payroll Protection Program of the federal stimulus act. Thanks to extraordinary efforts of our treasurer, Leslie Sayyar, and our bookkeeper, Barbara Escalante, the church submitted its application in a timely fashion. Recently, we received notice that the Small Business Administration had approved a loan of \$35,700, and our bank has now transferred that amount to the church's account. Because we continue to employ all of our staff, we expect approximately \$30,000 to \$32,000 of the loan amount to be converted to a grant before the end of the year.

Finally, you are all aware of the wonderful gift that Steve Williams left for the church. An action team recently recommended to the session that the bulk of the money be placed in a Steven Williams Organ Preservation and Music Enhancement Endowment Fund with lesser amounts for other music needs including a better piano for the chapel. The report is a detailed one that we will describe more fully in a separate communication. For now, we can rejoice that Steve's gift will strengthen our music program and preserve the organ that was so important to him for decades to come.

Much uncertainty and anxiety remain as our state, our nation, and the world continue to struggle with the COVID19 crisis. Your faithfulness and generosity give us hope – indeed, certainty – that long after this crisis has passed Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church will continue its ministry in the valley and beyond. For all that you do and all the ways that you give, thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ,

The Session and Administration Ministry Team

June Adult Education Class on Zoom!

The Eye of the Needle, or Can Capitalists Enter Heaven?

Sundays June 14, 21, and 28 at 9:00 am, the Adult Class will meet on Zoom. Feel free to join at your breakfast table with coffee/tea in hand! If you do not normally attend this class, but want to be included, please contact Grace Boyer GraceEBoyer@gmail.com.



The class will be emailed four short articles published in the Spring 2020 edition of "Reflections," a twice yearly publication of Yale Divinity School. The entire edition includes some 20 articles reflecting on the issues of the economic gap in American society.

For **June 14** we will read two pieces. The first is a one page summary by Kathryn Tanner of her book published in 2019 entitled Christianity and the New Spirit of Capitalism (Yale University Press). The second is written by a businessman identifying several ways to address weaknesses he sees in the free market. For **June 21** we'll read an article by Presbyterian pastor/organizer Liz Theoharis offering a moral critique of our current circumstances, and a way forward. For **June 28** we'll read Old Testament professor John Collin's summary of biblical texts that bear on our relationship to money. **Jamie Dale** will lead the discussion and send out a few questions ahead of time each week to prompt our always engaging conversation.

Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World (A Summer Invitation)

This summer, Grace Boyer invites you to join her in reading Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World, by Mark Williams and Danny Penman, and do its 8 chapters/weeks of meditation exercises on your own at home.

Step 1) Order the book. Either the older version of it that comes with a cd of 8 recorded meditations, or the newer version with a web link to the recordings (this has "An Eight-week Plan For..." as part of its subtitle).

Step 2) Let Grace know you are doing this, so we can set up a way to check in with each other over the summer.

Step 3) In June read at least chapters 1 & 4 (Ch. 2-3 go into the brain science).

Step 4) Beginning during the week of June 28 read chapter 5 and do its week of exercises. Then each new week do a new chapter and set of exercises, finishing up by the end of August. And if that schedule doesn't work for you, make up your own! The goal is to bring some inner peace during the summer months.

Children/Youth Spiritual Nurture Continues!

Since the church went "virtual" in March, Children/Youth ministry has continued in new forms. Grace emails families weekly children's message videos that match the scripture for the Sunday worship service. You can find these videos on the church's website Covid-19 page:

<http://warrenwilsonchurch.org/covid-19/> Steve continues to find ways for children to help lead in worship, and he made a visit at each doorstep as the "Pastor Bunny" on Easter. Church Buddies and Confirmation Mentors continue to reach out. We had a Kid's Zoom call on Easter, another Zoom to wave "fire-rings" for Pentecost, a Confirmands' Zoom, and may have a Parents' Zoom soon. In June, the Children/Youth Ministry Team will meet to brainstorm even more ideas for how to keep connecting and nurturing our children and families this summer.

How your congregation can help the food insecure in our community through donations to Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry via Second Loaf:

For over 30 years, Mountain Retreat Association has sponsored Second Loaf, a weekly collection of food from conferences and Montreat summer visitors, which is then distributed directly to families through Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministries. With the effects of COVID 19 restrictions and the cancellations of many Montreat activities, Second Loaf will change its strategy this summer.

Beginning Saturday, June 6, 9:00 am – 11:00 am, donations of **non-perishable food**—such as canned, boxed, and packaged goods that can help stock the pantry shelves at SVCM--will be collected in the parking lot at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church. Collections will continue each Saturday throughout June and July.

While normally Second Loaf draws from summer visitors to Montreat, this summer we are asking all Black Mountain, Montreat, and Swannanoa residents to consider donating. All collections go to help alleviate food insecurity for the neighbors in our community.

We are especially asking church congregations who collect foods each Sunday for SVCM to consider making their donations to Second Loaf until regular church activities resume. We hope you will encourage the members of your congregation to support Second Loaf.

Second Loaf volunteers will be vigilant about keeping volunteers and donors safe by wearing masks and gloves, washing hands and using hand sanitizer, cleaning tables between donations, wiping down donations before sorting them into boxes, and maintaining 6' separation.

While the summer looks different this year from the normal bustle of cars and buses, tourists and campers, the needs of our community continue, and Second Loaf hopes to maintain service to those in our community that may not see the summer season as a time to relax, renew and recreate because of the pressing needs they face to survive. Contributing to Second Loaf can keep the shelves at SVCM full for those who need food assistance this summer.

Questions?

Contact
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Covid-19: A Prayer of Solidarity

For all who have contracted coronavirus,
We pray for care and healing.

For those who are particularly vulnerable,
We pray for safety and protection.

For all who experience fear or anxiety,
We pray for peace of mind and spirit.

For affected families who are facing difficult decisions
between food on the table or public safety,
We pray for policies that recognize their plight.

For those who do not have adequate health insurance,
We pray that no family will face financial burdens alone.

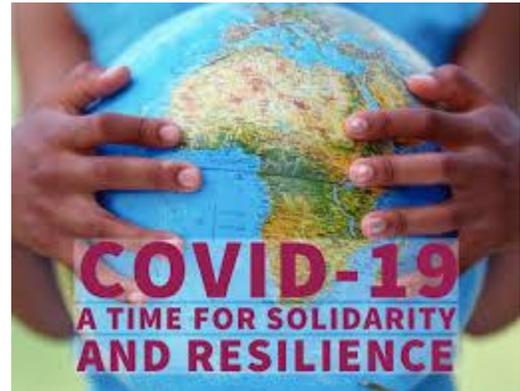
For those who are afraid to access care due to immigration status,
We pray for recognition of the God-given dignity of all.

For our brothers and sisters around the world,
We pray for shared solidarity.

For public officials and decisionmakers,
We pray for wisdom and guidance.

Father, during this time may your Church be a sign of hope, comfort and love to all.
Grant peace.
Grant comfort.
Grant healing.
Be with us, Lord.

Amen.



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(submitted by Donna Eagle Joslin)

ASHEVILLE AREA HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Like all organizations, Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity's work has been hit hard by the Covid-19 crisis, but progress is still being made toward the goal of empowering another 1,000 families over the next decade to improve their housing and build strong, stable futures.

When the pandemic arrived and sheltering in place began, Habitat donated its inventory of personal protective equipment to area health care providers, and supported Habitat homeowners facing financial challenges. It also sent staff to help other organizations providing health and food services such as Manna Food Bank whose food help line went from just over 100 calls a week in mid-March to 400 calls a week by the end of April.

Even with its volunteer activities currently suspended for health safety reasons, work also continued at the Curry Court job site in Candler where construction of four-single family homes, and four two-family, two-story units that began in December, 2018 is almost complete.

Members and friends of our church helped with construction there with 23 volunteer days between July 10 and September 10 last year, and at a recent Board meeting Asheville Area Habitat approved an application to purchase Presbyterian/Methodist House # 28. The home buyer is a single mother with three children, and Habitat expects to provide more information about this family soon.

Habitat has also started construction at its newest neighborhood, New Heights in West Asheville. It will, for the first time, include some senior housing, one-level townhouse units designed and built for aging in place. An overview of the site including a short video is available at <https://www.ashevillehabitat.org/housing-programs/featured-neighborhoods/>

Asheville Area Habitat is not sure when it will be possible to resume volunteer activities at its job sites and ReStores, but misses its volunteers and looks forward to their return.



Habitat Presbyterian/Methodist House # 28 in Candler - photo taken in March

Session Available: If you have any questions about the operations and ministry of the church, please contact Pastor Steve Runholt or any other member of the session. The elders currently serving on the session are:

Class of 2020: Sandy Brauer, Carolyn Cole, Nancy Garrison

Class of 2021: Susan Daugherty, Bob Gambrell, Fran Roberts

Class of 2022: Sharon Lytle, Ken Murchison (clerk), Tacci Presnell-Smith

CLERK'S REPORT

The session met in the May stated meeting via Zoom on May 19. The primary business of the meeting was to receive the report of the action team to recommend how the congregation should steward the gift of Steven Williams. The session approved the report's recommendation that the bulk of the money be placed in a Steven Williams Organ Preservation and Music Enhancement Endowment Fund with lesser amounts for other music needs including a better piano for the chapel.

In addition to receiving the regular financial report for April, the treasurer informed the session that the church had received \$35,700 from its loan application under the CARES Act. The session also received reports from various ministry teams and took the following actions:

1. Decided that the chapel should remain closed to all visitors.
2. Approved a recommendation that each nursery worker be paid as if they worked two full Sundays in May and June.

Ken Murchison, Clerk of the Session _____



Steve's Slant Continued...

Suspending in person worship does not just protect the health of our members, it also helps flatten the curve of the spread of the coronavirus, which helps protect everyone.

Our members have been delivering lunches to the homeless downtown every Thursday for several weeks now. And we're about to launch a new weekly food drive to help feed hungry students on campus, and to support the efforts of SVCM to help feed hungry members of our wider community.

These are all important ways to be church, and do church, in these difficult times. But I think we must now ask ourselves what our next step might be, or needs to be, to be responsive to the world around us.

Again, I honestly don't know the answer, at least not in full. What I do know is that I would like for us to talk about it together.

Starting next Wednesday (June 10) and noon, I am going to hold a weekly Zoom gathering -- open to anyone who wants to discuss this question: how to be church, and do church, in light of what's happening in the world right now.

To give our discussion focus, I will provide some short readings that we can do together ahead of time. And I plan to begin with some readings on how we can support the burgeoning movement toward racial justice and equality.

We can also use these gatherings to practice some of the things we've already started: to share joys and concerns, to pray for one another and to build community.

Which is to say, we can use these times to be church, and to help us learn to do church even better, in these challenging times.



JUNE

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
101 Chapel Lane
Swannanoa, NC 28778

The Extended Family