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Steve's Slant

"It's a tsunami," a friend of mine said.

He is a mental health professional, and he was describing the effects of the stress we're all living under at the moment.

The stress of a global pandemic, of a steadily escalating economic crisis, of watching heavily armed federal troops arrest peaceful protesters on America's streets.

I had to agree: the weight of it all feels like a tsunami, one that is still breaking over us.

What was surprising is that I took some comfort from his comment.

Earlier, Robyn and I thought that our rambunctious boy-dog, Huck, had eaten a dishtowel. He has done this before. When this happens, the only remedy is an emergency, and rather expensive, trip to the vet for x-rays and emetics.

This is admittedly a stressful situation but one we ordinarily can manage without much difficulty. We lose a couple hours of our time, and a couple hundred dollars. And Huck comes home with us, feeling a little drugged and emptied out, but otherwise unscathed. It's expensive but it's manageable, ordinarily.

But these are not ordinary times.

After a few anxious minutes we realized there was an explanation for why one of our towels had gone missing. (I had used it to clean up a spill a few nights before.)

What makes this otherwise unremarkable story worth sharing -- at least I hope it does -- is that when we finally figured out what had happened, and my heart rate returned to normal levels, I sat in a chair in our living room, blankly staring at the TV, as tears leaked out of my eyes.

It felt like something inside of me had cracked, like something strong and essential, some internal wall I lean on when I need support, had given way, and the water began to pour through that crack.

I realized my tears were not about a dishtowel. They were about everything. The stress I still feel over having to learn how to do everything differently, from going to the hardware store to leading worship.

The grief I feel for all those lives lost unnecessarily, and for all the families who are now mourning loved ones.

The sorrow I feel for all the people who are suffering economic stress, all the people who are worried about how they're going to buy food, pay for medicine, pay for rent, pay their mortgage.

The sympathy I feel for all the parents and teachers and administrator and students who are worried about school and how to manage it safely--and whether to go at all.

The anger I feel about what is happening on America's streets, and to our democracy.

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

August Birthdays!

Beth Meriwether	August 1	Darcy Orr	August 4
Alisa White	August 6	Elaine Barnes	August 8
Blake Joslin	August 8	John Craven	August 9
Pat Levi	August 11	Bill Mosher	August 11
Hank Barnes	August 11	Vicki Collins	August 14
Carla Presnell-Smith	August 21		



We will be reading "Have You Seen Luis Valez" by Catherine Ryan Hyde on Aug. 13th at 11:30. Kathryn Williams will be leading the group... again on Zoom.

Betty Smith was the featured author for the Swannanoa Valley Museum's July Book Group presentation. During the Zoom Book Club on July 20, Betty talked about her book Jane Hicks Gentry: A Singer Among Singers, published in 1998.



Betty spoke about Jane Hicks Gentry as a person she wished she could have known, about Gentry's contributions to Appalachian music, and about her own research. In response to a query as to why all ballads tell sad stories, Betty replied that there is no meat in a story of a perfect picnic, with perfect food, perfect weather, and no ants. She told an anecdote of Gentry's visit to the offices of Joseph Pulitzer. A young secretary was asked if he would have trouble transcribing Gentry's comments. He replied that he would have no problem writing down what the lady said. Gentry then shared a long riddle full of tongue twisters. The secretary left the room.

During the hour-long presentation, Betty multi-tasked: talking about Jane Hicks Gentry, answering questions, using the Zoom app and speaking on her phone for audio clarity. Betty also sang two ballads for the group. (Submitted by Corise Gambrell)



PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS: Jon Hettrick and his family; The family of Ray Stock, on his death; Joel P. Rogers, and his husband Rich Holst, and Rich’s mother Joan Holst; Diane Sharp, friend of Babs Guardenier; Lee Dugger and his family; Sara Wilcox; Blake Joslin; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison; Sandy & Paul, dear friends of Carolyn Cole; Rev. Dr. Lee, friend of the Corbin family, 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; 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.

Warren Wilson College will be opening its campus to new students on August 7.

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. Church Buddies and Confirmation Mentors continue to reach out. 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 and throughout the Fall.

Recently, we have added Grace’s virtual messages to our Sunday services.

5 Cents a Meal Offering

A reminder from our children and youth regarding the 5 Cents a Meal offering that they normally collect on the first Sunday of every month:

The 5 Cent a Meal offering helps feed hungry people in North Carolina and around the world. Food for hungry people is needed now more than ever. Because we have not been meeting in person for worship, we have not been passing the red buckets to collect our coins.



(Continued on next page)

Please consider giving to the 5 Cent a Meal offering so we can continue to help hungry men, women, and children in our neighborhoods and around the world.

You can mail your contribution to the 5 cents a meal offering to the church at Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, Attn: Receiving Treasurer, 101 Chapel Drive, Swannanoa, NC 28778. In addition, you will be able to make your gift online at <http://warrenwilsonchurch.org/>. As always, we remain grateful for the generosity you have shown in this particularly difficult time.

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

Steve's Slant Continued...

I say all of this to say that if you find that tears suddenly spring to your eyes when you spill a glass of milk, or if you find yourself weeping at the sound of presidents' voices as they eulogize a civil rights icon, reminding you of what normal, decent leaders sound like and what they say when our country is hurting, there's a reason for that.

Because it is a tsunami. And bearing up under its crushing weight is exhausting.

Robyn and I are leaving on Saturday, heading to the lake for a couple of weeks to rest up a bit before the start of this academic year on campus and the start of the program year at church.

While we are away, and every day afterward until this tsunami finally passes (because it will, eventually), I hope that you will take good care of yourselves.

Wear a mask when you're out in public, yes. But even more than that, be good to yourself, and to those around you. Be kind to yourself, and to those around you. Be patient with yourself, and with those around you.

And know, trust and believe, that, by God's grace, we will get through this, together.



Lunches for people experiencing homelessness

Back in the May newsletter, Vicki Collins wrote that the Covid-19 crisis appeared just as our church was scheduled to host our week of Room in the Inn.

Since the College was closed, we did not host, and Homeward Bound (the parent organization for Room in the Inn) opted to house those women at their AHOPE facility in Asheville. We delivered our Room in the Inn meals there for the RITI women for one week. Then we kept making sandwiches adding more for many of the unhoused people who come to AHOPE daily for a shower or mail or a pair of sox.

Because the governor's STAY SAFE order meant STAY AT HOME, the city, Homeward Bound and the Asheville Poverty Initiative collaborated to create a new shelter at the Civic Center for unhoused people. This has since moved to the Red Roof Inn on the Smokey Park Hwy in west Asheville and serves approximately 65 people. Each person has their own room, and meals are provided by an array of churches, local restaurants and other businesses and civic groups. One church even arranged for a food truck to come to the Red Roof Inn to provide a meal.

On behalf of WWPC, Vicki has continued to coordinate weekly sack lunches for as many as 170 individuals! This was no small feat as the numbers and needs have been constantly changing, but Vicki kept in close contact with Homeward Bound and Avl Pov. Initiative. Bag lunches have been collected at her house each Thursday by MANY church members, as well as their neighbors who wanted to help. Several drivers, including Vicki and Don, Brent, Susan L and Sandy B have delivered the bounty, dropping them off at the Shelter, at 12 Baskets (the meal program of Avl Poverty Initiative) and The Woodfin (an apartment program where Homeward Bound has housed some of their clients).

Since Vicki has left for Vermont, we've modified the system somewhat: there's a Black Mountain contingent creating bag lunches on 1st and 3rd Thursdays. The WWPC Swannanoa/Avl contingent provide lunches on 2nd and 4th Thursdays. We rotate drivers to deliver the meals to the shelter and other programs. If you aren't already involved and want more info, contact Sally Broughton, Betty Siviter or Sandy Brauer.

Our church has been quite generous. The "sandwich brigade" now includes scores of people! And thankfully, Homeward Bound has been able to move a few of those who were sheltered into their own permanent homes. The even larger dilemma than sheltering people is trying to find sufficient housing in Buncombe County to move each into their own homes.

Submitted by Sally Broughton

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

We recently had a piano donated to us by a former student of mine, Matthew Saunders. He was a student of mine at Mars Hill University and he had to move and couldn't take the piano with him, and I told him it would be a blessing for us to have a piano in the youth room. He thought that was a great idea and he was generous in the donation. I also want to thank Brent Roberts, John Bishop and Jack Ballard for helping move the piano for Lake Lure and for moving it into the youth room. Thanks so much for all your help and I and the youth will be looking forward to making music when we can join together again. Joel P. Rogers



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