



THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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Steve's Slant

Last July, four months after we suspended in-person worship, I happened upon a Twitter thread, written by a professional aid worker, a woman with extended experience working in disaster zones.

She said that in those situations, when your own life has been so totally disrupted -- traveling into those zones -- and when the normal life of everyone living in those zones has been so totally disrupted, you typically hit a wall after about four months. Your energy fades. You feel listless. Exhausted. Irritable. Forgetful. Not yourself.

But then, she added, you slowly start to adjust and adapt to your new circumstances and begin to feel, and function, more like yourself again.

I don't know about you, but that certainly rang true for me. But if that happens after four months, my question now is, what happens after nine months?

What happens when it is not just the regular seasonal darkness of shorter days and longer nights gathering around us, but when the deathly shadow of an extremely dangerous and highly contagious virus falls over the entire country?

No one really knows. None of us, and no expert anywhere, has ever experienced anything like what we are all going through now.

The good news, the truly wonderful news, is that help does seem to be on the way. Safe and effective vaccines are in the pipeline and should be widely available soon, maybe even by this spring.

In light of that news, it was fitting that the theme for last Sunday -- the first Sunday of Advent -- was hope. Because the thought that this nightmare may be over relatively soon does feel like the first glimmer of hope we've felt since we first shut our doors here, and churches and businesses across the country began to shut down to various degrees.

All of which is to say that whatever you are feeling right now, it's okay. I won't say it's normal because there is nothing normal about what we are currently experiencing, collectively and individually.

But whatever you're feeling, it is okay. And understandable.

If you're sad that this holiday season feels so different than it always has, so sparse and lonely, or guilty that you're not more joyful when you see Christmas lights in your neighborhood, or hear "Silver Bells" playing in Ingles, that's understandable.

If on some deep level -- or even a more immediate level -- you feel paralyzing grief over this enormous loss of human life that's unfolding every day, perhaps now including people you once knew personally, that's understandable.

If you are feeling anxious, even fearful, about the current surge in new Covid cases, that's understandable.

If you are feeling confused in the grocery store, listless when you wake up in the morning, fatigued during the day, irritable with your spouse or while driving, that's all understandable.

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Please call 828-298-9092 to leave a message for us at the church. The phone will be checked remotely, or in person several times per week.

Thank you!

December Birthdays!

Hythe Hamilton	Dec. 5	Doug Orr	Dec. 9
Jon Hettrick	Dec.12	Darrell Spencer	Dec. 14
Emily Pulsifer	Dec. 15	Tacci Smith	Dec. 22
Joanne Lincoln	Dec. 30	Sandy Brauer	Dec.31
Derron Daugherty	dec.31		



The Warren Wilson Book Group will meet on Tues. Dec. 10 at 11:30 am . The meeting will be via Zoom. Anyone interested in joining the discussion can Email Sandy - sandra_brauer@yahoo.com - and we will send you a link to the discussion. Helen Bell will be leading the discussion of "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett. Helen always asks thought provoking questions.... join us...

(Submitted by Sandy Brauer)

CLERK's REPORT

At the November 2020 stated meeting, the session took the following actions:

1. Approved the purchase of Ingles gift cards and Thanksgiving meals for students who are remaining on campus over the semester break with funds to come from the earnings of the Church College Endowment and the Student Relations Fund.

2. Authorized use of funds from the Room In the Inn Fund to pay for Thanksgiving meals for Room in the Inn clients.

Ken Murchison
Clerk of the Session





PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS: The Bannerman family, on Glenn and Evelyn's death; Ellenor Frelick, on Paul's death; Jon Hettrick and his family; Jon's mother, Marjorie Hettrick; Rob, Doe and Cali Martin; Ric Morton and family; Ellen Ballow, friend of Sandy Brauer; 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; 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, and all those helping to keep essential services open for all of us.

JANUARY MEALS FOR THE HOMELESS SHELTER

The Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry Homeless Shelter is closed in the usual format, but SVCM is working hard to serve the homeless in the Swannanoa Valley.

WWPC has volunteered to provide meals on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for January 5, 7, 12, and 14. We are responsible for ten meals each night. We are delivering the meals in take-out boxes, which will be provided to you. Sarah Anne Eller and Corise Gambrell are coordinating the meals. We will assign a menu for each night. Then you can volunteer to prepare that meal for your family and make two or three or five extras, as you choose. For example, one meal will be spaghetti, fruit or green salad, bread, and a dessert. Another meal will be lasagna, vegetable, bread, and dessert.

If you want to participate, contact Sarah Anne or Corise. We will bring you the take-out containers and collect the meals if you wish. SVCM prefers they be delivered at 3:00 PM on those days.

SVCM's Shelter Director, Sonny Moore, is doing an outstanding job serving the homeless. He has found as much housing as he can. He provides warm clothing and tents, and he has an emergency plan for the very coldest nights. WWPC members are bringing bag lunches to SVCM twice a month for those who are homeless.

Contact Sarah Anne or Corise if you want to help.



Johnny Raines Christmas Cheer Program (SVCMM)

Help a family with Christmas.

In 2019, 172 families with 391 children received Christmas through the Johnny Raines Christmas Cheer Program. This program helps ensure families are blessed with the spirit of

Christmas. For information on how to be involved, choose a family to help and give, please go to the link below:

<http://www.svcmbblackmountain.org/johnny-raines-program.html>

or call 828-669-9404 and ask for Ally Wilson.

PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES

The Nominating/Representation Committee of Presbytery has been diligently working for the past several months to fill the various committees of Presbytery and requests our input in identifying those from our church who may be interested and able to serve on the presbytery level. Some of the committee positions require that the persons who serve be ministers or elders. Many other committee positions may be filled by anyone willing and gifted to serve, so the committee welcomes suggestions of members other than ordained elders. You may share your recommendations with Steve Runholt or Ken Murchison, and they will pass your recommendations on to the committee.

END OF YEAR GIFTS

If you plan to make gifts to Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church in December, here are some dates you should know. For a check to be applied to the 2020 operating budget, it must be dated and postmarked on or before December 31, 2020 and the treasurer must receive the check by January 8, 2021. For online gifts to be credited to your 2020 giving record or to be applied to the 2020 operating budget, the Presbyterian Foundation must process the gift by midnight on December 31, 2020.

Thank you for your support of Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church; it has enabled our ministry to continue during the hard days of the pandemic.

(Submitted by Ken Murchison)



Habitat for Humanity's newest faith partner house is now being built, and in January anyone who makes a donation for it will be eligible to win one of five delicious meals prepared by Asheville chefs and restaurants in a ***Stay Home with Habitat*** virtual fund-raiser.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CONTINUES MOVING FORWARD IN A VERY CHALLENGING YEAR; ANNOUNCES “STAY HOME WITH HABITAT” FUND RAISER

In a letter at the end of October, Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Andy Barnett cited the blessing of hundreds of supporters that have kept things steady through a challenging time, and reported that seven local families have moved in to a Habitat home since the pandemic began.

On Nov. 18 Habitat also provided an update on its newest faith partner house called House of Faith, and announced plans for a virtual fund raiser for it in January. Called “Stay Home with Habitat,” five local chefs and restaurants will create delicious meals from their favorite faith tradition, and people that make a donation to the House of Faith could win one of them and have the meals delivered to their home.

In his letter, Andy also said that the Habitat repair team continues to serve area families, the ReStores are bustling, and ground has been broken for 10 new homes in west Asheville’s New Heights neighborhood.

Habitat is also well on the way toward funding 38 Adopt-a-Lot sponsorships in the first phase of that neighborhood, as well as with a new collaborative sponsorship model called the Power of Ten.

During September, when our church’s special offering for the Habitat House of Faith raised \$1,283, construction of the house began, and the walls have been raised. Habitat has also approved an owner for the house and is creating a video to share about her and her future home.

Andy concluded the letter by stating that he is grateful for the dedicated volunteers and donors “who see us through challenges and into a future where everyone has a place to call home.”

A Birthday surprise for Ernst!



Both the church and the college wanted to help Ernst celebrate his 90th birthday by having a drive by celebration which included farm crew members and farm equipment. Everyone on College View joined in the fun as many drove by waving, dropping off cards and wishing Ernst well.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The Advent and Christmas season is the time for the Christmas Joy Offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA), a cherished tradition of the Presbyterian Church since the 1930s. This offering supports two causes that are important to many at Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church.

A portion of the offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers in their

time of need. Rev. Dr. Stewart M. Pattison provides a good example of the help the offering has provided. Rev. Patterson has been living with multiple sclerosis for years. As his health has recently forced him to retire, gifts from the Christmas Joy Offering have come to have special meaning for him. Several years ago, he received a grant from the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and the Presbytery of Chicago; it enabled him to purchase a specialized scooter and to continue his ministry as the solo pastor of the Community Presbyterian Church of Lombard, Illinois. Now that he is fully retired, the Board of Pensions is also providing support and assistance as Rev. Pattison navigates the Social Security Administration system, which he says can be a “very difficult process.”

The offering also helps to develop future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, a cause particularly relevant to our status as a Matthew 25 congregation. The offering connects the church with students at these schools:

- Stillman College, an historically black college in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Kay Stockdale briefly taught at Stillman while Dennis was attending graduate school.
- Presbyterian Pan American School, an international college preparatory school near Kingsville, Texas, with students from a variety of countries including Mexico, China, South Korea, Rwanda, Taiwan, Colombia, and the United States. Ray Stock taught at the Pan American School before he joined the Warren Wilson faculty.
- Menaul School, a college preparatory school in Albuquerque, New Mexico for students in grades 6-12. More than 84% of students self-identify as coming from racially or ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Ordinarily, we collect the Christmas Joy Offering during our worship services prior to Christmas. This year, you may mail your gift to Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, Attn: Receiving Treasurer, 101 Chapel Lane, Swannanoa, NC 28778. You may also make your your gift on the church website during the month of December.

Thank you for all the ways that you support the ministry of Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church.

(Submitted by Ken Murchison)

Bringing Thanksgiving to the Homeless...



A heartfelt thanks goes out to members near and Far who sent in contributions to help pay for this project. And to the dedicated members who prepared and delivered these Thanksgiving meals to the Red Roof Inn housing the homeless.

Steve's Slant continued...

If the news of a coming vaccine fills your heart with hope, and floods your bloodstream with endorphins, that's understandable.

But here's the thing that may come as the biggest surprise: you might be feeling ALL THOSE THINGS AT THE SAME TIME. And if this dense emotional fog leaves you feeling a little lost and confused, or like you're operating in the dark, that's understandable, too.

Our spiritual and emotional circuits are bearing extremely heavy loads at the moment, unprecedented loads, loads we're really not equipped or prepared to bear. As we move deeper into this Advent season -- and deeper into this winter season -- it's important to recognize this load for what it is, and to take steps to mitigate it.

As adults, many of us, perhaps all of us, take more pleasure giving gifts at Christmas, than we do in receiving them. But this year, make sure you include yourself in your gift-giving.

If you need to stay in your pajamas on any given morning, and just drink coffee and write in your journal, by all means give yourself that gift. And silence the nagging voice that's trying to make you feel guilty for doing what you need to do to take care of yourself, rather than pushing yourself to go more places and do more things than you have energy or desire to go or do.

If you need to not burden yourself with the big task of sending out Christmas cards, give yourself that gift, and know that everyone will understand.

The light is coming friends. This darkness will not last. But until it breaks through, I leave you with this final thought, and send you this Christmas wish:

God rest ye merry gentlefolk, let nothing you dismay. Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day, to save us all from Satan's power when we had gone astray, oh-o, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, oh-o tidings of comfort and joy.



Our congregation has concluded its annual Stewardship Season for 2020, however we are still able to accept your commitments for 2021 if you have forgotten to send it in. Thanks go out to the 39 families who have already sent in their commitments for 2021 taking us to \$178,978 toward our goal of \$202,864. The 2020 Budget Team has met to review the proposed budget to see what adjustments to our goals are needed. (Last year 50 families were in a position to pledge.) Our gratitude to those of you who have indicated your pledge for the upcoming year. If you still intend to, you can do so very easily on our webpage, or contact the treasurer, Brent Roberts. If the bounty for sharing seems out of your grasp at this time, know that you are loved and your presence in our church is always a gift.

In faithfulness, your Stewardship Ministry Team,

Barbara Griswold, Larry Griswold, Susan Daugherty, Sally Broughton, and Rev. Steve Runholt



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!

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church
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The Extended Family