



THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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Steve's Slant

At this point in the proceedings you may be asking, where do we go from here?

Here is what I mean more specifically: now that the vaccine effort is fully underway, and now that so many members of our church family (and all members of our church staff) have been fully vaccinated, what does that mean for us?

When can we take the tape off our pews and sit where we want?

When can we start singing and participating in the liturgy?

When can we share in Communion in the way we're used to doing?

When can we hug a friend we haven't seen in more than a year and whom we've known and loved for decades?

When can those of us who still don't feel safe going out in person, finally stop watching church online and come in person?

The answer is we just don't know. We're in the process of coming out of a global pandemic – something that has not happened in a century. So as a country, never mind as a local church, we have essentially zero experience with how these things go, or when certain activities will be safe, while others still might not be.

I am acutely aware that not having clear answers to these questions may be frustrating. I certainly find it to be. But as I often say, it might be helpful to remember that we're not the first people to find ourselves in this situation.

In some ways where we are right now reminds me of the situation in which the disciples found themselves after the first Easter, and in which the first churches they established found themselves in after Jesus took his leave from the world's stage.

How do we do this new thing called church?

Can we admit gentiles? If so, do they have to be, you know, circumcised?

What about food? Can we eat just anything?

And women? What's their role?

Oh, and also, do we ordain our leaders, setting them apart for service to the church? If so, what should their qualifications be? And can anyone be ordained if they meet those qualifications?

The epistles -- roughly half of the New Testament -- are devoted to addressing these very questions.

Which is to say that in the face of huge changes -- like a resurrection, for example, or, on the other end of the spectrum, a pandemic -- the road ahead can be shrouded in fog, and it may stay that way for a while. Clear answers may not come immediately.

In the case of the disciples and the leaders of the New Testament church, they relied heavily on the Holy Spirit -- and on the Apostle Paul, the author of aforementioned epistles -- to guide them as they lived into what was for them a brand new reality.

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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!

May Birthdays!

Babs Guardenier	May 8	Lizzy Newman	May 10
Pat Wilson	May 11	Tess Newman	May 13
Ned Guardenier	May 27	Zach Pulsifer	May 28
Rick Garrison	May 30		



The Warren Wilson Book Group will meet via Zoom on Thursday, May 13th. The group discussed whether or not to meet in person but decided to wait until the June meeting to decide. Several locations were considered... details will follow in next month's notice. For May, Kathryn Williams will lead the discussion of "Caste" By Isabel Wilkerson. (submitted by Sandy Brauer)

PENTECOST OFFERING

Each year during the season of Pentecost, the Presbyterian Church collects a special offering to help the church encourage, develop, and support its young people and also to address the needs of at-risk children. Individual congregations retain 40% of the Pentecost Offering to support projects and organizations that make an impact in the lives of young people within their communities. The Presbyterian Mission Agency uses the remaining 60% to support children-at-risk as well as youth and young adults. At Warren Wilson, the Session has asked the Children and Youth Ministry Team to consult with our youth and to offer a recommendation as to how the local portion of our offering should be used.

One example of the programs the Mission Agency supports with the Pentecost Offering is DREAAM (Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males). It is a program designed to invest in African American males at risk and to walk alongside them and their families from the ages of five through 24.

You can make your gift to the Pentecost Offering in three ways. You make place your gift in the offering plates that are located in the chapel during worship, you can mail a check to the Receiving Treasurer at the church, or you can give online through our website. The Pentecost Offering will be a selection for the online giving portal throughout the month of May.



OUR HEALING PRAYERS GO OUT TO: Chuck Stephenson; Kathë Mosher; Flo Bishop, as she transitions to a new skilled care facility; Jon Hettrick and his family; Jon’s mother, Marjorie Hettrick; Fred Porter, relative of the Griswolds; Mark Laabs, friend of the Griswolds; Blake Joslin; Ric Morton and family; Ellen Ballow, friend of Sandy Brauer; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison, and Pat Crumpler.

WE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING HEALTH CARE WORKERS, AND PEOPLE WORKING AT MEDICAL FACILITIES: Carolyn Cole; 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.

OUR PRAYERS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS GO OUT TO: Natalie Cowal; Carla Presnell-Smith, and all those helping to keep essential services open for all of us.

“Never forget the three powerful resources you always have available to you:

Love, Prayer, and forgiveness.”

H. Jackson Brown Jr.

Clerk's Report

At its stated meeting on April 18, the Session

1. Approved a one-third time (12-14 hours) Associate in Ministry position. At the May meeting, the Session hopes to approve the job description, to name a search team, and to establish a plan to fund the position for at least three years.

2. Finalized its commissioners for the 2020 meetings of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

3. Authorized \$350 to pay for foam for the church bells with the funds to come from the Steven Williams Music Enhancement Designated Fund.

Steve Runholt announced that the installation of the equipment for live streaming of worship services should be completed within the next two weeks.

Ken Murchison, Clerk



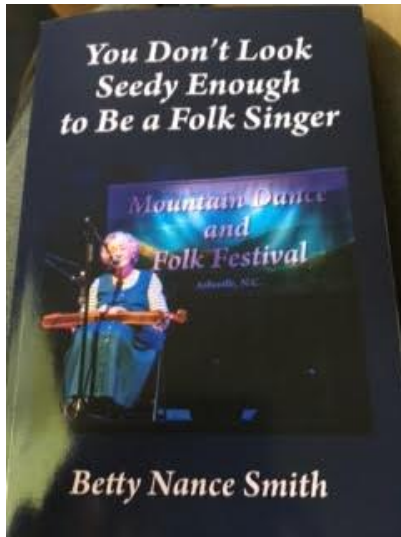
PRESBYTERY SPRING GATHERING



The Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina held their Spring Gathering via Zoom on April 10. Fifty-two women from seventeen different congregations attended. The Reverend Doctor Byron Wade, General Presbyter, brought greetings from the Presbytery and talked about his wife Regina's work as Moderator of PW for New Hope Presbytery. The Reverend Sally Woodard presented an introduction to the new Horizon's Bible Study *What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus*.

Sponsors of the Guatemalan Microloan project shared a video of microloan recipients. College scholarships were presented to two students. Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery donated to Manna Food Bank in Asheville and Second Harvest Food Banks in Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

The 2021 Fall Gathering will be in Tryon, and the 2022 Spring Gathering on April 9 in Montreat. Corise Gambrell, who participates in Presbyterian Women through the Montreat PW Circle, planned the recent Spring Gathering. She is Moderator-Elect for the Presbytery's Presbyterian Women.



During lockdown, Betty Smith worked on a new book about her family and her life. It is called You Don't Look Seedy Enough to be a Folksinger.

Betty had some assistance in her venture from a retired editor and a retired publisher, both Givens Highland Farms residents. Betty has copies of her book for sale (\$16.00), and the Warren Wilson Book Group looks forward to hearing Betty talk about writing and publishing her story.

(Copies available in church office, please call first.)

Steve's Slant continued...

We, too, will rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us as we move into our new reality, post-pandemic. But we have another major resource to help us make these decisions: science. And the CDC. And state and local health departments. And the Office of Theology and Worship of the PCUSA, and our local presbytery here in Western North Carolina. And we will be careful to take all their recommendations into account and to abide by their mandates.

In light of the early success of the national vaccination effort, it does feel like life is beginning to open up again, even if we're not quite fully back to normal. For example, I feel freer about going to the hardware store than I did a couple months ago, but I still wear my mask. Robyn and I have started to meet friends for coffee outside, but we've not yet gone out to dinner together indoors, in a restaurant.

So, things are changing, slowly, for the better. And in our worship life, we want to keep pace with these changes. But we also don't want to get ahead of what we know we can safely do.

The short version of this story is that there is a lot we don't know right now. But here are some things I can say for sure about our worship life:

Our Worship Planning Team met recently and we will be making two important recommendations to Session when they meet later this month:

One: that we continue our tradition of meeting outdoors for worship on the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend.

Two: that at least for this summer, we **not** move up our worship time to 10:00 a.m. This change is always met with some resistance, with at least a few of you voicing your dislike for it. And so the team thought it was only fair to listen to the voices asking us to keep the service at 11:00, at least for this year.

So that's where things stand as of today. Where they'll stand in another week, or another month, well, when we find out, if they're different from where they are today, we'll be sure to adjust accordingly.

Until then, I ask for your continued patience and prayers as we discern the way forward in this still somewhat foggy time.



PENTECOST

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