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Steve's Slant

Lately when people ask me how I'm doing, I always offer the same reply. "I'm well, all things considered. It's just that there is a lot to consider right now."

Human beings are remarkably resilient creatures. We have the capacity to endure an astonishing amount of hardship and suffering. We lose loved ones prematurely, we lose jobs unexpectedly, we lose homes or belongings to fires, floods and tornadoes, just to name a few of the more obvious hardships people routinely endure and survive.

In response to these emotionally harrowing experiences, we mourn our loved ones, we grieve our losses and, ideally, we get help if we need it.

And then, finally, we wake up, get out of bed, steel ourselves to greet the day, and we resume living our lives, even if it still takes weeks or even months before they feel "normal" again. And of course sometimes they never feel normal again, yet nevertheless we persist.

But the situation in which we currently find ourselves—and by "we" I mean every single one of us without exception—the situation in which we currently find ourselves, is uniquely and exceptionally....choose your word....challenging, difficult, unpleasant, harrowing, stressful.

Even if our personal lives are completely settled and free of stress (and whose is, really?), the larger context in which we spend our days is dominated by world-historical-level crises and stressors: the still-ominous shadow of a global pandemic, now in its third year, looming over everything; the ongoing threat to our democracy and the continued rise of an extremist, hard-right political movement here at home, and, now, war in Ukraine, carrying with it the threat to the current world order.

However resilient we humans may be, I am not sure we are built to cope with such a comprehensive assault on our peace of mind. It feels to me like our individual and collective coping systems are at, or even above, capacity.

Which, I think, is why we are seeing so much bad behavior out there in the world at large, from an angry (and essentially pointless) trucker convoy circling our nation's capital, to violence on the stage of the Dolby Theater in Hollywood during the Oscar's ceremony, to angry outbursts in Starbucks and grocery stores, at gas stations and barber shops, in all sorts of unexpected places, all across the country.

Here in America, we are not at our best right now.

And that might include you.

If you're wondering why you're feeling so irritable of late, or why you're suddenly dropping things, or why you can't immediately remember where you put your keys or parked your car, or why you want to tear that stupid, mean-spirited bumper sticker off the car parked beside yours at Ingles, there is a reason: none of us is at our best right now.

(Continued on page 4)

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Please call 828-298-9092 to speak with us or leave a message for us at the church. Thank you!

April Birthdays!

Eloise Murchison
Leslie Sayyar
Ken Murchison

April 4
April 11
April 24

Molly Hamilton
Claudia Nix

April 10
April 21



The Warren Wilson Book Group will hold its April meeting at noon on Thursday, April 14 in Fellowship Hall. Bring your own lunch and beverage to enjoy from 12-12:30. The book discussion is held from 12:30-1:30. In April Anne will lead our discussion of *If the Creek Don't Rise* by Leah Weiss. New members are always welcome--come read with us!

OUR HEALING PRAYERS GO OUT TO:

Elizabeth Cook and family, on Bob's death; Milt Butterworth, Sandee, and family; Pat Crumpler and family, on the death of her niece, Lauren Talton, Fran Roberts; Shane Reece, Nancy Garrison's son; Pat Wilson's son, Kell; Gina Marvin; Brooks Joslin, Blake's father; Erika Lytle; Jackie Ligon Cole; Rick Garrison; Fran Roberts' sister-in-law, Linda Briggs; Flo Bishop; Jon Hettrick and his family; Jon's mother, Marjorie Hettrick; Mark Laabs, friend of the Griswolds; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison.



The Warren Wilson Apartment at Hope for Tomorrow



When Hope for Tomorrow opened in 2018, Warren Wilson, along with other area churches (First Baptist Black Mountain, Black Mountain Methodist, Christ Community, Montreat Presbyterian, Black Mountain Presbyterian, and St. James Episcopal) adopted an apartment. We set it up for the first family to move in, and we agreed to help refurbish the apartment when needed. Our Afghan refugee family lives in the apartment adopted by the Black Mountain-Swannanoa Kiwanis Club. Club members purchased a number of new items such as linen, an electric kettle, a toaster, and blankets before Farkhunda and Elham moved in.

The WWPC apartment is currently occupied by mom, Melissa, and her three children. Melissa teaches at AB Tech, and she is a practicing Muslim. Her children are ten, fourteen, and sixteen.

With pandemic restrictions lifting, SVCM hopes that the adopting churches will do something thoughtful for the family each month. Suggestions are to remember birthdays, leave grocery items that are very expensive for a family on a limited budget, etc.

If you would like to assist in remembering Melissa and her family with a small gift each month, you can contact Corise Gambrell, who serves on the Hope for Tomorrow Advisory Board.

Hope for Tomorrow is supportive housing constructed for homeless women and children. The Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry raised over \$1,000,000 to build the apartments. Burnace Roberts was a leader in that effort. There are ten apartments. Mothers who live at Hope for Tomorrow have case managers who assist them in goal planning. Nutrition, healthy eating, and budgeting classes are offered, as well as assistance in completing the GED program.

Savanna Craig is the new resident manager at Hope for Tomorrow. Savanna has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a Master of Divinity from Gardner-Webb University. She spent six years directing various aspects of the Christian Education program at Central United Methodist Church in Shelby, N. C.

Outdoor beautification Team

Are you interested in having some outdoor fellowship?
Working with plants? Maintaining the outdoor spaces around the church
buildings with church friends?

We will meet once a month for 2 hours of work with time following for refreshment on the fellowship Patio.

Our first beautification day will be Saturday, April 16 from 9:00-11:00 am. If weather conditions are bad, we will meet at 9:00 on April 23. Contact Bob Gambrell, gambrell4@charter.net, or Donna Eagle Joslin, deagle@warren-wilson.edu. If you'd like to join us!



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY NEWS

HABITAT INVITES YOU to attend the wall-raising ceremony for its next House of Faith (Friday, April 29 at noon) which will be built with help from church partners like us. This will be in west Asheville's New Heights neighborhood. If you have questions or need directions, contact Larry Griswold at larrygris@gmail.com. If you can help as a volunteer at the House on May 20 or 21, or June 4, or any other work day between May 3 and June 4, please contact Larry

Steve's Slant continued...

I realize this characterization may not work for everyone—and wouldn't work at all for people from other faith traditions—but in ways we perhaps have never known or experienced before, it feels like we are living in a Good Friday world: a world where gloomy clouds obscure the sun, and mean, violent men seem to getting away with murder and a host of other crimes, and God's presence seems nearly impossible to discern.

That is the hard, hard news of these times we're currently living in.

But I believe in the truth and the power of the Easter story. I believe that this present darkness will not last. And I don't just believe this in theory, or strictly as a matter of faith.

I believe it because I have seen with my own eyes the truth of Easter, the power of Easter, the hope and the light of Easter, break in on my own life in some of my darkest moments, and break in on some very dark places in the wider world—in my home town after a devastating flood, in refugee camps in Mozambique, in communities so wounded by oppression and injustice their members believed they would never heal.

I've seen the light of that dawn break in before in these dark times and places, and felt the power of new life rising. And I believe I'll see it and feel it again, that we'll all see and feel it again, because if Easter begins in darkness, in the end, that bright dawn always comes.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING For over 70 years, OGHS has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Please consider a donation to this special offering which will be collected during this Lenten season, culminating on Easter Sunday. Make checks out to WWPC with OGHS on the memo line. Thank you!

APRIL 23, 2022
10:30 AM-6:30 PM

JOIN WITH MIDDLE SCHOOL
AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH
GROUPS FROM ACROSS THE
PRESBYTERY FOR A DAY
FILLED WITH RECREATION,
ADVENTURE, LAKE FUN AND
WORSHIP AT CAMP GRIER!

PWNC YOUTH

ADVENTURE DAY

@ CAMP GRIER

Schedule:

10:30 - NOON

Registration and Group Games

Noon

Picnic Lunch (BRING YOUR OWN!)

1:00 - 5:00 PM

Adventure On Campus (AOC)

5:00 - 6:30PM

Dinner, Music and Worship

AOC ACTIVITES:

FARM/GREENHOUSE

CLIMBING WALL

HORSES/OUTDOOR GAMES

ORIENTEERING RELAY*

CANOEING/LAKE ZIPLINE

*NEW ACTIVITES FOR 2022!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 16

Children and Youth Update

Children and Youth Sunday School has started again! The Youth and Children of the church have been enjoying lessons tying into our worship themes and what's happening in the world. Recently the children have made "Hugs-to-go" (studying the Prodigal Son) and Peace Cranes in the colors of the Ukrainian flag.

Sunday School for Children and Youth meets each Sunday at 9:45 in the Youth Room and all are welcome!

Coming Up:

- There will be an **Easter Egg Hunt** after church on Easter Sunday, April 17th.
- The **Acolyte Ministry** will be resuming soon!
- **Youth Sunday** will be Sunday, June 5 as we celebrate **Pentecost!** (submitted by Sarah Grace)

Help eliminate \$1,000,000 of Medical Debt in Western North Carolina!

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina has initiated a program to address systemic poverty by eliminating \$1,000,000 of medical debt held by neighbors here in Western North Carolina. Although that goal seems impossible, it is not because \$10,000 in gifts throughout the presbytery will retire \$1,000,000 of medical debt. The presbytery is partnering with the non-profit RIP Medical Debt, an organization that purchases debt from debt-collectors in bundled portfolios. Each dollar donated will abolish \$100 of medical debt. The presbytery's arrangement with RIP Medical Debt will specifically focus on debt of folks living in western North Carolina.

RIP Medical Debt works to forgive debt rather than collect it. Working with third-party credit data providers, RIP searches bundled debt portfolios to locate accounts meeting our criteria for financial relief. RIP then negotiates to buy portfolios at a steep discount, on average a penny on the dollar. Prior to RIP's purchase, many of these bills have passed through several collection agencies and months or years of collection pursuit. Others are purchased or donated directly from hospitals and doctors' groups. RIP offers to purchase these accounts at their present industry market value. The humanitarian difference is that once RIP buys this debt, it forgives it on behalf of the donor, removing derogatory credit marks that would hobble their finances for years.

Eliminating medical debt is particularly important. These debts are a primary cause of bankruptcy, and they disproportionately affect people of color. This program is part of our efforts to be a Matthew 25 presbytery and Matthew 25 churches.

At its March stated meeting, the Session approved the recommendation of the Community Engagement Team that Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church should join this effort. The Session designated \$500 of the funds remaining from our PPP grant and challenged the congregation to match this sum with special gifts.

You may make your gift in three ways. You can place a check with Medical Debt Relief in the memo line in the offering baskets during worship or you may mail a check to the church (WWPC Receiving Treasurer, 101 Chapel Lane, Swannanoa, NC 28778). If you prefer, you may make your gift online by selecting the Medical Debt Relief option.

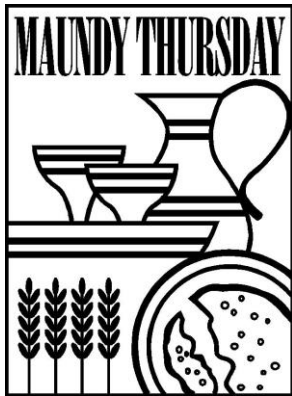
This program is truly one where gifts of every size matter. A \$100 gift will retire \$10,000 of medical debt of our neighbors. A \$25 gift will retire \$2500; a \$10 gift will retire \$1000, and a \$5 gift will retire \$500. (Submitted by Ken Murchison)

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

April 10 Palm Sunday: Meet in front of the Chapel at 10:45 to collect your palm branches

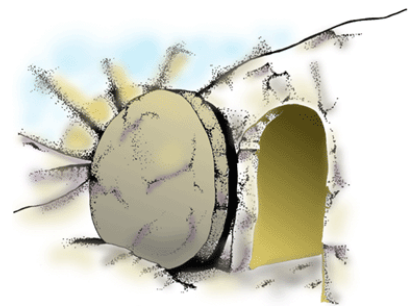


April 14 Maundy Thursday: Service in the chapel at 7:00 pm. This is a special service which includes the serving of communion.

April 15 Good Friday: No community service this year

April 17 Easter Breakfast: Fellowship Hall at 9:30 am

Easter Sunday: Service at 11:00



Easter Egg Hunt: Following the service



Holy Week

APRIL

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