

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

Steve's Slant

BY REV. DR. STEVE RUNHOLT



On Earth Day Sunday, I shared a story told by Robin Wall Kimmerer, found in her book "Braiding Sweetgrass", about Skywoman, and the role this mythical figure played in the origin of Ms. Kimmerer's tribe, the Potawatomi people.

About this origin story, Ms. Kimmerer writes:

The story of Skywoman's journey is so rich and glittering it feels to me like a deep bowl of celestial blue from which I could drink again and again. It holds our beliefs, our history, our relationships. Looking into that starry bowl, I see images swirling so fluidly that the past and the present become as one. Images of Skywoman speak not just of where we came from, but also how we can go forward.

I quote Ms. Kimmerer here because I think what she writes about this most sacred story from her own tradition is also true of our most sacred stories from our own tradition. And I say stories, plural, because I'm thinking not just about the story of Creation, as it comes to us in Genesis, but also, and perhaps especially, about the Easter story.

I also quote her because in this Easter season – this Eastertide – what she writes strikes me as the perfect invitation to stay with our story for a few more weeks, as we make our way from Easter Sunday to Pentecost.

I'm sure most of you have a Bible at home. Some of you may read it regularly. For some of you, it may have gathered a bit of dust of late.

Either way, I encourage you to take it out and read the Easter story again for yourself. Indeed, stretch the experience out a bit. Read all four versions, as told by each of the Gospel writers.

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Steve's Slant continued...

I might suggest you start with Mark's version, as his was the first Gospel to appear in written form. (Spoiler alert: if you are expecting to encounter the risen Christ, you may come away disappointed, as the post-Easter Jesus does not make an appearance in Mark's Gospel. But take heart! Jesus does appear in the other three!)

To borrow Ms. Kimmerer's language, look into that deep, starry bowl and let the story speak to you. Focus on the characters that populate the story –Mary Magdalen, Jesus' mother Mary, Peter, James, John, Thomas, even Judas – and let their humanity speak to you of your past: who you have been at various times in your faith journey; and of your present: who you are now. And perhaps of your future, too: who you aspire to be as you continue to on your faith journey.

Go back as far as you like. Perhaps consider all the hardships in your own life you've come through. The times you have experienced the truth of Easter in your own life: what those have meant to you and how they have shaped you.

Of course maybe you'll realize that some parts of your story feel more like Good Friday than Easter. If that's true, what might it look like for the truth of Easter, the power of Easter, to break through that darkness?

Then, in light of your own rich history, here is the really fun part, think about what it means for all of us to come together, bringing all of our individual stories into one place, all the same time: on Sunday mornings at 11:00.

And might even do this exercise again collectively. Go back as long as you've been here. Think about all the relationships you have enjoyed as a member or regular attender of this church. Perhaps reflect on all the hardships, even the traumas, we have experienced together: the hard loses, mass shootings, hurricanes, Covid, insurrection.

What has Easter meant to you? What has this community meant to you? What is your hope for yourself, moving forward in your journey of faith? What is your hope for us together, moving forward in our shared journey of faith?

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Sarah Grace Montgomery May 4
Elliot Newman May 10
Tess Newman May 13
Zach Pulsifer May 28

Babs Guardinier May 8
Pat Wilson May 11
Ned Guardinier May 27
Rick Garrison May 30



Happy
Birthday

Beautification Team



Kay and Dennis Stockdale, along with Jim Storey, worked on the area in front of the fellowship Hall patio in April. Please thank them for their hard work on this project! Let us know if you'd like to donate plants or bulbs for the areas around the church. We would love to plant daffodils and other bulbs this fall!

Kay Stockdale, Jack Ballard, Donna Eagle Joslin, Susan & Derron Daugherty.

A Sanctified Art

A Sanctified Art emerged as a ministry to support worshipping communities in integrating art and creativity into their spiritual practices. Initially representing the art and ministry of one person, *A Sanctified Art* expanded to become a team of artists and pastors in January 2016. In 2019, they began intentionally welcoming guest contributors and partnering with organizations, musicians, creatives, and scholars to bring new energy, insight, and wisdom into our resources.

Their team works with co-contributors and with supporting pastors, worship and arts ministry teams in churches, and individuals through our seasonal offerings. They worked with CREDO to add creative visuals to their worship and online retreats and are growing in their connections to both guest contributors and new communities of worship and learning.

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church used the resources from *A Sanctified Art* for our Advent services, and most recently for Lent.

THE WARREN WILSON BOOK GROUP



The Warren Wilson Book Group will meet at noon on Thursday, May 11 to discuss *Good Night, Mr. Tom* by Michelle Magorian. Corise will lead the discussion. Please bring your lunch and enjoy some fellowship from 12-12:30. The book discussion begins at 12:30. We always welcome new members!



Joys and Concerns

Our Healing Prayers go out to: Arden Starnes and family, on Danny's death; Pat Wilson on the death of her sister, Mary Rose; Susan Runholt, Steve's sister; Lee & Martha Dugger and family; Betty Smith; Bob Gambrell; Salyna Morgan; Walt Roberts, Fran & Burnace's son; Erika Lytle; Houston Huggins, Beth Meriwether's brother; Carol Lee and Brooks Joslin, Blake's parents; Jackie Wintle's cousin, Richard Taylor and her niece, Jessica Brown; Janice Kesterson, Mark Meriwether's aunt; Kip Smith, Tacci's father; Pat Crumpler; Shane Reece, Nancy Garrison's son; Pat Wilson's son, Kell; Fred Porter & Fred Harvey, the Griswold's brothers-in-law; Bartley and Phyllis Spencer, Sandy Brauer's brother and sister in law; Jackie Ligon Cole; Rick Garrison; Fran Roberts' sister-in-law, Linda Briggs; Flo Bishop; Jon Hettrick and his family; Marjorie Hettrick; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison; Bobbie Galgaro and daughter Lisa, friends of the Daugherty family.



Easter Service



A special thank you to everyone who helped with our Easter service, and to those who purchased lilies to honor, and remember their loved ones

Easter Music

Our interim Music Director, Frank W. Boles ended our Easter service with a postlude that was not only difficult to play, but was very familiar to many of us in this congregation. It was as if an old friend had come to visit.

Frank's expertise on the organ was evident from beginning to end, with a resounding round of applause as *Toccata* (from symphony for Organ No. 5) reached its conclusion.

The music that was shared on Easter morning was truly uplifting, as our guest trumpeter, Bell Choir, and our Adult Choir kept us inspired throughout.

Thanks to everyone for sharing your musical gifts!





Fundraising Concert

Connell Sanderson spent his formative years nurtured by the members of the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church community. Sunday school, youth group, hiking the campus trails, and throwing countless millions of rocks into the Swannanoa River all helped him develop into the fine young man that he has become.

At age five he decided, after watching the Montreat Pipes and Drums in the Montreat Fourth of July Parade, that his life's mission was to learn to play the bagpipes. He never wavered from that mission, becoming a very fine Highland piper and at age 15 he was a uniformed member, piping with them in the July Fourth parade.

After high school Connell went to work as a finish carpenter, becoming a master of this trade, but his first love was always music. Over the years he grew more fond of traditional Irish music, and after acquiring and mastering various flutes, whistles, and stringed instruments he obtained his first set of Uilleann pipes (also called the Irish Bagpipe) and the rich traditional music heritage of the Green Isles.

This past summer, while touring Ireland with a friend and playing music at every opportunity, he was encouraged by several members of the music faculty of the University of Limerick to apply for their Master's program in music performance and music therapy. Once the paperwork was filed, he was quickly accepted and will be on campus this coming August. To help defray the costs of his education and living expenses while in Ireland Connell will be performing a number of benefit concerts, and WWPC graciously agreed to host the first. Connell will be joined by the very talented Don Penzien for an evening of traditional Irish music that you will not soon forget.

The concert will be in the WWPC Chapel on May 5th, 7 to 9 PM. Cover is \$20 for adults, \$15 for youth/students.





EASTER BRUNCH



NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

JUST FOR FUN

Ice Cream Social! Join us on May 21 following the service for an Ice Cream Social on the Patio of Fellowship Hall. We'll have ice cream, toppings, and treats hosted by The Congregational Life Team! Just for Fun is a social gathering that focuses on fellowship and FUN!

MAY 5 FUNDRAISING CONCERT IN CHAPEL

On Friday, May 5 at 7:00 pm Connell Sanderson and friends will give a concert of Celtic music to raise funds for his year in Ireland at the University of Limerick's Master's Program in music performance and music therapy.

OUTDOOR SERVICE IN THE PAVILION

Join us for our Annual Memorial Day Weekend service on Sunday, May 28 (also Pentecost Sunday) at 11:00 am in the pavilion on Warren Wilson's campus. Our outdoor service is always a favorite. ALL ARE WELCOME!





Did you know?

Camp Grier was founded on July 16, 1952 by Robert D. Grier of Statesville, North Carolina as an outdoor ministry of the Presbyterian Church. During the 1940s, Concord Presbytery used Camp Fellowship on the Catawba River.

When Duke Power revealed plans to build Lake Norman, the Presbytery was in danger of losing its camping facilities. Undaunted, Mr. Grier purchased 600 acres of land in Old Fort, NC in the summer of 1950 in order to start another camp for the Concord Presbytery. Mr. Grier set up a saw mill on the camp property and volunteers from the churches built the buildings in Main Camp. The camp was named in memory of Mr. Grier's father, the Rev. John McDill Grier.

Camp Grier is currently located on 655 acres and is surrounded by the first tract of National Forest purchased by the federal government under the Weeks Act. An 8,100 acre tract encompassing the Curtis Creek watershed was purchased for \$7 an acre from the Burke McDowell Lumber Company in 1911. Following in that great tradition of conservation Camp Grier protected a 200 acre tract of property surrounding Jarrett Creek in 2018.

Camp Grier made a commitment almost 50 years ago to provide outdoor experiences for all children. They are still more committed than ever to this value. As kids spend more and more time in front of screens indoors the need for outdoor play has become critical.

For more information on Summer Camp, go to:

campgrier.org/summer-camps
or call, 828-668-7793

(A limited number of scholarships are available.)



Personnel Review Team

SUBMITTED BY JIM STOREY

Each year, WWPC completes a review of its entire staff — normally all four positions, but just Steve, Donna, and Frank for this year. Several years ago, the Session voted to conduct the review in the spring at the end of our normal program year. This year, the Administration Ministry Team named Bob Gambrell, Sharon Lytle, Ken Murchison, and Jim Storey as the action team to prepare the annual review for the church staff.

To complete its work, the team needs input from the entire congregation. Please share with the team your words of praise for the work our staff members have done in the past year and your suggestions as to how we can improve our ministry in the future.

The following questions may help individuals prepare their responses:

1. What staff members' work have you noted over the last year?
2. For each staff member you identify:
 - In what ways has the staff member assisted our ministry?
 - What strengths did he or she display in their work?
 - Can you suggest any ways in which the individual's support for our ministry might be enhanced?

These questions should not limit anyone's response. The team would like everyone's insights regarding what the staff has done well and how the church can improve. The team will also appreciate your general observations about our church – what is going well, what concerns do you have.

Please address written responses to Jim Storey at the church office (101 Chapel Drive, Swannanoa 28778) or place it in the AMT mailbox in the office. Alternatively, you may email your response to jstorey57@gmail.com. The team will keep your observations in confidence, but it does ask you to sign your comments. Anonymous comments are very difficult to evaluate. If possible, please submit your responses to the team before the end of May so it can complete its report for the Session in a timely matter. The team appreciates your assistance in this most important process.

Church Contacts

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