

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

Steve's Slant

BY REV. DR. STEVE RUNHOLT



Finishing strong. It's what we all want.

We want it for our sports teams and for our favorite athletes. We want them to attend to the details, to execute the winning play, make the clutch shot, the big catch, the crucial putt, so they can hoist the trophy and so that we can collapse back in our chair, content in the knowledge that all our ardent cheering in front of the TV has not been in vain.

Finishing strong. I love that we used this phrase as the title for our Lenten educational series, because we want this for ourselves, too. We want to attend to the details that will enable us to live out our final stages comfortably and peacefully, knowing that we've done the work we need to do to protect and care for ourselves, and to protect and care for our family and loved ones.

Finishing strong. It's what we all want. And it is certainly what I want for my last six months here, for our last six months together.

To that end, I have two pieces of good news.

First, the Music Director Search Team is about to wrap up their preliminary work. They have attended to the details: they've completed their surveys, held their listening sessions, consulted with the relevant ministry teams and advisors.

With that work done, they will soon be posting an advertisement and job description for this position and will begin interviewing candidates next month.

So, it might be tight (perhaps too tight) but I would love to think they will find a qualified candidate who can join our staff in time to begin rehearsing with our choir when we resume our normal programs in early September.

Which leads me to my second piece of good news.

Last week, I met with the Associate Pastor Search team to talk through the implications of my announcement on their work.

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We agreed there are some. There are budgetary considerations and institutional considerations. And there is also the question of momentum: of regaining it and then maintaining it as we continue to come out of covid.

And so we also agreed it would be helpful, and beneficial, to move forward with bringing an Associate Pastor on board:

- Someone to support our Christian education programs (adults and children).
- Someone to preach occasionally and help lead worship every week, and to help backstop me should I need to be away on a given Sunday this fall.
- Someone who could (as one team member put it) provide some glue to the congregation, during this transitional period.

Given our present circumstances, we also agreed it might make the most sense to hire a "Stated Associate" rather than a "Called Associate"; that is, someone who agrees to serve for a specified time period (a year, say), with the possibility of renewal--assuming renewal is mutually agreeable and of mutual interest.

And so I believe the team will make this recommendation to our Administration Ministry Team for their review of the financial considerations, with a view toward making this same recommendation to Session.

Again, given the tight timeline, it might not be possible, but it would be wonderful if we were able to find a well-qualified candidate who is willing to fill this position by the end of the summer, so that they can be here, in place, by the start of the Sunday school year.

But either way, whether these positions are filled by September, or whether it takes a little longer to work out the details and find the right candidates, I believe that moving forward on filling them will set us up – you and me, both – for a strong finish to this current chapter.

And set you all up for a strong beginning to your next chapter.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Larry Griswold	July 4	Bob Castellani	July 4
Allyson Hettrick	July 8	Grace Boyer	July 14
Don Collins	July 18	Brent Roberts	July 23
Gretchen Williams	July 23	Bob Gambrell	July 27
Allee Williams	July 27	Pat Crumpler	July 29



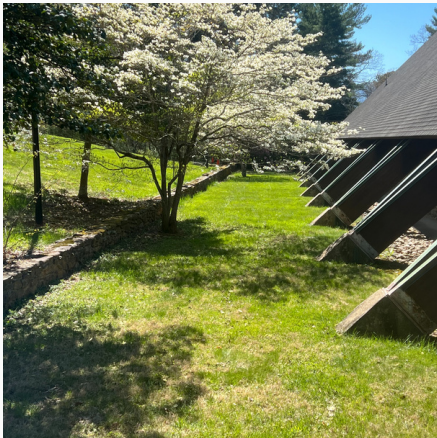
Joys and Concerns

Our Healing Prayers go out to: Susan Runholt, Steve's sister; Lee & Martha Dugger and family; Betty Smith; 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; 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.



Landscape Crew Returns to Campus

BY DONNA EAGLE JOSLIN



While I was out in front of the chapel watering the flowers in late June, Dave Ellam, the Dean of *The Center for Working Lands* on campus called out to me as he was working nearby, to give me some good news. He let me know that the Landscape Crew was being reinstated, and would begin their work this summer maintaining the grounds around campus. The Landscape Crew was disbanded when COVID hit in the Spring of 2020. This is great news! The crew now has a supervisor, an assistant, and 45 hard working student crew members.

THE WARREN WILSON BOOK GROUP



The Warren Wilson Book Group will not meet during the month of July. Look for Book Group news in the upcoming August Newsletter!



Land of the Sky Concert

MAKING MUSIC TO TELL THE TRUTH

SPENCER LAJOYE

LIVE IN CONCERT

Thursday, July 13
7:00 – 9:00 pm

Land of the Sky
United Church of Christ
15 Overbrook Place
Asheville, NC

To support bringing this gifted artist to Asheville for this free concert, please click on the QR code to make a love offering on a sliding scale from \$5 to \$20.

Spencer is a folk/pop singer songwriter, and a vocal loop artist from Boston. They do music to return to their body as a queer person in recovery from American Christian evangelicalism. Their single, *Plowshare Prayer*, went viral among hurting and healing people worldwide. Delivering Broadway-esque melodies accompanied by a weathered dreadnought, their performances are equally confident quirk and elegant storytelling.

Masks Optional • landoftheskychurch.org



A Message From the Treasurer

A request from the Treasurer's Office

In order to receive mail in a timely fashion and make deposits as soon as we can, we are asking that all checks and other items be mailed to the following address:

**Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church
101 Chapel Lane
Swannanoa, NC 28778.**

This means you may have to change the church's address on your bank's website, call the bank or go in person to change the address, or contact your financial advisor to have the address changed. Please no longer use the college's PO Box. Sometimes there are delays, especially during the summer months when the campus Post Office operates for limited hours.

Thank you for your help!
Treasurer's Office



Harvesting the Gifts of Aging

Life expectancy is increasing but it can be difficult in our current culture to have positive expectations about our elderhood when we are bombarded by negative images of aging. Many people never discover that there are some very special gifts to be found in their elder years that could give them a life that is deeper, freer and even more precious. Join us for the retreat to discover these gifts!

During this 2.5 day retreat your certified workshop facilitators will guide you through a series of individual and group reflections, exercises and discussions where you will explore your gifts. You might find that this time of your life can in many ways be the best time of your life. This retreat will also be a great opportunity for you to build new, deep friendships with likeminded people.

The "Harvesting the Gifts of Aging" retreat will be at historic William Black Lodge in the mountains of western North Carolina in beautiful Montreat, North Carolina.



COMMUNITY LETTER

BY DAMIAN J. FERNANDEZ, PRESIDENT, WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

Dear Warren Wilson Community,
(Sent to the community on June 29, 2023)

Today the U.S. Supreme Court struck down affirmative action. The ruling is expected to have wide-ranging effects on admission and financial aid at colleges and universities, including private institutions like Warren Wilson College. My fear is that this decision will reduce opportunity, undervalue potential, and slow progress toward the country we aspire to be.

The Supreme Court's majority opinion, offered by Chief Justice Roberts, notes that race-based admission programs at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. A dissenting opinion offered by Justice Sotomayor states that with the decision "the Court cements a superficial rule of colorblindness as a constitutional principle in an endemically segregated society where race has always mattered and continues to matter."

While we have yet to understand the practical implications of the ruling, I want to remind everyone that our admissions process is a personal one—like our education. We admit individuals, one at a time, which means that we are sensitive to their circumstances, talents, and interests. At Warren Wilson we are about inclusion, not exclusion.

Our College was founded on the democratic value of access to opportunity combined with hard work. From our long history of including those who have been excluded, we have witnessed the transformative power of learning from different life experiences and standpoints. We have not always gotten it right, but I invite you to learn from our missteps, to speak up and act when there is a process or a practice we can improve, and to move forward with me. Even in light of the Court's decision today, we will continue to center diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Like our nation, we too are a work in progress.

In the past months we launched the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Working Group of the Board of Trustees. The Staff Liaison Group finalized its collaboration with the Southern Equity Collective, producing an equity assessment and roadmap, and our Wilson Inclusion Diversity and Equity (WIDE) Office advanced its agenda. These efforts will continue to yield better results as we infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into our departments, curriculum, and daily practices. Soon I will announce a new institutional initiative to ensure just that.

So much good work awaits. We will not abandon our commitment to create an environment that embraces diversity as a fundamental strength for learning and the common good. Our College is "dedicated to a just, equitable, and sustainable world." Let us stand united in pursuit of our mission.

Damián J. Fernández
President, Warren Wilson College



NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

JULY 2 CHURCH PICNIC

On Sunday July 2, following our service, we moved into Fellowship Hall and enjoyed picnic food and good conversations with friends! Thank you, Congregational Life Team!



A great time was had by all!

Look for information on "Church Night at the Tourist's Game" in the August Newsletter!

Church Contacts

Church Office: 828-298-9092

Church Admin.: Donna Eagle Joslin, 825-298-9092, deagle@Warren-Wilson.edu

Minister: Rev. Dr. Steve Runholt, 828-712-7803, srunholt@Warren-Wilson.edu

Interim Dir. of Music: Frank W. Boles, 317-509-3089, frankwboles@gmail.com

Treasurer: Leslie Sayyar, 828-333-8867, treasurerwwpc@outlook.com

Treasurer: Brent Roberts, 919-844-6311, brentbroberts@icloud.com

Bookkeeper: Barbara Escalante, bookkeeperwwpc@outlook.com

