



Warren Wilson  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



We are assembling gift-bags for neighbors who will use the new shower facilities at SVM in Black Mountain.

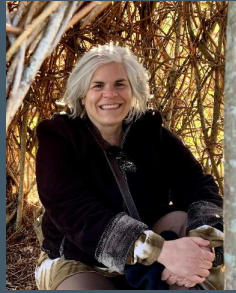
Step 1:  
Take a plastic bag and fill it with one of each of the toiletries.



# Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

## Session Clerk's Report to the Congregation

### February 9, 2025



#### FROM THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

It is interesting for me to begin this 2024 annual report as a person who was not a part of your community in 2024! As your current Transitional Pastor, I have had the task and honor of reviewing this report ahead of you. What you will find in this report is that you, Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, have been seeking to live in to your mission and vision:

#### Our mission...

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church is called to be a welcoming and inclusive community of faith and fellowship, and to embody God's love through ministries of compassion, reconciliation, justice, and peace.

#### Our vision...

We aspire to be a vibrant, thriving community that values both head and heart, that puts love over fear, and that seeks to be the body of Christ in this time and place.

In this Annual Report, you will find information about 2024 from elders and leaders of WWPC. They are information based, but what is behind the information are the stories of those who participated in the events and activities described, the ways people served and were served. We hope that you will find pieces of particular interest and either give thanks for way the Spirit is moving in our midst, or seek out more information about how you might be involved in the future.

Peace, Laurie

#### 2024

Just at the end of 2023 we were happy to welcome Ted Stewart as our temporary Choir Director and Organist while continuing the search for a new Director of Music Ministry. Ted stepped in at just the right time to bring us through the Advent season with choir voices singing.

The first days of 2024 brought us Margaret LaMotte Torrence and the official beginnings of our time of pastoral transition. Margaret brought us grace, a steady presence, powerful words from the pulpit, and gentle words to nudge us on our way.

Under Margaret's leadership, a Mission Study Team, chaired by Brent Roberts was created and they began their work. Led by Margaret, and our director of music, Ted Stewart, Worship was both authentic and vibrant.

In late spring, we celebrated and thanked Donna Eagle Joslin for her years of service as the Church Administrator. We remain grateful to Donna for her time, energy, love, and care she offered over the years. At the same time, we welcomed Andrew Tripp, as our new Church Administrator, who came in and immediately began sharing his gifts with a generous spirit.

In September of 2024, Hurricane Helene violently blew through our community and our lives changing what "this time and place" looks like and feels like. Following the hurricane worship and activities halted for a while as we all struggled to understand how our world had shifted. It was, and is clear, the aftermath and recovery has only just begun. In November of 2024, our presidential election reminded us just how divided a country we are.

As we read this in February of 2025, we look back on a landscape that has shifted a bit. Some things about early 2024 can seem almost quaint. However, this annual report sounds both faithful and hopeful. It is clear the church is being the church and individually members of the church are out in the community "embody(ing) God's love through ministries of compassion, reconciliation, justice, and peace."

At the end of December, Margaret informed us that she would not be renewing her contract as Transitional Pastor in order to focus on her family. With sadness, we bid her goodbye with our prayers of both thanksgiving for her time with us and a call for God’s blessing be with her. The session identified and found Laurie Furr-Vancini to be our Transitional Pastor moving forward.

To say 2024 was a full year is an understatement! And through it all, we gathered as the body of Christ. May the Spirit continue to lead us as we have been led in the past. Thanks be to God.

**Session and Ministry Teams**

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church elects six elders, two per year, who serve three year terms. In 2024 stated session meetings were convened each month with moderator, Rev. Margaret LaMotte Torrence, to provide oversight of worship, programs, finances, and activities of the church. In addition there were five called meetings to address immediate concerns. There were also seven electronic votes conducted by email. To prepare the chapel for worship each Sunday morning each elder serves as Elder of the Day seven times during the year. Session members offer leadership in church ministry teams and act as liaisons to the ministry teams. They volunteer to serve as commissioners to stated meetings of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina which meets four times per year. Records of all meetings are stored in the church offices. A list of session members and ministry team leaders is available as an addendum in this report.

The official active membership of Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church declined by 1 in 2024 from 129 to 128. In 2024 we received four new members into the congregation. Average weekly in-person attendance was 49, with additional participants joining online.

**MISSION STUDY TEAM**

In March 2024 under the guidance of our transitional pastor, Margaret LaMotte Torrence and per Presbyterian governance, a Mission Study Team was formed composed of Donald Collins, Natalie Daugherty, Barbara Griswold, Pat Levi, Sharon Lytle, Ken Murchison and Sally Broughton. The focus of the study is, Who are we? What is God calling us to be and do? Who Is our neighbor?

The study was informally initiated with a presentation on April 14 “The Origin Story for Warren Wilson College” by WWC faculty member Dr. Jeff Keith. This was followed by two different congregational gatherings for “Holy Conversations”. The considerations for table discussions on April 21 included having a look at our time line since the church formation, adjectives with which we would describe our church and examples of how we’ve seen these come to life. On May 19 each table of participants was given a different aspect of our mission statement to consider, followed by whole group discussion.

The team broke into pairs over summer months to conduct in person interviews with over 15 individuals representing the college, our mission partners in the county, and other entities with which the church engages. These included SVCM, Habitat, Veterans Quarters, etc., Buncombe Co. Commissioners, WWC personnel, and school officials. The quest was to hear various perspectives on Warren Wilson Church and the concerns with which they felt we could be involved in our community. These surveys were reviewed and compiled into common statements to help guide the narrative for the study document.

We are currently compiling financial data for the past five plus years, which includes regular giving as well as budget and endowment information. For 2025 the goal is to complete the study, compile a narrative, and present findings to the Session, and if approved then to the Presbytery and congregation. A congregational questionnaire has been created and was sent in January 2025. It will be compiled and included in the report. The goal is to present the Mission Study document to the Session at their stated February meeting. All of this information for the Mission Study clarifies who the church is and what the church is about.

The team is back at work with our new transitional pastor, Laurie Furr-Vancini, assisting with completion of the study after a pre- and post- Hurricane Helene slowdown.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM



One focus of this team is to steward the funds committed by session to support our community partners. Our 2024 annual budget for Community Engagement was \$18,700. Our list of financial partnerships is reviewed annually. This team also authorizes expenditures from the Community Outreach Endowment. In addition, in 2022, session created a Community Engagement designated purpose fund. [In 2024, \$500 from each of those funds was gifted to This Child Here in support of scholarships for Ukrainian youth to attend Presbyterian affiliated schools in the US.] The CE team shepherds the collection of special offerings throughout the year. Souper Bowl, Habitat, Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Our Daily Change, and Warren Wilson College collections generated over \$5500. And in 2024 we received and distributed \$5051 through the four seasonal PCUSA special offerings.

Beyond our financial commitments, members of Warren Wilson Presbyterian share their time and energy in two community outreach efforts coordinated by Larry Griswold.

## Helping Create Affordable Houses

We had been hopeful to host the identified new homeowner for our annual Habitat Moment for Mission at the start of the Sept. 29 worship service, but Hurricane Helene made that impossible. After delays caused by the hurricane, House of Faith #4, a single story townhome Arden’s multi-generational Glenn Bridge neighborhood, began construction on Oct. 8.



Among the first volunteers to help build was a group of clergy including our transitional pastor, Margaret LaMotte Torrence. On November 2, five of our church members (including from the left:Derron and Andrew Daugherty, Ken Murchison, and Emily and Andrew Pulsifer) were among the first volunteers to return to work at the job site, House of Faith #4 in .



During the volunteer period which ran through December 14, five additional members, Don Collins, Anne Dale, Jamie Dale, Bob Gambrell, and Jim Storey, signed up to help. The Asheville chapter House of Faith is being built by a coalition of area faith communities and should be completed next summer.

The next work period for volunteers is scheduled for February 4 – March 22.







## **Veteran's Restoration Quarters (VRQ)**

On the fourth Friday each month since 2010, volunteers from our church have prepared and served lunch to 80-100 residents and staff at the VRQ on Tunnel Rd. near the Swannanoa River. The VRQ is an arm of Asheville Buncombe Christian Community Ministry that provides shelter, education and skills training for up to 160 veterans during their transition to permanent housing. When nighttime temperatures fall below freezing it also provides emergency shelter for up to 40 men.

Located in a former motel with a commercial kitchen, lunch volunteers spend the morning cooking meals, preparing items for the salad bar, making salad dressings and sandwiches and assembling sack lunches for residents who were away from the building at meal time. When Hurricane Helene swept through our community on Sept. 27, which would've been our normal volunteer Friday, everyone there had to be evacuated before 8 feet of water flooded the building, destroying the ground floor including the kitchen and dining room. The good news is that in less than two weeks temporary lodging for the VRQ residents was set up across Tunnel Rd at the Quality Inn. Because it does not have a commercial kitchen or food storage space however, feeding everyone presented a huge challenge. Thankfully two of the many disaster relief organizations that have come to provide badly needed help in Western North Carolina, Mercy Chefs and World Central Kitchen, began providing meals that are prepared elsewhere and delivered to the site. WWPC volunteers resumed serving chef-prepared nutritious lunches and dinners furnished by Mercy Kitchen, at the VRQ's temporary location in November. In addition, Team Rubicon, a volunteer organization of veterans specializing in disaster response, has finished cleaning up the damage at the VRQ so that it can be rebuilt, and Veterans Bridge Home is providing volunteer labor, donations and some meals. Many other organizations and companies are also helping with funding for the rebuild which may take a full year. Until then our church will continue to provide a small number of volunteers at 11:45 a.m. on the 4th Friday of the month to distribute lunches at the VRQ temporary location at 1430 Tunnel Rd.

## **Circle of Welcome led by Vicki Collins**

Under the auspices of Lutheran Services, our church, for the second time, formed a circle of welcome to help new Afghan refugees. Our family arrived in September. The father had served in the Afghan army with American forces, and the Taliban seized all his resources, violently attacked his family, and threatened him. The family was evacuated by the US in the summer of 2024 and has been fully vetted and awarded Special Immigrant status, which is a direct path to a green card. Their family back in Afghanistan haven't been so lucky. Their visas are in process, and because the program is now paused indefinitely, other family members are in hiding and fear for their lives.

The family is truly delightful; father and mother, daughter (11) and the boys (8) and (3) are working hard at learning English. Lutheran Services found them a house in Swannanoa, and they weathered the hurricane in amazingly good shape. They quickly made friends and the children are enrolled in local schools. The father now works full time at Givens Highland Farms.

Our role is to help them adjust to life in America, by driving them to various appointments, helping them with shopping and just finding their way around. We are enjoying activities with them and providing a circle of new friends.

The experience has been truly gratifying for our team. We have found wonderful new friends, including several amazing Swannanoa neighbors. We have learned so much: about Afghan culture and food, about the difficulties of navigating life here without money or a car, and how to use imagination in communicating with inadequate translation apps. We see this work as a true expression of our commitment to serve Christ in this world right now.



**Hope for Tomorrow is a component of the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry** designed as housing for homeless mothers and children as well as a program to assist those families in becoming self-sufficient. The apartment "adopted" by WWPC is currently being used as storage, but it can be used as housing for a larger family when needed. It is the only two-bedroom apartment. Most of the families at HFT moved out to more permanent housing just before Helene's visit. Immediately after the storm, HFT housed families displaced by the storm. Currently two apartments are occupied by mothers and children and four more of the ten are ready for occupancy. The HFT staff includes Cindy Riley as program director, DeShondra Glenn as case manager, and Harmony L as resident property manager. Cindy and her husband lived at HFT when their home was destroyed by the storm. Harmony first came to HFT as a resident with her two sons. She is invaluable as the person on site who maintains the apartment and takes major responsibility for refurbishing them when a family moves out.

WWPC member, Corise Gambrell, has coordinated our support for Hope for Tomorrow, and along with Sarah Anne Eller, plans annual summer pool parties our church hosts for residents. She was a member of the SVCM Executive Board until November, 2024, and currently serves as a member of the Hope for Tomorrow advisory board, having worked with the program since it began.

**Support for Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry SVCM**

Warren Wilson Church hosted an Ecumenical Lenten Service in the Chapel on Wednesday, March 6. These weekly services are coordinated by the Swannanoa Valley Ministerial Alliance. The offering collected was to benefit SVCM's ministries to unhoused neighbors living in the valley.

In past years WWPC has coordinated an effort to recruit volunteer walkers and donations toward the annual Walk for Your Neighbor, hunger walk sponsored by SVCM. The hurricane caused that event to be postponed.



On September 8 returning WWC students led us in a service of worship organized by the Office of Spiritual Life as they had (pictured below) in March. Such a blessing is carried through their voices, hands, and hearts. After worship folks gathered for a potluck lunch to welcome students back to campus. Part of the sharing and fellowship included an assembly line project to fill gift bags for neighbors who are now using a new shower facility at Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry (SVCM) in Black Mountain. Prepared bags will provide soap, towels, oral care and other toiletries.





## COMMUNICATIONS



The Communications Team has worked to share the church’s message throughout the community. Through Social Media Content, Website Updates and Design, Direct and Electronic Mailings, New Format for the WWPC Newsletter, Parlor Screen Content Church Event Updates, Church Directory, Stewardship Assistance, and Member Access to Breeze, the team promoted church events and helped to keep the congregation and community well informed.

With new staff coming onboard, team members worked towards a smooth technology transition and updated media accounts with new credentials. We updated the website with staff photos and bios, new events and worship opportunities. John Bishop assisted with moving the website to a new hosting service and created business cards for staff. We assist members and staff with content, formatting and technology when requested.

A main task in 2024 was to assist with stabilizing the live-stream and audio for Sunday services. Many thanks go to the LaMotte and Torrence crew for instructing volunteers on the audio and visual equipment. We are grateful for changes made to the technology and creation of a useful “how to” guide. and created business cards for staff. To better accommodate members who watch our worship services via live-stream, we reformatted the online bulletin and added hymn text. We collaborated with other teams to add their events and announcements to the website, calendar and the screen in the parlor. We began updating contact information and photographs for the member directory, so we can publish the revised PDF version in early 2025. Our newsletter articles provided instruction on creating a Breeze software account so members can to gain access to the directory on-line, thus reducing the need to print paper documents. With an aim toward greater visibility and to assist visitors in locating to the church we are exploring signage for directions on Warren Wilson. Over the years we continue to learn how, when and what to communicate; it’s truly a team effort. Our church community is a lively group with much to convey!

## ADULT EDUCATION



After a very busy 2023, the Adult Spiritual Nurture Team decided to disband and turn the leadership reins over to the Adult class participants. During winter and spring of 2024 the class watched and discussed the Lenten video series, “The Historical Jesus”, Jamie and Anne Dale facilitated a discussion of a parable, Vicki Collins presented her research on the history of Palestine as it relates to today’s conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, Kara Nash, Natalie Daugherty and Beth Meriwether presented regarding autism and neurodiversity, and Don Collins summarized and lead a discussion of Walter Ziffer’s memoir, Confronting the Silence - A holocaust survivor’s search for God.

The class took the summer months off as many members would be traveling. The class resumed meeting on September 8 with the first couple of meetings focused on planning. With the destruction wrought by Hurricane Helene at the end of September, classes were suspended until the beginning of November when participants reconvened and processed together their experiences post-Helene. Jamie Dale facilitated a meeting focused on Christian nationalism. The class closed out 2024 using the Advent devotional booklet provided by the church as a guide for classes.

## WORSHIP & MUSIC

The 2024 Worship and Music programs were led by the wisdom and talent of Transitional Pastor Margaret LaMotte Torrence and Interim Music Director Ted Stewart, under the guidance of Chairperson Beth Meriwether. One of the team's most notable accomplishments was the acquisition of a beautiful new piano for the sanctuary. A piano concert was held on December 7 to celebrate. Ted continues to develop and strengthen the Church choir, and taught a class in music reading.

Children and the young at heart have also been actively included in worship services. The Church sponsored programs on neurodivergence, SVCM's Hope for Tomorrow program, refugee support, aid to Ukraine, houselessness, and disaster recovery.

In spite of challenges created by Hurricane Helene, the WWC Farm Crew continued its 9-decade tradition of the Thanksgiving farm display in the chancel, complete with a visit by wool sheep, Angelina, and her shepherd.



**- A New Beautiful Grand Piano at WWPC**

On November 26, 2024, at 1:00 pm Ryan Singleton, Isaac Gomez and Ian Davis, from Piano Emporium/Freedman Pianos ushered in and installed at Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church a beautiful shiny black Yamaha C7 7ft 6 inch piano. On November 11, the Piano Committee saw and heard the piano fully demonstrated by Wayne Smith at Freeburg Pianos. It was then that we all knew this is “the one” that would bring glorious sounds to the WWPC Chapel.



Ryan, Ian and Isaac finish the moving and installation.

Piano Search Committee Members were: Jim Storey, Ken Murchison, Beth Meriwether, Brent Roberts, Andrew Tripp, Ted Stewart, Wayne Smith (Independent Piano Consultant), Kevan Sorenson (Piano Emporium Search Guide) and Levi Freeburg. The Committee formed in the Spring, and reviewed possible pianos, and consulted a few piano technicians/tuners in the area.

Our reviews, especially by local technicians, helped us to zero in on watching for a Yamaha or Kawai 7’ 6” piano—very well built and sturdy, easy to regulate, good tune holding, brilliant treble range, clear mid-range and robust bass range, beautiful clear tone and responsive key touch. With patience Kevan helped us watch for a piano. The first of November a 7’ 6” C7 came into the Freeburg Pianos on consignment—a rare opportunity. The piano was about 20 years old and had been given very good care. It was used in a recording studio and a teacher’s studio. That meant it had been kept in excellent tune and regulation. Perks were a top level cover, an installed damp chaser and artist bench. Freeburg’s technician found that the piano needed very little regulation of the key action, and traveled in with little need for tuning.

The Yamaha piano replaced an 1888, 6’ 6” Beckstein piano owned by the college. It served beautifully for many years. When its key action mechanics were no longer manufactured, it became impossible to order action parts for rebuilding and regulating. It served us well and lived out its last struggling days at WWPC.

Funds for the Yamaha instrument came from the Steve Williams trust fund and other designated funds of the church. The price was a good bit lower than the budget planned by the Committee.





Thanks to the Asheville Area Piano Forum—a large organization of local pianist, both professional and amateur—we were easily able to pull an inaugural piano recital by five of the Piano Forum members: Eric Fricke (pictured), Will Baunach, Eunice Stackhouse, Wayne Smith (both solo and 4-hands piano), Karen Boyd (both solo and 4-hands piano) and Ted Stewart, accompanist to Beth Meriwether playing the flute. On December 7, 11:00 am, we called the event, “A WWPC Piano Celebration”. And a celebration it was! The repertoire was classic and holiday music of great variety demonstrating the piano’s wonderful dynamic range and clarity of beautiful tone. The attendees were exuberant with accolades of both piano and the players.



Andy Reach tuned the piano on December 6. When asked how the tuning went, he exuberantly said, “I love your piano!”—a great appraisal of the piano. The piano will serve the church well with beauty and clarity in our church services and also concerts and programs.

**CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

Led by Susan Daugherty, the Congregational Life Team played a vital role in revitalizing our fellowship after the pandemic. Throughout the year, we reconnected through cherished traditions and new gatherings that nurtured our church community.

We planned future events and spread joy with Valentine's care bags for shut ins. We revived the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (relocated to Sanctuary due to a power outage) and celebrated Easter with a potluck brunch. Spring treat bags were shared with our care and concern members. In May the team held an Ice Cream Social alongside a luncheon listening session.

Over the summer months, several events took place. In June we hosted a BBQ and square dance at Owen Park for Donna Eagle Joslin, who retired after serving many years as the church’s administrator. We also coordinated a multi-generational VBS with Spiritual Nurture and reinstated the July 4th Picnic. In September, we partnered with the College/Church Relations team for a Welcome Back Potluck for Warren Wilson College's new and returning students. The team hosted the annual Trunk-or-Treat with the Spiritual Nurture team and the Homecoming Potluck in October. In December, the Wassail Celebration (relocated due to renovations) rounded out the year. Christmas Care Bags were delivered with love.



Beyond major events, we rekindled simple joys—fellowshipping over coffee after worship, gathering for potlucks, and sharing in life’s moments. We bid farewell to Sarah Grace Montgomery with a special coffee hour, supported grieving families with memorial receptions, and sent birthday cards, sympathy notes, and goody bags to remind our members they are cherished.

The Congregational Life Team works throughout the year coordinating the details that make our gatherings meaningful. Deep gratitude to all who bring us together in faith, fellowship, and love.





## ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Ministry Team (AMT) met monthly, either in person or via Zoom, to offer recommendations on the many financial and administrative necessary for the smooth functioning of the congregation. The responsibilities of the AMT span three general categories: finance, personnel, and administration. The AMT's financial responsibilities include ongoing tasks such as reviewing the church's monthly financial reports and quarterly endowment reports and dealing with unusual expenses as they arise. Other financial highlights include some annual tasks such as the approval of the 2024 budget in January 2024, the completion of a thorough audit of the church's 2023 finances, a successful, if somewhat delayed, stewardship campaign in the fall, and the preparation of the 2025 budget, with final Session approval in January 2025. There were also some non-recurring financial items that required significant attention from the AMT in 2024. Two examples include recarpeting and repainting the Pastor's and Administrator's offices, and the purchase of the new (to us) Yamaha C7 piano for the sanctuary.

Personnel management highlights included hiring Andrew Tripp as our new Church Administrator upon the retirement of Donna Eagle-Joslin and finalizing the Transitional Pastor Agreement with Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini, our new Transitional Pastor. AMT also formed the annual Personnel Review Team which performed the 2024 review of the church staff. We took a slightly different approach to the review process in 2024 since our Transitional Pastor had only been on staff for a few months, our Administrator was about to retire, and our Music Director was serving in an interim capacity. The "review" followed the same structure as previous years with comments solicited from Ministry Teams, the choirs, the adult Sunday school participants, and the congregation at large, but the focus was oriented toward identifying and resolving any problems or issues that Margaret or Ted were experiencing, and capturing lessons learned from Donna that would benefit her successor.

The AMT's administrative activities included supporting the Session by updating the Church-College Covenant document which is overdue for renewal. This activity was delayed by the effects of hurricane Helene and is still in progress.

## FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

In 2024, several much-needed facelifts were completed in our facilities.

- Since our transitional pastor was using the vacant office, formerly occupied by an associate pastor, the empty larger minister's office was painted and re-carpeted in April. After our church administrator retired in May, it seemed an opportune time to refurbish that office space, so new paint and carpet brightened that space as well.
- Warren Wilson College saw to the much-needed replacement of outside lighting on the front of the chapel for we which we shared expenses, per the covenant.
- Several pieces of new equipment were added to our audio and video systems including a new microphone and cable and a set of headphones to help the operator monitor the live-stream sound quality.
- Our choir director requested new microphones for the choir loft. Replacing the old ones, which had outlived their usefulness, created improved sound in the life-stream broadcast.

There were discussions about rental use of the lower fellowship hall. Several options seemed like possibilities – a Montessori school in April and a non-profit organization supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in May, but the facilities did not completely meet the needs in either case without considerable upgrades.





September brought significant hurricane damage to the Christian Education building and the Ransom Fellowship Hall. The Children's Room downstairs in the Christian Education Building was flooded. The tile in the upstairs kitchen and the carpet in the hallway were also affected due to moisture. A Remediation Service hired by the College performed the necessary work to restore these spaces. The buildings were not usable for several weeks, due to air quality as a result of mold, so the offices were temporarily moved to the Parlor in the Chapel. In addition, the handbells and the equipment associated with them were temporarily moved to a small upstairs room in the Chapel along with all the artwork. By the end of the year, the downstairs Children's Room was updated with new drywall and laminate flooring; the kitchen, hallway, and restrooms received new laminate flooring; and the fellowship hall was recarpeted. Additionally, both the chapel and Ransom Fellowship buildings were re-roofed.



**FINANCES 2024**

2024 was a year of personnel transitions with Rev. Margaret LaMotte Torrence beginning the year as our Transition Pastor and then the retirement of Donna Eagle-Joslin in late May, followed by the hiring of Andrew Tripp as Church Administrator. Despite these changes and the associated uncertainty, Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church finished 2024 in a strong financial position. We ended the year with a large surplus of \$44,683.52. The surplus was the result of higher than projected giving and lower than projected expenses. You can review the exact details in the December 31 revenue statement prepared by our bookkeeper and treasurer.

Year after year your generosity consistently exceeds our expectations and 2024 was no exception. Those who made commitments for 2024 gave \$5,552.93 more than the total commitments we received at the end of our stewardship campaign Regular givers who did not make commitments exceeded our estimate by a remarkable \$14,485.05 and loose offering was \$4,692.52 greater than anticipated. Our total giving was \$254,374.50 (\$24,730.50 more than our budget projections).

Our personnel budget for 2024 included a \$12,000 allocation from non-recurring designated funds for pastor search expenses in anticipation of beginning the search for a new permanent pastor late in the year. These funds remained unused as the completion of our Mission Study and subsequent formation of the Pastor Nominating Committee were delayed by the impact of hurricane Helene. This had no net effect on the budget since neither the income nor expense were realized, and the allocated designated funds were preserved for use in 2025. Personnel expenses were reduced by the transition of the Church Administrator position (by \$4,575.82), the lack of a permanent Music Director (by \$3,645.45) and the fact that there were no nursery workers or paid Sunday school workers in 2024 (by \$4,290). Our other expenses were an additional \$6,822.79 lower than our budget projected, due to a combination of reduced expenditures in the music and education programs, additional reductions in personnel expenditures for sound technician pay and bookkeeping expenses, and careful management of our administrative expenses.

The church's strong financial position allowed us to paint and recarpet the Pastor's and Administrator's offices, and to purchase a new piano for the sanctuary (\$28,550). The piano expense was initially charged to our Capital Campaign designated fund, but a combination of endowment funds, additional contributions from the congregation, and the accumulated surplus from prior years will allow us to retire this debt in early 2025.



As usual, the generosity of this congregation extended beyond the operating budget. In addition to the \$19,350 the church allocates to community engagement in the operating budget, the congregation contributed approximately \$12,709 to special offerings. Some of the largest of these gifts were \$2,492 for One Great Hour of Sharing, \$1,889 for Our Daily Change, \$1,722 for the Souper Bowl, and \$1,705 for the Christmas Joy offering. An additional \$8,694 was contributed to a special designated fund established by the Session for Buncombe County Hurricane Relief. Altogether this represents over \$40,000 in contributions to support our local and global missions.

The outstanding 2024 financial results that your giving produced places the church in a strong financial position. The balance sheet itemizes the allocation of the substantial increase in our assets. During 2024 the church’s assets increased by \$94,271.35 to \$667,664.53. The primary contributor to the increase was substantial gains in the market value of the church’s endowment assets which increased by \$74,265.27. The balance sheet details how those assets are allocated to the various endowment and other accounts that the church has established over the years. The total equity of \$78,597.32 is the value of the assets that the Session has not yet designated to any specific account, although some of this will be used to retire the piano debt.

**Endowment Fund**

Our endowment funds total balance grew substantially in 2024 – from \$420,206.48 to \$494,471.75, the result of a combination of a sound investment approach and a rising stock market. The Funds Ministry Committee has invested most of the assets of the endowments in mutual funds administered by the Presbyterian Foundation. In addition, the committee retains the assets available for distribution as earnings in an Endowment Money Market Fund at First Bank.

The December 31, 2024 endowment balance of \$494,471.75 includes the assets of six endowment funds. The individual balances were:

- General Endowment - \$216,935.85
- Community Outreach - \$32,338.45
- Spiritual Nurture - \$24,476.35
- Worship and Music - \$24,078.77
- Church-College Relations - \$22,795.15
- Steven Williams - \$173,856.27

The endowment funds provide a valuable supplement to your annual giving. The earnings of the Williams Endowment provide annual support for organ maintenance and the music program, and the earnings of the remaining endowment accounts provide an important source of funds for unexpected or nonrecurring expenses that are not included in the budget. They also provide important protection if the church ever experiences an unexpected shortfall in revenue. In 2024 endowment earnings were used to help pay for refurbishment of the handbells and chimes, This Child Here scholarships for Ukrainian students, assisting Warren Wilson College students in financial need, purchasing new sound system equipment, and organ maintenance.

A group of knowledgeable volunteers oversees our endowment investments, led by John Laney as chair of the Funds Ministry Committee. Elizabeth Cook and Elaine Barnes are the other members of the committee.





2025 Budget

The 2025 budget recently approved by the Session builds upon our 2024 financial results while anticipating further changes to our pastoral staff. Entering another year of transition the Session approved an ambitious challenge budget for 2025. Despite a late start to the stewardship campaign due to the hurricane; a stable level of commitments, increased regular giving (reflecting our 2024 experience) and the allocation of \$2400 of our prior year surplus brought us within 3% of our income goal. Some revised assumptions about when a new permanent pastor could be expected to be in place made it possible for the final budget for 2025 to fully fund nearly all the challenge budget spending goals, the exception being the nursery/Sunday school workers budget which could be funded using prior year surplus funds if needed.

Your generosity made possible several notable aspects of the budget for 2025. The Session was able to give our non-ordained staff a 4% raise, include a health care stipend for the Church Administrator, and to fully fund our new Transition Pastor’s contract while providing for the hiring of a new permanent pastor in the 4th quarter of 2025. The budget also provides funding for a part-time Associate position beginning in the 4th quarter, concurrent with the new permanent pastor. The 2025 operating budget also continues the annual allocation of \$500 to handbell and chime maintenance initiated in 2024. These funds are being accumulated in a designated fund to finance a five-year program of routine handbell and chime maintenance.

Close examination of the budget reveals less dramatic changes that are still worth noting. The budget reflects an increase in community engagement spending. The increase is \$1,000, divided equally between support of the denomination and local organizations. The budget also increases the weekly honorarium for supply pastors to \$250 and provides dedicated funding for the Music Director to participate in the annual Presbyterian Musicians’ conference at Montreat.



Final Thoughts On Our Financial Picture

The 2024 financial results and our projections for 2025 are a reminder that there are (at least) two things that we should be grateful for. First, the generosity of this congregation has enabled us to remain in a position of financial strength as we move through a period of transition and as our community recovers from a natural disaster. Second, the folks that give us the ability to monitor these results on a regular basis deserve a special word of thanks. A dedicated group of individuals – Barbara Escalante, our bookkeeper; Leslie Sayyar, our disbursing treasurer; Brent Roberts, receiving treasurer; and John Laney, chair of the Funds Ministry Committee – do an immense amount of work to provide the Administration Ministry Team and the Session with accurate and timely reports throughout the year. Their efforts make it possible for those groups to keep track of and manage the church’s finances throughout the year.





January 28, 2025

Dear friends,

We are writing to thank you again for your generosity and to report the successful completion of our stewardship campaign. When the Session approved the final budget on January 22, 38 of you had made commitments for 2025; and those commitments totaled \$211,456. When combined with other gifts we expect to receive this year, your promises enabled us to fund substantially all of the items in the challenge budget. Your commitments ensure that Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church will live so God can use us in 2025.

In her sermons during the stewardship season, Margaret reminded us of the resiliency both the college and the church have shown in the past. Once again, you have demonstrated that ability to respond positively in troubled times. Faced with the worst devastation in the history of our region during a year of transition, you responded to our needs as you have so often in the past. Your generosity places the church in a solid financial position as it searches for a new pastor to lead us to a bright future.

Thank you again for ensuring a bright future for our congregation. Now let us all join together to live so God can use us.

Yours in Christ,

The Stewardship Team

Janice Collins, Derron Daugherty, Donna Eagle Joslin, Sharon Lytle,  
Ken Murchison, and Laurie Furr-Vancini



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2025 Final Budget

Line		2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Challenge	2025 Final
	INCOME				
1	<b>COMMITMENTS</b>	\$209,215	\$212,144	\$224,000	\$211,456
2	<b>REGULAR INCOME</b>	\$16,285	\$14,000	\$15,700	\$18,000
3	<b>LOOSE PLATE</b>	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$4,700	\$5,000
4	<b>GIVING INCOME</b>	<b>\$229,000</b>	<b>\$229,644</b>	<b>\$244,400</b>	<b>\$234,456</b>
5	<b>GIFTS/GRANTS</b>	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	<b>PRESBYTERY COLLEGE</b>	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
7	<b>INTEREST</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,100
8	<b>PRIOR YEAR SURPLUS</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,400
9	<b>WMS END EARNINGS</b>	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$3,900
10	<b>TRX - MEMORIALS FD</b>	\$0	\$0	\$4,500	\$2,224
11	<b>TRX – PERSONNEL FD</b>	\$16,000	\$12,000	\$19,500	\$19,500
12	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$250,400</b>	<b>\$246,544</b>	<b>\$273,300</b>	<b>\$265,580</b>
	EXPENSES				
13	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>\$8,100</b>	<b>\$9,690</b>	<b>\$10,810</b>	<b>\$10,810</b>
14	<b>SPIRITUAL NURTURE</b>	\$1,500	\$1,600	\$1,650	\$1,650
15	Ch/ Youth Ed	\$1,100	\$1,150	\$1,200	\$1,200
16	Adult Ed	\$400	\$450	\$450	\$450
17	<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	\$1,200	\$1,290	\$1,325	\$1,325
18	<b>WORSHIP &amp; MUSIC</b>	\$4,100	\$4,850	\$5,735	\$5,735
19	Worship Supplies	\$1,100	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,050
20	Music License	\$400	\$500	\$500	\$500
21	Choir Music	\$1,200	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250
22	Instrument Maint	\$1,400	\$2,100	\$2,350	\$2,350
23	Music Education	\$0	\$0	\$585	\$585
24	<b>CONGREGATIONAL LIFE</b>	\$900	\$950	\$1,050	\$1,050
25	<b>COLLEGE RELATIONS</b>	\$400	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,050
26	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	<b>\$18,700</b>	<b>\$19,350</b>	<b>\$20,350</b>	<b>\$20,350</b>
27	<b>PCUSA</b>	\$6,775	\$7,100	\$7,600	\$7,600
28	<b>LOCAL MISSION</b>	\$11,925	\$12,250	\$12,750	\$12,750



2025 Final Budget

Line		2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Challenge	2025 Final
29	<b>P ERSONNEL</b>	\$197,940	\$190,869	\$214,320	\$206,327
30	<b>STAFF RAISE POOL</b>		\$0	\$4,049	\$0
31	<b>PASTOR</b>	\$92,602	\$90,238	\$98,438	\$97,662
32	<b>SEARCH EXPENSES</b>		\$12,000	\$19,500	\$19,500
33	<b>CHURCH ADM</b>	\$46,697	\$48,089	\$45,007	\$46,631
34	<b>MUSIC DIRECTOR</b>	\$23,300	\$24,000	\$24,002	\$24,906
35	<b>ASSOC IN MINISTRY</b>	\$20,950	\$0	\$9,112	\$4,448
36	<b>SUB ORGANIST</b>	\$800	\$900	\$900	\$900
37	<b>NURSERY WORKERS</b>	\$4,141	\$4,290	\$1,650	\$0
38	<b>PULPIT SUPPLY</b>	\$850	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$3,000
39	<b>GUEST MUSICIANS</b>	\$200	\$250	\$300	\$300
40	<b>CONTRACT SERVICES</b>	\$7,400	\$7,622	\$7,962	\$7,980
41	<b>SOUND TECHNICIAN</b>	\$1,000	\$1,080	\$1,000	\$1,000
42	<b>GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATION</b>	\$25,660	\$26,635	\$27,820	\$28,093
43	<b>OFFICE SUPPLIES</b>	\$1,175	\$1,275	\$1,400	\$1,400
44	<b>OFFICE COMM</b>	\$1,800	\$1,000	\$780	\$780
45	<b>POSTAGE/PRINTING</b>	\$1,400	\$1,500	\$1,680	\$1,680
46	<b>OFFICE SOFTWARE</b>	\$1,900	\$2,350	\$2,510	\$2,510
47	<b>EQUIP PUR/SERVICE</b>	\$2,700	\$2,700	\$2,400	\$2,400
48	<b>CREW MISC EXPENSE</b>	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75
49	<b>SESSION EXPENSE</b>	\$500	\$543	\$555	\$578
50	<b>INSURANCE</b>	\$2,600	\$2,700	\$3,100	\$3,100
51	<b>ST TR/CREDIT CD FEES</b>	\$350	\$200	\$100	\$100
52	<b>UTILITIES</b>	\$7,500	\$7,600	\$8,250	\$8,500
53	<b>ONLINE GIVING CH</b>	\$250	\$150	\$290	\$290
54	<b>BUILD MAINTENANCE</b>	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
55	<b>BUILD CLEANING</b>	\$4,410	\$4,542	\$4,680	\$4,680
56	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$250,400	\$246,544	\$273,300	\$265,580
57	<b>INCOME MINUS EXPENSES</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

# WARREN WILSON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## 2025 Session Members

### **2025 CLASS**

Sharon Lytle	<a href="mailto:slytle@Warren-Wilson.edu">slytle@Warren-Wilson.edu</a>	(828) 242-8492
Natalie Daugherty	<a href="mailto:forestchick07@gmail.com">forestchick07@gmail.com</a>	(336) 413-9071

### **2026 CLASS**

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James (Jim) Storey	<a href="mailto:jstorey57@gmail.com">jstorey57@gmail.com</a>	(828) 587-0104

### **2027 CLASS**

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Chrisann Ohler	<a href="mailto:drchrisann@aol.com">drchrisann@aol.com</a>	(415) 218-6514

### **CLERK**

Sally Broughton	<a href="mailto:sallycallaham@gmail.com">sallycallaham@gmail.com</a>	(828) 231-0989
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### **STAFF**

Laurie Furr-Vancini - Transitional Pastor	<a href="mailto:laurie-furrvancini@warren-wilson.edu">laurie-furrvancini@warren-wilson.edu</a>	(904) 502-5432
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Andrew Tripp - Church Administrator	<a href="mailto:andrew-tripp@warren-wilson.edu">andrew-tripp@warren-wilson.edu</a>	(828) 298-9092
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William "Ted" Stewart - Interim Music Director	<a href="mailto:stewart.smith@att.net">stewart.smith@att.net</a>	
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### **MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS**

Congregational Life - Susan Daugherty

Worship & Music - Chrisann Ohler

Communications - Brent Roberts

Community Engagement -

Administration Ministry Team - Jim Storey

Church College Relations - Don Collins & Leslie Sayyar