



THE EXTENDED FAMILY

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Volume 28 Issue 1

January/February 2021

Steve's Slant

Regular readers of The Extended Family will know that I always start the new year in this column with a look back at last year--a retrospective summary of the State of Our Union, if you will.

Even under ordinary circumstances 2020 would have been an unusually difficult year. We lost some legendary figures, people who supported and helped sustain this community for decades: Steve Williams (in Dec. 2019, but we obviously felt his passing well into 2020), Mike Levi, Ron Wilson, Ray Stock, Pat Laursen, Barbara Hempleman.

What made these losses even harder was that, in all cases apart from Steve and Mike, we could not gather to mourn our dear friends, or properly celebrate their lives. And the lives of these faithful saints certainly deserved to be celebrated.

In the fall, our good friend and close colleague, Grace Boyer, left us to take the next step on her vocational journey, a loss that was felt across all generations of our community, from our youngest children to our oldest members. Grace's departure was perhaps especially hard for the leaders of the ministry teams she worked with (Congregational Life and Spiritual Nurture) and, honestly, for the church staff, too, as we had come to enjoy, and depend on, her collegiality, in staff meetings and in Sunday worship services.

So even under ordinary circumstances, 2020 would have been an exceptionally difficult year. But there was nothing ordinary about last year.

In March, as we all vividly remember, we shut our doors and suspended in-person worship to help "flatten the curve" of the coronavirus. Little did we know what was coming: how steep that curve was about to get, and how much more limited life was about to become as we all sought to protect ourselves from this dangerous virus.

All we knew at the time is that we suddenly had to learn a whole new way to do church and be church.

The miraculous thing is, we did.

Most obviously, we moved to providing our worship services online. Our early efforts were quite simple, a little crude even. But we learned quickly and the quality steadily improved.

Looking back now, three highlights stand out from last year: our Easter service, which started in darkness and ended in the light of resurrection hope. (Do you remember Allee's dance, down the center aisle of the sanctuary? Just stunning.) And also the joint services we did with our sister congregation in the Dunkeld Cathedral, and our Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols.

One other positive thing to come out of our shift to online services: we have become aware that people who don't live in our community, or who don't worship here regularly, or who once did but no longer do, are joining with us in worship. We've had viewers tune in from Illinois, Minnesota, Virginia, Arizona, Florida, Texas, Massachusetts and California, and even some from overseas, too, with viewers in England, Germany and (of course) Scotland.

(Continued on page 6)

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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!

January/February Birthdays!

Sarah Anne Eller	Jan. 5	Sandee Butterworth	Jan. 7
Jamie Dale	Jan. 12	Carolynne Cowal	Jan. 15
Robyn Runholt	Jan. 15	Mary Kells	Jan. 16
Corise Gambrell	Jan.24	William Hamilton	Jan. 29
Cadence Cowal	Jan. 30		
Diana Sanderson	Feb. 1	Jack Ballard	Feb. 9
Clotilde Guisasola	Feb. 11	Karen Cruser	Feb. 12
Georgena Millar	Feb. 13	Brownie Newman	Feb. 16
Edythe Wiener	Feb. 19	Milt Butterworth	Feb. 22
Burnace Roberts	Feb. 24		



The Warren Wilson Book Group will meet via Zoom at 11:00 am. on February 11th, 2021. Corise Gambrell will lead the discussion of "The Jane Austen Society" by Natalie Jenner. At our January meeting each member listed 2 or 3 of their favorite books. These book will not be part of the Zoom discussions but are for recreational reading. When the list is compiled, I'll be happy to Email you the list if anyone is interested. To join the Zoom meeting for "The Jane Austen Society" notify Sandy Brauer at sandra_brauer@yahoo.com and we'll see that you get a copy of the link.
(Submitted by Sandy Brauer)

“The most valuable possession you can own is an open heart. The most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace.”

Carlos Santana

If you are donating food to help with hunger relief, here is some good advice from one of Anne Dale's Facebook friends who works in a food bank:

1. People donate Kraft Mac & Cheese in the box. But it needs milk & butter which is hard to get from food banks.
2. Boxed milk is a treasure. Kids need it for cereal, which they get a lot of.
3. Everyone donates pasta sauce & spaghetti noodles.
4. Canned foods should be pop tops OR donate can openers.
5. Oil is a luxury needed for Rice a Roni which they get a lot of.
6. Spices, salt & pepper are a real gift.
7. Tea bags & coffee are caring gifts.
8. Sugar and flour are treats.
9. Important are fresh produce donated by farmers & grocery stores.
10. Seeds are great in spring & summer because growing can be easy for some.
11. Rarely is there fresh meat.
12. Tuna & crackers make a good lunch.
13. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
14. They get lots of peanut butter & jelly but NEED sandwich bread.
15. Butter or Margarine are good.
16. Eggs are a commodity!
17. Cake mix & frosting makes it possible to make a child's birthday cake.
18. Dishwashing detergent is very expensive & always appreciated.
19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury & women will cry over them.
20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.

BONUS:

CASH makes it possible for the Food Bank to buy what's missing and buy in bulk.

Thank you, Anne, for sharing this good advice.



OUR HEALING PRAYERS GO OUT TO: Judy Fore and family, on Bill's death; Corise Gambrell's brother, Louis Holleman and family, Corise and Bob's daughter Laura and her partner Alisa; Jon Hettrick and his family; Jon's mother, Marjorie Hettrick; Fred Porter, relative of the Griswolds; Mark Laabs, friend of the Griswolds; Blake Joslin, on his back surgeries; Ric Morton and family; Ellen Ballow, friend of Sandy Brauer; Kim Reece, daughter of Nancy and Rick Garrison; Sandy & Paul, dear friends of Carolyn Cole, 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.



The Super Bowl and the S O U P E R Bowl of Caring.

Two bowl games will occur on Sunday afternoon, **February 7th**. The National Football League's Super Bowl and the Souper Bowl of Caring.

In 1990 a youth group leader at a Presbyterian church on Columbia S. C. prayed this simple prayer. "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat." On this Sunday, the Souper Bowl of Caring had its beginning.

This subsequent one-day and normally youth-led effort to collect funds and food to address the issue of hunger in local communities has now spread nationwide and even internationally. Over 163 million dollars has been raised since 2020, one can at a time, one dollar at a time. Even though much support will be virtual this year, the national goal is to raise funds enough to provide 14 billion meals. That's billion with a "B"!

If you have attended WWPC on any of the past eleven Super Bowl Sundays, you could not miss our youth decked out in chef's hats and with soup pots collecting for this worthwhile effort; however, things will be different this year. There will be no gathering in the narthex nor in the parlor. For the first time in twelve years our youth will be unable to be directly involved in collecting for this effort to address the issue of hunger.

Remember that all funds collected at the "Souper" game" on February 7th will be used locally, and we may choose the program to support. Please help in this worthwhile effort to assist our neighbors who are experiencing a food crisis.

(Submitted by John Laney)

Steve's Slant continued...

But we adapted in many other ways, too, apart from just worship. Our members continued to deliver an amazing amount of ministry:

- Weekly lunches to Asheville's homeless population, housed at the Red Roof Inn in W. Asheville
- Monthly meals at the Veterans Restoration Quarters on Tunnel Road
- Boxed lunches to the students who had occasion to stay on campus during summer breaks and holidays, including a Thanksgiving meal for students -- and also for the guests at the Red Roof Inn.
- Lots of outreach to our own members, particularly those who are homebound -- gift baskets and other gestures to let them know we love and support them.
- Ongoing Sunday school classes for adults and children.

Which is another way of saying that all of our programmatic Ministry Teams remain fully engaged in supporting the life and ministries of our congregation: Church/College Relations, Community Engagement, Congregational Life, Spiritual Nurture, Worship and Liturgical Arts.

And thanks to the careful guidance of our Administration Ministry Team, our finances are in the strongest shape they've been in for some years. It is true that we were granted a PPP Loan (Paycheck Protection Program), in anticipation of a sharp drop in our regular giving--a loan that would help pay our staff and that, per the terms of the program, would become a grant if used to pay personnel costs.

But that drop in giving did not occur. In fact, in terms of our internal income (that is, giving from our members), we finished the year in the black. Given that we did not hold an indoor service, or take a regular offering, for the last ten months of the year, I find this, well, again, borderline miraculous.

Last year we had to find completely new ways to do church and be church. And we did. And you made that possible. And in the process, you helped bring God's love, grace, mercy and generosity to life in ways I ways I don't think any of us could have imagined back in March.

So, thank you. For all of it. All the ongoing ministry. All the congregational care. All the teaching in our Sunday school classes, all the outreach to our neighbors on campus and in the wider community. And, of course, all the financial support.

Still, it was a very hard year. And life under COVID continues to be hard. I miss you all. I miss singing with you. I miss preaching to a live, in-person audience, and passing the peace with you, and sharing fellowship with you.

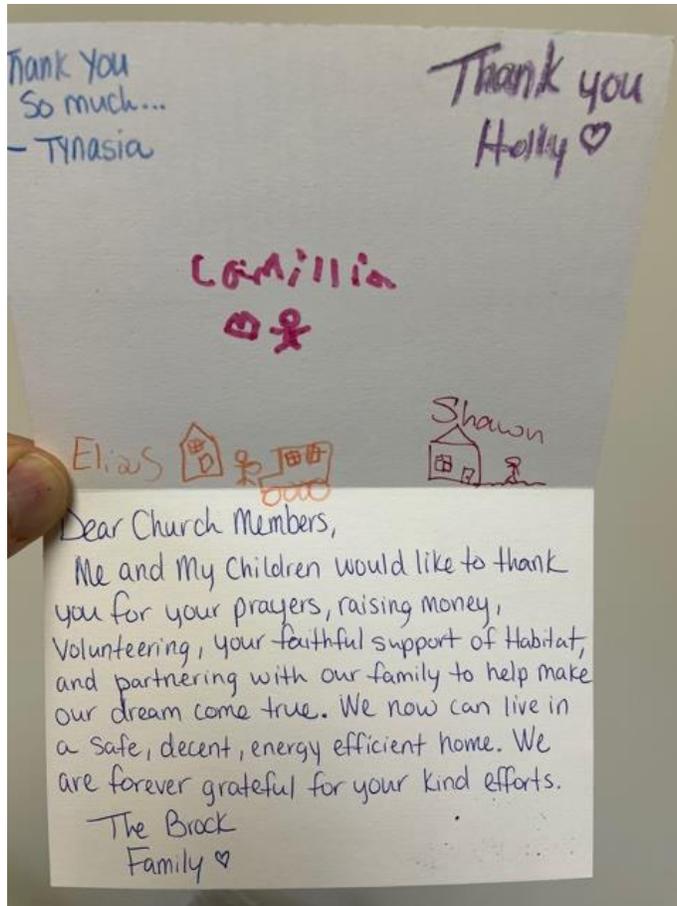
I miss building Habitat houses with you, and enjoying big pot lucks after church with you. And I miss gathering with you to mourn our losses together, and to celebrate the lives of the beloved members of our church family whom we have lost.

I miss all of that. But the good news is that hope is on the horizon.

So let me close with this. With vaccine distribution now underway, we are starting to anticipate a return to in-person worship. This is still several months away, at least. We're not going rush into this and we're going to approach this transition very carefully and conscientiously.

But we are starting to prepare for it now. I'll share more details about how we're doing this next month.

Until then I'll just say, I can hardly wait!



Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church received the thank you note on the left from the Brock family in late December.

As you may remember, this family was featured in the September newsletter as the family who would be moving into the Habitat house that our church helps to support, and they are pictured below.



Larry Griswold received this message on Dec. 4 from Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Andy Barnett:

We had a beautiful closing yesterday with Holly Brock, the homeowner of the house WWPC helps sponsor. She is so excited to spend Christmas with her family in their new home. And yesterday was her birthday!

Andy Barnett

Campus Community- **Welcome Chaplain Shannon Spencer!**

I'm pleased to announce that Rev. Shannon Spencer, DMin has accepted the position of Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life. Many of you may know Shannon through her work in the Asheville community and as the founder of the Asheville Poverty Initiative. Shannon has served as a valued community partner through the Social Work Department and Community Engagement.

Paul C. Perrine, VP for Student Life

Celebrating Black History Month



The 2021 theme for Black History Month is “The Black Family: Its Representation, Identity and Diversity.” The theme is an important one as we remember that we are made in the image of God (imago Dei). There is only one human race, and every member of it has the attributes of the Divine. Getty Images

How to celebrate this year

According to ASALH’s website: “The black family knows no single location, since family reunions and genetic-ancestry searches testify to the spread of family members across states, nations and continents. Not only are individual black families diasporic, but Africa and the diaspora itself have been long portrayed as the black family at large. While the role of the black family has been described by some as a microcosm of the entire race, its complexity as the ‘foundation’ of African American life and history can be seen in numerous debates over how to represent its meaning and typicality from a historical perspective — as slave or free, as patriarchal or matriarchal/matrifocal, as single-headed or dual-headed household, as extended or nuclear, as fictive kin or blood lineage, as legal or common law, and as black or interracial, etc. Variation appears, as well, in discussions on the nature and impact of parenting, childhood, marriage, gender norms, sexuality and incarceration. The family offers a rich tapestry of images for exploring the African American past and present.”

This description can help us provide tips and ideas for celebrating Black families in authentic Christian ways that will not divide, but rather heal and unite us. I suggest the following:

- **Explore beyond well-known Black families.** Don’t simply focus on African American celebrities and popular, well-known figures like former President Barack Obama. Highlight nontraditional families and stories — even poems. Maya Angelou’s “The Black Family Pledge” is a good resource.
- **Don’t whitewash history or Bible stories.** Do present historical people in their cultural context as truthfully as possible. For example, use the month of February to study Jesus’ race as a Middle Eastern Jew.
- **Hold off on the soul food.** Don’t make Black History Month an African American “mash-up” of soul food, blues music and other cultural activities without deep learning and self-reflection. Black culture in America is multicultural, and the Black family is a microcosm of humanity.

(Continued on next page)

- **It's a good time for a pulpit exchange.** If your church is predominantly homogenous, do team up with a Black church or a multicultural congregation and plan a pulpit exchange either in person, if COVID-19 safety precautions are followed, or online.
- **Highlight interesting historical facts.** For example, did you know the Mexican American celebration of Cinco de Mayo may have actually prevented a Confederate victory during the American Civil War? Explore how other communities have played a role in Black history.
- **Study more than antiracism.** When you preach or have a book study during Black History Month, don't choose a racism study or preach on antiracism. Rather, highlight the stories of how Black love and community sustain our world.
- **Delve into the definition of family.** Encourage congregants to consider their ethnicity, ancestry and family experiences. As noted earlier, family structure is changing across all groups. Don't think that because you're "white" you cannot speak of racialization or racialized peoples.

Anita Coleman is associate professor of bibliography and research and the director of library services for the Ernst Miller White Library at Louisville Seminary in Kentucky.

Clerk's Report

At the January stated meeting, the session received three new members: Mary Craig by transfer of letter from Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church and Janice Collins and James Storey by reaffirmation of faith. Welcome!

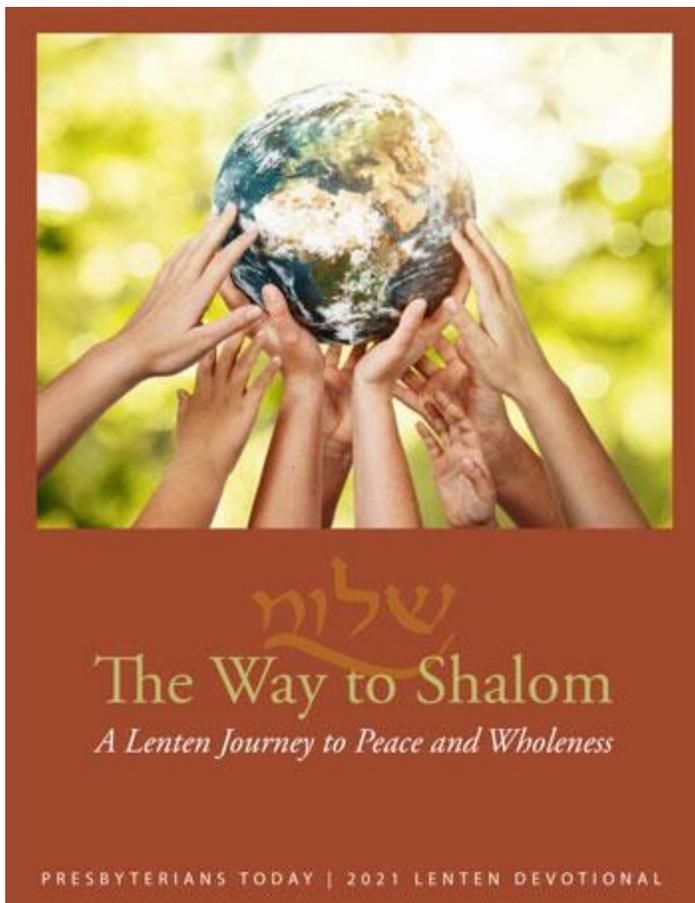
The session also:

1. Gave final approval to the 2021 Budget.
2. Accepted the financial reports for 2020 with thanks to Leslie Sayyar, Brent Roberts, Barbara Escalante, and John Laney for their work in providing accurate financial information to the session throughout the year.
3. Approved the following special offerings for 2021: Souper Bowl, One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost Offering, Habitat for Humanity, Peacemaking and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy.
4. Elected Bob Gambrell as chair of the 2021 congregational nominating committee and John Laney as a member of the committee.
5. Recommended approval of revised Terms of Call for the pastor with the terms reflecting the three percent raise included in 2021 budget.

At the congregational meeting on January 24, the congregation heard reports on the 2020 financial results and the 2021 budget as well as annual reports from the clerk and pastor. The congregation elected Ann Dale, Derron Daugherty, and Beth Meriweather to the 2021 congregational nominating committee and approved the revised terms of call for the pastor.

Ken Murchison, Clerk of Session





LENT

Lent is a time of spiritual renewal. It is a season of preparation during the 40 days and six Sundays before Easter. Lent is a time when we reflect upon the love of God and the gift of God’s grace. It has a solemn beginning with Ash Wednesday, which is on Feb. 17 this year. On that day, with burnt palm branches crushed into ashes smudged onto foreheads, we are reminded that “from dust you came and to dust you shall return.”

But Lent is not a time to wallow in worry about God’s wrath. It is not a time of anxiety about our sinfulness or worth. Lent is a time of reflection on what God has done to redeem us and how we can live a whole and full life as a child of God. The Apostle Paul counsels us in Philippians 4: “Have no anxiety about anything” (RSV).

A different Lenten focus for 2021

While Lent is a time for prayer, fasting, service and contemplation, at the top of our list should be a prayer for the acquisition of peace. This year for the season of Lent, we invite you to reflect upon the gift of *shalom*, the Hebrew word for peace. In the Bible, *shalom* can be translated not only as peace, but also as tranquility, security, well-being, health, welfare, completeness and safety. How can we receive this gift of *shalom* and, in turn, bestow it upon the world?

In Israel, *shalom* is both a greeting and a farewell. When greeted by “*shalom*,” it is a form of hopeful blessing that you are filled with God’s perfect peace and well-being. It is a prayer that you will have health, prosperity and peace of mind and spirit. *Shalom* denotes fullness and perfection, an overflowing joy that moves from your innermost being and is expressed in the way you live your life and engage with others.

The season of Lent moves us to reflect deeply upon *shalom*. We live in a world in desperate need of peace. The United States has just come out of a contentious election while struggling with a global pandemic and grappling with racial violence. Poverty, misery and despair fill many corners of the world. Violence holds a vicious grip on the lives of many people. We desire peace. We need peace. We must pray — and work — for peace here in the U.S. as well as in other parts of the world. The need for peace is a global one, and this devotional will raise awareness of our brothers and sisters who are living in areas around the world that are filled with conflict and strife. (Continued on next page)

To obtain peace, though, we must explore the full extent of its meaning. The search for shalom must examine it as relational, connectional and communal. It is relational wherein my peace cannot be achieved if others are denied what makes them whole. It recognizes that what impacts you impacts me. It is connectional in that it begins with a recognition that we are children of God created “in the image and likeness of God.” Shalom is communal in that it builds community and enables us to live as one. Scripture proclaims the need for shalom. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, blesses us: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives” (John 14:27a).

This Lent, let us make our way to shalom — a gift that will bless one another and the world. —
Jimmie Hawkins

Engaging with the Lenten Devotional:

How to approach each week

Each week in Lent will have a new theme covering one of the many definitions of shalom. You will be invited to begin the week by reflecting on the theme. Ponder it in prayer before beginning to read each day’s devotional. Ask God to open your heart to receive whatever message the Spirit is eager to give you during this season of walking with the Prince of Peace, Jesus.

Shalom: the way to justice

Written by Jimmie Hawkins

Reflect

Lent 2021 begins with the sobering reminder of Ash Wednesday that we always stand in the need of God’s mercy and grace. God is eager to hear our cries for forgiveness — forgiveness for the times we didn’t work for justice and forgiveness, for the times we took justice into our own hands. This week’s theme of justice as “the way to shalom” invites you to think more deeply about God’s justice and what it looks like in your life. Recall a moment in your life when you



received God’s mercy and grace. What was the situation? How did it feel to know you were forgiven? Now think about a time when you withheld forgiveness and when you sought justice on your own. How did that work? Were fractured relationships healed by your own actions? What would have been different if the justice you sought was turned over to God?

(This is part of the first week’s devotion, to download the devotional, press ctrl + click twice)

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/lent2021/>



January/February

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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