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*Join us for a cup
of coffee every Sunday
morning in the kitchen
before Church School*

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STEEPLE VIEWS

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Our Mission is to:

Share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other.

STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

April, 2010

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

With Easter right around the corner, I am reminded of an illustration that my friend, Michael Jinks, used in one of his sermons. He wrote: “Our family went to see the movie, *Beethoven*, which is about a huge St. Bernard dog and his human family. The little boy in the family is about ten years old; he’s sort of small for his age; and he’s always getting beat up by the bullies.

“One day the bullies corner him; they pull off his glasses and start pushing him. The kid has just about all he can take, and so he puts up his fists to fight back. And at that very moment, the huge family dog, Beethoven, comes to his rescue. It walks up behind the little boy, glaring at the bullies, snarling.

“The bullies take one look at the dog and they decide it’s time to stop. Quickly without making any sudden movements, they give the little boy his glasses back, they apologize, and they back away. And all this time, the little guy standing there with his fists raised, doesn’t know that the dog is behind him. He thinks the bullies backed down because they were afraid of him.

(Michael then applies the story) “St. Paul is standing on the sidewalk surrounded by death. His fists are up. He dares the bully, Death, to do its worst. He isn’t afraid. But here’s the difference: Paul knows that he can stand on the sidewalk and face down death, because the Risen Christ is standing behind him!”

As I write this article for the April 2010 newsletter, we are still working our way through Lent. Why, Jesus hasn’t even made it to Jerusalem yet! Before long, there will be a cross with his name on it – just for him. And yet, we know how this story ends, don’t we? While we still have to get to Calvary, we go forth knowing full well that the cross will be transformed from a tragedy into a triumph, and the grave will be emptied and the Christ will be raised. Now there is forgiveness of our sins and new, abundant, and eternal life on both sides of the grave. What’s more, the Risen Christ stands by our side, staring down the enemies - sin and death - and they back down for they know they are no match for this One, who is the Resurrection and the Life.

We aren’t promised that life will always be good and fair. But, the Risen Christ does promise us saying, “I will be with you always.” Through thick and thin, he stands with us and for us. Whatever life throws at us, we have his presence and his power to see us through to a better place of being.

In preparing for my sermon on March 21, I came upon this thought by Linda J. Hillard, who wrote: “It’s hard to see a new thing happening as one learns she has cancer and begins to undergo chemotherapy. It’s hard to see a new thing happening as a man watches his business fall a part... Believing in the new thing God was doing in her life, the woman with cancer reprioritized her life, reconciling a severed relationship with her sister. Believing in the new thing God was doing in his life, the businessman sold all his business stores, except one. He moved his family to a smaller house, had more time to spend with his wife and children and had far less stress in his life.”

Those are examples of resurrection living. Where have you seen the Risen Christ actively involved in your life, and have you made sure to tell others? Thanks be to God who gives us the victory over sin and death through our risen Lord Jesus Christ!

In Christ’s love,
Randy



**Happy Birthday in
April to....**

- 2Nick Carter
- 3Ruth Thompson, Claude Young
- 4Max Pinkston
- 5Kate Judson
- 7Bob Davis, Kisean Adams
- 8Troy Lee Rakes, Mary Catherine Stegall,
- 9Marty Davis
- 10Bobby Wilson
- 11Pansy Olson
- 12 Tom Unterbrink
- 14Judy Garland
- 15English Ford, Rhonda Casey, Briana Tatum
- 16Reed Moore, Chip Lackey
- 17Glenna Harmeyer, Barbara Tatum
- 18Mary Manning, Meredith Seamon
- 19Jean Linker, Mary Catherine Lawhon
- 20Manly Boyd
- 21Tracey Lawhon, Patrick Edgerton
- 22Roni Johnson, Matthew Price
- 23Forrest Truitt, Gene Stanley, Barbara Parker
- 24Ed Porter
- 25Ethan Jessup
- 26Patrice Newnam, Doug Walsh, Sarah Beeler
- 27Ralph Keys, Margee Gunter, Doug Goldstein, Colin Walsh
- 28Aynsley Renz
- 30Lynn Pritchett, Evelyn Clark, Will Kirby

And in May to:

- 1Logan Esarey, Janet Fentress
- 3Carson Nease, Jerry Bishop
- 5Sonny Benfield, Amy Mason, Kellene Wotring
- 8Bill Manning, Olivia Jessup
- 10Sandra Shank
- 11Bonnie Price, Mandy Pritchett, Emily Beard
- 12Pearl Richardson, Monica Stevens

IN MEMORIAM

Alex Clark Eden

September 2, 1951 – February 27, 2010

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to Lee Eden, Alex and Lauren Eden, Ryan and Jana Jennings, Jared and Jamie Peck, Jennifer Eden, and Barbara Eden and families on the death of their husband, father, son, and grandfather, Alex Clark Eden, in Annapolis, Maryland. Clark, a member of First Presbyterian since October 11, 1992, entered the Church Triumphant on February 27, 2010.

Sympathy. of the congregation is extended to the family of Nathaniel (Nat) Venable Daniel, Jr., a former member of First Presbyterian, on his death February 26, 2010, in Wilmington, North Carolina. Nat and his wife, Susie, left Martinsville in 1980.

Contemporary Service

As you know, the time changed on March 14th. I fully expected to see about 10 people at such an unusually early hour. There were actually 51 people in attendance. We appreciate the ongoing support for this new endeavor.

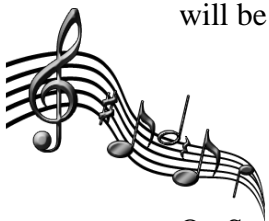
With great appreciation for her talents, we bid farewell to Sandra Ford at the end of this month. Sandra has been instrumental in making this service a reality. She has brought all her musical talents to the forefront- singing, arranging, composing and guiding us with her great musicality. Sandra, there will never be anyone to take your place. We are all so thankful for you and all you have done for the Praise Team!! Please thank Sandra for all she has done when you see her. We are still seeking instrumentalists; guitar, bass and percussion. If one of these is an instrument that you would like to play and join us, please let me know.

I hope this Easter season is filled with the love of God and the joy of Christ's resurrection for each of you.

In Joy,
Betsy

On April 1, Maundy Thursday (when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples in the upper room) we will have a covered dish supper at 5:30 in the fellowship hall, and everyone is encouraged to bring a favorite casserole or special dish, and a dessert to share with others. We will then move upstairs to the sanctuary for the worship service at 7:00 p.m. During worship we will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by intinction--people will come forward to the Table to sup by taking the bread and dipping it in the juice, and then they will return to their pews. If you prefer, you can either receive communion from the bread and juice trays on the front Table or an elder can serve you the communion elements in your pew.

Palm Sunday is March 28, the day when we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Our community holds an annual Palm Sunday in the park worship service, where a group of churches in the area walk to Wilson Park for a brief ecumenical worship service. We will meet in the narthex of the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. that Sunday morning to walk as a group to the park. All Sunday school classes that day will be cancelled.



The Tempo "Our Musical Pulse" Chancel Choir

On Sunday morning, March 21, the Chancel Choir sang a beautiful service of choral music distributed throughout as items we usually associate with the spoken word. Even the Sermon was sung by a quartet of female singers, "Hear Our Prayer", a short cantata by Felix Mendelssohn.

Even though the last music service was only two and a half months back, the choir hit the road singing this new year. They worked very hard to put this music into performance shape. (A performance for God.) They did

an excellent job!

The choir was joined by some guests from out of town as well as some from Martinsville. Brian Joyce and Norman Duensing joined us and played Percussion and Bass on two of the anthems. Lynn Pritchett and Maggie Pilson played their flutes, one as the Prelude and one as the Postlude. By the way, the congregation remained seated during the Postlude, something we encourage for every service. We always appreciate the fine work of our Organist, Cynthia Dobrinski. She wrote the piece that she and Lynn played as the Prelude. The Chancel Choir has Maundy Thursday and Easter to go before the Summer Stretch gets here in June. They still rehearse on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 o'clock. We have room for other interested singers, both in the choir room and in the Chancel area of the Sanctuary.

If you appreciated the service on March 21, give a choir member an "at-a-boy" or a "thank you", the next time you see one.

Sanctuary Ringers

You will hear the Sanctuary Ringers in the morning service April 4, which is Easter this year. They will be playing the Prelude, joining the organ and congregation on the opening hymn, and playing the Offertory. The music they will play includes; "Now the Green Blade Riseth", "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today", and "Bell Song". When you see and hear our largest Handchimes on Easter, those were given in memory of Jack Lester. Thank you for those who gave the money to make this purchase possible.

Last month we welcomed Sarah Robertson into the ringers. Sarah is a Lutheran and plays with us because of her interest in Handbells and our Sanctuary Ringers. We welcome her. With this addition, we have a full choir, TWELVE! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

The choir is enjoying being in a room we share with the Youth and Children's Bell Choirs. It is always special to have your own room, and we appreciate those who made it possible.

Please continue to be in prayer for the five young people, who are attending the 2010 **Confirmation Class** with Randy. They are: Stuart Beard, Annie B. Boyd, Dyer Pace, William Seamon, and Mary Catherine Stegall. The class will conclude on Sunday, April 25 with a review of all of the material covered during the past several months. Then, the youth will have dinner and meet with the Session on Monday, April 26; at that time they will have the opportunity to make their own profession of faith. Then, on Pentecost Sunday, which is May 23, Stuart, Annie B., Dyer, William, and Mary Catherine will be recognized as full and active members of the church.

KUHN SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

For several years, John and Vera Jane Kuhn have faithfully provided a \$1,000 scholarship for the purpose of providing financial assistance to students seeking undergraduate education or vocational training. John and Vera Jane, residents of King's Grant, are active members of our church.

The scholarship is paid directly to the institution of higher learning that the recipient is attending. Funds are disbursed no later than July 1 of each year and the scholarship is applied to tuition costs for undergraduate education or vocational training. A recipient may reapply for the scholarship in subsequent years. Financial need of the applicant is given primary consideration.

The scholarship is administrated by a scholarship committee that reviews all applications. Applications for the scholarship are available now (in the Church Office) and the scholarship committee awards the scholarship by June 1 for the school year beginning in the fall of the same year. Applications are due by April 30.

We are very grateful to the Kuhns for their support and generosity!!



BUTTERFLY ALERT

It's springtime, and once again BUTTERFLIES will flutter in the halls and narthex of First Presbyterian Church.

Just as the angel trees at Christmas reflected the giving spirit of our church family, the spring multicolored butterflies, which will appear on Sunday, **April 11**, represent the gifts of clothes, shoes, games, and money to purchase food which the Mission Committee will distribute to six needy families on May 4.



Once again we will share our blessings with others within the community. The Butterfly Trees will "bloom" on three Sundays: April 11, 18, and 25. Wrapped gifts with butterfly tags attached will be due in the Session Room on **April 30**, and delivery of the gifts will be on May 4.

We rejoice that our church family can share with the less fortunate of our community. The Mission Committee looks forward to a generous response to the Butterfly Tree project once again.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SPECIAL OFFERING

On Palm Sunday, March 28, and Easter Sunday, April 4, we will receive the annual *One Great Hour of Sharing Offering*. The purpose of this offering is to meet human needs and is administered through three programs of the Presbyterian Church (USA): the Presbyterian Hunger program, Presbyterian World Service, and the Self Development of People. Please give generously to this offering which is a witness to the unity to which Christ calls us.

GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP SERVICE will be held at noon, on April 2, in our sanctuary. Once again, the service will focus on the *Seven Last Words of Christ* from the cross. Hymns and prayers will be interspersed throughout the service. Preaching at this service will be various pastors from the area. This service is very meaningful, and everyone is urged to attend.



Children/Youth Music

I hope these beautiful days find you outside enjoying God's beautiful, unfolding creation. Everywhere we

look, we see evidence of His Love for us.

We are truly blessed.

As I write this in late March, Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter are before us. The children and youth have major responsibility on Palm Sunday with two anthems, a solo and handbell pieces. We are very excited to be entrusted with these duties. The WAM group is not large in numbers, but they are mighty in talent and heart. We have a powerful faith-filled time together on Mondays. We will not be meeting on Easter Monday. We will be singing and ringing again on April 25th.

The Kindermusik crew continues to do wonderful things with their music. The Kinder I children are delighting in their ability to read 3 notes! They can read them, sing them and play them on their glockenspiels! Our rhythm skills are coming along very well indeed! They will not be meeting on Tuesday, April 6th since weekday school and the city schools are on holiday.

Music Together is very popular indeed with our young families. We are fully subscribed and have a waiting list. It is very exciting to me to see the great interest that is abroad in early musical experiences for children. It is such an important time in their lives to hear good music, play with instruments, and have the ability to be creative in their own way. I really applaud the commitment of these families.

Cantabile bells will be ringing in April.

They are a joy with which to work. There is always room for other teens to join. Even if you have never held a bell, we can get you up and running with a bell in your hand.

Our Schumerich bells, which are the ones that the children and youth play, are in need of service. There are so many moving parts and the bells are old and well loved. Thanks

to the generosity of Mrs. Jack Lester, the bells are going in for service. Her husband, and my life long friend, Jack, loved children and his church. This is a wonderful memorial to Jack and will be appreciated by all who hear the bells and all who are privileged to ring them. Thank you so much, Myrtis!

IT'S TIME FOR A FUNDRAISER!!

Plans for the summer mission trip are well underway and your help is greatly needed. Soon you will be asked to participate in a fundraising event that will be held to raise funds to help cover the costs of the mission trip (\$325 per person). For those of us who find it difficult to actively participate in the out-of-town mission trip, the fundraiser will be a way to actively provide support for those who are going. Stay tuned for news about the fundraiser very soon!

Although the March 28 deadline for the trip has passed, please contact Cindy Franck (cfranck@mindspring.com) if you'd like to go on the trip.

Note: Way to go, Chancel Choir! The worship service on the 21st was absolutely wonderful.



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