



Presbyterian Web Sites:

Presbytery of the Peaks: www.peakspresbytery.org
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic: www.synatlantic.org
Presbyterian Church (USA): www.pcusa.org
Pby. Disaster Assistance: www.pcusa.org/pda/
Presbyterian Today: www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today
Pby. News Service: www.pcusa.org/pcusa/brief.hem



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

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S T E E P L E V I E W S



*Our Mission is to:
Share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other.*

STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

April, 2009

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

Perhaps you have seen or heard this story because it has been circulating a long time. I used it in a sermon that I preached in 1985 for my home church's 90th anniversary celebration in St. Louis, MO, and I have seen it periodically as an e-mail message that makes the rounds every so often. But each time, it still speaks to me and I hope it will speak to you as well. The story goes like this:

A churchgoer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all." This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher. "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this... They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me those meals, I would be physically dead today... Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

Since I was about five years old, I have gone to church (Sunday School and worship services) for most of my life. And, like the first letter to the editor, I can't recall too many lessons or sermons. In fact, I will confess there are times when I am hard pressed to remember what I preached the week before! But, as I reflect on my journey through this life, while I too cannot remember all of those thousands of Sunday School lessons and sermons, which I either heard, taught, or preached, I do remember the kindness of a Sunday School teacher, who took our entire Sunday School class to the St. Louis zoo for an entire day; the commitment of a husband and wife team, who sponsored the Senior High school youth group for years; the pastor who came to my basketball game on a Saturday night or the pastor, who invited my parents to call him by his first name rather than by his title; and the list goes on and on. There was a lot of spiritual nourishment, food for the soul, that took place throughout my life, and the same is true today – for me and for the church, whenever and wherever it gathers in Christ's name.

This month ahead offers us wonderful opportunities to gather for study, worship, and fellowship – and to grow in the faith as we hear the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who was crucified and resurrected for us all. I invite you and challenge you to take part in the Holy Week experiences – Palm Sunday in the Park with other area churches and then here at our church; the Maundy Thursday supper and then worship service with the Sacrament of the Lord's supper; the Good Friday service at noon with reflections on Jesus' seven last words; the joyous celebration of the risen Christ on Easter Sunday - and other worship services including the Chancel Choir's musical service on Sunday, April 26 (11:00 a.m.). I won't be hurt or offended if you don't remember all that was said or sung. But I do hope that you will be fed and will leave here nourished, satisfied, hungering for more, full of God's love, and warmed by the Christian fellowship as you interact with other saints. Let us feast on the abundance of God's grace!

In Christ's love,
Randy



Happy Birthday in April

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

And in May

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

IN MEMORIAM

Norma Lea Mason Cumberledge November 15, 1925 – March 2, 2009

Peggy Gillespie Ford May 26, 1941 – March 6, 2009

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Norma Lea Mason Cumberledge on her death in Greenville, South Carolina. Norma, a member of first Presbyterian since October 16, 1960, joined the Church Triumphant on March 2, 2009.

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to Ralph and Sandra Shank and family on the death of Sandra's brother, Dominic Neal Matherly, on March 8, 2009, in Franklin County, Virginia. Sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Peggy Gillespie Ford on her death in Martinsville. Peggy, a member of First Presbyterian since June 26, 1988, joined the Church Triumphant on March 6, 2009.

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to Kris and Robyn Bridges on the death of Robyn's father, Dalton Robertson, March 9, 2009, in Danville, Virginia.

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to Wendy Shook on the death of her husband, Don Paul Shook, on March 13, 2009, in Roanoke, Virginia.



Grace Network has asked us to please supply both pasta and spaghetti sauce. Pasta should be 1-lb. boxes or bags

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SPECIAL OFFERING

On Palm Sunday, April, 5, and Easter Sunday, April 12, 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.

Please give a big **“THANK YOU!”** to the following people: the Fellowship Committee members and friends who helped serve the meals for the Kirk Night suppers in March; the ministers who led worship and preached for the Wednesday night Lenten worship services; those who provided the lovely reception for Jody Moore on Sunday, March 8; those who provided the meal for the Vector Brass Ensemble; and the Facilities Committee members who unlock and lock up the church, turn on/off the lights, make the coffee, and so much more. Thank you to all who quietly serve behind the scenes, in the wings, and help to make the most of our time together when we gather at the church.

The Tempo

“Our Musical Pulse”

Chancel Choir

Our next worship-music service will be on April 26 at the 11:00 a.m. worship hour. The title will be “Darkness and Light”, and will combine both the Passion Week themes with the Jesus, The Light of the World theme.

The service will consist of Congregational Singing, Scripture, as well as Seven Choral Meditations on the “Last Words of Christ”, by Dale Wood. Octavos for the second part of the service will include “Mary Speaks”, by Daniel E. Gawthrop, sung by a women’s quartet; “The Glory of the Father”, by Egil

Hovland“, “Heavenly Light”, by Peter J. Wilhousky; “Walk As Children of Light”, by Daniel Kallman; and “Ascription of Praise”, by David Schwoebel.

It is too close to the program for new singers to sing with us, either as full time members or for just the April 26 service.

Our Wednesday evening choir rehearsals continue. We rehearse program music from 8-9 p.m. and the Sunday morning music from 7:00-8:00.

Sanctuary Ringers

The Sanctuary Ringers are currently rehearsing on Tuesday evenings from 6:00-7:00 p.m. because of the Lenten Services on Wednesday evenings. The ringers will return to the Wednesday evening schedule the day before Maundy Thursday, April 8. We expect to play in the morning service on March 22 and on Easter Sunday.

Although we have no vacant positions, there is always a need for substitute ringers in rehearsals and for some worship services.

Langley AFB Brass Ensemble “Vector”

The United States Air Force Heritage of America Band’s brass ensemble Vector presented a free concert in our Sanctuary on Monday evening, March 16. Prior to the program, the ensemble enjoyed a dinner prepared by members of the Chancel Choir. My thanks to Beth Chapman, Marge Dunn, Pearl Richardson, Darla Main-Schneider, Judy Mattox, Lang Mauck, Deborah Blankenship, Lynn Pritchett, and Jim Beard. Our program was a part of their spring tour with other concerts scheduled in Vinton, Lynchburg, and South Boston.

The ensemble presented music which was a fusion of conventional brass quintet instrumentation plus a drummer with Pop and Rock tunes from the last 25 years. The members were seasoned, versatile performer with education and experience from around the globe. One of the trumpet players did the vocals on a couple of the tunes. This six-person ensemble played to an audience of all ages and were extremely well received.

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Editor: Patrice Newnam, Publisher: Sarah Altizer; Mailing Staff: volunteers



Children and Youth Music

Isn't Spring wonderful!
It is a time of rebirth and of joy as
we welcome the greening of the
world around us.

I appreciate the kind words of many of you about The Three Trees. The children really outdid themselves in the presentation of this powerful music drama. I have looked for years for something that is as exceptional as this, but nothing else comes close. Hence, the reason that it is presented every other year. As always, I appreciate the leaders who join me in making things happen for this special group: Amy Mason, Wendy Seamon, Meredith and Kimberly Seamon and Sam Smith. Thank you all!!

We are preparing for a special Palm Sunday, April 5th, and for Mother's Day. Let me clarify the new schedule for Youth Sunday. Youth Sunday, when all the parts of the service will be lead by youth, has been changed to May 16th. Usually the children in Orff would be supplying the music that Sunday, but I will be at Edmund's graduation from law school that weekend, so we will be supplying the music on Mother's Day just for this year. Next year, we will join the youth on Youth Sunday, the Sunday after Mother's Day, since EVERY ONE OF OUR CHILDREN HAS GRADUATED!!!!!!! We are slightly thrilled!

We have a few openings in Music Together! We welcome Tammy and Scott Sapp and their beautiful little girl Lillie Kate. New friends are always exciting! If you know anyone who might be interested, please let me know. I will be delighted to contact them. We are having a ball with our new curriculum. Loads of singing and dancing.

Kindermusik children are definitely on track with their music. They are reading, singing and having great fun with their glockenspiels. It is a very special group of youngsters.

Cantabile ringers will be ringing in April and May. We are holding on for dear life to

Carrie Buffkin, our senior who will be leaving for college in the fall. She has been part of the music program since she was a very little girl. I am excited for her, of course, but there will always be a special spot in our group that is solely hers. You might want to congratulate Carrie on a job well done!

Contemporary Worship

Your Worship Team is working hard on music for the early service. We have had a wonderful first few months of the year and are working on music to help us walk together toward the cross. There will be no early service on Easter Sunday so that we may all worship together at 11 am.

We welcome Ed Lane to our worship team. He is a delightful young man that I know you will want to meet!!

We welcome you to come and worship with us as we praise God with song, word and prayer.

See you early on Sunday mornings!!

Betsy

A TRIBUTE TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SCOUTING AND LEADERS

The following article is an edited version of a Minute for Mission talk given on February 22, 2009 by Charlie Miller, leader of First Presbyterian's Boy Scout Troop 61. At the request of several congregational members, it is being printed in Steepleviews to acknowledge the rich history of the scouting ministry at First Presbyterian Church.

Charlie speaks: "For the past 73 years, from 1936 – 2009, your church has sponsored a Boy Scout troop. I suspect this is one of the oldest outreach programs we have had going continually. It's been every Tuesday night for 73 years. That's about 3,650 meetings, about 1,971 nights camping, and 475 nights of week long summer camp. That's a lot of commitment from our congregation!

"What have we received from our investment? I personally have been a part of 32 Eagle Scout ceremonies. Eagle Scout number 33 will be presented next month. I have seen young scouts grow into young men and those young men have become fathers of sons who are now into scouting. The leadership provided by our church has

set an example for others within and beyond our own church.

“Currently, we have an active membership of thirteen scouts and five leaders. There are larger troops, but the First Presbyterian troop #61 is one of the oldest with a rich history and legacy of leadership and a bright future. From all of the troop scouts and leaders, we thank you for your support.”

For over thirty-two years, Charlie Miller has been an active, dedicated leader of Troop 61. For his loyal leadership, diligence, and his Christian influence and steadfastness in this long standing church ministry, on behalf of his First Presbyterian church family, the Mission/Evangelism Committee salutes him and offers him heartfelt thanks and best wishes for many more years of scouting.

The last Lenten supper and worship

service will be on the first Wednesday of this month, April 1. Maundy Thursday (when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples in the upper room) is April 9. 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 into 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.

The Good Friday Worship Service

will be held at noon, on April 10, in our sanctuary. Once again, the service will focus on the “Seven Last Words” of Christ from the cross. Various hymns and prayers will be interspersed throughout the service.

Preaching at this service will be Hank Baumann, Ken Hughes, Bill Plonk John Wiederholt, Rusty Reaser, and Randy Stevens. This service is very meaningful and everyone is urged to attend.

Easter/Resurrection of the Lord is celebrated on Sunday, April 12.

We will begin with a 9:30 a.m. Easter breakfast in the fellowship hall. The children will participate in an Easter Egg Hunt following the breakfast. Sunday School will begin at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at 10:40 a.m. Then, we will gather in the sanctuary at 11:00 a.m. amidst the beautiful and fragrant Easter lilies, and “pull out all the stops” as we worship the risen Lord and proclaim his resurrection victory over death! There will be only one worship service this day.

Please join with your church family and friends for as many of these worship and fellowship events as possible. Your presence and involvement will make Holy Week that much more meaningful!

THE TREES ARE BACK!!

Remembering the expressions of joy and gratitude when Angel Tree gifts were delivered at Christmastime, the Mission/Evangelism Committee will respond to the dire needs of the community once again with spring BUTTERFLY TREES.



For three Sundays – March 29, April 5, and April 12 – the familiar trees will be in the narthex and Sunday school hallway. Butterfly tags representing the children of five needy families will be available for members of the congregation to take and purchase gifts of clothing, shoes, and books or games. Additionally, there will be butterfly tags for gifts of money with which the Mission Committee will buy food supplies for each family. Gifts are to be wrapped and returned to the Session Room by April 15 and they will be delivered to the families on Monday, April 20.

The First Presbyterian Church family is noted for its heartfelt concern for the needs within our

own community. The Mission Committee looks forward to its generous response to the BUTTERFLY TREE project once again.

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church has established the **John and Vera Jane Kuhn Scholarship Fund** for the purpose of providing financial assistance to students seeking undergraduate education or vocational training. John and Vera Jane Kuhn are active member of First Presbyterian Church. The Kuhn Scholarship is administrated by a scholarship committee that reviews all applications. Applications for the scholarship are available online or in the Church Office, and are due by April 15.



EASTER LILIES

The church invites families and individuals in the congregation to place a potted Easter lily in the sanctuary for Easter Sunday, April 12. All who wish to place a lily in memory of, or in honor of a loved one or friend may do so by con-

tacting the Church Office or by filling out the form below and mailing to the church or placing in the offering place with your payment. These names will be included on a special insert in the bulletin on Easter. Each plant is \$14 payable to the Church Office in advance. The last date for ordering and making payment to the Church will be March 31.

Please place my order for an Easter lily:

Name _____

Telephone _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of _____

By: _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of _____

____ I will pick up my lily immediately after worship.

____ I will leave my lily at the church.