



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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Happy
Valentines
♥ Day!

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



STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

February, 2008

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

Midway through the month of January I celebrated my sixth anniversary with the church. It is hard for me to realize that much time has slipped by so quickly. I have often said that ministers mark the passage of time in terms of Sundays and, to my way of thinking, there are only about three or four days in between Sundays - they go by in a blur! An anniversary is always an occasion to reflect on what has taken place and what's up ahead.

I think an appropriate place to begin is with the grace of God! I believe it was the grace of God that called and led me to be the pastor here, and I am humbled by and grateful for God's grace in my life and in the life of this congregation.

My life has been enriched and blessed by the gift of so many friendships within the church and the larger community. There is indeed a "blessed tie" that binds our hearts to Christ Jesus and, through him, to each other. I feel very privileged to share life, love, and faith with the members of the church, the Session, and the staff. In particular, I am grateful for the many ways that you have ministered to me and my family throughout our son's (Andrew) battle with cancer and Laura's various eye surgeries. Because of your many prayers and kind, loving actions, I have greater appreciation for the Apostle Paul's words in Galatians 6:2 - "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law (of love) of Christ." Thank you for being there for us during some turbulent and uncertain times.

I remember the very first Sunday I stood before you in worship. I didn't know too many of you and you didn't know me. I remember being very nervous and my breathing was rapid and shallow. However, as I began to preach and bring you God's Word, I found myself relaxing because I was on familiar ground. I remember thinking that, by the grace of God, this was my flock to love and tend to, and I was excited about building bridges and new friendships. Over the course of these six years, I have enjoyed many opportunities to be with you and share your joys and concerns. We have laughed together and we have worked hard to strengthen Christian community in this place. I rejoice at all that we have done together - both within the church and the larger world - in the name and ministry of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, there are certain remembrances that cause pain. By my count, over the past six years, some forty-plus church members, who were actively involved in worship here in our midst, are no longer with us in a physical sense; they have entered the heavenly kingdom and now surround us within that great cloud of witnesses, and I miss them very much. I wish that all or at least most of the church's members were in worship and Sunday School every Sunday, but, sad to say, that is not the case; we are less than we could be and that frustrates me. I regret that there have been some problems in the church that have caused distress and pain; I pray for God's peace, healing, and reconciliation (as well as our own ability to forgive both ourselves and others) to

take place in the life of our church. I hope for unity amidst our diversity.

As we journey forth into 2008 (and the start of my seventh year), I find that I am very hopeful for what is yet to be. Again, the grace of God has more in store for us - of that, I am sure! The success of our New Consecration Sunday emphasis, which enabled us to fund every item within the proposed 2008 budget, gives me further reason to hope. Your financial support of the ministry we plan to do for the Lord within this year speaks volumes!

Once again, thank you for the privilege of being your pastor, your friend, and your brother...
In Christ's love,
Randy

A Word from the Associate Pastor:

This year, I came up with several New Year's resolutions and had the best of intentions to follow through with them. I have made some limited progress so far, but also find myself feeling frustrated at being pulled in so many different directions. How do we organize our lives? How do we maintain our focus on what is really important? I received this email recently and it helped me put things into perspective. Perhaps it will be beneficial for you, as well.

When things in our lives seem almost too much to handle, when twenty-four hours in a day is not enough, we can remember the mayonnaise jar and two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar

was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded unanimously, "yes." The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed. "Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - God, family, children, health, friends, and favorite passions -- things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house, and car. The sand is everything else -- the small stuff. "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. So . . . Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play With your children. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. "Take care of the golf balls first -- the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand." One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend." In 2008, here's hoping that, with God's help, we can spend less time on the small stuff and keep our focus on filling our lives with the truly important things.

Peace in Christ,

Jody

The Souper Bowl of Caring

Offering will be taken by our youth on Sunday February 3, 2008, which is Super Bowl Sunday. The Souper Bowl offering is a part of a national program: over 14,000 congregations participated last year to raise money for hunger. Youth will be standing by the doors of the church on February 3rd with pots and pans. Drop in a few dollars and help alleviate hunger!

Lock-In: The Youth Group will have a Lock-In on February 8-9th!

Please sign up if you can attend by Tuesday, February 5th. We will be meeting at the church at 7:00 p.m., driving to Danville for dinner at Ruby Tuesday's and to watch a movie.

You will need to bring \$15 for dinner & the movie. Please invite your friends to join us!



Happy Birthday in February to

- 1 Carolyn Lackey,
Logan Jennings
- 2 David Seamon
- 3 Harold Lamm, Lillie Willis, Doris Renno
- 5 Michael Mason
- 6 Caitlin Mahoney, Charlie Miller
- 7 Emily Goldstein

- 8 Frances Leavitt, Guy Stanley,
Milton Mitchell
- 9 Marshall Chaney, Hannah Fraser
- 11 Jo Dykes
- 13 Connie Anderson, Amy Fraser,
Linda Mitchell
- 15 Bob McLachlan
- 18 Dana Mahoney
- 19 Sandra Ford, Zack Sanders

and in March to

- 3 Ruth Thompson
- 4 Duke Easley, Margaret Hurt
- 5 Carter Ferrell, Dee Moore
- 6 Allison Knighton, Myrtis Lester
- 8 Harriet Mattox, Bill Garrett
- 9 Tyler Price
- 11 Carol Darnell, Don Richman,
Nicholas Young

We Help Others ("WHO") Addition: The Congregational Care committee is looking for people to visit shut-ins and others who would welcome company to read, play a game, or just chat. If you are willing to volunteer, or if you know of someone who would welcome a visitor, please contact Joan Ragland at 632-9193 or pjragland@comcast.net
Joan Ragland

What is Lent? Lent is a period of prayer and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1st and ends on Easter Sunday April 16th. Lent is a holy season of preparation for the church. During Lent, we follow Jesus on the road towards Jerusalem and his death on the cross for our sake. Lent recognizes that life is full of temptations and that we too often succumb to sin and distance ourselves from God's will. In Lent, God calls us to a time of simplicity

where we focus our attention on God's voice. Jesus himself spent forty days in the wilderness fasting and praying so that he could more clearly discern God's direction for his life. (also put in bulletin 2/10, 2/17, and 2/24).

With the beginning of the Church's season of Lent on Ash Wednesday (February 6), once again we will plan to have a series of Wednesday night suppers followed by Lenten worship services on February 6, 13, 20, 27, and March 5 and 12. Supper will begin each Wednesday at 5:45 p.m., and most (if not all) of the meals will be catered. Donations are appreciated to offset the cost of the meals and, as usual, the Two-Cents-A-Meal cans (to support the Presbytery of the Peaks' program to fight hunger) will be on the tables; your help is greatly appreciated! Then, we will move upstairs into the sanctuary for worship, which will begin at 6:20 p.m. and conclude by 6:50 p.m. in time for choir rehearsal and any committees that will be meeting.

Here is the schedule of preachers for the Lenten worship services: Jody Moore (Feb. 6); Bill Plonk (Feb. 13); Randy Stevens (Feb. 20); Randy Stevens (Feb. 27); Rusty Reaser (Mar. 5) and Hank Baumann (Mar. 12). Please make plans to join us for these special meals and Lenten worship services.



Children and Youth Music

I am so glad to be back with the children and youth after our lovely Christmas break! Everyone is working

well on wonderful new music and there is lots to look forward to.

The big news is that the children and youth will be joining the Chancel Choir in a Lenten Service on Sunday March 9th. Bob and I have planned a service that is prayerful and joyous in nature with anthems that all choirs will participate in and others that the separate choirs will present. We plan for brass to accompany some of the anthems which will be a moving experience for the children and youth and the congregation. This is the week before Palm Sunday. We had hoped to have the program on Palm Sunday, but due to school spring breaks, we chose March 9th as the best day. We believe this program of music will be important to you as you journey toward Easter Sunday. I would like to invite any children and/or youth, who are not presently a part of Orff, who would like to come and sing with us on this special occasion to join us for this special event. Just give me a call or an email, and I will fill in all details.

Orff musicians are excited to be singing and ringing in morning worship on Sunday, February 3rd.

Music Together children, Moms, Dads and Grandmoms have their new materials in hand. The new songs are exciting, joyful and varied. This Tuesday morning class is so full of joy and excitement; they are a delight with which to work.

Kindermusik I and II have new folders and instruments in some cases. Kindermusik I students are learning about the instruments in the orchestra along with beginning to read two notes and enjoying new learning games. Kindermusik II continue to study music of other cultures and they are learning the recorder. The recorders are really amazing

for the money. The class is thrilled with them.

The High School Handbell ringers will be taking a road trip to the Capital Area Youth Handbell Festival on February 23rd. We are looking forward to a day of ringing and fellowship with others. Our group will be playing a solo in the afternoon concert. I am very proud of these special teens!

Happy Wintry February to each of you!!! Betsy

SPRING FAMILY RETREAT COMING IN APRIL

While we all may be shivering and wondering if it will ever be warm, look at the calendar and you will see that Spring is truly a little over one month away.



To get the season off to a great start, a family retreat is being planned at Camp Hat Creek on the weekend of April 4. Hat Creek is the Presbytery camp located just north of Brookneal, Virginia. Many of our members and their families have gone there in the past, and many of our youth have gone to summer camp there.

Plans are now in process to have a family retreat beginning Friday afternoon, April 4, and concluding with a worship service on Sunday, April 6. In between, there will be time to relax, play games, hike, and do a lot of family-oriented activities. And ladies, the men will do the cooking so that is another incentive to pack up the family and make it a relaxing weekend.

More will follow in the church bul-

letins. Brookneal? Well, it's not hard to find. Directions are not difficult to follow, but maps will be made available for you men who do not like to ask for directions. So mark April 4, 5, and 6 on the calendar, and plan to gather at Hat Creek just for the fun of it!

Bill Peterson

The Tempo "Our Musical Pulse"

Lessons and Carols Service

In the December issue of the **Steeple** Views I could not write anything about the Lessons and Carols Service the Chancel Choir presented on the sixteenth because the copy had to be in before that service was held.

Allow me to thank the members of the choir who were a part of that service. Sandra Ford and her helpers provided a lovely setting with the window and aisle candles and greenery. The choir provided lovely music as well as readers of the scripture. Cynthia Dobrinski did her usual superb job of playing and accompanying the choir. Randy Stevens joined with us as the Minister for the service and we appreciate his contribution.

Our thanks to the ladies who provided the lovely reception for the choir, congregation and guests following the service.

Chancel Choir

We (Director and Members) always look for other talented singers to join with us in our Ministry of Music. When you are involved in a worthwhile ministry, you want others to know the same fulfillment you have experienced. The rehearsal room door is open and the welcome mat is out. At this point we are in real

need of additional Sopranos, Altos, Tenors, Baritones and Basses. If you have an interest in singing with us in our Music Service in March, please make that interest known to Mr. Chapman.

We are sorry that Nick Fraser has taken a position in Scotland. The choir presented him with a current picture in December. Nick we will miss you and your voice.

The choir is currently rehearsing worship music for the Lent and Easter seasons. We will begin on the music service music shortly which will involve the last part of the Wednesday evening rehearsal and a Sunday morning rehearsal.

Sanctuary Ringers

The Sanctuary Ringers are rehearsing again following an after Christmas break. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 6:00-7:00 p.m. If you have an interest in ringing handbells, please make that known to Mr. Chapman. We are always in need of Substitute ringers. You will hear the ringers in worship on January 27 and February 24.



Weekday School News

Happy new year
from The Weekday

School! We are back in full swing and all anxiously awaiting snow.

The children are in winter mode, learning about all things dealing with cold weather, snow hibernation and the like.

We currently have a few immediate openings in the Mother's Morning Out class on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. If you know of anyone who has a child 12 months to 2 years please direct them our way. There is also some space in the 4

year old class as well. We will begin registration for the 2008-2009 school year at the end of February. Current students will register first then church members, then we will open it up to the general public. If any of you have questions please feel free to give me a call in the Weekday School office.

The Weekday School suffered a tremendous loss with the sudden death of Jerry Moore on January 5th.

Jerry was the father of Alex, Thaniel and Jarret Moore, all Weekday School students. Please keep Tammy and the children in your thoughts and prayers now and in the difficult months ahead.

As always, we have a great time with these children. It is a blessing to be a part of their rapid growth and development. There is never a dull moment when the children are here.
Melissa White
Director

GRACE NETWORK NEEDS

First Presbyterian Church is still responsible for Spaghetti Sauce this year. Grace Network is distributing on average 30-35 cans of Spaghetti Sauce per week. According to their present inventory, they have approximately a four month supply in stock (I'm guessing around 480 cans). So, they said we are doing extremely well with our responsibility.

However, at this time they do have a critical shortage of one lb. bags of rice. They use an average of 35 one-pound bags of rice per week and presently have less than a two-day stock.

They also have approximately a two-week stock of 5 lb. bags of sugar.

The **2008 Budget** has been approved. Due to a very successful New Consecration Sunday and the generous pledging of our members, the balanced budget includes \$624,000 of income and projected expenses. Some budget highlights include major increases in Facilities for painting, funding for Contemporary Worship, salary increases, and significant increases in Benevolences at both the local level and Presbytery. The 2008 Budget reflects \$91,000 of increased income over 2007. Barring any unexpected emergencies, the 2008 Budget will enable the Church to operate without utilizing our reserve funds. Based on current economic conditions, we are truly blessed.

Bob Davis