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

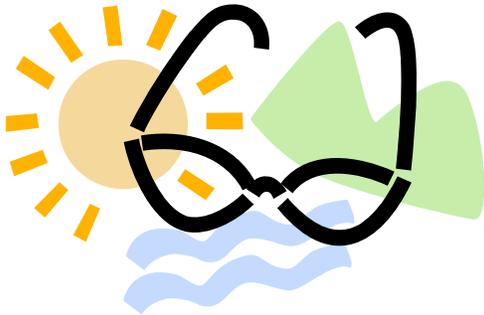
First Presbyterian Church Staff:

Randall Stevens, Pastor H[rcstevensfpc@juno.com](mailto:Hrcstevensfpc@juno.com)
Joseph Moore, Associate Pastor H[assocpastor@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org](mailto:Hassocpastor@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org)
Rusty Reaser, Parish Associate
Robert Chapman, Director of Adult Music H[adultmusic@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org](mailto:Hadultmusic@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org)
Betsy Haskins, Director of Children/Youth Music H[haskinsbetsy@yahoo.com](mailto:Hhaskinsbetsy@yahoo.com)H
Cynthia Dobrinski, Organist
Debbie C. Youngman, Librarian
Sarah P. Altizer, Church Secretary H[office@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org](mailto:Hoffice@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org)
Robin H. Keys, Bookkeeper H[fpc@mail.kimbanet.com](mailto:Hfpc@mail.kimbanet.com)
Church Web Site H<http://www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/>

Our Web Site: Hwww.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org

Phone: 276-632-3431 Fax: 276-632- 3802

H[office@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org](mailto:Hoffice@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org)H



First Presbyterian Church
1901 Patrick Henry Avenue
Martinsville, VA 24112
Address Service Requested

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



STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

June, 2008

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

I came across this story some time ago and it speaks volumes to me, and, I hope to you! In 1957, some Buddhist monks in Thailand had to relocate a large clay statue of Buddha, because a highway was being built that would run straight through their temple. When a crane began to lift the huge statue, a loud crack was heard. At the same time it began to rain. The head monk, afraid that the Buddha would be permanently damaged asked that the statue be lowered to the ground and covered with a huge tarp. Later that evening, the monk went to check to see if the Buddha was dry. When he lifted the tarp, and directed his flashlight toward the idol, his eyes caught a slight gleam. Curious, the monk fetched a chisel and hammer and began to tap away at the clay. What he discovered after hours of delicate work was a solid gold Buddha ten and a half feet tall, weighing two-and-a-half tons! After some research, the monk discovered that

Centuries before, as an enemy army was about to attack what was then Siam the ancient monks had covered the golden Buddha in clay so that it would not be destroyed or plundered. Because all of the Siamese monks were murdered, nobody had yet discovered their secret. (Jack Canfield, "The Golden Buddha," in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: 101 Stories to Open the Heart and Kindle the Spirit*, pp 68-71) Inside each of these earthen vessels we wear, which move us from place to place, is a great treasure. We are created in the very image of God, and we carry around within ourselves the good news of Jesus Christ and the presence and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. As someone once said so well (despite the grammatical

problems): "God don't make no junk!" We are precious to almighty God! God knew us and loved us before we were born; in baptism, God tells us we are God's precious children and we belong to God now and forever; Jesus Christ redeemed us from our sins and leads us from death to eternal life; the Holy Spirit is God's ever present Gift to us, and the Spirit of God gives us many gifts as well (see Galatians 5:22-25 and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 for example); and, last but not least, the author of 1 Peter reminds all of the saints, who believe in and follow Jesus Christ, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people." Wow! Did you hear all of that, and, even more, do you believe that, can you affirm that good news for and about yourselves? There is a treasure more priceless and precious than gold within each one of us. We are God's own people. Furthermore, if we can accept that good news as being gospel truth for ourselves, then we need to go one step further and acknowledge that the same inherent worth is found within others as well. If we can and will see the truth in that reality, it will transform how we relate to others. Strangers can become new friends in Christ. People with whom we tend to disagree can be changed from enemies into brothers and sisters in Christ. We can become more open and more tolerant of others, who see things from a different perspective. After 1 Peter states all of our accolades since we belong to God through Christ Jesus he goes on to say, "In order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of God who called you out of darkness into the light" (1 Peter 2:9). As we affirm the gracious gift of God both within ourselves and others we reflect more of God's light and love in the world,

which serves to “punch holes in the darkness” and gives glory to God. After all, that’s the business we are in “to glorify God and enjoy him forever!”

In Christ’s love,
Randy

Word from the Associate Pastor:

May has been a very good month here at First Presbyterian Church of Martinsville. The early service has kicked off and has been very successful: members of our congregation and visitors from the community have found the worship to be rich and meaningful. Youth Sunday on May 11th was glorious. Tyler Price, Elizabeth Pritchett, Melissa Seamon, & Taylor Shank spoke eloquently about what the church means to them. It was a special treat to see between forty and fifty children and youth sing the Choral Benediction together at the end of the Youth Sunday service. Six gifted, fun, and thoughtful seventh graders were officially presented as new members of the church on Pentecost Sunday. It has been a joy to meet with Claire Adkins, Caroline Harris, Michael Mason, Ben Pinkston, Jacob Wingfield, and Virginia Zentmeyer every Tuesday since February for confirmation class.

In my sermon on Pentecost Sunday, I talked about the importance of fellowship to the church family. It is our responsibility and privilege to help one another overcome life’s obstacles. I came across a true story that Charles Swindoll shows us the importance of supporting each other in his book *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*. In the fall of the year, Linda, a young woman, was traveling alone up the rutted and rugged highway from Alberta to the Yukon. Linda didn’t know you don’t travel to Whitehorse alone in a rundown Honda Civic, so she set off where only four-wheel drives normally venture. The

first evening she found a room in the mountains near a summit and asked for a 5 A.M. wakeup call so she could get an early start. She couldn’t understand why the clerk looked surprised at that request, but as she awoke to early-morning fog shrouding the mountaintops, she understood. Not wanting to look foolish, she got up and went to breakfast. Two truckers invited Linda to join them, and since the place was so small, she felt obliged. "Where are you headed?" one of the truckers asked. "Whitehorse" she replied. "In that little Civic? No way! This pass is DANGEROUS in weather like this." "Well, I’m determined to try," was Linda’s gutsy, if not very informed, response. "Then I guess we’re just going to have to hug you," the trucker suggested. Linda drew back. "There’s no way I’m going to let you touch me!" "Not like THAT!" the truckers chuckled. "We’ll put one truck in front of you and one in the rear. In that way, we’ll get you through the mountains."

All that foggy morning Linda followed the two red dots in front of her and had the reassurance of a big escort behind as they made their way safely through the mountains.

Caught in the fog in our dangerous passage through life, we need to be "hugged." With fellow Christians who know the way and can lead safely ahead of us, and with others behind, gently encouraging us along, we, too, can pass safely. I am grateful for all the ways members of our church provide "hugs" to those in need: through these acts of kindness, we are showing our neighbors that we are Christians by our love.

Peace in Christ,
Jody



Happy Birthday in June to

- 1 Sami Easley, Cynthia Dobrinski, Gage Lawson, Reid Lawson
- 2 Suzanne Lacy, Cole Rothrock
- 3 Bob Knighton
- 4 Laura Beth Eanes, Mike Eanes, Pat Wilson
- 5 Meredith Bumgarner
- 6 Nancy Plonk
- 9 Lori Hurt, Josh King, Susan Smith
- 10 Sherri Bell, Allison Campbell, Cindy Edgerton
- 12 Edmund Haskins, Wilson Young, David King
- 13 Eleanor Woody
- 15 Waid Lester
- 16 Karen DeBusk, Ainsley Russell
- 17 Dyer Rothrock, Ken Knight
- 18 Courtney Newnam, Susan Pilson
- 19 Taylor Johnson
- 20 Drew Parker, Spencer DeBusk
- 22 Raven Adams
- 23 David Price, Harold Wells, Virginia Truitt, Basil Boyd
- 24 Denny Casey
- 26 Lyell Knighton, Vicki Wells
- 27 Ibbey Gunter, Louie Judson, Steve DeBusk, Lynn Stegall, Clyde Hill
- 29 A. C. Wilson, Andy Parker, Caroline Kirby

and in July to:

- 2 William Seamon
- 3 Andrea Lawhon, Sarah Toothman
- 4 Ben Pinkston
- 5 Paul Cannaday, Sam Smith
- 6 Barbara Stanley
- 7 Clara Hartley
- 8 Dyer Pace
- 10 Mildred Bishop

CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to Sallie Elizabeth Altizer and Angus Thomas Hinson, Jr. on the occasion of their marriage in the sanctuary on May 3, 2008.

CONGRATULATIONS to Leanna Blevins and Gavin Russell on the birth of their son, Heath Anderson Russell, May 17, 2008, in Eden, North Carolina. Big sisters are Grayson and Ainsley! Our Graduates Class of 2008

HIGH SCHOOL Graduates

Carlisle School
Hannah Patricia Fraser

Franklin County High School
Tyler Henry Price

Martinsville High School
Justin Rogers Bell
Sherrill Rosa Dailey
Michael Morgan Haley
Anne Carlyle Hurt
Elizabeth Ricard Pritchett
Margaret Hayden Renz
Zachary Philip Sanders
Melissa Ann Seamon
Taylor Carroll Shanki
Diana Joy VanNutt

Colleges and Universities

Courtney Patrice Newnam, University of Richmond, BS Finance
Michelle Eileen Unterbrink, University of Virginia,



The early morning worship service (with its contemporary style of music) is off to a great start. The first Sunday, May 4, there were 115 people in worship. The second Sunday, May 18, there were 50-60 people present. Those, who have attended this earlier scheduled worship service, have found that while the style of worship is different (it's a shorter service, more informal in nature, more congregational participation in terms of moving around and greeting one another and sharing of joys and concerns for the pastoral prayer, and different music), nevertheless, it is still worship with integrity! Everyone is invited to come and experience worship at the earlier service even if you prefer the later worship service for different reasons. It helps to experience this new thing that God is doing right here in our midst. Also, in order to emphasize that we are one congregation (and not two due to the two worship services), we encourage everyone to participate in both the fellowship time downstairs (after the early worship service) and the Sunday School hour.

The Session has called the congregation to meet at the close of the 11:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 8, 2008 for the purpose of electing an Officer Nominating Committee. The Officer Nominating Committee will consist of two current elders from the Session's Class of 2008, two Presbyterian Women, two youth, and three members at-large. The committee will meet and work during the summer months (and as needed throughout the next year) and will present a slate of nominees (8 elders and 2 trustees to serve on their respective boards as the Class of 2011) at the annual meeting of the congregation on September 21st during the worship service.

Leaps and Bounds

Our middle school youth group will be attending the Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference from June 24-27, 2008. Please pray for the youth and adults from our church, who will be joining hundreds of Presbyterians from across the country, for this event. The theme for this conference is: "Leaps and Bounds."



The Youth Group Hike to raise money for the Colon Cancer Alliance in honor of Andrew Stevens, originally scheduled for April 27th was postponed due to bad weather. The hike will be rescheduled this fall. All donations that have already been given will go to the Colon Cancer Alliance.

Our Youth Group will be participating in a mission trip to Morehead City, NC from June 15-20, 2008. We will be working with the MORE Program at First Presbyterian Church in Morehead City. MORE stands for Mission, Outreach, Relationships, & Education. We will be working with various communities organizations during the week, including a soup kitchen for the homeless and hungry and a relief agency for those afflicted by hurricanes. A total of twenty-one people from our congregation will be going on the mission trip. They are: Emily Beard, Carrie Buffkin, Rachel DeBusk, Alanna Ferguson, Parker Gunn, Caroline Harris, Maggie Lovell, Michael Mason, Jody Moore, Farrell Pace, Ben Pinkston, Matthew Price, Kimberly Seamon, Melissa Seamon, Meredith Seamon, Wendy Seamon, Sam Smith, Laura Stevens, Jordan Torrez, Judy Ware, and Jacob Wingfield. These youth and adults will be

commissioned for their work on the mission trip at the 11:00 a.m. service on June 15.

Congratulations to our graduating high school seniors! They will be recognized at the 11:00 a.m. worship service on June 1, 2008.



Our 2008 Summer Sunday School Schedule Begins June 1st for Children, Youth, & Adults!

The Topic for the 2008 Adult Summer Sunday School Series is "The Question of God and The Quest for God." With the assistance of a PBS Video Series, and looking through the lens of our Christian faith, the adult summer class will contrast the writings and opinions of C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud. In the latter half of the summer, we will use a PBS Video Series to illuminate the life and witness of the Reverend Billy Graham. The class will meet every Sunday in June, July, and August in the Session Room at 9:45 a.m. During the summer, middle and high school youth will meet together. Also children in first grade through fifth grade will meet together during the summer months. We hope to see the entire family at S.S. this summer!

Children and Youth Music



May was an exciting month for the children and youth musicians in our church.

Youth Sunday was a very moving experience for all involved. The Orff children did a won-

derful job on their anthem and sounded heavenly. The older Orff children played their handbell piece with musicality and confidence. They have worked very hard on their handbell skills. What a great group!

The Cantabile ringers played so well. They are a joy to work with. To see highschoolers with such a high level of commitment warms my heart and yours too, I suspect. You can expect great things from them!!

A special moment in the service was the choral benediction which was sung by all the children and youth. I will always remember that special ending to a very worshipful service.

Sandra Ford did a masterful job in accompanying, playing the Doxology at about 25 seconds notice and smiling all the time. Sandra is such a treasure in our church. I appreciate her many talents more than I can say.

We had a great time at the Kinder-musik I and II parties. These young musicians are really something to watch as they grow and mature.

I am planning a very cool kick off event for August to begin another great year. Stay tuned for details!!

Come by and see me this summer. It is all too quiet in the music wing!!!

By now, you should have received your Save the Date card for our Coming Home weekend in August. If you did not, or know someone else who did not, please let me know and we will be sure to get them on the mailing list.

This is really shaping up to be a fun experience that you won't want to miss. Please mark your calendars for



Coming Home.....

..IS COMING!!!

August 16 and 17. It will be here before we know it!

I want to take the opportunity to thank Betty Stanley for all her hard work on the Contemporary service. She has guided the band and singers in such a wonderful manner. It is a real joy to work with Betty and the rest of the crew as we work quite hard to provide a worshipful experience. Everyone involved has contributed so much to the success of the service, but Betty has led the way. We all appreciate you so much!!

Betsy Haskins

The Tempo

"Our Musical Pulse"

Chancel Choir and the Summer Stretch

The Chancel Choir will be singing throughout the three Summer months. They will have an abbreviated rehearsal schedule with some early Sunday rehearsals replacing the Wednesday rehearsals. Wednesday rehearsals will be held on June 4 and 25, on July 30 and on August 6, 13, 20 and 27. Early Sunday rehearsals, 9:45-10:30 a.m., will be held on July 6, 13, 20, and 27.

There will be a Solo Sunday each month so that you can hear three of our members sing. If you are interested in singing with us for the Summer, we invite you to mention that to Mr. Chapman. We are always glad to have youth and college students join us for the Summer. Betty Stanley will be singing on June 15.

Sanctuary Ringers

The Sanctuary Ringers concluded their season when they played in worship on May 18. The choir will not rehearse again until July 30.

On the afternoon of May 18 the choir enjoyed their annual family cookout at the home of Gael and Smith Chaney. We appreciate the Chaney's opening their home to the ringers and their families.

Coming Home Fellowship

Both the Chancel Choir and the Sanctuary Ringers will contribute music to the Saturday evening dinner/fellowship event on August 16. Some singers and ringers who do not sing and ring regularly are joining with us in this fellowship. In addition to the choirs there will be group and quartet singing. Rehearsal of this music takes place during the last 45 minutes of the Chancel Choir rehearsal on Wednesdays and on Sunday morning in July at 9:45 a.m. If you are interested in singing or ringing please talk to Bob Chapman.

Happy Anniversary

Two members of our music staff celebrated anniversaries on May 1. Our organist, Cynthia Dobrinski celebrated her seventh and Bob Chapman, his twelfth. Congratulations!

First Presbyterian Weekday School

Summer has arrived! The last official day for the First Presbyterian Weekday School was May 22. We had a great year. It has been a joy to watch the children grow and change. They make every day an adventure!

The teachers, aides and myself will be busy closing up the classrooms for the summer. School will resume on September 2nd. If you know of anyone with interest in The Weekday School, you can leave a message for me in the church office and I will be happy to get back with you.

Have a safe and happy summer!

Melissa White

Director

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