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Presbyterian Church (USA): www.pcusa.org
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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

First Presbyterian Church

March, 2007

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

The other day I was driving in to work and I heard an interesting story on the radio. Shortly after Serena Williams won the Australian Open tennis tournament, she appeared on the David Letterman show. The next day Serena called David Letterman to ask if he (or a staff member) had found one of her earrings, which she had lost the previous evening. She told him that the pair of earrings was worth \$75,000.00 and, what's more, she had borrowed them from a friend! David promised Serena that they would look all over the TV studio for her earring, which he and his staff did. They checked the chair that Serena sat in, the stage where she had played David Letterman in a Wii virtual reality tennis game, the hallways, and any other room she had been in during her visit to the studio, but they came up empty-handed.

Then, one of the staff members had a brilliant idea. He suggested that they watch a videotape of the prior evening's program, especially the segment in which Serena appeared, to see if they could determine when and where she had lost the earring. They watched the videotape of her guest appearance footage through several times; and, at a certain point, someone detected the precise moment when she had lost the earring. Furthermore, in watching the replay, they were able to observe that, when the earring came loose from her ear lobe, it fell into a pocket on the front of her blouse. David Letterman called Serena at home and asked her if she still had the

blouse and, if so, would she check the front pocket. Serena did just that and then yelled for joy as she discovered the missing earring!

Perhaps the obvious lesson in the above story is the value of teamwork and how all contributed to find a solution to the problem. But, as I have carried this story around inside of me, I find myself thinking about the season of Lent, which begins tomorrow on Ash Wednesday, February 21. Lent is a specific time in the Church's liturgical year for us to remember and respond to the atoning death of Christ. Lent offers us the opportunity to examine ourselves closely, to reflect on our sins and to experience deep sorrow for the wrongs we have committed and for the good that we have omitted to do, and then to repent of those sins. When we reflect on and repent of our shortcomings, we are then led to rejoice for Christ died in order to forgive us. The First Letter of Peter affirms: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls" (2:24-25).

Let us examine ourselves closely, noting especially those times when we have sinned against God, each other and even our own true selves. Let us sincerely and sorrowfully repent. Finally, trusting in the grace and mercy of God revealed in Jesus' death on the cross let us rejoice greatly! After all, believe it or not, the forgiveness of our sins is worth far more than finding half of a pair of earrings valued at \$75,000.00. It certainly cost Jesus more than that it cost him his

life! By the grace of God and nothing less, "By his (Jesus') wounds, we have been healed." Thanks be to God!

In Christ's love,
Randy

A Word from the Associate

Pastor:

In a book entitled *Lectionary Tales* by Gregory L. Tolle, I recently came across a story that was originally told by the author Ron Hutchcraft. The story is about a woman named Jamie, who one night was cruising the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey. It was dark, the beaches were supposed to be closed, and the lifeguards had gone home. Jamie heard what she thought was a scream coming from the ocean. As she ran toward the beach, she yelled behind her for help because she knew someone was in trouble.

Jamie saw immediately that a woman was drowning. She hesitated for a moment, then ripped off her shoes and jumped into the water. A couple of passers by assisted her over the next few minutes and they were able to bring this woman back and save her life. Afterward, Hutchcraft asked, "Jamie, how did that feel?"

She said, "I was standing there at the edge of the water thinking that there's nothing scarier than the ocean at night."

He responded, "How did you decide to go in?"

She replied, "It was pretty simple. Someone would die if I didn't."

The Ocean City Beach Patrol has never lost anybody. They have a one hundred percent rescue record, but they were not around that evening. What if Jamie had said, "Oh, somebody's drowning. I better go get a lifeguard, get a professional." Then the lady would have probably died because there were not any professionals there. Who was re-

sponsible? Jamie was, as the person there in that moment.

God never meant for only a few people to be interested in caring for and serving others. It is not just Randy and my job to be ministers during the week: we are all called to think about what our faith asks us to do every day and each moment throughout the week. We miss an opportunity to be each other's "angels here on earth" if we do not help the person who is hurting. I am reminded of the story of the Good Samaritan from Luke: other people, including the Pharisee and the Levite, were seemingly too busy to help, but the Good Samaritan did God's will by putting aside his own needs to serve the injured man on the side of the road.

As Christians, all of us are ministers for Christ. Jesus has appointed you to represent him. And where is your appointed location? According to Gregory L. Tolle, we do not need to look very hard to find where we are supposed to minister. Where do you work? That's it. Where do you live? That's it. Where do you go to school? That's it. That is your assignment from God. This Lent, I invite all of us to consider where God is calling us to minister to address others' needs.

Peace in Christ,
Jody

HOLY WEEK

Since Holy Week takes place the first week of April, here is a heads-up on what to expect. The week begins with the annual Palm Sunday in the Park on Sunday, April 1, as we join with other Christian friends from neighboring churches in remembering Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem; as before, we will gather in the narthex of the sanctuary at 9:45 a.m. and then walk to the park for the 10:00 a.m. worship service, which

will last a half hour. During our 11:00 a.m. worship service we will celebrate the Confirmation-Commissioning service for six of our youth; there will not be the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper since it will be observed later in the week.

On **Maundy Thursday**, April 5, we will gather in the fellowship hall for a potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. and worship (with communion by intinction or served in the pews) will follow at 7:00 p.m.

On **Good Friday**, April 6, we will have a worship service in the sanctuary at noon; seven Presbyterian ministers will offer reflections on the Seven Last Words of Jesus from the cross.

Easter Sunday (April 8) we will gather for breakfast in the fellowship hall at 9:30 a.m., followed by Sunday School at 10:00 a.m., and a special, joy-filled worship service at 11:00 a.m. Please make plans to attend these special events and make your Holy Week experience more meaningful as we approach the cross and prepare to encounter the empty tomb and the risen Christ!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY in March to:

- 1 Dan Stevens
- 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
- 10 Frances Morton
- 11 Carol Darnell, Don Richman,
Nicholas Young
- 12 Bill Peterson, Bob Clark
- 15 Fred Isenhower
- 17 Dick Sowdon, Rachel DeBusk,
Alanna Ferguson

- 18 Catherine Bridges, Rick Renz,
Steve Edgerton
- 19 Matt Johnson
- 20 JoAnne Sanders
- 23 Diane Clark
- 24 Holt Truitt
- 27 Pam Mason, Kenzie Rakes, Charles
Toothman
- 28 Christiana Campbell

and in **APRIL** to:

- 2 Nick Carter
- 3 Claude Young
- 4 Max Pinkston
- 5 Kate Judson
- 7 Bob Davis, Kisean Adams
- 8 Troy Lee Rakes, Mary Catherine
Stegall

SYMPATHY of the congregation is extended to Johnny and Ashby Pinkard and family on the death of Johnny's mother, Mary Ethelene Murphy Pinkard, January 31, 2007, in Martinsville.

CONGRATULATIONS to Ryan and Jana Jennings on the birth of their son, Logan Edward Jennings, February 1, 2007, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Proud grandparents are Clark and Lee Eden and proud great grandmother is Barbara Eden!

WE will miss Bob and Arlene Dunn who have transferred their membership to Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, Martinsville.

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

Kirk Night Suppers

Don't forget that the Kirk Night Suppers and Lenten worship services will continue every Wednesday throughout the month of March. The suppers begin at 5:45 p.m. in the fellowship hall and will conclude with the blessing and necessary announcements at 6:15 p.m. Then, we will move upstairs for our Lenten worship service from 6:25-6:55 p.m. The remaining speakers for these special Lenten services are:

February 28	Ken Hughes
March 7	Bill Plonk
March 14	Hank Baumann
March 21	Randy Stevens
March 28	Rusty Reaser

Please check the weekly Sunday bulletin inserts for the menu, cost, and other related matters.

Update on Adult Sunday School Classes:

Do you know that more people of faith are confused about the book of Revelation than they are about any other book in the Bible? Do you want to get behind the myths and find out what Revelation is really all about? Come learn from the video series taught by Dr. Mickey Effird, who is master teacher and professor at Duke Divinity School. The Margaret Irby began this study in February, which will continue through March and into the spring. Come and join us Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. in the Margaret Irby Classroom!

Come join the I Promised What? Class Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. for its new Sunday School study. We will be discussing the book *In the Midst of Chaos: Caring for Children as Spiritual Practice* by Bonnie Miller-McLemore. The discounted cost per book is \$15.00. This study will provide practical activities and ideas to implement faith in simple ways to your family's life. Each chapter discusses one activity or topic in depth, such as reading bedtime stories, dividing household chores, dealing with stress, finding time for yourself, and playing games as a family.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL WEEKEND

For those of you who have asked what has happened to our Mid-Winter Connection, well there is a new program coming to the church in March. It will be Spiritual Renewal Weekend, and it is scheduled to be on March 24 and 25. Our speaker will be Dr. Jane Rogers Vann, Director of Christian Education at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond. She is the author of "Gathered Before God: Worship Centered Church." Her main interests include congregational education, spiritual formation in congregational life, and the relationship between worship and education.

Dr. Vann is scheduled to conduct a Saturday evening program in our fellowship hall, and lead the Sunday School program on Sunday morning. She will also preach during the morning worship service on the 25th.

So mark your calendars for March 24, and 25. You will be receiving more information in our church bulletins as we approach the time. Be assured, you will thoroughly enjoy what is in store for our church.

Confirmation Class Update: The seventh grade confirmation class is off to a great start. We have been meeting on Sunday afternoons (and some Tuesday evenings as well). Thus far, we have discussed the Trinity, the body of Christ, the resurrection, and the Bible. The confirmands have memorized a number of statements, including Scripture passages, the Lord's Prayer, and the Doxology. The class will meet with the session on Monday evening, March 26 and will be presented as new members of the church on Palm Sunday, April 1. The members of this year's class are: Emily Beard, Alanna Ferguson, Libby Goldstein, Katherine Lester, Matthew Price, and Kimberly Seamon.

Chancel Choir

As I write this article it is Valentine's Day. Happy Valentine to each of you!

Tonight is another rehearsal evening for the Chancel Choir. We have music in the folders for now through our program on April 22 at 10:45 a.m. We have some "Spring Singers" who are singing that program with us. One of them is Connie Anderson who has come out of retirement to sing the program with us. Other than Connie, we do not have any FPC members who have taken us up on the offer to sing with us. The Spring Music-Worship Service is scheduled for Sunday morning, April 22 at 10:45.

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 Altos. We seem to be down to four and that indicates that

it is time to enlist four more. Sopranos, Tenors, Baritones and Basses are welcome as well.

Our Spring Music Worship Service is titled "God So Loved the World" (A Celebration of the Resurrection.) Music will be substituted for the usual parts of the service that are spoken which will include the sermon. In addition to the Organ and Piano, we will have accompaniments provided by Brass, Oboe and Percussion. I think you will appreciate the variety of texts and musical styles included in this program. Certainly there is an abundance of material by composers and arrangements who are tops in this field today.

As always, we want to extend to members of our community the invitation to join us in this worship experience. That is something with which we invite you to help. Please lend your support. Thank You! RLC

Sanctuary Ringers

By the time you read this article the Sanctuary Ringers will have played in worship on February 25. In March the ringers will ring in worship on the 18th.

We are always looking for talented ringers to join with us in our ministry. Most of the time we need persons who are willing to step in and fill a position for an absent ringer in rehearsal or at a service. If you fit that description please let Mr. Chapman hear from you.

If you have an interest in learning to ring handbells you might mention that. It would be nice to have several who want to learn at the same time. Instruction can be arranged to suit the person or the group.

Children and Youth Music

February has been a really interesting month. I think



every child I teach (and most of their parents as well) has been sick at least once in the last few weeks. When we rang on Sunday, we had 4 out of 11 children in the younger group out with illness. Oh well, today the temperature is almost 60, so I take heart that Spring is coming and with it, perhaps all these germs will be swept away!

The children and young people did a very fine job in worship on February 18th. The youngest ringers performed their most difficult piece yet with great focus and authenticity. I was very proud of them. Our spiritual, "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel" was well done, also. The Handbell Quintet brought great musicality to the arrangement of "Holy, Holy, Holy." They are ringing 3 octaves of bells which, for those of you who know handbells, is quite a challenge.

Orff I and II are busy preparing music for Lent. During worship on March 11th, we will be presenting "The Three Trees." This is the most meaningful message for Lent that I have found for children and young people. We have presented it twice before and many of you have asked that it be done again. This will be the message for the congregation during the worship service that morning. We were practicing in the sanctuary yesterday, and I was struck by what wonderful help so many of our young people provide. We had Emily Beard, Michael Mason, Kimberly and Meredith Seamon and our adult leaders Laura Stevens and Amy Mason. With 28 active and energetic choristers, their help is central to the success of this program. I thank the Good Lord for their commitment and love for their church ...and for their young charges.

Here is a heads up. The time changes on **Sunday, March 11th at 2 am.** If you don't turn your clocks forward, and you come to church, you will miss "The

Three Trees!" We would not want that to happen!!!

The younger Kindermusik children are doing very well with their glockenspiels and recorders. The first-year gang is adding to their music reading ability and playing as well. The second-year children are playing pentatonic songs on the recorder at ages 5 and 6. I am very proud of them.

In Music Together, we are really rolling! If you are in need of a dose of enthusiasm and zeal, come by the music room on Tuesdays from 11:00-12:20. These young musicians and their moms, dads, and grandmoms are just delightful. It is my special pleasure to see them grow musically and developmentally. First steps, first teeth, first Valentine's party...Sheer delight!!

I hope your journey to the cross throughout this Lenten season is prayerful, and I join you in being thankful for the gift of our Lord.

Betsy



**The time changes on
Sunday, March 11th
at 2 am.**

Weekday School News

We are having a great year in the Weekday School! Spring is right around the corner, but we are all still looking for some snow before that happens. This is the time of year that we begin registration for the upcoming 2007-2008 school year. Registration for church members and siblings of Weekday School students began on Monday, February 19th. On February 26th, we will open registration to everyone. If you know of anyone

who is interested in sending their child to preschool, please have them contact me as soon as possible. It looks as though we are going to have a pretty full house.

March is designated "The Month of the Young Child." During March we will be having special programs each week. The children will learn some sign language, learn to sing a song in Spanish, have a special dance class and the Puppet Ministry from First United Methodist Church will perform for them. If you have any special talents and would like to do a program for the children, please let me know. We are always open to new ideas. The four-year olds continue their monthly field trips to King's Grant. They have a great time performing their songs and playing games, but their favorite part is the special snack that King's Grant prepares for them.

Our spring Pepsi fund raiser is currently in progress. Orders will be placed on March 15th. If you would like to purchase drinks, please see me. Don't forget Wendy's Night Out on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Join us for dinner and fellowship!

As always we are grateful for the opportunity to work with these adorable children. It is truly a blessing to be able to watch them grow and develop.

Sincerely,
Melissa White

The Facilities Committee will host a **SPRING CLEANUP DAY** on Saturday, March 31st, beginning at 8:00 am. and running until noon. Lunch will be served at the conclusion of the workday. Join other members of our congregation for a morning of fun and fellowship as we work to do the annual spring cleaning of our beautiful facilities.

We're Catching The Spirit!! Middle School and High School Invitation and Update

If you like to Explore, Learn, do Different Things, have Fun or just hang out at times, we would like to invite you to our Sunday School class.

Our first adventure outside the classroom was attending a reenactment of the Civil War that divided our nation and the Presbyterian churches. We started our day with a Civil War worship service led by a Methodist and a Baptist minister who spoke with real fire. You had to be there.

Afterward we toured the living and medical quarters asking the reenactors questions about the life of the soldier. Eating is always popular and the high-pressured cork drinks proved to be entertaining too. Then the full battle with artillery, Cavalry and the foot soldiers commenced. We left a tired bunch of troopers.

In the classroom, we started with classes on Taking Charge of your health, habits, emotions, attitude and the Christian example that we set for others Using biblical explanations and examples we found solutions to many of these very problems.

We played the popular TV show "Who Wants to be a Mountaineer" to learn about Bob Childress, a Presbyterian minister, and his ministry and what was happening during that time. We headed to Floyd County and worshipped in one of his six churches. A member of the church, "Buffalo Jack", a West Pointer and ranger gave us a tour of Buffalo Mountain and proved quite entertaining.

We then studied the outcasts Jesus encountered and compassion and mercy Jesus extended to them and the example he set for us all. The outcasts were a Sin-

ful Woman, Zacchaeus, Blind Barti-maeus and the Ten Lepers.

The Christmas mystery trip was to Ascension Lutheran church in Danville, where Chrismons were started 50 years ago by a church member. They had, in the middle of the church, a 28' live tree loaded with Chrismons from around the world. We enjoyed a contemporary service and had communion.

We just completed classes on sharing the good news- responding to the call, overcoming obstacles, clarifying the truth and using every opportunity.

We sponsored the Sweetheart luncheon in appreciation of the singles who have been so faithful to the church and its members.

We have started a new class on "What to Know Before You Date" and have two trips planned before school is out. We are going in March to the Peaks of Otter after worshipping in the 1844 Liberty (Bedford) Presbyterian Church. The next trip in April is to Rock Castle to enjoy the beginning of spring and beauty of God's creations.

We would like to invite you to join us in the excitement of Christian learning and fellowship. Hope to see you this Sunday!



EASTER LILIES

The church invites families and individuals in the congregation to place a potted Easter lily in the sanctuary for Easter Sunday, April 8.

All who wish to place a lily in memory of, or in honor if, a loved one or friend may do so by contacting the Church Office or by filling out the

form below and placing in the offering plate with payment. These names will be included on a special insert in the bulletin on Easter. Each plant is \$11 payable to the Church Office in advance. The last date for ordering and making payment to the Church will be Friday, March 23.

Please place my order for an Easter lily:

Name _____

Phone _____

In memory of

In Honor of

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