

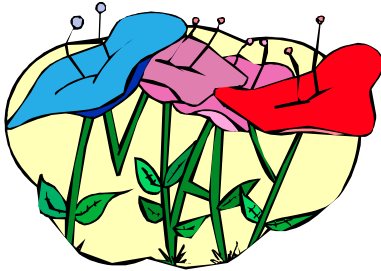


Presbyterian Web Sites:

Our Web Site: www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org
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

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Cynthia Dobrinski, Organist
Debbie C. Youngman, Librarian
Sarah P. Altizer, Church Secretary office@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org
Robin H. Keys, Bookkeeper fpc@mail.kimbanet.com
Church Web Site <http://www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/>



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

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Martinsville, VA 24112
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STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

May, 2007

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

We journey with the resurrected Christ into this new month of May, and, before long, we will celebrate the Day of Pentecost. On Pentecost Sunday, May 27, we will remember and rejoice in God's gift of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church. That celebration calls to mind an article I read in "The Presbyterian Outlook" (Feb. 19, 2007, p. 8) by Gregory Koukl. In the article, "Let's Not Blame Religion For All the World's Ills," Mr. Koukl states that certain atheists seem to blame religion particularly Christianity for all the world's ills. He goes on to say, "But nothing could be further from the truth. Many conflicts that appear at first glance to be religious in nature are actually political or cultural wars that divide along religious lines."

Mr. Koukl does acknowledge that the Crusades, the Inquisition, some of the religious wars of the Reformation and the Salem witch trials were more theological. And yet, "the record is not as grim as many make it. Thousands of witches were not burned at the stake; the Salem witch trials resulted in 19 executions before they were stopped by Christians. The Spanish Inquisition involved thousands and the Crusades tens of thousands, not millions." On the other hand, "more innocent people have been murdered, tortured, and enslaved by secular ideologies Nazism and communism than by all religions in history... You'll find that carnage of unimaginable proportions resulted not from religion, but from institutionalized atheisms The greatest evil does not result from people zealous for God. It results when people are convinced there is no God to whom they must answer Christ and his followers have been the greatest force for

good in the history of the worlds. This is Christianity's real record not a history of evil, violence, and debauchery, but a legacy of radical transformation for good."

Neither the Church nor her members of the one body of Christ (whether individuals or congregations) are perfect like her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Lord knows, we all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There is no denying that sad reality. And yet, by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Church is able to do some amazing things, leaving "a legacy of radical transformation for good." I am not aware of any colleges or universities that were founded by atheists but I am well aware of many, many colleges and universities that were founded and supported by Christians from many different denominations (actually, I prefer the word "perspectives") within the body of Christ. I am aware of a number of hospitals that have the word "Presbyterian" (or Methodist or Roman Catholic, etc.) in their title but I am ignorant concerning how many hospitals dedicated atheists began.

Again, we don't pat ourselves on the back. No, instead, we give credit where credit is due! God's Holy Spirit is alive and at work in the world, even in us and through us. The Spirit of the living God empowers and equips us for ministry. Filled with God's life-giving Spirit we go out into the world and teach or tutor children, serve on boards and agencies within the community, collect spaghetti sauce for Grace Network, help comfort the sick and bereaved, hold A Service of Prayer for the Virginia Tech family following the senseless tragedy on April 16, and so much more.

There's so much more that needs to be done, and, with the help of God's Spirit, we will do our part. Thanks be to God

for the wondrous gift of the Holy Spirit.
And, Happy Birthday, Church!
In Christ's love,
Randy

A Word from the Associate

Pastor:

Gregory Elder tells the story of when he grew up as a child near the Atlantic Ocean. He would spend hours at the beach working on intricately decorated sand castles. He took pride in the beautiful "sand cities" he would create. One year, several bullies discovered Elder's sandcastles and started picking on him. In a matter of a few seconds, they would topple the creations it took Elder hours to build. Finally, he tried an experiment. He put rocks, cinder blocks, and chunks of concrete on the base of his castle. Then Elder hid and waited for the bullies to return, barefoot, to do their dirty work. The boys smiled mischievously as they started to kick down the castles. But their expression changed soon into one of anguish. Elder suspected that those boys stopped knocking down sand castles after that day. The bullies never bothered him again.

Even though Christ tells us not to worry, we do. It is human nature. Many people who love the church worry about it. Many of you can remember a time when Sunday used to be a day reserved only for church: it was truly treated as Sabbath. The stores were closed and soccer games did not conflict with church activities. When we worry about these changes, we forget that the church is built, not upon the sinking sand (like Elder's first sand castles), but upon the solid rock of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18). Yes, the church faces new challenges today in our rapidly changing world, but Christ is still doing exciting things in our midst. The Good News that God claims us, forgives us, and

loves us is a story worth telling, a story that people will always long to hear. It is a story that still can bring tears to our eyes and fill our hearts with joy. On Pentecost Sunday we have an opportunity to celebrate what God is doing here and now with the church. Pentecost will be celebrated this year on Sunday, May 27, 2007. Pentecost is the third most important Christian holiday of the year (Easter and Christmas are the two most significant holidays). Pentecost is the birthday of the church, when the early church recognized the gift of the Holy Spirit. The liturgical color of Pentecost is red, which represents the tongues of fire and the power of the Holy Spirit. This year, our church is doing something extra special to celebrate this important day. We are inviting everyone in the congregation to wear red this Sunday, so there will be a "sea of red" in the congregation. The choir will process into the sanctuary during the first hymn. Also, following worship, there will be refreshments served on the lawn, including a birthday cake with red icing to commemorate the church's birthday! I hope to see you on Pentecost Sunday!

Peace in Christ,
Jody



HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN MAY TO

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

- 14 Jon Tatum, Farrell Pace
- 16 Becky Miller, Kemp Newnam
- 17 Margaret Ann Irby
- 18 Jaime Powell
- 19 Taylor Shank, Anne Banks Boyd
- 20 Colleen Dallas, Doris Treakle, Jeff Adkins
- 22 Curtiss Lester, Elizabeth Pritchett
- 23 Randy Bumgarner, Annie Grace Payne
- 27 Margaret Smith, Kent Williams, Virginia Seamon, Jacob Wingfield
- 28 Ginny Newnam
- 29 Christine Fraser, Ed Linker

and in JUNE to

- 1 Sami Easley, Cynthia Dobrinski
- 2 Suzanne Lacy, Cole Rothrock
- 3 Bob Knighton
- 4 Laura Beth Eanes, Mike Eanes, Pat Wilson
- 5 Meredith Bumgarner
- 6 Nancy Plonk
- 8 Juliet Pichirallo
- 9 Lori Hurt, Josh King, Susan Smith

IN MEMORIAM

Adeliah Crouch Isenhower
 January 22, 1936 - April 17, 2007
SYMPATHY of the congregation is extended to Fred Isenhower and family on the death of his wife, Adeliah Crouch Isenhower, in Kiawah Island, South-Carolina. Adeliah, a member of First Presbyterian since February 11, 1996, joined the Church Triumphant on April 17, 2007.

IN MEMORIAM

Gladys Belcher Lacy
 July 1, 1913 - April 19, 2007
SYMPATHY of the congregation is extended to the family of Gladys Belcher Lacy on her death in Martinsville. Gladys, a member of First Presbyterian since October 27, 1957, joined the Church Triumphant on April 19, 2007.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Ligon Hutcheson Ragland
 April 11, 1917 - March 26, 2007

SYMPATHY of the congregation is extended to the family of Mary Ligon Hutcheson Ragland, on her death in Martinsville. Mary, a member of First Presbyterian since November 25, 1945, joined the Church Triumphant on March 26, 2007.

SYMPATHY of the congregation is extended to Glenna Wimer on the death of her sister, Hannah Lowry, March 19, 2007, in Pennsylvania.

During this summer of 2007 we will once again combine all of the **adult Sunday School classes** into one class that will meet in the Session room. The class will meet for fourteen Sundays, from 9:45-10:40 a.m., beginning on June 3 and ending on September 2. Jody, Randy, and Rusty will share teaching duties and our program title is, "Snapshots of Faith: A Journey Towards Understanding." The lesson plans will be taken from The Thoughtful Christian series and will include such topics as: What is the Trinity? How Did Jesus' Death Save Us? Is There Life After Death? We hope this suggested study whets your biblical and spiritual appetite and that you will plan to join us during the summer months.

LUNCHEON FOR NEW/ PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

There will be a Luncheon for New/Prospective Members at the home of Bill and Anne Peterson on April 29, immediately following worship. Bill and Anne live at 1000 River Forest Place, and all new members and visitors are invited to join in this fellowship opportunity.

The Tempo "Our Musical Pulse" Sanctuary Ringers

The Sanctuary Ringers rang April 15 and will ring their final service of this season on May 27. (Memorial Day Weekend) When we ring in May, Brian Fentress and Cynthia Dobrinski will be ringing with us. That afternoon the ringers will go to Wendy Seamon's home for our annual Family Cookout at 5:00.

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 a rehearsal or at a service. If you fit that description please let Mr. Chapman hear from you. We do have one open position if any ringers are interested.

If you want to learn 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. Summer would be a great time to schedule a class.

Please express your appreciation to those who regularly ring in the Sanctuary Ringers. They usually spend at least six hours each month in rehearsal and in service. Thank you ladies! Remember, we will accept male handbell ringers.

Spring Worship-Music Service, April 22, 10:45 A.M.

By the time you read this material, the Spring Worship-Music Service will have happened. Tune in next month for comments.

Happy Anniversary

Two members of our music staff celebrate anniversaries on May 1. Our organist, Cynthia Dobrinski celebrates her sixth and Bob Chapman, his eleventh. Congratulations and Best Wishes!

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.

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 the Chancel Choir for the Summer, or on a more permanent basis, we invite you to mention that to Mr. Chapman. We are always glad to have youth, college students, and adults join us. Regular Wednesday rehearsals will begin again in August.

Children and Youth Music



I hope all of you are enjoying these beautiful days in God's creation. Earth day yesterday only serves to remind each of us that we are the caretakers of this beautiful earth.

Once again, our music classes are drawing to a close after a very good year. There are important dates for all groups, so please read carefully.

Orff I and II will have a slightly extended meeting schedule in May since our Musical Youth Sunday will be on May 20th. Our son Wallace is graduating Mother's Day weekend, so I will be one of the proud parents in Illinois cheering for our son!

All children will sing and ring that day. I hope everyone will be present for a wonderful worship service with word and music. We will be singing Sandra Ford's anthem "Sing For Joy," that she composed especially for us! Thank you, Sandra; we want so much to do justice to your talent!! The younger and older children will ring as well as the Handbell Quintet. Tyler Price will be holding down the musical fort at the piano for

the entire service. Lots for which to be thankful! Our last meeting will be our party on May 21st.

Music Together families are doing great things. Our combined group is filled with Moms, Dads, Grandmoms and especially those singing infants and children. My grandson Landon is now among them! We will celebrate our year with a picnic on Tuesday, May 15th!

Kindermusik I will complete the year on Wednesday May 9th. We have learned so much and have had a very good year. All parents are invited to attend!

Kindermusik II will complete the year on Tuesday, May 15th. I have an appointment on Tuesday, May 8th, so we will not have class that day. We will celebrate with our party the next Tuesday, May 15th.

In closing, I am sad to say that this will be my last Steepleviews. I am resigning my position as Music Director for Children and Youth, effective July 1st. I had intended to spend my entire musical career in this church, but that is not to be.

It has been a wonderful 18 and a half years. I remember all the 1600 children that I have taught, and their families as well, with love and joy. When I think of the Christmas programs, it makes me smile when I see the costumed children who are now in college or finishing college and those that will follow them. I will support whomever is hired to take my place in every way that I can. I love this church and my church family deeply. So many staff people have meant so much to me: Jane DePriest, Kitty Campbell, Dwight Christenbury, Sel Harris, Jon Martin, Bob and Jody. My friends Sarah Altizer and Randy have their own special spot in my heart. Thank you for more than I can say.

I will miss each of the children and youth whom I teach, but I will be cheer-

ing for you from my new spot in the church, in a regular pew.

Blessings, love and joy to each of you!
Betsy

There will be a three week **Sunday School course for prospective and new members**, which will be taught by Jody and Randy in the Session room on May 6, 13, and 20 (9:45-10:40 a.m.). The course is intended to help people know what it means to be a Presbyterian within the one body of Christ. Time will be spent talking about our own faith journeys, Reformed theology, Presbyterian history and government, worship and sacraments, and how our own church is organized for ministry and mission. At the end of this three-week period, those wishing to become members of our church will be given the opportunity to meet with the Session. If you have questions, please call Jody or Randy.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 9 - 13

Meet Shadow, our VBS Bible buddy for Tuesday. We know a shadow is not the real person, so our buddy will remind us of

the Bible point “**God is real**”. How many of you know who Rahab is? We will hear all about her brave actions on Tuesday July 10. If you don’t want to wait that long, you can read about Rahab in Joshua chapter 2. Shadow will also help us remember the Treasure Verse “The Lord is the only true God”. Do you have July 9 – 13 circled on your cal-

endar? Look soon for sign-up forms in the church pews and next month in Steeple Views. Adults and Teenagers – you are vital to the success of our program. Please consider helping out this year. Your Bible School team is working hard so you won't have to.

MORGAN'S BOOK DONATED TO FPC

Last year the youth group at Christ Episcopal Church and their advisor Rives Coleman wrote and published a children's book that reflects the struggles and triumphs that Morgan Dunnigan has experienced over the past 18 months. This past winter, Rives Coleman approached the Mission Committee at FPC and asked if we would accept the books as a donation to the church, no strings attached. We have gladly accepted this generous offer from our friends at Christ Episcopal.

The Mission Committee, the Youth Group and other organizations at FPC will, from time-to-time, be offering this book for sale at tables set up around the church (at Kirk Night, for example). The proceeds from the sale will go towards a scholarship for FPC's weekday school program. The book is a great gift for the children in your life and will inspire adults as well.

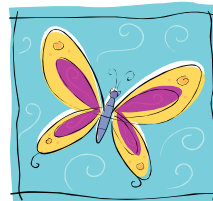
Jim Beard

To All Women of First Presbyterian Church

I need your help. I am putting together a plan that will hopefully help us plan funeral receptions with as much ease as possible. When a friend dies, we all want to do something for the family, and in memory of the deceased, and for many of us that usually means helping with food or flowers to let the grieving family know we care. I would like very

much to take on the responsibility of coordinating any receptions we may have in the future. In order to do so, those of you who would like to help, please give me information in the spaces below. With everyone doing just one thing for the reception, and if we have a good number of volunteers, we should be able to prepare for and carry out the plan with very little effort on anyone's part.

I need people to help set up, prepare food, buy punch or coffee, serve punch or coffee, furnish a centerpiece, contribute money (for things which must be purchased such as flowers, special napkins, etc.) and help clean up. I would like for you to do just one thing so as not to make this burdensome for anyone. Also, with a long list, I will not be calling on you often. I also realize that all of you will not be available for every reception. That is understandable.



The Butterfly Tree

Gifts will be delivered Monday afternoon, May 7. The Youth Jam will participate in the deliveries, but we will need

more help. We will meet in the session room at 4:00 p.m. on May 7. Please see Jody if you would like to assist with this project. Reminder that the gifts were due back Monday April 30!

Youth Sunday will be May 13, which is Mother's Day. The graduating senior class will be invited to speak to us on the theme of "What the Church Means to Me." The youth will lead the entire service, including the prayers, the call to worship, and the anthem. Come support our youth and worship God on this meaningful day in the church's life

Special Program & Speaker for

Sunday School: "Working with Children of Generational Poverty:" 9:45 a.m. on May 27, 2007 in the Reed Classroom. Pam Heath, who works with the Martinsville City School System, will speak to us about the cycle of poverty and she will share with us specific statistics and stories to help us understand how poverty impacts this community.

The JOY Fellowship will have a mystery outing on Wednesday May 2nd. We will meet at the church at 4:30 p.m. Transportation will be provided in the church bus as we go to an unknown, mystery location for dinner. We should return to the church by 7:15, while there is still daylight. JOY Fellowship, which stands for Just Older Youth, includes older adults from our congregation. We are always looking for new members; so if you are an older adult, who enjoys fellowship and a meal with other church members, please join us for this mystery outing. Let the guessing begin about where we will be heading for dinner! If you can attend, please R.S.V.P. to the church office.

Weekday School News

Spring has sprung at the First Presbyterian Weekday School. The children are visiting the Discovery Room each week and learning about many aspects of nature. Keep your fingers crossed that we hatch all of our chicks again this year! Spring fever is all around as evidenced by all of the spring theme artwork that the children are producing. Discovery Room will close on May 10th and will culminate with our annual Art Show held on that day. Parents will have lunch with the children and teachers. Special artwork that the children have made throughout the year will be on display in the Fellowship Hall.

The four-year old class is preparing for their last trip of the year to King's Grant. They are practicing "Jesus Loves Me" in sign language for their big finale! Plans are underway for our end of the year parties and some are making their summer vacation plans. Registration is ongoing and we have very limited space available for the 2007-2008 school year. If you know someone who is interested in enrolling a child, please encourage them to do so, as soon as possible.

The last day of school is May 24th. All of the teachers and I feel privileged to be a part of the lives of these precious children.

Sincerely,
Melissa White