



**Presbyterian Web Sites:**

Presbytery of the Peaks: [www.peakspresbytery.org](http://www.peakspresbytery.org)  
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic: [www.synatlantic.org](http://www.synatlantic.org)  
Presbyterian Church (USA): [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)  
Pby. Disaster Assistance: [www.pcusa.org/pda/](http://www.pcusa.org/pda/)  
Presbyterian Today: [www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today](http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today)  
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*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



# STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

November, 2007

Martinsville, Virginia

## From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

Giacomo Puccini was an Italian operatic composer, who wrote such works as *Madame Butterfly*, *La Boheme*, and *La Tosca*. In 1922 Puccini was stricken with cancer and decided to write one more opera entitled *Turandot*. "But suppose you die?" remarked his students. "Oh," Puccini responded, "my disciples will finish it."

In 1924 Puccini died, and his disciples did indeed finish his opera. The premiere took place in Milan, Italy at La Scala Opera House, under the baton of Puccini's best student, Arturo Toscanini. The performance proceeded to that point where Puccini had abruptly ended. Toscanini paused and remarked to the audience, "Thus far, the master wrote and then the master died. Toscanini then picked up the baton and shouted out to the audience, "But his disciples finished his music."

That story resonates with our own experience as rooted in Christ Jesus. Although our Master died (yet, was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven!), Christ Jesus expects his disciples to finish the work he began while here on earth. His task was to seek and to do the Father's will, and that job description is now laid upon our shoulders.

In the Book of Order of our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we read that The Church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all humanity. The Church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality which God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. The new reality revealed in Jesus Christ is the new humanity, a new creation, a new beginning for human life in the world: sin is for

given; reconciliation is accomplished; the dividing walls of hostility are torn down. The Church is the body of Christ, both in its corporate life and in the lives of its individual members, and is called give shape and substance to this truth. (G-3.0200)

Thus far, the Master wrote, spoke, and served. Now, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as disciples of the living Christ, we strive to finish the music that he set in motion. We are intentional about carrying on our Lord Jesus ministry of love and reconciliation. Someone has said, that we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ as we take the Gospel and share it in the world.

It is highly significant that, in the very same month we celebrate Thanksgiving, we also emphasize stewardship. We not only reflect on all of the blessings we have received from the Lord, we also respond with gratitude and strive to give as we have received. As we move towards New Consecration Sunday on November 11, and from there build a faith-based budget for 2008, let us be ever mindful of our Master's work. And then, let us do our part as his disciples to finish or, at least continue his work in this community to the best of our ability. Working, serving, and giving together, in the name of our Lord Jesus, we can accomplish a great deal for the kingdom of God in 2008.

We have a God-given opportunity set before us to do our part to further Christ's ministry. May our response echo Isaiah's own words:  
"Here am I; send me!" (Isa. 6:8)  
In Christ's love,  
Randy

## Word from the Associate Pastor:

November has now arrived: the holiday season is upon us. It is time to put away our Jack-o-Lanterns and Halloween costumes. Soon we will be barraged with advertisements telling us how we need to stuff our stockings with their new products. This month, of course, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving.

Did you know when Thanksgiving officially began? In elementary school, all of us heard about how the Pilgrims celebrated a time of thanksgiving when they first entered the new world. But did you know that Thanksgiving was not an officially recognized national holiday until 1863?

Abraham Lincoln established the holiday in the middle of the Civil War, which was perhaps the darkest hour in the history of our entire nation. What a bold, daring move! Lincoln reminded our country of gratitude at a time when we, as a nation, were bitterly divided.

Here is a portion of Lincoln's touching Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1863: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand, which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently

and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwells in the heavens."

It makes me proud to see how Lincoln faced adversity with courage and conviction. In Lincoln's day, it would have been easy to give in to despair amidst all the challenges our nation faced, but he chose instead to remain positive. We face our own challenges today. The economy of this community is facing a downturn. The war in Iraq continues, and peace and stability remain elusive.

People are more over scheduled than ever, feeling pulled in too many directions. Unfortunately God often takes a back seat in our over scheduled lives. I think if we, like Lincoln, look to God for our many blessings, our perspective on life will be properly balanced. There are indeed many reasons for offering praise to our Lord. Thanks be to God!

Peace in Christ,

Jody



## Happy Birthday in November to:

- 3 Elizabeth Ferrell, Bill Hensley, Mildred Moorman
- 5 Kim Snyder, Neil Tatum
- 8 Donna Lawhon
- 10 Kathy Washburn
- 11 Leon Gunter, Elizabeth Wotring
- 13 David McConnell
- 15 Norma Cumberledge, Hank Moore
- 16 Sharon Rakes
- 18 Ruth Easley, Donna King

- 19 Susan Bowles
- 20 Sam Hurt
- 21 Jim Baker, Henry Moore
- 22 Cliff Campbell
- 23 Sue Benfield
- 24 Judy Ware
- 25 Jean Hill, Ed Pace
- 27 Margaret Clanton, Joe DeVault,  
Margaret Knight, Analisa O'Toole,  
Leanna Blevins
- 28 Katie Krauss
- 30 Steve Mahoney

**and in December to:**

- 1 Anne Vipperman, Morgan Haley
- 2 Margaret Hotchkiss, Erik Stegall
- 3 Dru Rothrock
- 4 Ashby Pritchett, Debra Easley
- 5 Mary Mac Knighton
- 6 Wallace Haskins, Keith Sanders,  
Roslyn Ramsey, Katherine Lester
- 8 Lyn Davis
- 9 Joan Montgomery, Chris Wingfield,  
Jack Adkins

**SYMPATHY** of the congregation is extended to Leon, Margee, and Ibby Gunter on the death of Leon's brother, Donald Shockley Gunter, September 23, 2007, in Stuart, Virginia.

**SYMPATHY** of the congregation is extended to Logan and Victoria Esarey on the death of Logan's father, William Logan Esarey, October 15, 20-07, in Charleston, South Carolina.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Bobby and Carey Ballard on the birth of their son, Aaron Christopher Ballard, on October 8, 200. Marge Dunn is the proud great grandmother!

The Martinsville-Henry County Ministerial Association will have its **Annual Pre-Thanksgiving worship service** on Sunday, November 11, 4:00 p.m., at the Jerusalem Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Highway 57 (the right-hand side as you head towards Chatham). The preacher for this special service will be the Reverend Ken Hughes, who is the pastor at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church. Please plan to attend this special gathering of the saints in this part of God's kingdom and enjoy the rich Christian fellowship.



**Children and Youth Music**

**"Christmas in Reverse"**

Uppermost in my mind these days is our children's pageant, *Christmas in Reverse!* It will be presented on **Sunday evening, December 2nd, at 7 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. A nursery will be provided and refreshments will be shared afterward.

After reading 32 plays, I finally found one that I absolutely adore! Good things come to those who wait and Jesus' birth is not only the good part, but the **BEST** part!! This play is presented in a very interesting way that will not be divulged until playtime.

But suffice it to say, there will be a host of 38 performers from Kindergarten through high school, and dancers, and singers, and special effects never before seen. In the Fellowship Hall! There will also be cameo performances by some very special people you will not believe your eyes!!

The best part is an original telling of our need for the birth of the Savior of the World. I think this play will be a great beginning for you and your family to begin to focus on the central most important part of Christmas-Jesus birth. I

promise you will go out into the December night with the songs in your heart, and the joy of Christmas foremost in your mind. Parents, please note that we will rehearse on two Saturdays in November: November 10th and November 17th.

### **Music Together**

We are having a ball in Music Together. With a large group of boys and girls and wonderful Moms, Dads and Grandmoms, the music is spectacular. We will be celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas joyfully as we do all things. Come by and join in the fun. You don't have to have a little one to come and make music with us.

### **Kindermusik I and II**

The children are doing wonderful things in both groups. Kinder I is exploring all the sounds in our environments starting from the sounds we make to additional levels in outward concentric circles. We are very interested in steady beat! Kinder II girls are becoming consummate dulcimer players. They are quite impressive!!

We are reading an entire octave very well and beginning to compose our own rhythm patterns and beginning songs. I am very proud of them~

### **High School Ringers**

The group of six teens is doing a great job practicing and preparing music for worship. In our Sunday afternoon practices, there is a lot of laughter, fellowship, and music making. These are very talented young people who give to their church with grateful hearts.

In closing, I hope that this Thanksgiving is filled with joy and love for you and your family. I wish the blessings of fall and the joy that is ours through the greatest blessing of all-our Savior Jesus Christ.

In joy,  
Betsy

### **Clean-Up Day**

Come one, come all. Enjoy the fellowship of your fellow workers. On November 17, we will have our Fall Clean-Up Day. Hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, with lunch served in the Fellowship Hall for those participating. This is our chance to spruce up our facilities for the Christmas season. There will be many tasks needing our attention, so please come.

Bring rakes, tarps, leaf blowers, trimming tools, and any other outside tools that you may have, if you can work outdoors.

Report to the kitchen area where a list of tasks too numerous to list here will await you. Cleaning items will be provided. You provide the elbow grease. Thanks in advance.



**Christ the King Sunday:** November 25 is Christ the King Sunday, which is the last Sunday in the liturgical year.

The following week, the new liturgical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent. Christ the King Sunday acknowledges that Christ is Lord of all creation.

Even though earthly powers have some limited power in this world, everyone is ultimately subject to Christ's sovereign plan and rule. This Sunday, we celebrate that divine justice will overcome all obstacles and ultimately have its way.

**Advent Breakfast:** An Advent Breakfast will be on Sunday, December 2, at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring the whole family! We will trim the Christmas tree that morning. Please bring any ornaments your family would like to add to the tree.

## **The Tempo Our Musical Pulse**

### **Summer Stretch**

You might find it strange that I title this article using Summer Stretch as a part of it. This past Summer Stretch was indeed an interesting one because of my hospital stay in Roanoke. This summer's stretch included new leadership for the Chancel Choir and for the Sanctuary Ringers. I appreciate those who stepped up to the plate and helped organize and continue the work of these musical groups. Cynthia Dobrinski, Betty Stanley and Sandra Ford kept the Chancel Choir operating on schedule. Janet Fentress, Lynn Pritchett, and other members of the Sanctuary Ringers started and planned the first two months of the new season. Former members of the Chancel Choir came back to help during this time and beyond. Thank You!

After I came home, many members of both groups and others in the congregation provided nightly food for the Chapman family and that was much appreciated. It was nice to answer the door and find supper being catered by a marvelous 'cook.'

The prayer ministry of many in this church and community, the visitation ministry of Randy Stevens, Jody Moore and other persons helped to sustain Beth, Elizabeth and me in this time of intense stress. A church and friends are never more appreciated than in circumstances which happened during this past 'Summer's Stretch.'

### **Corky Retires**

K. Byron Corcoran, the Minister of Music at First United Methodist Church, retired this past summer. Corky served that church well during his 20-plus years of ministry. The community has profited from his ministry as well. Here at First Presbyterian Corky has been a solo-

ist in our programs and his adult choir combined with our choir to present a program of John Rutter Hymns in a hymn festival at both churches.

All who knew Corky personally had an appreciation for his background in college and in the Army Chorus. Many of the musicians who were in the chorus provided guest artists for his 'Five Sundays at Five' programs which were provided for the community. Most persons who knew Corky knew of his love for hunting and golf. I am sure that those two activities will give him much pleasure in his retirement.

On a more personal note, Corky was my friend. When times were tough he provided a friend's ear and advice for me. He helped me secure a teaching position at Liberty University when I took early retirement from a church I had served for 21 1/2 years.

First Methodist will find it difficult to replace Corky's ministry. Our city will miss his influence in so many areas of our life. My best wishes to Corky and Judy in the days ahead.

### **Adult Christmas Music Program**

The Chancel Choir Presents  
A Service of Lessons and Carols  
Sunday Evening, December 16  
6:30 p.m.

### **September Gifts to Memorial Funds General Memorial Fund**

**In memory of Libby Cobb:** Mark & Rebecca Crabtree, Frances P. Elliott, Roger & Jeanne Kleinschmidt, Thomas & Nancy Lesure, Marcia Luggert, Bob & Jackie McLachlan, Eliza Severt, Natalie Shoebridge, Charles & Gladys Sweat, Robert & Prudence Swerlick

### **In memory of Jackie Crouch:**

Hesta & Bob Anderson, Jim & Nancy Baker, Carl & Georgette Bishop, Frances Clark, Glenn & Darlyne Clark, Vivian Clark, Patsy Clarke, Toy & Joe Cobbe, Doyle & Aliysa Cockram, G.W. Copenhaver, Sr., Mickie Cox, Norma Cumberledge, Juanita Daniel, Milt & Nancy Davis, Bob & Arlene Dunn, Buck & Helen Flythe, Bill & Connie Garrett, John Gress, Bill & Fran Hensley, Nancy Hughes, Eleanor Kallam, Lanie Loos, Gladys Lowe, Laura McGee, Bob & Jackie McLachlan, June Mechum, Pat Petty, Retta Sheppard, Betty & Rodney Smith, Ann Spencer, Jim & Myra Stegall, Support Team at Patrick Henry Elementary School, James & Connie Sutton, Buena Thomas, Dot Waleski, Davis & Ina Walker, Pauline Wells, Merle White, Emilie Wooldridge, Anne Wright

### **Music Memorial Fund**

In memory of Libby Cobb: Kitty Neil, Betsy S. Smith

### **A Short Word from the Kitchen Mouse**

Groups who are responsible for organizing events and serving meals in the Fellowship Hall are asked to please take inventory at the conclusion of the event and take any left overs to the Rainbow House, 13 Cleveland Avenue. Call ahead (632-8701) and someone will be at the door to receive the food. Many times food spoils in the refrigerator when it could have been used by women and children at Citizens Against Family Violence.

<p>Our church has been asked to pray for <b>Sara Cole</b> (former daughter-in-law of Buck and Betsy Cole). Prayer telephone number is 1-800-209-9845.</p>
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### **Sunday School Veteran's Advice**

Some weeks back the Older Adult Sunday school class was asked the following questions:

- 1- Why do you come to Sunday School?
- 2- What advice would you give to young parents about Sunday School?

The answer to the first is no surprise for learning and fellowship were neck and neck in the answers. Discussion and habit were some other answers. Now you have got to remember, and I am guessing low I think, that participants in this class probably have 25+ years of Sunday School and they still see its value.

The second questions had varied answers but common themes and I have listed a few.

- Children are so open to learning and we need to take advantage of this in their formative years.
- Children need to learn of God and have him in their lives.
- It is so helpful as children grow up to have a strong Christian base.
- Teach the children the joy of going at an early age.
- The most important part of parenting is role modeling, and Sunday School is a good start.
- Don't ask your children if they want to come to SS. Make it a family tradition that everyone comes. You'll be glad you did.

This advice is given by parents with 25+ years of experience in parenting--advice given from failures and successes.

An old neighbor of ours from the past had this to say,

"I have disposed of all my property to my family. There is one thing more I wish I could give to them, and that is the Christian religion. If they had that and I had not given them one cent, they would be rich. If they have not that, and I had

given them the world, they would be poor."  
Patrick Henry

Doc Altizer  
SS Superintendent



Don't forget that **Daylight**

**Saving Time** ends early morning on Sunday, November 4.

Please remember to set all of your clocks and watches back one hour ("fall back" one hour!) before you go to bed on Saturday. That way you'll be sure to be on time for Sunday School and church at 9:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., respectively!