

STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church † May 2014 † Martinsville, VA

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This will be the last bulk mailing of *Steeple Views* to the entire congregation and friends. We don't have enough addresses to qualify for bulk pricing (200). If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter via first-class mail, please call the church office at 632-3431 to sign up for a free subscription.

If you already receive the e-News Weekly from the church, you will receive a notice when *Steeple Views* has been posted on the web site. If you would like to be added to this list, please email fpcmartinsville@gmail.com or gael.chaney@alumni.duke.edu.

Sign up by May 20 to receive the June issue. Print copies also will be available in different locations around the church.

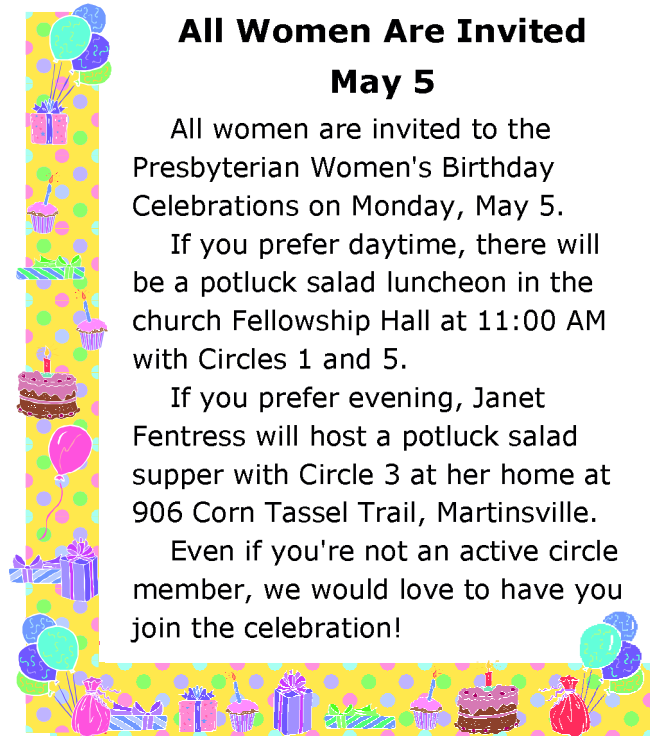
All Women Are Invited May 5

All women are invited to the Presbyterian Women's Birthday Celebrations on Monday, May 5.

If you prefer daytime, there will be a potluck salad luncheon in the church Fellowship Hall at 11:00 AM with Circles 1 and 5.

If you prefer evening, Janet Fentress will host a potluck salad supper with Circle 3 at her home at 906 Corn Tassel Trail, Martinsville.

Even if you're not an active circle member, we would love to have you join the celebration!



Church-wide Clean-up Day Saturday, May 17

The Facilities Committee invites all members of the church to our annual spring cleanup on May 17 from 9 AM until 2 PM. All hard-working church members will be treated to pizza for lunch. So come one, come all and help spruce up First Presbyterian on May 17.

The Living Dead?

Area Presbyterian churches will host an exciting gathering on Wednesday, May 28, when Brian Blount, President of Union Presbyterian Seminary, will speak at Forest Hills Church (725 Beechnut Lane). According to Pastor Jenny, "Brian Blount is, like, rock-star status, as far as I'm concerned!"

"Invasion of the Living Dead: Some Thoughts on Resurrection" is the topic of his talk, which will begin at 7:00 PM. A reception will follow.

Brian K. Blount is president and professor of New Testament at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, and Charlotte, North Carolina. He was called to the position in 2007 after serving for 15 years as the Richard J. Dearborn Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Princeton Theological Seminary.

President Blount's primary work has been in the Gospel of Mark, the Book of Revelation, and cultural studies and hermeneutics (the theory of Biblical text interpretation). He is the author of five books. He and his wife, Sharon, have two grown children.

John and Vera Jane Kuhn Scholarships Available

Applications for the Kuhn Scholarship are currently being accepted and are available on our church web site or by contacting the church office. Applicant must be a church member and must be enrolled in an undergraduate or vocational institution. Applications must be submitted by May 18, 2014. For further information, please contact JoAnne Sanders 276-340-6913.

*Pastor's Reflections***Endings and Beginnings**

On Sunday May 4, we are going to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for NINE children in our church family. In the sign and promise of baptism, we mark and hallow a joyful new beginning—not only in the lives of these children and their families—but for the whole church family.

Baptism is indeed a new beginning. In the gospels, the story of Jesus' own baptism stands at the very beginning of his adult life and inaugurates his ministry. As Presbyterians, we baptize infants—those at the beginning of life—to recognize and celebrate God's claim on our lives from our very beginnings. As Presbyterians, we also baptize children and adults, to remember and give thanks that God is always bringing new beginnings into our lives, whatever our age.

The celebration of new beginning is so dominant in our practice of baptism, that we tend to shy away from the reality that ending is also a part of baptism. The apostle Paul's words to the Romans pose a stunning question: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3). I find my spirit resonating with this reality right now, in this season of ending for me and this chapter of my ministry. There have been a lot of endings in our church family in the past several years, touching us personally as well as collectively and organizationally. I find myself at times still grieving losses, at other times bemoaning changes, and even longing for a sense of normalcy. I confess I have too often identified the Spirit of God as a support and comfort to get through these

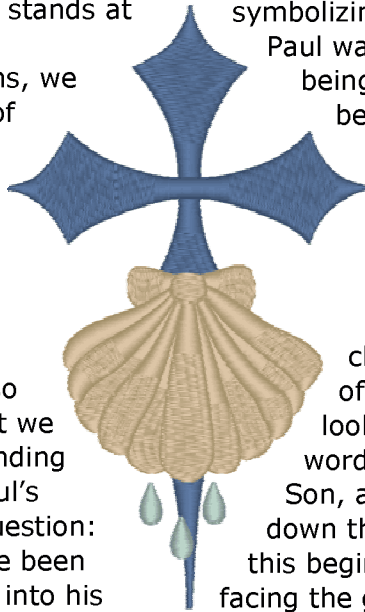
endings, rather than seeing God's presence in the ending itself.

Our picture of baptism is incomplete if we do not also recognize and hallow the endings God is working in our lives. (This is one point we could do well to learn from our brothers and sisters who practice believer's baptism by immersion, symbolizing the dying and rising through waters.)

Paul was very clear about this in his letters: being joined to Christ in baptism isn't going to be an easy road. Being joined to the Body of Christ means we share in Christ's death. Living out our baptismal promises calls us to stand vulnerably and courageously in the midst of change, loss, pain and suffering—just as Christ did.

As I have prepared to baptize these children, my heart leaps with joy as I think of the moment I will embrace them and look into their eyes and speak the ancient words, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" as the water flows down their heads and my hands alike. The joy of this beginning sits right alongside my ache in facing the goodbyes in this ending time. And that's what makes these moments so holy—so sacramental—as we bring the whole of our lives, hearts, spirits to God. As we meet God with all that we are—our vulnerability and courage, our questions and commitments, our beginnings and our endings—the promise of baptism surrounds all of us and joins us together. For as Paul assures us, "if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him." Let the living begin.

Pastor Jenny



Easter Sunday, April 20, lilies and an Easter egg hunt

Worship

Special Sundays in May



May 4 is a Sacramental Sunday!

We will celebrate both the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism will be administered to nine children, ages two to nine, of the Kirby, Russell, and King families. These children and their parents have been meeting together for several weeks with Pastor Jenny to come to know what it means to receive God's gift of grace, at their own levels of understanding.

In the Presbyterian tradition, sacraments are gifts of God to the church, in which the whole community is called to participate. This participation is often evident in the Lord's Supper, as we all partake of the elements of bread and cup. Often that participation is not as embodied in our practice of Baptism—the focus seems to be on the one being baptized. To emphasize the important part of the Body of Christ in this sacrament, EVERYONE is invited to bring a container (bottle, jar, cup) of water from your own home to be mingled together in the water to be used for baptism. You will be invited to bring the water forward as a part of the worship service. Rounding out the fullness of participation, the children who will be baptized will be baking bread on Saturday for the Lord's Supper. Please plan to be present to support these families, the future of God's church.

Sunday, May 11, will be Youth Sunday, which is also Mother's Day. The youth are planning the service with Pastor Jenny as their resource and guide. To support them in this effort, there will only be one service on that day, at 11:00 AM. The youth work hard to prepare for this special service every year.

On **Sunday, May 18**, the Sanctuary Ringers will be ringing for the last time before their summer break.



On **Sunday, May 25**, the day before Memorial Day, the Martinsville-Henry County Honor Unit will present the American and Christian flags prior to our traditional worship service. The ceremony will take place at 10:50. You will want to arrive at church and be seated early in order to witness this ceremonial presentation. Our own John Brown is a member of the Honor Guard and will be participating. Barb Tatum and Betty Hudson will be in the narthex prior to the service with ribbons for any veterans who wish to wear them at worship that day.



We look forward to seeing you in Worship every Sunday, either at 8:30 or 11:00 AM, as we gather in God's presence as His family of faith, to praise Him, hear His Word, and be inspired to serve.



Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering Sunday, May 25

Vacation Bible School July 7–11, 9 AM–Noon

Vacation Bible School will be here in about two months. I hope everyone has put the date on their calendar and soon will sign up your kids as campers or yourself as a volunteer or both. It takes many folks to make a week of VBS a success. Registration forms will be available soon. New this year is a kick-off hot

dog supper on Sunday July 6 at 5:00 PM. There will be food, songs, games, and shirt painting. We hope many will attend this event.

Our chef extraordinaire, JoAnne Sanders, will probably be having a knee replacement about a week before VBS and will not be able to help this year. Therefore we are looking for someone to step into this exciting position. JoAnne will be planning the snacks and helping with the preliminary tasks but we need someone to lead the station each day. If you feel led to help us out, please call Janet Fentress at 618-0153 or 638-3840 or email at jpfentress@hotmail.com.





Coming this Summer!

Camp Peaks Day Camp is coming to Martinsville July 28-August 1. First Presbyterian is sponsoring this exciting program in partnership with Presbytery of the Peaks. Day Camp will run from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Campers do not need to be members of the congregation—Day Camp is open to everyone!

All children entering 1st-5th grades can enjoy this taste of camp. Day camp will be held again at Bill and Sandy Martin's Farm in Axton. They were generous enough to share their farm with us last

year and everyone loved it! The Day Camp program includes Bible stories, worship, games, arts and crafts, nature study, a cook-out, field trips, fellowship and making new friends!

A Director and counselors, trained to run the camp, will come from the Presbytery Camps Workgroup. We will need volunteers from the congregation to help each day and to accompany us on our field trip to Fairy Stone Park on Friday, August 1.

The cost for the week is \$80, with scholarships available. This covers all weekly costs including drinks, a morning snack and s'mores every afternoon. Campers bring their own sack lunches. Brochures are available in the church office. Please register early! There will be a limited number of places and the cut off for registration is July 14th. For more information, call JoAnne Sanders at 276-340-6913.

In Memoriam

Harriet Treagle Mattox

March 8, 1916 - April 25, 2014

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Harriet's daughter Anne Lackey and the rest of the Mattox family. Please keep them in your prayers.

Two New Babies!

Congratulations to Sarah Journals and Benjamin Smith on the birth of their daughter, Everlee Harper Smith, on April 15 in Roanoke, VA, also to proud grandparents Carol and Greg Darnell and aunt Elizabeth Wotring.

Congratulations to Jared and Jamie Eden Peck on the birth of their son, Davis James, on April 16, 2014. Lee Eden is a proud grandmother.

Session Highlights for Stated Meeting March 31, 2014

- Jenny Spivey moderated the meeting that began at 7 p.m.
- Cathy Stone led the Session in devotion and an opening prayer.
- Bob Davis, Moderator of the Pastor Nominating Committee, updated the Session on its recent work that included continuing to interview candidates, listening to sermons and visiting church services. A report will be given to the congregation in April and communicated via other church media.
- It was noted with sadness the deaths of John Kuhn on February 8, 2014, Bobby Wilson on February 28, 2014 and Trula Campbell on March 29, 2014.
- Milt Davis, Church Treasurer, reported on the financial period ending March 2014.
- The Session approved continuing the work to secure the church building. The next project will

include securing the narthex entrance doors similarly to the chapel hall entrance doors. A single keypad, anticipated to be placed outside the narthex entry door adjacent to the side parking lot, will allow for all of the exterior narthex doors to be unlocked simultaneously.

- In that there were agenda items unaddressed at its March weekend retreat, the Session agreed to continue its conversation at an additional retreat meeting to be scheduled for April or early May.
- It was noted that Elder-elect training will take place in April and May.
- Cathy Stone was elected as Commissioner to the Presbytery on May 8 in Roanoke.
- The meeting was closed with prayer by Jenny Spivey at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by Joan Montgomery
Clerk of the Session



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STEEPLEVIEWS May 2014

Our Mission: Share God's Love, Embrace Our Neighbors, Nurture Each Other

STEEPLE VIEWS is published by First Presbyterian Church, Martinsville, VA. Please submit articles and calendar items by the 14th of each month. Email articles to Gael Chaney at gael.chaney@alumni.duke.edu or leave a printed copy in the church office.

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Stewardship: Lang Mauck

Worship: Cathy Stone

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