

August 25, 2022



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Devotional Meditation

Elder, Monica Stevens

August 24, 2022

Filling Your Days

Psalm 1:1-3

The truly happy person doesn't follow wicked advice, doesn't stand on the road of sinners, and doesn't sit with the disrespectful. Instead of doing those things, these persons love the Lord's Instruction, and they recite God's Instruction day and night! They are like a tree planted by streams of water, which bears fruit at just the right time and whose leaves don't fade. Whatever they do succeeds.(CEB)

Have you ever made a 24-hour pie chart of how you spend your day? I haven't, and I doubt many of you have either. On the one hand, it seems like a pointless waste of our precious time, but on the other hand maybe it is something we should seriously consider. Sleep, work, chores, travel, family, and personal time probably take up large chunks of your day, but what fills the rest of the time?

Our psalmist suggests that we should be like a tree planted by a stream of water. Every day the tree goes about the business of growing, processing the sunlight to feed itself through photosynthesis, producing oxygen, and producing fruit. However, to function well and stay healthy, the tree also needs to send out roots to absorb the water from the stream so that every part of the tree is constantly suffused by the water that brings and sustains life.

The psalmist uses this simile to say that those who are truly happy (blessed in the KJV and RSV) are those who are intimately connected with God's Instruction. The Hebrew word that has been translated as Instruction (Law in the KJV and the RSV) is *torah*. The psalmist may have had the Torah, that is, the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy in mind, or in a broader sense *torah* can mean God's will—God's justice, righteousness, and peace. Either way, the psalmist tells us that the truly happy, blessed people are those whose lives are centered on God and God's will.

I have to admit that when I first memorized this Psalm as a pre-teen, my active imagination envisioned monks spending their days in the monastery reading and

chanting scripture, but I have since developed a more realistic concept of what it means to "love God's Instruction" and "recite God's Instruction day and night." One whose life is centered on God experiences God's presence and allows that presence to permeate all aspects of their life. This isn't something that happens overnight or is a one-and done experience. Living in God's presence is cultivated through study, prayer, meditation, participating in worship, participating in a community of believers, and serving God by serving others. For Christians this is called discipleship formation.

For some, church and spiritual life is something that takes place on Sunday morning and is then set aside until the next Sunday. It's like a garment that one can put on when needed and then hung up in a closet, out of sight and out of mind until needed again. That is a utilitarian sort of spiritual life, but it lacks substance and depth. As Christians, we are called into a living relationship with God through the grace of Jesus. We are called to be righteous, to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. The process of discipleship formation is how we cultivate that relationship with God and allow it to permeate every aspect of our lives. Discipleship formation allows us to move beyond "doing" church to "being" the church. We move from viewing our relationship with God as a series of committee meetings and other church obligations to finding strength, sustenance, and purpose for our lives through time spent in God's presence through prayer, worship, and service. We move from a spiritual life that is dry and empty to one that is infused with a sense of joy, energy, love, and commitment and passion to being the community of God. It is the difference in living life in black, white, and shades of grey or living life in gloriously vibrant Technicolor. Discipleship formation creates an awakened and engaged commitment to God and to God's people. What a privilege to be called to share this life with God and one another.

Gracious Father, thank you for creating us and calling us to join you in the work of sharing your love, justice, righteousness, mercy, and peace with the world. Help us to become firmly rooted in you so that we may live healthy, productive and joyful lives in your name and for your glory. Alleluia! Amen.

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The Church is Open for In-Person Worship Service!

The safety of our congregation and community are our highest priority. COVID-19 transmission rates are medium in our area so you may wear a mask based on your personal preference, however, those who are not vaccinated should wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth while anywhere inside the church and sanctuary. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19, should remain at home.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Friday 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.



Please join us for worship this Twelfth Sunday after **Pentecost** at 10:00 AM

Sermon by Elder Monica Stevens

Invitation to Adventure

Based on Acts 2:42-47 and Psalm 100

Liturgist: Chuck Cundiff

Ushers/Greeters: Billy Kirby



Session Meeting, Monday, August 29 at 7 pm

Church office will be closed Monday, September 5, to observe Labor Day.

The WDS will be back in session Tuesday, September 6.

The Presbyterian Women will begin meeting again on Monday, September 12 at 10:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Refreshments will be served. Study books, "Celebrating Sabbath" are available in the church office.

The Grace Network Pumpkin Patch



Volunteers are needed to help unload pumpkins on Saturday, September 24 at 9:00 a.m. The Pumpkin Patch is open Sept 24 - Oct 31 and volunteers are needed to help sell the pumpkins. The times are divided up in shifts. This is a great way to help the community! If you are interested in volunteering, please call Sandi Teague 276-340-6822.



September

4 Monica Stevens
 11 Nancy Davis
 18 Jerri DeVault
 25 Janet Fentress

October

2 Duke Ferrell
 9 Liz Ferrell
 16 Rob King
 23 Shanna King
 30 Elena King

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Family of Elizabeth "Betty" Hendricks, Sue Benfield, Georgette Bishop, Mike Boswell, Catherine Bridges, Jim Brunt (N Davis' brother), Bud Buffkin, Tommy Cobb, Bobby Davis (Milt Davis' son), Neill Ferrill (Sandra Ford), Daniel Handy,

Melanie Hardy, Marvin Hudson, Betty Carol Lamm, Mary Manning, Lauren Prince, Susan Rosser, Laura Stevens, Scott Stevens, Bruce Thomas, Carl Utley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski, persecuted Christians, military service men and women, missionaries, and all refugees and immigrants forced to flee their countries.



Please submit prayer requests to Rita in the church office, [\(276\) 632-3431](tel:2766323431), office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org.

Congregational Care and Fellowship

If you are in need of prayer, a meal, transportation, etc...due to a death in the family or the birth of a baby, please reach out to the Congregational Care and Fellowship committee by contacting Pearl Minter at [276 340-3476](tel:2763403476).

Grace Network Donations

The 3rd quarter 2022 food donation item is **Green Peas** (15 oz.)



Please consider donating extra when you are able to get out and about as your donations will become more important than ever.

Hygiene Items are always needed (optional)

- *Toilet Paper
- *Bath Soap
- *Dish Detergent
- *Feminine Products
- *Toilet Paper
- *Deodorant
- *Deodorant
- *Toothpaste
- *Laundry Detergent

**Items may be brought to church but please call the office to make sure Rita is*

there. Alternatively, you may drop off at Grace Network, Monday - Friday, 9-2 PM



Steeple Views Reminder

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Steeple Views is published weekly on Thursdays. **DEADLINE** for submission of articles is Wednesday evening.

If you have information you want included in Steeple Views, **PLEASE SEND TO:** fpcsteepleviews@gmail.com. For time sensitive announcements, please sent to skirbycwj@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Sharon Kirby, Editor



For updates and announcements, please click on the link below or copy and paste into your web browser:

https://www.peakspresbytery.org/images/2020_Peaks_Postings/PP_Aug18_2020.pdf

Our Mission

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

Printed copies of Steeple Views are available at church. Current and back issues are also on our website:

www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/page.cfm/topic/newsletter

Useful Links

FPC website:

www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/ or www.fpcmartinsvilleVA.org/

FPC online directory: members.instantchurchdirectory.com/

FPC Facebook page: www.facebook.com/FPCMartinsvilleVA

Presbytery of the Peaks: www.peakspresbytery.org/

Presbyterian Church (USA): www.pcusa.org/

Daily Bible Readings: www.presbyterianmission.org/devotion/daily/

Church Office Phone: [276-632-3431](tel:276-632-3431)

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THE SESSION

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Treasurer: Henry Moore

Class of 2022

Brooke Cundiff: Mission/Outreach

Pamela Rakes: Stewardship and Communication

Betty Hudson: Christian Education

Class of 2023

Billy Kirby: Administration

Class of 2024

Pearl Minter: Congregational Care and Fellowship

Neil Tatum: Facilities

Liz Ferrell: Worship

TRUSTEES

2022: Joan Montgomery, Ashby Pritchett

2023: Sandra Ford, Joe DeVault

2024: Duke Ferrell, Milt Davis

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