

June 20, 2024



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Pastor's Corner

Elder Monica Stevens

Growing in God's Kingdom

"Thus says the Lord God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar...On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it, in order that produce boughs and bear fruit...Under it every kind of bird will live in the shade of its branches and nest. All the trees of the field will know that I am the Lord.

I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish..." taken from Ezekiel 17:22-24 (NRSV)

"Jesus also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all seeds on the earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'" Mark 4:30-32 (NRSV)

Ezekiel was among the first of the Israelites carried off into exile in Babylon. When he arrived, God called him to be God's prophet to those in exile. Much of Ezekiel's message decried Israel's faithlessness, disobedience, and political missteps that led to their exile. But God also gave Ezekiel a message of hope and restoration that spoke of the exiles being replanted in their homeland. In God's vision, new life for the exiles was rooted solely in their identity as God's people. Reconnecting to the King of all Creation and rooting their lives in God provided the continuity the exiles needed to be able to return, rebuild, and find their purpose within God's vision. Even though their monarchy would not be

reestablished and they would exist as a conquered nation living under a succession of different empires, they would be able to discover their true identity and highest purpose as citizens of God's kingdom—a kingdom based on God's love, justice, and faithfulness. Centuries after Ezekiel, God brought forth another shoot, this time from the "stump of Jesse," that was planted in Israel in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the parable of the Mustard Seed, Jesus taught that God's kingdom can take root in the most humble and ordinary settings from just a tiny bit of faith. Unlike the soaring images of lofty cedars in Ezekiel's prophecy, Jesus used an image that was very familiar to his audience—the mustard seed and plant.

Jesus' audience would see the humor in his chosen metaphor. Instead of majestic trees, Jesus chose a very common, scrubby, invasive plant that only grew to be about two feet tall. Jesus' message was that like the mustard seed, God's kingdom can grow from tiny beginnings in the most humble, inhospitable, and unexpected of places into a life that provides safety and shelter and growth in God's presence.

What do these passages have to say to us about living in God's kingdom as they relate to the conditions and changes we face in our individual lives and in our life together as a faith community? Consider these observations.

- 1) God has grafted us into citizenship in God's kingdom. God has claimed us, firmly rooted us in God's presence, and nurtured our growth so that God will be able to bless us and bless others through us.
- 2) God is actively at work on our behalf even when we are living through the darkest, most difficult days of our lives. God is with us in whatever kind of exile we find ourselves.
- 3) Through his parables, Jesus calls us to an active role in the kingdom of God.
- 4) We neither understand nor control the growth or the form of God's kingdom, but we are called to encourage the growth that is occurring within and around us.
- 5) Jesus tells us that even if our faith seems insignificant to us, God has the ability to make it grow, thrive, and become something wondrous.
- 6) Don't set limits on God's kingdom. It can sprout in the most unlikely of places, spread like wildfire, and thrive even in the harshest conditions.
- 7) We are constantly nurtured and sustained by God. We are blessed to be

a blessing to others and thus hasten the completion of God's kingdom on earth. Thanks be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit for the love that has rooted us, the grace that nurtures us, and the power that causes us to grow and thrive. May we all share what has been rooted within us and so be a blessing to others.



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

Sermon by Pastor Bea

based upon Job 38:1-11 and Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

Liturgist: Gale Buck

Ushers/Greeters: Monty and Joan Montgomery

Liturgist Schedule

June

23 Gale Buck

30 Janet Fentress

July

7 Pearl Minter

14 Jerri DeVault

21 Joe DeVault

28 Janet Fentress

August

4 Cindy Edgerton
11 ***no liturgist needed***
18 Duke Ferrell
25 Billy Kirby

September

1 Liz Ferrell
8 ***no liturgist needed***
15 Jack Kirby
22 Sharon Kirby
29 Ione Linker

Be Aware!

**Protect yourself
from scammers!**

Watch for emails, texts or calls that might be fraudulent and do not trust communications (even if they sound legitimate) that ask for personal information, money or gift cards.

You will NEVER get an email from the church or your pastor asking you to purchase gift cards because we are busy or in a meeting.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday 9:30-3pm
Friday Closed

If you need to conduct office business outside these hours, please call to make an appointment ([276-632-3431](tel:276-632-3431)). Voicemail will be monitored.



ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The Martinsville-Henry County After 3 Summer Camp, sponsored by P & HCC, will run **Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, June 2-28 and July 8-19** (no camp July 1-5). They will use the fellowship hall and kitchen areas so please keep this in mind if you schedule meetings or activities.



Two cents a meal offering will be collected this Sunday, June 23.

A Congregational Meeting will follow the worship service **June 23** for the purpose of electing a nominating committee who shall recruit elder and trustee candidates for the Class of 2027.

It's almost time...!

Peaks Reading Together

Just Mercy
A Story of Justice and Redemption
Bryan Stevenson

PRESBYTERY OF THE PEAKS BOOK STUDY

On the four Mondays during the month of June, join with other Peaks Presbytery members to discuss Bryan Stevenson's

MONDAY JUNE 3:
INTRODUCTION THROUGH CHAPTER 3
JUNE 10:
CHAPTERS 4 - 7
JUNE 17:
CHAPTERS 8 - 12

book, "Just Mercy," and
be encouraged in
seeking justice for all.

JUNE 24:
CHAPTERS 13 - 16
7:30PM TO 8:30PM

ZOOM ID: 844 2443 7027
PASSCODE: 489354

RACIAL EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE
JUSTICE AND MERCY COMMISSION



Join us again this summer for

COMMUNITY

WORSHIP

June 9 - Grace Presbyterian @ 11 am

218 Fayette Street, Martinsville, VA

July 14 - First Presbyterian Martinsville @ 10 am

1901 Patrick Henry Avenue, Martinsville, VA

August 11 - Forest Hills Presbyterian @ 11 am

725 Beechnut Lane, Martinsville, VA

September 8 - First Presbyterian Collinsville @ 11 am

4500 King's Mountain Road. Collinsville, VA

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Light refreshments will be served
following each service.



Community Breakfast

Team leaders and schedule for the remainder of the year

- July 20 **NEED LEADER**
 - August 17 **Suzan & Bill Kirby**
 - September 21 **Brooke & Chuck Cundiff**
 - October 19 **Billy & Sharon Kirby**
 - November 16 **Nancy & Henry Moore**
 - December 21 **Kym & Neil Tatum**
 - January 18 **NEED LEADER**
-

back2school

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

There are many opportunities to let your gifts shine during this great event.

Registration

- Saturday, July 13 (noon – 3pm) at The Uptown Ministry Center
- Tuesday, July 23 (6-8 pm) at The Uptown Ministry Center

Pack the Bus

- At Walmart, Martinsville July 19-21 . Shifts TBD
(City Cluster's supplies are from Holy Trinity Lutheran)

Filling Backpacks

- At the Future Home of Community Fellowship
700 Commerce Court, Martinsville
Tuesday, July 30 (6:00 pm) All are welcome!
(City Cluster back pack filling Wed. 31 at 5pm)

The Big Event

- At The Uptown Ministry Center (Behind Rania's)
Saturday, August 3 (7:30 am) Shifts will be determined

If you can help, please email: Tracy Hinchcliff
tracy.hinchcliff@gracenetworkmhc.org or call 276-403-4222.

Lemonade on the Lawn



Will be the following Sundays:

July 14

Aug 18

Sep 15

Happy June Birthdays!

- 1** Gage Lawson, Reid Lawson
- 3** Riley Wood
- 8** Shanna King
- 9** Susan Smith
- 10** Betty Hudson, Cindy Edgerton
- 12** Lt. Col. David King
- 16** Ainsley Russell
- 18** Susan Pilson
- 23** Basil Boyd, David Price
- 24** Dr. Denny Casey
- 26** Ann Reaser
- 29** Caroline Kirby



These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Family of Carol Ballard (M. Dunn), Anne Abercrombie, Sue Benfield, Jerry Bishop, Jackie Bloxom (P. Stanley), Marilyn & Ernest Bremner, Bud Buffkin, Evelyn Cannaday, Cathie Carter (B. Tatum), Bob Chapman, Joel Christman (B. Stanley), April Cox (B. Tatum), Nancy Davis, Steve Edgerton, Marge Dunn, Neill Ferrill (S. Ford), Gary Francisco (Shanna King's Father), Juanita Griffin (J & B Williams), Daniel Handy, Marvin Hudson, Harold Lamm, Mary Manning, Maggie Pilson, Susan Rosser, Becky Stone Sawyers (L. Pritchett), Dee Moore Smith, Laura Stevens, Scott Stevens, Barbara Tatum, Bruce Thomas, Nathan Toms (A. Madonia), Carl Utley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski, persecuted Christians, military service men and women, missionaries, and all refugees and immigrants forced to flee their countries.



Congregational Care and Fellowship

Look who received a prayer shawl!



If you are in need of a [prayer shawl](#), or know someone that could use one, please pick one up from the narthex and be sure to sign it out. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pearl Minter.

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 at [276 340-3476](tel:2763403476).

Grace Network Donations

**2nd quarter food donation item is
Potato products (boxed mashed, scalloped)**



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
- *Deodorant
- *Toothpaste
- *Laundry Detergent

**Items may be brought to the church or dropped 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 send to skirbycwj@gmail.com

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

Presbytery of the Peaks

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

<https://www.peakspresbytery.org/peaks-postings/>

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)

Our mailing address is:

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STAFF

Rev. Bea Miller, Interim Pastor, rev.millerb@gmail.com
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Peter Marshall, Worship Technology Coordinator,
worshiptechnology@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

THE SESSION

Clerk: Nancy Baker
Treasurer: Henry Moore

Class of 2024

Pearl Minter: Congregational Care and Fellowship
Neil Tatum: Facilities
Liz Ferrell: Worship

Class of 2025

Ron Rebman: Mission/Outreach
Sue Legg: Stewardship and Communication
Monica Stevens: Christian Education

Class of 2026

Billy Kirby: Administration
Susan Pilson: Communication
Anne Madonia: Think Tank

TRUSTEES

2024: Duke Ferrell, Milt Davis
2025: William Kirby, Gale Legg
2026: Sharon Kirby, Dru Rothrock

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