

September 24, 2020



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Pastor's Corner

"Be still and know that I am God! I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

Prayer labyrinths have been used in different ways throughout the world for generations. I myself became aware of them at a Presbyterian retreat center in Texas known as MO Ranch. MO Ranch, especially during the Summer, is a virtual beehive of young energy and excitement. With all that activity around you might think it would be hard to find the time or place for meditative communing with God. But God's presence abounds around every corner, and one of the best places for that is a huge labyrinth in the woods by the river.

Prayer labyrinths are a series of mazes that do not offer dead ends, wrong turns, or endless complications. Instead, they offer a chance, while walking through, to focus on the journey of our lives past, present, and future.

The MO Ranch labyrinth offers intermittent stops where one might meditate on major crossroads of one's life and where you saw God active in those times. As you enter the maze, the hope is that the details and distractions of life can be released and one's heart can be open to God. As you journey to the center, your focus now turns to receiving a word from God about choices from the past and a way to make ready for a charge to the future. Once that meditation and prayer to God happen in the center, the journey back is a joining of hearts with God and a charge for the days to come.

The Psalmist in Psalm 46 writes about a time in his life where distractions, noise, and chaos seem so overwhelming that its difficult to function. Sounds familiar, doesn't it. In these days of uncertainty, it's time for us all to be quiet and listen for a word from God. Slow down. Stay in prayer. And know how to commune with God by giving your heart to the Almighty.

In God's Grace,

Pastor Mark

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Be sure to join the Facebook live worship service this Sunday at 10 AM. The info will be sent via text message and will include the link to the service. You may also join by navigating to our Facebook page, scrolling down to the "videos" section of the page and simply clicking on the video at 10 AM.

sermon by Pastor Mark Hinchcliff

God's Calling You, Answer

Based upon Matthew 21:23-32 and Exodus 17:1-7



*COVID is not stopping the pumpkins! :) They will be arriving on **September 25 at 4 pm** and we are so excited to bring the patch once again to our community.*

*We will need help with the unloading of the pumpkins on the **25th** and we will need help to man the patch on the First Presbyterian Church Day which is **October 17th** from 9-5. You can work a 2-hour interval. Please contact Tracy at 409-330-0847 or tracy.hinchcliff@gracenetnetworkmhc.org if you are interested in helping out at the most cheerful place of the fall! :)*

Happy Pumpkins!

Announcements

Our first in-person worship is planned for October 4 at 10:00 a.m. We will not, however, offer Sunday school or youth programs. The nursery will not be open. All children must remain in the sanctuary with their families. Communion will be celebrated. Individual wafer and juice sets will be provided for each person and will be located in the pews.

Opening Soon But We Need YOU! We have set a tentative re-gathering date of Sunday, October 4, in person 2020 but we still need volunteers! As we prepare to reopen parts of the building, we are still in need of your help. If you are healthy and are not at-risk, please consider volunteering. Below you will see brief descriptions of some of the main responsibilities:

1. Building Team - will prepare the building by posting signs, closing off open spaces and rooms; taping off some areas of the building; the sanctuary and restrooms will be marked for physical distancing

2. Cleaning Team - clean and disinfect before and after services; work with staff to make sure all the commonly touched surfaces and furnishings are cleaned regularly

3. Screeners - screen congregants as they enter the narthex; check temperature by using a digital thermometer; communicate health guidelines and best practices; facilitate use of hand sanitizer dispenser; provide masks and gloves as need

4. Ushers - welcome congregants and work with screeners on Sunday morning to assist with safe distancing and seating; prepare collection plates, count offerings, deposit collection; take names of everyone in the service. More detailed descriptions will be provided with a checklist for each area.

Please let Rita (632-3431, ritaofficefpc@gmail.com) know which teams(s) you are willing to serve by Sunday, September 20. We will then schedule training sessions for each team using Zoom or telephone.

Presbytery of the Peaks

Applications for the **Stated Clerk for Presbytery of the Peaks** are being accepted through September 29, 2020. The Stated Clerk is elected for a four-year term and is expected to work up to ten hours per week at an annual stipend of \$12,100, plus professional expenses. See Nancy Baker if you are interested in seeing the Position Description for the Stated Clerk, Qualifications for the Stated Clerk, and the Stated Clerk Application Form. This information will also be shared through the ***Peaks Postings***.

Adult Sunday School

Everyone Should Know

Exodus

V. Steven Parrish



Join us for the next adult Sunday school class beginning **August 23**.

(excerpt from the PCUSA bookstore webpage)

"The story of the Exodus has emboldened oppressed people for centuries. In it, God empowers human striving for freedom. Steven Parrish introduces six themes that reveal the character of God. God listened to the captives' suffering and responded. Through the wilderness, God sustained the people with food, water, and law. God promised to be present to the people. And God is merciful and gracious, as demonstrated in the golden calf episode. This volume includes material for participants and guides for leading all six sessions."

The class meets Sundays at 9:00 AM by Zoom. Contact Denny Casey d.a.casey@comcast.net for a book and to get your Zoom invite.

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/images/2020_Peaks_Postings/PP_Aug18_2020.pdf

Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

Doc Altizer, Carl and Georgette Bishop, Marilyn Bremner (S. Ford), Jim Brunt (N. Davis' brother), Tommy Cobb (M. Dunn), Sandra Bryson Cox, Mallory Hall-DeSantis (B. Tatum), Daniel Handy, Helen Hawkes, Anne Holland (sister of Pearl Minter), Betty Carol Lamm, Eddie Levi, Mary Manning, Laura Stevens Milton, Regenia Noel (M. Stevens), Anne Peterson, Gavin Russell, Gene Stanley, Charlotte Walker (JoAnne Sanders' mother), persecuted Christians and all troops in defense of freedom throughout the world.



Please submit prayer requests to Rita in the church office, (276) 632-3431, office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org.

Grace Network

Hi, Friends

As the Director of Grace Network, I wanted to give you an update what we are doing for our community. There are so many of you that support Grace in many ways and we are grateful. Each month this summer from the time we had to close down due to ofCovid in March, we have been phasing in our services gradually to create the safest environment we could possibly have in order to protect our clients and our volunteers. We are now open 5 days a week serving clients by appointment and as of this week, we have reopened our food pantry. During the summer, we were part of the food box distribution program sponsored by the Harvest Foundation and the Henry County Food Bank, but for September, we decided it was safe enough and we had enough volunteers willing to come back that we were able to open our food pantry back up with our regular service there. We are also working with the City of Martinsville to help those facing cutoffs or evictions due to the pandemic with funds granted to us by the Cares Act from the state. We have been able to help over 300 households with over \$44,000 in assistance either from the Cares Act or our funds from the community through Grace Network just this summer. We will continue to work with our community partners to help our clients find resources as we move to better times. The unemployment rate for Martinsville is back up to over 15% which is worse than the rest of Virginia at about 9%. So we continue to struggle in our community, but I for one am very proud of the resources that are available in helping those in need.

Your contributions to our pantry will be most important as we move forward and we continue to be grateful for the monetary support from First Presbyterian Church. I wanted to let you know that your donations are being used well and wisely and are changing the lives of those suffering. The assigned item for FPC moving into October will be Peanut Butter. We appreciate your donations. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate in contacting me.

Blessings, Tracy.

Please remember

Peanut Butter

Please stay safe, stay healthy

The new food item for First Presbyterian Church for the 4th quarter is **18 oz.**

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

Hygiene Items - We are always in need of these items!

SEPTEMBER Dish Detergent, Deodorant, Laundry Detergent

OCTOBER Toilet Paper, Feminine Products, Deodorant

NOVEMBER Bath Soap, Toilet Paper, Toothpaste

DECEMBER Dish Detergent, Deodorant, 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*

Blessings, Tracy

A Note from the the Editor

Although regular church services have been cancelled and we are no longer meeting in person, I hope we all try to stay in touch with one another using any possible medium. Phone calls, face time, emails, etc. It is important that we look after one another during these difficult times and it's good to know we are not alone. While there are no regular happenings to report on, I would like to send out Steeple Views on a weekly basis so please feel free to share any news or updates with me and I will do my best to include them in the newsletter. skirbycwj@gmail.com or 276 806-9709.

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/

Steeple Views is published. **DEADLINE** for submission of articles is Tuesday evening. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Sharon Kirby, Editor

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THE SESSION

Moderator: Rev. Mark Hinchcliff

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Treasurer: Henry Moore

Class of 2020

Denny Casey: Christian Education

Ron Rebman: Administration

Kym Tatum: Fellowship

Class of 2021

Lynn Pritchett: Stewardship

Rob King

Monica Stevens: Worship

Class of 2022

Brooke Cundiff: Mission/Outreach

Pamela Rakes: Communications

Betty Hudson: Congregational Care

TRUSTEES

2020: Milton Davis, Duke Ferrell

2021: David Garland, Ed Linker

2022: Joan Montgomery, Ashby Pritchett

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