



# Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

**December 2015**

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## *In Memoriam*



### **Eleanor Marshall Woody**

Our dear friend Eleanor Woody joined the Church Triumphant on Thursday, November 19. She had been a member of our First Presbyterian Church family since September 1993. Our deepest sympathy is extended to her family and friends. A memorial service will be held at King's Grant Victory Chapel on **Tuesday, December 8, at 2:00 PM.** (An obituary is not available at this time.)

### **Angel Tree Project Deadline Dec. 6**

For many years, our congregation has made Christmas brighter for several area families through our Angel Tree Project, and this year is no different. The response from the first two Sundays was very positive, and there are only a few angels left. The last Sunday the trees will be out is **November 29**. Please return wrapped and tagged gifts to the church by Sunday, **December 6** and leave them in the Session Room. Turn in monetary donations to the office or place a designated check in the offering plate.



Counselors at Patrick Henry and Albert Harris Elementary Schools select

deserving students and families who might not receive special gifts at this time. The families are varied. One family faced the loss of a mother recently, and the father is doing his best to work and provide a stable home for his children. We all remember one year the child who, when asked if Santa came, responded, "No, but the church did." Our efforts can make a difference for a child.

Families are color-coded, and children's age and sex are given, along with clothing sizes. There are four angels representing four gifts for each child. We chose to list a shirt, pants, shoes, and a toy. The counselors report needs for winter coats and outerwear plus underwear and pajamas. We will prepare food baskets to send to each family as well.

The toy suggestions are just that. You do not have to buy everything listed but may choose from that list or select something else. Soccer balls and basketballs are always good. The counselors suggest educational materials or things that would stimulate imagination or critical thinking. Connect Four is an excellent game for all ages, is not expensive and helps develop thinking skills. There are others like that.

Baskets and gifts will be delivered **December 15**. Contact Nancy Baker ([nbaker08@comcast.net](mailto:nbaker08@comcast.net)) if you would like to help deliver or to get more information. Thank you for your generous support of this project, and thank you to Clyde Hill for building the Angel Trees.

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*Pastor's Corner*

## **Charged Up, or Down for the Count?**

*At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and Jesus was in the desert forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him. Mark 1:13 (NIV)*

It was almost thirty years ago, but it seems like yesterday, when I remember getting a frantic telephone call from my father saying he had come home to find my diabetic mother passed out on the floor and he wasn't sure if she was breathing! "Where are you? Can you meet me at the hospital?" he said with real fear in his voice. We had dealt with hospital scares with my mother before but something about this time was different. I wanted to be there, I wanted to help, but I was almost an hour away and I felt helpless!

By the time I arrived at the hospital my mother was not there but a message was given to me to call home to speak with my father. I think I knew at the time what that meant—which my father confirmed—she had passed! I should have gotten in my car and immediately driven to the house but I froze. I didn't know what to say or what to do; I just stalled out and couldn't act. I look back now and I am not proud of the way I responded. I should have been the strong one to go and support my father and my family, but I wasn't!



As I sat stunned by the phone in the Emergency Room of the hospital a nurse came over and put her arm around me and asked if she could pray. Up until that moment my sense of helplessness had turned to hopelessness, but an angel was there to minister to me. My sense of paralysis slowly wore off, and I was able to go be with my family.

Helplessness is a feeling that everyone has to deal with at some time or another in our lives. Feelings themselves aren't bad, evil, or destructive. Remember, we cannot brand our feelings one way or another. They are feelings, emotions, given to us as a gift from a creative and loving God. The issue with any feeling, especially helplessness, is what you do with it after it becomes a reality in your life. Helplessness can lead to paralysis in your life and render you in a state of depression unable to move forward.

With tragic events all around us like the Paris shootings, and with personal loss right here at home, a sense of helplessness could send some into hopelessness. Loneliness around the holidays from recent loss may seem overwhelming, but remember Jesus in the desert: in a time of extreme trial he was ministered to, angels strengthened and encouraged him to carry on. So the next time you go through a feeling of helplessness, what will bring you hope? Find someone whom you trust, with whom you can talk, someone who can bring you perspective. My sense is that this church community might just be the reminder of God's hope and strength. Look for that renewal to move you out of that funk—Jesus awaits your call!

In Christ's mercy,  
*Pastor Mark*

**Christmas Music Worship Service**  
**Sunday, Dec. 13, 11:00 AM**



**Chancel Choir & Sanctuary Ringers**  
**There will be NO 8:30 service that day.**

*Weekday School News*

**Substitute Teacher Needed**

The Weekday School has had a great Fall. We have had visits from the Police and Fire departments which were both big hits with the children!

Our Fall program was a success and now everyone is getting geared up for the Christmas season ! We are looking for people that may be interested in being a "go to" substitute teacher. Please let us know if you are interested. Always remember if you hear of anyone needing a fabulous, loving preschool for their child or grandchild we would be glad to talk with them. Come visit when you can!

Mary Lewis Johnston



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### **New Elder Elected**

At a called meeting of the congregation on November 8, Bill Kirby (the elder) was elected to serve as ruling elder to fill the unexpired term of Virginia Truitt, who moved away.

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### **Check the Kitchen for your Dishes**

There are quite a few unclaimed dishes in the Marge Dunn Kitchen. Please stop by and look to see if any belong to you, even if you don't think you're missing a dish.

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## Memorial Gifts to the Church

### In Memory of William Banks Peterson

Connie and William C. Garrett, Jr.  
Gwendolyn Sowden  
Judge Bill and Cathy Stone

### In Memory of Glenna Q. Harmeyer

Benjamin D. Beeler  
Sonny and Sue Benfield  
Walter and Helen Flythe  
Connie and William C. Garrett, Jr.  
Carole G. Kiser  
Dr. and Mrs. H. E. Kiser, Jr.  
Gwendolyn Sowden  
Judge Bill and Cathy Stone

- 
- 1 Anne Vipperman Madonia
  - 2 Carol Belcher
  - 3 Dru Rothrock
  - 4 Ashby Pritchett
  - 6 Ken Wilson, Keith Sanders
  - 8 Lyn Davis
  - 9 Joan Montgomery, Chris Wingfield,  
Jack Adkins
  - 10 Marion Miller
  - 11 K.J. Joyce
  - 14 Mervin King
  - 15 Pat Baumann, Kim Boyd
  - 17 Matthew Mason
  - 18 Bill Kirby
  - 20 Claire Adkins, Evan Hatchett
  - 22 Vera Jane Kuhn, Grayson Russell
  - 24 Jackie McLachlan
  - 26 Smith Chaney
  - 27 Gael Chaney, Nancy Moore, Cathy Stone
  - 28 Doc Altizer, Brenda Williams
  - 29 Ken Smith, Denise Unterbrink

*Please let us know of any errors or omissions.*



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

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Mission: Denny Casey  
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