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Presbytery of the Peaks: www.peakspresbytery.org
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic: www.synatlantic.org
Presbyterian Church (USA): www.pcusa.org
Pby. Disaster Assistance: www.pcusa.org/pda/
Presbyterian Today: www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today
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*Join us for a cup
of coffee every Sunday
morning in the kitchen
before Church School*

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STEEPLE VIEWS

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*Our Mission is to:
Share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other.*

STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

October, 2010

Martinsville, Virginia

From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

A while back, I came across this story that actor Kevin Bacon tells on himself. Following the release of his movie, *Footloose*, Bacon's son came to him and said, "Dad, that movie was awesome! That part where you were swinging from the rafters in that building, that was really cool! How did you do that?" "Well, son, that wasn't really me. That was a stunt man." "What's a stunt man?" his son asked. "That's a guy who dresses up in my clothes and does stuff I can't do." "Oh. Well, that part in the gym where you twirled around on that bar and landed on your feet, that was pretty cool. How'd you do that?" "Uh, well, that wasn't me either. That was a gymnastics double," Bacon said. "What's a gymnastics double?" "That's a guy who dresses up in my clothes and does stuff I can't do." "Oh. Well, gee, dad, just what did you do in that movie?" "Well, son," Bacon said sheepishly, "I guess I got all the glory."

What a great picture of God's grace: God's grace, unearned, undeserved, given to us not because of what we've done but because of who God is. The grace of God is at the very heart of the Christian faith. We see God's grace in our lives especially in our crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit. Even our ability to believe and say, "Yes!" to God is due to God's grace. Recall the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (2:8).

I admit it. I am extremely biased when it comes to understanding the grace of God. After all, I have experienced God's grace for all of my life! I have been blessed at birth with a wonderful family, and, I was privileged to be raised in a Christian home by my parents with both sets of grandparents close by. There has never been a time in my life when I wasn't part of a Christian fellowship. The grace of God's love was evident through the many people in my home church, who nurtured me and shared the Good News of the Gospel with me. Every Sunday felt like a joyous family reunion.

I marvel at the grace of God in bringing Monica and me together and for the journey we have been on that took us from Missouri to Texas and on to Virginia. We have been blessed greatly with the birth of our children and the four churches to which we have been called. I am often reminded of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who wrote: "It is by the grace of God that a congregation is permitted to gather visibly in this world to share God's Word and sacrament... It is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with other Christians." (*Life Together*, pp. 18 and 20)

I have also experienced God's grace following my recent surgery and being able to live without pain. What a gift it is to come home after a long day and see my dog's happy face in the window with his tail wagging so hard his whole body moves back and forth. There is grace in every direction: in a telephone call or an e-mail from a dear friend; a good book or movie; a beautiful sunrise, sunset, or a starlit night; a fragrant flower and a delicious piece of fruit; and on and on and on.

Where have you experienced the gift of God in your own life? We can all attest along with the psalmist: "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" Let us be grateful for God's grace in our lives – both individually and communally – and let us be sure to give God thanks and praise on our daily journeys and when we gather for worship.

In Christ's love,
Randy



Happy Birthday in October to:

- 1 Andrew Price, Shane Pinkston,
- 2 Myra Stegall
- 4 Will Mahoney
- 5 Connor Dunnigan, Nancy Baker, Mike Powell, John Abercrombie
- 6 Jane Ford
- 7 Ralph Shank
- 8 Brian Mason
- 9 Debbie Brown, Cole Tatum
- 10 Grey Ferguson
- 11 Fran Hensley, Richard Lawhon
- 14 Dwayne Williams, Walt Seamon, Bennette Zentmeyer
- 15 Sarah Krauss, Joe Smith
- 16 Liz Kighton
- 18 Betty Hendricks
- 21 Mary Page
- 23 Helen Hawkes, June Irby, Nancy Brown
- 24 Virginia Zentmeyer, Jana Jennings, Melissa Jessup, Ralph Shank, Jr.
- 27 Katherine Eanes, Stacey Eanes, Matthew Johnson
- 28 Gwen Sowdon, Jenny Spivey
- 29 Walter Anderson, Mary Ann McConnell
- 31 Rusty Lacy, Lindsey Unterbrink

And in November to:

- 3 Elizabeth Harris, Bill Hensley, Mildred Moorman
- 5 Neil Tatum
- 8 Donna Lawhon
- 10 Kathy Washburn

Associate Pastor's Column

Keeping it Real

A few weeks ago, several members in the congregation shared an article with me entitled, "The Perils of Wannabe Cool Christianity" from the Wall Street Journal. The author, Brett McCracken, quoted surveys and statistics that report how many young people are leaving the church (temporarily or permanently). First of all, I rejoice and give thanks to God that we do have many young families and youth involved in the life of this congregation! At the same time, I share the author's concern about sharing the gospel in order to reach the

younger generation. He notes that, too often, when churches look for something to draw in the younger crowd they attempt to be "cool," rely on slick technology, and shock-factor "marketing gimmicks."

Rather than reaching young people through those methods, he offers this observation, with which I heartily agree, "As a twenty-something, I can say with confidence that when it comes to church, we don't want cool as much as we want real. If we are interested in Christianity in any sort of serious way, it is not because it's easy or trendy or popular. It's because Jesus himself is appealing, and what he says rings true."

As God leads us forward into new places and times in ministry, I think that we will discover new ways of being church together. The songs that we sing, the prayers that we pray, the tools that we use, in our worship and ministry may change. When I came before the Examinations Committee of the Presbytery of the Peaks as a candidate, one older woman asked me about my thoughts on youth ministry and reaching young people in the church. "You're not just going to start a Facebook page and call that youth ministry?" I smiled and said, "Well, yes and no. I use Facebook, and will likely use it with the youth group. But, that is not the goal of youth ministry, it is just a tool."

We should no more ignore the gift of modern tools like Facebook, praise music, cell phones, or projection screens, than we should ignore the printing press or photocopy machines. But we must understand that these tools are not the goal of ministry, and that they don't do the job of ministry for us. These tools may be "cool," but if there is not behind them the true ministry of sharing God's love, then to use Paul's words in 1 Corinthians, they are like "noisy gongs or clanging cymbals."

So, let's keep it real. As our mission statement says, we are all called to *share God's love, embrace our neighbors, and nurture each other*. Let us use the gifts and talents God has given us, and the tools we have around us, to offer people what is ultimately real and eternally true – God's love in our Lord Jesus Christ.



“Trunk or Treat” Halloween Party – October 31st, 5:30-7:00pm

For youth group on Halloween evening (a Sunday this year) our youth, along with the youth at Forest Hills

Presbyterian Church will help host a “Trunk or Treat” event for younger kids in our church and community. What is *Trunk or Treat* you ask? Folks bring their cars/minivans/etc. and decorate their trunks with some funny theme and stand by their cars to hand out candy to the young kids that come by. We will arrange our cars in one section of the parking lot and invite our young guests to come in costume! We hope to invite the children in our ELI and Weekday School programs, and Forest Hills will likewise invite children involved through their congregation. The event will be held on our parking lot, and we will have additional refreshments and goodies for the parents and children that attend! This is an excellent way to *share God’s love and embrace our neighbors* in a fun way!

The Tempo “Our Musical Pulse” Chancel Choir



Adult Music Report September 19, 2016

There are at least three groups who have the opportunity here at First Presbyterian to give expression to their faith through music and who use their talent to serve and praise God.

By far the largest and the first choir is the Congregational Choir. Hymn singing is a part of each of our church’s worship experiences. The hymn singing and service music is planned to reflect at least one of the Lectionary readings for the day.

The Chancel Choir is the worship choir for the eleven o’clock service. This choir leads the hymn singing, sings the anthem and service music. Persons with vocal and musical

skills use those God given abilities as a part of this musical family. Weekly Rehearsals, Christmas and Spring Music Worship Services are also presented by this choir. These services are open to our community and frequently involve guest singers and instrumentalists.

The Sanctuary Ringers is our Adult Handbell Choir. When our membership is full, we have an even dozen members and several substitute ringers. They rehearse for 55 minutes each Wednesday evening and ring in worship once a month, October-May.

How fortunate we are to have the facilities and equipment which has been provided by First Presbyterian through the years. This past winter we added another partial octave of handchimes to our 5 octave set. These were given in memory of Jack Lester.

This Fall the Chancel Choir is busy with our service music and a different style Christmas Music Service. On December 19, at 6 p.m., I invite you to gather with us for a music service in the Sanctuary using music composed by J.S. Bach, George Handel, John Leavitt, and arrangements by John Erickson and Michael Burkhardt. Two of these works will be accompanied by Organ, Strings, and Winds. From the Sanctuary we will move to the lower level with refreshments in the hall and the final music of the evening in the Fellowship Hall. “Twas the Night Before Christmas”, arranged by Harry Simeone, “I Wish You Christmas”, by John Rutter and some surprise singers will round out the time. We invite persons from our congregation to bring friends and guests from our community to join with us. We plan to be through by 7:45 or 8:00 p.m.

My time would not be complete without a commercial which seeks out talented singers and instrumentalists who might join with us in our mission of music here. We can always use those who have the interest, time, and talent. I am interested in starting a “bucket choir” for those of you whose confession is that “I can’t carry a tune in a bucket”. Speak to me following the service or e-mail me at adultrmusic@firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org.

Thank you for listening. May God continue to bless us in His service together.
(This report was given by Bob Chapman in the Congregational Meeting on September 22, 2010)

Mission Fair

The annual Mission Fair will be held on October 31 following the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Please come for food (lunch), fellowship, and to hear presentations from five community organizations and First Presbyterian's summer mission team. We will learn more about MARC Workshop, the Salvation Army, Tackfully Teamed Riding, Boys and Girls Clubs, Community Storehouse, and our mission team's trip to *Galilee By the Sea*.

First Presbyterian Church, as a congregation and individuals, supports numerous mission projects both near and far. The luncheon on October 31 will allow us to learn more about just a few of the organizations and projects that we support.

We look forward to seeing you there!!

World Communion Sunday

The first Sunday in October is designated ***World Communion Sunday***. On this Sunday, October 3, more Christians from north and south and east and west around the world will gather at the Lord's table to break bread with the risen Lord and with each other than at any other time in the church's liturgical year.

DEDICATION OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOUSE

Everyone is invited to a dedication of the newest Habitat for Humanity House on 114 Pebble Road, on Sunday, October 3, at 3:00 p.m. Volunteers from our Church who worked on this house are: Smith Chaney, Nancy Moore and Hilary Moore.

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Meet your new Elders, Class of 2013

At the annual meeting on Sunday, September 19, 2010, at the close of the 11:00 a.m. worship service, the congregation voted and elected the following persons to serve as elders on the Session's Class of 2013: Jim Beard, Joan Montgomery, Bill Peterson, Ann Reaser, JoAnne Sanders, and Cathy Stone. Also, Chris Beeler and manly Boyd were elected to serve as trustees on the board of Trustees (Class of 2013). We are grateful for their willingness to serve and lead our congregation over the next three years.

Operation Christmas Child

The Shoe Box Project

This year the youth group is again taking part in a unique mission project called *Operation Christmas Child*. *Samaritan's Purse* operates a number of projects including *Operation Christmas Child*, a program where shoeboxes are packed with personal hygiene items, school supplies, toys, and distributed to nearly 8 million children annually in 95 countries. *Samaritan's Purse* is an International Relief Organization under the direction of CEO and founder, Franklin Graham. To date, this organization has collected and distributed more than 69 million shoeboxes to boys and girls in over 135 countries.

People across the country are getting their items and donations ready to send to their churches. Our youth are asking that all families participate in this project in one of several ways:

- 1) by bringing a filled shoebox with suggested items,
- 2) by bringing empty shoeboxes for the youth to pack (you know they are in your basement!)
- 3) by bringing donations of items on the suggested list below (no used or damaged items please!),
- 4) by making donations to help cover shipping cost (a box takes \$7 to ship worldwide)

Please bring your donation/gift to the church by October 31st. Donations of items and shoeboxes can be brought to Pastor Jenny's office, and



monetary donations given to the church office. The youth will pack and gift wrap shoeboxes during youth group on November 7th. The boxes will be delivered to our local drop-off center the week of November 15th.

Operation Christmas Child is a great way to bring joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need of hope. What a perfect gift to give in honor of Jesus' birthday.

Gift Suggestions

Designate your box for the appropriate age category below:

Girl or Boy: Ages (2-4 years), (5-9 years), or (10-14 years)

School Supplies: pens, pencils, and sharpeners, crayons or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

Toys: small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch A Sketch, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky, etc.

Hygiene Items: toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

Other: hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries).

A Personal Note: In a separate envelope, you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. (If you include your name and address, the child may write back.)

DO NOT INCLUDE: Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

Upcoming Youth Group Events

Sat., Oct. 2 – **Pumpkin Patch Service**

Project. We will meet at the corner of Starling and Mulberry, 8:30am. We will volunteer by

helping to unload the pumpkin truck and set up Grace Network's Pumpkin Patch. After we help with pumpkins, we will go out together for a bite to eat! (Note: bring some work gloves and consider long sleeves to help haul pumpkins!)

Sun. Oct. 3 – **Church Picnic, 5:00pm.** This

year we will have our Church Picnic at the church! This is an event for all church members, and there will be special activities and games for the youth. Bring your friends!

Sun. Oct. 10 – **Trip to Presbytery Youth Event at Second Presbyterian, Roanoke.** We will meet at the church at 4:00pm to take the bus up to Roanoke. Read more about this event in the related blurb in this newsletter. We should be home around 9:00pm.

Sat. Oct. 16 – **Virginia Creeper Trail Bike Trip.** Chris Wingfield and Johnny Pinkard are organizing this event again, we will meet at the church at 7:00am to travel to the trail in Damascus. Come ready for a full day of fun!

Sun. Oct. 17 – No evening Youth Group meeting due to Saturday event.

Sat. Oct. 23 – **Trip to Haunted House in Greensboro,** more details to come.

Sun. Oct. 24 – No evening Youth Group meeting due to Saturday event.

Sun. Oct. 31 – Youth Group, 5:30-7:00pm

Sun. Nov. 7 – Youth Group, 5:30-7:00pm – Pack and wrap shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child

Youth Bike Trip - October 16th

Fall is once again here and the youth group is once again heading off to enjoy God's good creation and get a taste of the outdoors on the Virginia Creeper Bike Trail in Damascus, VA. We will load up the bus and leave the church at 7:00am on Saturday morning, October 16th, and make the trip to Damascus. The cost of bike rental is \$26.50, and if you want to bring your own bike (Johnny Pinkard will be again driving his pick-up to transport our bikes), then the cost of the shuttle is \$12.50. Checks should be made out to *First Presbyterian Church* and given to the church office by Monday October 11th. (Also please note we will need an FPC signed release form for each youth and guest. The

forms are available on the website.) Please bring money that day for a snack on the way, and for a snack along the trail! If you have questions, contact Chris Wingfield, Johnny Pinkard or Pastor Jenny.

Presbytery-wide Youth Event - October 10th

Second Presbyterian Church in Roanoke is hosting an event for youth from churches throughout the Presbytery of the Peaks. There will be a pizza dinner and then music with Beth Williams and a keynote by Rodger Nishioka. The theme is *Faith on Fire* and it will be like an “evening of Montreat,” (for those of you who know and love the Montreat Youth Conferences, or those who are interested in going this next summer!) Our group will meet at the church at 4:00pm and take the bus up to Roanoke. We should be home about 9:00pm.