



**Presbyterian Web Sites:**

Presbytery of the Peaks: [www.peakspresbytery.org](http://www.peakspresbytery.org)  
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic: [www.synatlantic.org](http://www.synatlantic.org)  
Presbyterian Church (USA): [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)  
Pby. Disaster Assistance: [www.pcusa.org/pda/](http://www.pcusa.org/pda/)  
Presbyterian Today: [www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today](http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/today)  
Pby. News Service: [www.pcusa.org/pcusa/brief.hem](http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/brief.hem)

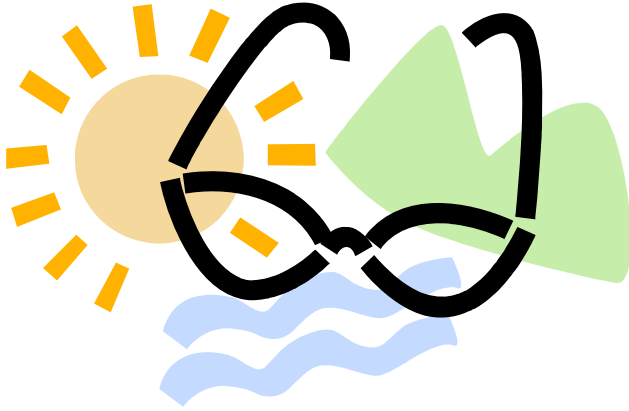


*Join us for a cup  
of coffee every Sunday  
morning in the kitchen  
before Church School*

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STEEPLE VIEWS



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

# STEEPLE VIEWS

First Presbyterian Church

April, 2009

Martinsville, Virginia

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## From My Perspective Within The Kingdom

Towards the end of last year, following the Officers' Retreat in the fall, the Session of our church adopted the following Mission Statement: **"Share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other."** That Mission Statement declares what we will strive to do in response to God's gracious love poured out upon us. We are reminded of our three-fold response to God whenever we hold a Sunday bulletin in our hands, pick up the monthly *Steepleviews*' newsletter, or read the agenda for one of the seven committees of the Session.

"Share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other" is the standard by which we will examine ourselves. When we hold this mission impetus up, do we see ourselves living out what we think is most important in terms of what we are called by God to do in the world? This mission statement is intended to guide both the Session and the entire congregation as well as every group within the church such as the Sunday School classes, the youth groups, Presbyterian Women, the various choirs, and so on.

When you stop to think about it, our strong desire to "share God's love, embrace our neighbors, nurture each other" is deeply rooted in scripture. Our mission statement is a loud echo of the answer Jesus gave to the question, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31).

We share God's love because there is so much of God's love to go around. God's love cannot be hoarded; it is to be shared. We take God's love into the world and share it with our neighbors; and, there is still more than enough of God's love with which to nurture each other. During my college years, I remember hearing a friend say that the word *JOY* was an acronym that stood for: J – Jesus; O – others; and Y – yourself; when you love in that order of priorities, then you experience true joy. Life may not always be that simple, and yet, there is a profound truth found within that simple explanation.

Jesus' commandment to love God and neighbor (as yourself) had been stated before in the Hebrew Scriptures. But Jesus was the first to put the two commandments together; he expanded the notion of neighbor from a fellow Jew to encompass everybody (especially those in need); and, most of all, Jesus emphasized and lived out these two commandments, and he taught all of his disciples to go and do likewise!

In all that we say and do, may we (as individuals and as a congregation of God's people) resolve to "share God's love, embrace our neighbor, (and) nurture each other" – all to the glory of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In Christ's love,  
Randy



## Happy Birthday in June

- 1 Cynthia Dobrinski, Gage Lawson, Reid Lawson
- 2 Suzanne Lacy, Cole Rothrock
- 3 Bob Knighton, Riley Wood
- 4 Laura Beth Eanes, Mike Eanes, Pat Wilson
- 5 Meredith Bumgarner
- 6 Nancy Plonk
- 8 Phil Payne
- 9 Lori Hurt, Josh King, Susan Smith
- 10 Allison Campbell, Cindy Edgerton
- 12 Edmund Haskins, David King
- 13 Eleanor Woody
- 15 Waid Lester
- 16 Karen Debusk, Ainsley Russell
- 17 Dyer Rothrock, Ken Knight
- 18 Courtney Newnam, Susan Pilson
- 19 Taylor Johnson
- 20 Drew Parker, Spencer DeBusk
- 22 Raven Adams
- 23 David Price, Harold Wells, Virginia Truitt, Basil Boyd
- 24 Denny Casey
- 26 Lyell Knighton, Vicki Wells
- 27 Ibby Gunter, Louis Judson, Steve DeBusk, Lynn Stegall, Clyde Hill
- 29 A. C. Wilson, Andy Parker, Caroline Kirby

### And in May

- 2 William Seamon
- 3 Andrea Lawhon, Sarah Toothman
- 4 Ben Pinkston
- 5 Paul Cannaday, Sam Smith
- 6 Barbara Stanley
- 7 Clara Hartley
- 8 Dyer Pace
- 10 Mildred Bishop
- 12 Betty Carol Lamm, Betty Stanley, Heidi Pinkston

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 Staff: volunteers



## Class of 2009

### Martinsville High School

Laura Caroline Buffkin  
 Allyn Ann Campbell  
 Elizabeth Lester Chapman  
 Taylor Stephen Johnson  
 Alison Bailey Parker  
 Troy Lee Rakes

### Carlisle School

William Waid Lester

### Greensboro

Patrick King Edgerton

### Wofford College,

### Spartanburg, South Carolina

Charles Carter Lyttleton Ferrell  
 Kenzie Marie Rakes

### University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia

Thomas Dyer Rothrock

## News from the Stewardship and Visioning Committee:

The Session's Stewardship/Visioning Committee is involved not just with plans for the annual stewardship season, but also making us all aware of ways in which our Church's future and the better fulfillment of its mission can be strengthened. To that end, it has been working on a brochure containing information about the Church's existing endowment funds and methods by which we might seek to add to them. We anticipate that this brochure will be finally revised and approved by the Session in the near future. It will then be made available to all Church individual members or households. We also propose in future newsletters to continue to highlight this subject and perhaps stimulate thinking on a subject which, although important, is one that is easy to delay considering for much too long. Those who have thought about it and then done some-

thing in response have been motivated by a love to the Church and a desire to make an enduring gift to promote its mission and well being. Perhaps you would like to join them?



**Pentecost** will be celebrated at First Presbyterian this year on Sunday, May 31, 2009. Pentecost is the third most important Christian holiday of the year (Easter and Christmas are the two most significant holidays). Pentecost is the birthday of the church when the early church recognized the gift of the Holy Spirit. The liturgical color of Pentecost is red, which represents the tongues of fire and the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are inviting everyone in the congregation to wear red this Sunday, so there will be a “sea of red” in the congregation. Following worship, there will be refreshments served on the lawn, including a birthday cake with red icing to commemorate the church’s birthday!

### ***Session Highlight*** ***(from April 27, 2009)***

- The opening devotional and prayer were given by elder Bill Peterson
- The minutes for the Session’s stated meeting on March 30, 2009 were approved.
- Transferred the membership of Duke and Debbie Easley and Cheryl Rigney to the First United Methodist Church of Martinsville, VA.
- Noted the death of Dr. Joe Campbell (a church member) on April 24, 2009
- Voted to recommend to the congregation that the size of the Session be reduced from 24 elders to 18 elders (beginning with 6 elders elected to the Class of 2012)
- Voted to allow Grace Network use the church’s facilities on an as needed basis (when available).
- Elected Ann Reaser and Darla Main-Schneider to be commissioners to the Presbytery of the Peaks’ meeting at First Presbyterian Church in South Boston on May 7, 2009.