

January 20, 2022



# Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

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**Devotional Meditation**  
**Elder, Monica Stevens**  
**January 19, 2022**

## **Birds, Sheep, and Goats**

Matthew 6:25-34

Matthew 25:21-46

Since the beginning of the pandemic I have been doing much of my study and work at the end of my kitchen table closest to the windows. I like being able to look out the window when I need a break or when I am stuck and needing inspiration. Sometime in the last year I decided to start feeding the birds (and by default the squirrels) that I had noticed perching in my trees. This has been a source of delight for me and a supplement to the birds' normal diet. I haven't put out so much food that the birds would become totally dependent on me, but I have attracted a variety of birds to my yard and my back window sill. When the snow fell this past Sunday I noticed that the number of birds in my yard had significantly increased because many of their normal foraging spots had been covered by the snow and subsequent ice. I increased the amount of seed needed to meet the demand and that caused me to think about the passages from Matthew that I listed above.

In the Matthew 6 passage cited above, Jesus instructs us not to worry about our physical needs.

He says, "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" A little later on Jesus tells us not to worry about our clothing comparing us to the lilies of the field that neither toil nor spin, but yet, were more beautifully clothed than even Solomon in his glory. Jesus reminds us that we cannot add even an hour to our lives by worrying. God knows what we need, and God will provide, so worry is unproductive. Instead, Jesus tells us to strive first for the kingdom of God and God's righteousness, and all the things we need will be provided for us. God provides for each of us in one way or another. God provided for the birds before I started feeding them, God provided for the fullness of their needs when I decided to supplement their diet, and when the ground was covered and crusted over with snow and ice,

God provided for them through my willingness to convert some of my resources into bird seed to feed them when their own resources became scarce.

This thought brings me to the Matthew 25 passage listed above. At the final judgement, Jesus says people will be judged and separated as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. To one group Jesus will say, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you because you cared for me and took care of my needs when I couldn't." To the other group Jesus will say, "Depart from me you who are accursed because you didn't help me when I was in need." Both groups will ask when they saw him in need, and Jesus will tell them, "When you helped one of even the least of my family, you helped me, and when you ignored one of even the least of my family you ignored me."

If we listen to Jesus and "strive first for the kingdom of God," we can all learn to live so that the needs of all will be met. We will learn to trust God's grace and abundance and not live our lives in the constant fear of scarcity. When we trust in God's grace, we will be less likely to hoard whatever wealth we have, and we will be more willing to share what we have. Each of us has something different to share. We might have financial resources to share, time to donate to the service of others by working for Grace Network, the Community Breakfast, the Warming Center, or so may other organizations or individual efforts, skills to share to aid someone else, or the ability and drive to work to change public policies that perpetuate systems that unfairly limit whole groups of people. In God's kingdom, we are each blessed so that we can be a blessing to others. The resources of God's kingdom are not meant to be hoarded but used to meet the needs of others. May we each recognize and be grateful for God's abundance in our own lives, and in our gratitude, may we share what we have to the glory of God and the benefit of God's children.

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## ***The Church is Open for In-Person Worship Service!***

The safety of our congregation and community are our highest priority. In light of increasing infections, **we strongly recommend that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear a face covering that covers your nose and mouth while anywhere inside the church and sanctuary**

**The church office will open for limited appointments.** Please call to schedule. Please enter at the narthex for Sunday worship and during the week use the back door at the portico.

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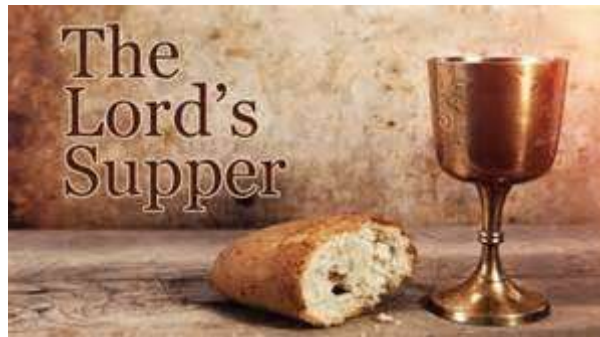
Please join us for the third Sunday after the Epiphany either **in person** or via **Facebook live** at 10:00 AM

Sermon by Elder Kym Wiederholt

***A Trust, O Lord, from Thee***

Based on 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a and Psalm 19

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**Attention all Elders:** We are now ready and able to start our Extended Table ministry once again!

We serve communion to shut-ins on **the first Sunday** in the month and to King's Grant residents on **the first Monday**.

We are asking all Elders who are interested in this ministry, to contact Nancy Davis at [davistwo@comcast.net](mailto:davistwo@comcast.net) or by phone at [634-1403](tel:634-1403). Please indicate which day or days you want to serve.

**Remember "Once an Elder always an Elder"**

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**Session** meets January 31 at 7:00 pm.



**Two Cents-a-Meal** invites every member of our congregation to prayerfully contribute a few cents at each meal to help alleviate hunger and poverty. Ideally, contributions come from “living more simply so that others may simply live.” Participation in is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus’ command, “You give them something to eat.”

**Two-cents-a-meal** offering is this Sunday.

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### Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

#### PRAYER CONCERNS

Georgette Bishop, Ernest and Marilyn Bremner (S. Ford), Mike Boswell, Catherine Bridges, Jim Brunt (N. Davis’ brother), Tommy Cobb (M. Dunn), Judy Epperly (Nancy Baker), Daniel Handy, Leonard Kelley (Monica Stevens’ brother), Betty Carol Lamm, Mary Manning, Laura Stevens Milton, Anne Peterson, Scott Stevens (M. Stevens), Bruce Thomas (M. Stevens), Carl Utley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski, and 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](tel:2766323431), [office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org).

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### Congregational Care and Fellowship

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 Lynn Pritchett at [276 252-6068](tel:2762526068).

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### *Grace Network Donations*

## Baking Mix

The 1st quarter 2022 food donation item is **Baking Mix (small) or Flour**



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!***

*\*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*



## Steeple Views Reminder

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

**Steeple Views** is published weekly on Thursdays. **DEADLINE** for submission of articles is Tuesday evening.

If you have information you want included in Steeple Views, **PLEASE SEND TO: [steepleviews@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:steepleviews@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org)**. If you send to another email address, the information may get lost and subsequently not included in the newsletter.

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

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## 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](https://www.peakspresbytery.org/images/2020_Peaks_Postings/PP_Aug18_2020.pdf)

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## Our Mission

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

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**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](http://www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/page.cfm/topic/newsletter)

## Useful Links

FPC website:

[www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/](http://www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/) or [www.fpcmartinsvilleVA.org/](http://www.fpcmartinsvilleVA.org/)

FPC online directory: [members.instantchurchdirectory.com/](http://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/)

FPC Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/FPCMartinsvilleVA](https://www.facebook.com/FPCMartinsvilleVA)

Presbytery of the Peaks: [www.peakspresbytery.org/](http://www.peakspresbytery.org/)

Presbyterian Church (USA): [www.pcusa.org/](http://www.pcusa.org/)

Daily Bible Readings: [www.presbyterianmission.org/devotion/daily/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/devotion/daily/)

**Church Office Phone:** 276-632-3431

## Our mailing address is:

First Presbyterian Church

1901 Patrick Henry Ave.

Martinsville, VA 24112

## STAFF

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Rita Bateman, Secretary/Office Manager, [office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org)

Drema Austin, Bookkeeper, [bookkeeper@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:bookkeeper@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org)

Carol Carter, Weekday School Director, [wds@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:wds@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org)

Deborah Burgess, Contemporary Music Director,

[contemporarymusic@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org](mailto:contemporarymusic@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org)

## THE SESSION

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Treasurer: Henry Moore

### Class of 2022

Brooke Cundiff: Mission/Outreach

Pamela Rakes: Stewardship and Communication

Betty Hudson: Christian Education

### Class of 2023

Billy Kirby: Administration

### Class of 2024

Pearl Minter: Congregational Care and Fellowship

Neil Tatum: Facilities

Liz Ferrell: Worship

## TRUSTEES

2022: Joan Montgomery, Ashby Pritchett

2023: Sandra Ford, Joe DeVault

2024: Duke Ferrell, Milt Davis

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