

March 23, 2023



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Pastor's Corner

Elder, Monica Stevens

" The Lord says (vs.16)...Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I am doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness." Isaiah 43:18-19 CEB

When Isaiah first delivered those words, Israel was in exile and had been in exile for roughly seventy years. Since most of the people he addressed had been born in captivity, life in Babylon was all they knew, and they could only dream of the life their people had lived in Judea. Now God was preparing them to return to and rebuild Jerusalem. At the beginning of Chapter 43, God, speaking through his prophet, reminded Israel that God loves them. He said, "Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you won't be scorched and flame won't burn you," (Isa. 43:1a-2). In verses 14 -17 God reminded Israel that God was the one who defeated the Babylonians just as God had defeated the Egyptians to free Israel from their bondage.

Then God tells Israel not to dwell on past events because God is doing something new. This new thing is sprouting up all around them, and when it seems that they can't go forward, God will make a way in the barren places and create a path in the wilderness for them to travel on toward their goal. The further we read into the Scriptures, we see over and over again that God is always creating, always doing new things.

God is using Isaiah's words to speak to us at First Presbyterian Church here in Martinsville. Our congregation has enjoyed a long and valuable ministry in the name of Jesus Christ in this community. This is something to be celebrated, but just as God cautioned Israel, we can't get stuck dwelling in the past. God is calling us to do a new thing and it is our job to discern what God is calling us to do so that we can remain a viable and vital witness to Jesus in this place.

As a part of our discernment process, sixteen people have volunteered to be part of a Think Tank that will learn to think outside of the boxes that have served us well in the past thus freeing ourselves to envision the new things that God might be calling us to do in the future. This process takes faith, trust, imagination, and patience. The Think Tank will engage in prayerful brainstorming, research, and discussion. In true Presbyterian fashion, all items they recommend for possible action will then be sent to the Session for consideration. As always, the Session has the final decision on any proposals.

The Think Tank has already met once and will meet again on April 3 at 2pm in the Session Room. It is crucial that all of us participate in this process in one way or another. If you cannot be part of the Think Tank, you can support their work in your prayers and you can enter into discussions with Think Tank members to hear what they are doing and give them your input on the issues they will discuss. To use

Paul's metaphor, we are called to be the Body of Christ, and as such, each one of us has a vital function to fulfill to maintain the health, vigor, and purpose of the Body. Thanks be to God who calls us together to work as one. Amen.



Please join us for worship this Fifth Sunday in Lent at 10:00 am

Sermon by Elder Monica Stevens

Based upon John 11:1-45 and Ezekiel 37:1-14

Liturgist: Milt Davis

Ushers/Greeters: Niel Tatum, Monty Montgomery

A decorative graphic consisting of various colored dots (yellow, blue, green) and lines (yellow, blue) scattered around the central text box.

Just a reminder:

You will NEVER get an email or text from the church or your pastor asking you to purchase gift cards because we are busy or in a meeting.

If you receive one of these messages, it will come from an email other than an official church email address or a phone number not in use by a church staff member. Simply report it to the church and delete. Do not respond. We are so sorry for the inconvenience these fraudulent activities (that have been happening for years to churches everywhere-not just here) continue to cause!

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Friday 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

The safety of our congregation and community are our highest priority. COVID-19 transmission rates are low in our area so you may wear a mask based on your personal preference, however, those who are not vaccinated should wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth while anywhere inside the church and sanctuary. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19, should remain at home.



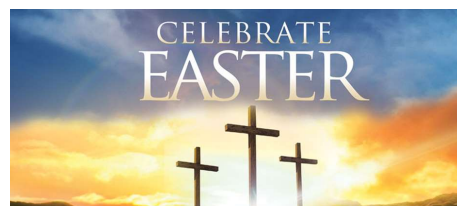
We now have three new listening devices for people who are hard-of-hearing. If you would like to use one during worship service, just ask an usher for assistance.



Pastor Bea away this week. If pastoral care is needed please call Monica Stevens [276 734-8830](tel:276-734-8830).

Session Meeting - Monday, March 27 @ 6 pm

PW Circle Meeting - Monday, April 3, 11am @ King's Grant. Lunch is \$11.



April 2 - Palm Sunday - Communion will be served

April 6 - Maunday Thursday - covered dish dinner in Fellowship Hall @ **6 p.m.** followed by Maunday Thursday service in sanctuary with Communion @ **7 p.m.**

April 9 -Easter Sunday with Communion

If you are able to help serve communion with any of these services, please contact Liz Ferrell at lizferrell@hotmail.com or text to [276-734-6376](tel:276-734-6376)

Community Breakfast Update from Judy King

The month of March has been filled with blessings for Community Breakfast. We filled 92 plates at the breakfast with 36 eating in and 56 take outs. My goal as coordinator for the breakfast is to see these numbers reversed and increased. I would also like to see more church family attending, eating and enjoying entertainment.

Thank you to **Therese Craddock** for donating over 13 dozen eggs and **First United Methodist Church** donating 30 pounds of bacon from their Food Bank. The bacon was enjoyed by all and we have enough for another breakfast. We also had monetary donations to be used for the breakfast. As a result of these generous donations, Marge and I did very little shopping this month. God does provide when there is a need.

Thank you to **Barbara Duncan** for playing guitar and singing and **Nancy Moore** and **Liz Ferrell** for cooking all the beforehand as this made everything more efficient on Saturday.

I plan to visit a couple churches for evening Community meals to observe their process and attendance. I will also check on the possibility of group home residents attending the breakfast.



One Great Hour of Sharing

offering will be collected on **Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday** to help with relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry and support for the poor and oppressed. Giving envelopes will be located in the pews. Checks should be written to the church.



Liturgist Schedule

March

26 Milt Davis

April

2 Shanna King **Palm Sunday**

9 Sam Smith **Easter**

16 Janet Fentress

23 Liz Ferrell

30 Cindy Edgerton



Celebrate **Red Cross Month** this March!

This tradition began 80 years ago when President Franklin Roosevelt issued the first national Red Cross Month proclamation — and each American president has followed ever since.

During our annual Red Cross Month celebration in March, we honor our volunteers commitment to supporting people in need, and ask them to invite their communities to join us. Our mission wouldn't be possible without community heroes like you.

Thank you for turning your compassion into action this month, and all year long.

As thanks for all you do, you'll receive a \$10 Visa® Prepaid Card by email when you come to donate blood by March 31.* It's a small token that we hope, combined with the overflowing gratitude of patients, reminds you just how incredible you are.

Our gratitude doesn't end here! **Come to give blood in March and you'll also be automatically entered for a chance to win a \$3,000 Visa Prepaid Card!** You could be one of five lucky winners.

2 Peter Marshall
6 Jerry Wood
9 Tyler Price

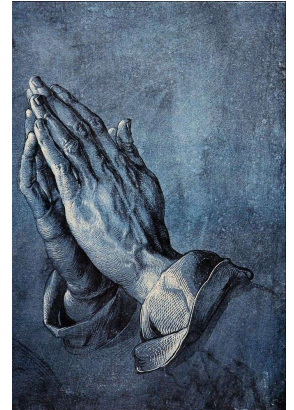


18 Steve Edgerton
21 Emma Wilson, Evan Wilson

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Marge Dunn, Ryan Bachelor (niece of N. Davis), Sue Benfield, Georgette Bishop, Jackie Bloxom (P. Stanley), Mike Boswell, Marilyn and Ernest Bremner, Catherine Bridges, Jim Brunt (N. Davis' brother), Bud Buffkin, Joel Christman (B. Stanley), Tommy Cobb, Neill Ferrill (S. Ford), Daniel Handy, Marvin Hudson, Betty Carol and Harold Lamm, Mary Manning, Maggie Pilson, Lauren Prince, Susan Rosser, Paul Salmons (M&N Davis), David Seamon, Beth Sibbick (N. Moore), Laura Stevens, Scott Stevens, Bruce Thomas, Nathan Toms (A. Madonia), Carl Utley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski, persecuted Christians, military service men and women, missionaries, and all refugees and immigrants forced to flee their countries.



Congregational Care and Fellowship



If you are in need of a [prayer shawl](#), or know someone that could use one, please pick one up from the narthex and be sure to sign it out. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pearl Minter.

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 Pearl at [276 340-3476](tel:2763403476).

Grace Network Donations

[The 1st quarter 2023 food donation item is Juice \(40-64 oz\)](#)

[The 2nd quarter food donation is canned greens \(turnips, collards, etc.\)](#)

Please consider donating extra when you are able to get out and about as your donations will become

more important than ever.

Hygiene Items are always needed (optional)

- *Toilet Paper
- *Bath Soap
- *Dish Detergent
- *Feminine Products
- *Toilet Paper
- *Deodorant
- *Deodorant
- *Toothpaste
- *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*



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

If you have information you want included in Steeple Views, **PLEASE SEND TO:** fpcsteepleviews@gmail.com. For time sensitive announcements, please sent to skirbycwj@gmail.com

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



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

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/

Church Office Phone: [276-632-3431](tel:276-632-3431)

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Peter Marshall, Worship Technology Coordinator, worshiptechnology@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

THE SESSION

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Treasurer: Henry Moore

Class of 2023

Billy Kirby: Administration

Class of 2024

Pearl Minter: Congregational Care and Fellowship

Neil Tatum: Facilities

Liz Ferrell: Worship

Class of 2025

Ron Rebman: Mission/Outreach

Sue Legg: Stewardship and Communication

Monica Stevens: Christian Education

TRUSTEES

2023: Sandra Ford, Joe DeVault

2024: Duke Ferrell, Milt Davis

2025: William Kirby, Gale Legg

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