

October 7, 2021



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Devotional

Elder Monica Stevens

October 6, 2021

Trust

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

Tuesday we left the house just before six in the morning. It was still dark and overcast without any light from the moon or the stars to help guide us. Tendrils of fog could be seen floating in the air whenever we passed near a street lamp or other source of light. Visibility was decent as long as we were in town, but once we turned onto Highway 57 the fog thickened in front of us. Unless homes or businesses had electric lights, it was impossible to see anything other than the light on the fog in front of us and the stripes on the road. It was as if nothing existed outside the beams of the headlights. In many places the fog was so thick that it became a completely opaque wall and I had to rely on the few yards of stripes that I could see to be able to keep going. There was one short stretch of the road (maybe a hundred feet) where the stripes disappeared. It was disorienting and unnerving, and I was very relieved when the stripes returned.

That momentary feeling of helplessness made me realize I was entrusting my safety and forward progress to my belief that the stripes on the road would lead me in the right direction even when I couldn't really see where I was or where I was going. Every previous time I had taken that road, I had seen how accurately and effectively the stripes outlined the road. The DOT had painted those lines to specifically mark the safe boundaries of the road. The experiences I had had on sunny days told me that the stripes would be a reliable guide on that dark and foggy morning.

Most of the time, navigating through life is like driving on a dry, sunny day. We can clearly see where we are going, and we can see the landmarks and signs that tell us where to alter our course. A sunny day also makes it easier to see and react to potential hazards and surprises that might pop up. We feel confident in our ability

to get from point A to point B on our own without much difficulty, and in fact, the journey might even be an enjoyable experience. On days like that, we generally just hop in the car and go without giving it a whole lot of thought.

However, life isn't always clear and carefree, is it? Things happen that leave us disoriented, groping in the dark, frightened, lonely, and unsure about how to go on. Life can leave us searching for any glimmer of light, hope, and guidance as we try to make our way forward. As thankful as I was for the reassuring gift of the yellow and white stripes on the road this past Tuesday, I am infinitely more grateful to know and be known by God who created each of us, loves each of us, and cares for each of us. God is faithful and trustworthy in all things. God is always with us and we can rely on him in the daylight and in the deepest darkness. Meditate on these words from Psalm 139 and let them fill you with trust in our God.

Lord, you have examined me.

You know me.

You know when I sit down and when I stand up.

Even from far away, you comprehend my plans.

You study my traveling and resting.

You are thoroughly familiar with all of my ways.

There isn't a word on my tongue, Lord,

That you don't already know completely.

You surround me—front and back.

You put your hand on me.

That kind of knowledge is too much for me;

It's so high that I can't reach it.

Where could I go to get away from your spirit?

Where could I go to escape your presence?

If I went up to heaven, you would be there.

If I went down to the grave, you would be there too!

If I could fly on the wings of the dawn,

Stopping to rest only on the far side of the ocean—

Even there your hand would guide me;

Even there your strong hand would hold me tight!

If I said, "The darkness will definitely hide me;

The light will become night around me,"

Even then the darkness isn't too dark for you!

Nighttime would shine bright as day,

Because darkness is the same as light to you!

You are the one who created my innermost parts;

You knit me together while I was still in my mother's womb.

I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set apart.

Your works are wonderful—I know that very well.

*My bones weren't hidden from you
When I was being out together in the secret place,
when I was being woven together in the deep parts of the earth.
Your eyes saw my embryo,
And on your scroll every day was written that was being formed for me,
Before any one of them had yet happened.
God, your plans are incomprehensible to me!
Their total number is countless!
If I tried to count them—they outnumber the grains of sand!
If I came to the very end—I'd still be with you.
(Ps. 139:1-18, CEB)*

Loving God, help us to remember that you are always with us, loving us and caring for us. Grant us the faith to trust you and follow your guidance through all that comes our way. This we pray in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

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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 due to the Delta variant and in order to follow state and local guidelines and CDC recommendations, **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.



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

"Daring Discipleship"

Based upon Acts 2:42-47; Colossians 3:12-17 and Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Sermon by Elder Monica Stevens



- **A drive-thru Trunk-Or-Treat is being considered** to take place on **Sunday October 31** (tentatively 2-4:00 p.m). In order for this to be feasible, we need a minimum of 12 trunks. If you are interested in participating in this, please contact Brooke Cundiff or Sam Smith no later than October 18.
 - Remembering **Doc Altizer** picnic and hike, Saturday, October 16.
 - **The Community Breakfast is October 16** and we need your help! Volunteers are needed to cook and prepare from 7-8:30 a.m. and to serve and clean up from **8:30-10:00 a.m.** The breakfast will remain in a drive-thru format until further notice. Contact Brooke Cundiff if you are available to help (276-340-6124 or bchnfamily@gmail.com).
 - **Pumpkins are here for the annual Grace Network Pumpkin Patch.** Grace relies on the community to man the patch and it's a great way for our church to serve. Volunteers are needed for **October 16 from 11:00 am to 1:00 p.m.** Contact Brooke Cundiff if you are available to help (276-340-6124 or bchnfamily@gmail.com).
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Ronald "Gene" Stanley

April 23, 1939 - October 1, 2021



The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Gene Stanley on his passing, Friday, October 1.

On Saturday, October 9, 2021, there will be a Celebration of Life service at 1:00 P.M., at the First Presbyterian Church of Martinsville with Dr. Dwight Christenbury officiating.

The full obituary can be found at: <https://www.wrightfuneralservices.net/obituaries/Ronald-Stanley-8/#!/Obituary>



The Community Breakfast is October 16 and we need your help! Volunteers are needed to cook and prepare from 7-8:30 a.m. and to serve and clean up from **8:30-10:00 a.m.** The breakfast will remain in a drive-thru format until further notice.

Contact Brooke Cundiff if you are available to help (276-340-6124) or bchnfamily@gmail.com).

Pumpkins Are Here!



Pumpkins are here for the annual Grace Network Pumpkin Patch. Grace relies on the community to man the patch and it's a great way for our church to serve. Volunteers are needed for **October 16 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am and 11:00 am to 1:00 p.m.**

If you are able to help with either of these shifts, please Contact Brooke Cundiff (276-340-6124 or bchnfamily@gmail.com).

This is a great opportunity for any student looking for volunteer hours!!!



FAMILY AND FRIENDS "GET TOGETHER" REMEMBERING DOC ALTIZER

**Saturday, October 16, 2021
12:00 PM**

The Family and Friends of Doc Altizer invite his church family to meet at the **Rocky Knob** Picnic Area on the **Blue Ridge Parkway on October 16th**. The address is **1670 Blue Ridge Parkway, Floyd, Virginia 24091** and is located near **Mile Post 169**. Turn at the Information Center and drive down into the picnic area until you see the family or members of the church!

Due to COVID, we recommend that you bring your own lunch. Bring a chair and plan a relaxing afternoon, visiting with Sarah, Sallie, Becca, and their families.

After lunch, those wishing to walk off their meals, are welcome to join a group hike on the Black Ridge Trail. This trail has a difficulty rating as "moderate". It is a 3 mile loop trail, which joins the Rock Castle Gorge Trail for a small portion of the hike. Everyone knows that Doc dearly loved hiking the Gorge Trail!

Others may choose to relax at the picnic area with Sarah, enjoying the beauty

of God's creation in this wonderful setting.

Should you have any questions, **feel free to call or text Johnny Pinkard @ (276) 952-5826.**

Rain Date: Next Spring! :>)

From the Transition Team

When Pastor Mark retired on August 31, our church began the process of finding a new pastor. A Transition Team, made up of Monica Stevens, Denny Casey, and Joan Montgomery was appointed by the Session's Administration Committee. In an effort to keep the congregation informed we want to tell you the work that has been done and the work to be done.

- The Transition Team met with Carl Utley, our General Presbyter, on 9/16/21 for training.
- Responsibilities of the Transition Team are:
 1. Identify and recommend to Session a candidate for Interim Pastor;
 2. Identify Transitional Priorities for Interim start up;
 3. Consult staff and elders about needs from Interim Pastor;
 4. Complete the Presbytery's Ministry Information Form (MIF) and seek appropriate approvals. The MIF describes our church in location, membership, mission statement, narrative questions, and top 10 Leadership Competencies, salary range, and basically what we are looking for in an Interim Pastor;
 5. Work with the Interim during transition as requested by Interim; and
 6. Communicate to congregation about transitional process.
- We were charged with interviewing staff and session members for what they wanted professionally and personally in an Interim Pastor. That has been completed.
- The Transition team met on 9/28/21 to consolidate the interview responses and to begin completing the MIF.
- The goal is to present the MIF to Session at the October meeting for approval.
- Upon approval by the Session, the Committee on Ministry, and the Presbytery, the MIF will be submitted to the Presbytery.
- Candidates will be identified based on matching our needs with candidate applications and the Transition Team can then begin interviewing.
- The goal is to find an Interim by the end of 2021.

The Transition Team welcomes input from the congregation by contacting Monica at mlkstev@hotmail.com, Denny Casey at d.a.casey@comcast.net, or Joan Montgomery at joanmontgo@gmail.com. We also ask for your prayers during this process.



Earth Care

When autumn arrives, we all like to admire the fall foliage.

But it can be hard for homeowners to love fall leaves when they drop off of tree limbs and onto green lawns. And in a number of communities, the once-accepted methods of getting rid of leaves—chucking them into the trash can or lighting large piles on fire—are no longer allowed, due to

limits on landfill space and concerns over human health. So what are some good earth-friendly options for autumn's fallen leaves? Here are four tips to help you get rid of your leaves while reducing your impact on the earth.

Mulch them

Leave the rake in the shed and the leaf-blower at the hardware store—mulching allows you to get rid of leaves without having to wrestle them into precarious piles first! Just run over fallen leaves with a lawn mower, mulching blade attached. The blade will cut the leaves into small pieces, which will settle undetected beneath the green canopy of your lawn. A long-term study of leaf-mulching confirmed the practice even benefits your backyard, as the leaves feed the underground microbes that benefit soil health.

Compost them

Fallen leaves are critical to composting. Leaves, twigs and other carbon-rich “brown” plant material can be added to existing compost piles to bring balance to nitrogen-rich lawn clippings, fruit and vegetable waste and other “green” plant material. Or, large piles of leaves can be composted on their own. If kept moist and periodically turned, the leaves will decompose and create a dark, crumbly compost that can enrich the soil in your garden.

Paper bag them

If putting fallen leaves to use in your lawn or garden just isn't an option, then consider curbside collection. A number of local governments collect leaves each fall, whether they are raked in piles to the curb or placed in paper bags. Even garbage-collection services often offer yard waste pick-up, transporting leaves to municipal composting facilities to keep them out of landfills.

Don't burn them

A lit match is a tempting solution to the leaf pile problem, but burning leaves can pollute the air and harm our health. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the open burning of leaves puts particulate matter and hydrocarbons into the

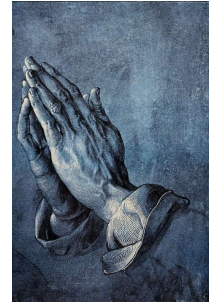
air. The former can increase your chances of respiratory infection, while the latter contains toxic and cancer-causing compounds.

Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Family of Gene Stanley, Carl and Georgette Bishop, Ernest and Marilyn Bremner (S. Ford), Catherine Bridges, Jim Brunt (N. Davis' brother), Tommy Cobb (M. Dunn), Sandra and Mark Dobrinski (brother and sister in-law of Cynthia), Judy Epperly (Nancy Baker), Daniel Handy, Leonard Kelley (Monica Stevens' brother), Betty Carol Lamm, Eddie Levi, Mary Manning, Laura Stevens Milton, Reed Stone Moore, Brenda Pendelton (A. Pinkard), Anne Peterson, Scott Stevens (M. Stevens), Bruce Thomas (M. Stevens), Tammy Tucker Wardinski (Susan Pilson), 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, office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org.

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:276-252-6068).

Please remember Canned Soup



The 4th quarter food donation item is ****canned soup****
(please NO tomato**)**

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*

**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

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/

Steeple Views is published. **DEADLINE** for submission of articles is Tuesday evening. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Sharon Kirby, Editor

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THE SESSION

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Treasurer: Henry Moore

Class of 2021

Lynn Pritchett: Congregational Care and Fellowship

Rob King: Facilities

Monica Stevens: Worship

Class of 2022

Brooke Cundiff: Mission/Outreach

Pamela Rakes: Stewardship and Communication

Betty Hudson: Christian Education

Class of 2023

Billy Kirby: Administration

TRUSTEES

2021: David Garland, Ed Linker

2022: Joan Montgomery, Ashby Pritchett

2023: Sandra Ford, Joe DeVault

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