

September 16, 2021



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Devotional

Dr. Denny Casey, Elder

Week of September 12, 2021

"...Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

I was having a conversation with a friend the other day about 9/11. He asked me, "Do you remember what you were doing when you heard the news?" "I do" I said, and my mind wandered back to that morning twenty years ago. My memories, as I'm sure many others', are still strong, as if indelibly etched in our collective memory. And even some of the same feelings I experienced at the time, seemed to bubble to the surface as we talked. Shock. Disorientation. Helplessness. Profound sadness.

What do you remember?

I remember being at work and someone came through the building announcing that a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. It must have been minutes after the first plane hit. She said they had set up a TV in another office and if anyone wanted to watch to come over. Back then, we didn't have many TVs, the internet was just in its adolescence, and cell phones weren't nearly as 'smart' as they are now. So, a handful of us gathered around a small TV set in a small office and watched, mesmerized in silence and in utter dismay at what we were witnessing. That morning, we all shared an experience of epic proportion and in the days that followed we learned more about what had happened and questions began to naturally arise. How could this have happened? How do we make sense of this? How are we to respond to this? What will life be like tomorrow? Is there more to come?

Which leads me to the Bible passage from the first chapter of Joshua. When Moses had died, God spoke to his assistant Joshua, calling him to complete the long and arduous trek through the wilderness the Israelites had been on for forty years. They were just to the east of the Jordan River and before them was the Land of Canaan,

the land God had promised them. But first they were commanded to arise and cross over the Jordan. The Israelites were faithful but didn't know what lie ahead. They didn't know what foes they were to face. They didn't know if they would live or die. They didn't know if they were going to reach the Promised Land. They must have had lots of questions. They must have felt anxiety and uncertainty about what lie ahead.

And I think about all that we're faced with today...the pandemic, climate change, natural disasters, racial and economic inequities, political division, and global human rights issues. We have much to feel uncertain and helpless about. But, like Joshua, I think we are being called to put our faith in the Lord and to lead with assurance on God's path. What God said to Joshua - that He will be with him in what lies ahead and that he should not be frightened, can also give us great comfort, strength, and encouragement. Think of it, wherever we go, whatever happens, God will be with us. What a blessed assurance that is! But for Joshua and the Israelites that was just the beginning. They had a lot of work to do once they crossed the Jordan. We have work to do too.

The first thing we can do is to draw closer to God...to pray and to put our faith fully in the Lord. And when we do, we will be compelled to put our faith into action. As James calls us: faith without action is dead. We can easily succumb to feelings of helplessness or be tempted to place blame or to pursue political partisanship or spread mistrust, hatred, and intolerance. But we are called to a higher purpose and to put our faith into action, as Micah calls us: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. The scope of our challenges might seem overwhelming, but there's always something we can do, no matter how small it might seem. Every faithful act truly does matter. Like a pebble dropped onto a pond, what we do can send ripples of lasting and far-reaching effects.

What if we get together for a time of prayer? What if we ask for God's wisdom with our challenges? What if we take more time to share the love of Christ with others?

We can support victims of disasters. We can express our appreciation and honor those who work to help us during crises such as first-responders, people in health care, spiritual leaders, counselors, and those who help with crisis management. We can seek and support partnerships with secular and interfaith organizations that are dedicated to working for peace and justice. Not sure where to start? Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

In Christ,

Denny

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The Church is Open for In-Person Worship Service!

If you **have not** been fully vaccinated please wear a mask and continue to practice social distancing.

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.

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**



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

"Wisdom from Above"

Based upon James 3:13–4:3, 7–8a and Psalm 1

Sermon by Elder Dr. Denny Casey

Community Breakfast this Saturday, September 18!

****CORRECTION from previous communication****



We are offering the DRIVE-THRU only option this month!

Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

- *Cooking*
- *Serving*
- *Greeters (hallway and dining room)*
- *Drive-Thru*
- *Clean-up*

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

If you are able to help with the breakfast this Saturday, please contact **Brooke Cundiff** for additional details by calling or texting **276 340-6124**.



- **Community Breakfast** Saturday, September 18
 - **Congregational meeting Sunday, September 19** following the worship service. This meeting is to elect the class of 2024 elders and trustees.
 - ***Please let the office know if you would like to participate in the congregational meeting, via Zoom.*** If so, a personal invitation to do so can be sent to you. Call 632-3431 or email office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org by noon on Friday.
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Earth Care

Flowers or Plants Make Much Appreciated Gifts

With a little advance planning you can grow your own gifts. Unique floral varieties can be raised in your small home plot, which make appealing gifts which anyone can appreciate. A fresh bouquet from your garden is always a beautiful, personal gift. Potted plants also make great gifts, or give bulbs or starter plants of your favorite garden crops – spare asparagus crowns can be



the beginning of a perennial bed!

Or you can harvest and dry flowers, using a press or a dehydrator, to use for homemade gift cards are dried floral arrangements.

If you prefer to buy flowers as gifts, choose from 'in season' locally grown varieties. The maintenance of greenhouses and long-distance transportation can involve significant expenditures of energy coming from fossil fuels.

Did you know you can bring these plastic items to Kroger for recycling:

- Plastic shopping bags
- Resealable zipper bags
- Outer plastic packaging
- Cereal bags
- Shopping materials & bubble wrap

What can we pick up for you? Contact **Victoria Esarey** **276 732-9110** or email vesarey@gmail.com. These items will be broken down into parts, making them more valuable as recyclables.

From the library of Pastor Mark

Pastor Mark has left behind several of his personal books that are free to a good home. They are located in the hallway between the sanctuary and church office. Please take some time before or after a church service to peruse through the titles and help yourself to any you might enjoy. (You can also call the church office & schedule a time to come by and look through them during the week).



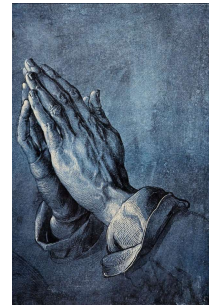
Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Family of Laura Buffkin, Carl and Georgette Bishop, Ernest and Marilyn Bremner (S. Ford), Catherine Bridges, Jim Brunt (N. Davis' brother), Kimberly Bryson, 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, Regenia Noel (M. Stevens), Anne Peterson, Gene and Betty Stanley, 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

steeplevIEWS@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

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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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