

April 29, 2021



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

From the desk of Rev. Mark Hinchcliff

First Presbyterian Church of Martinsville, Virginia

April 26, 2021

"For I know the plans I have for you ... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

I remember almost seven years ago when I first came to this church, I took this Scripture out of Jeremiah as not only inspiration but also a charge. A charge never to act towards intentional harm but rather to act with plans to give hope for a future. The church was grieving from the physical and emotional loss of a beloved pastor followed by a difficult transition. In my own personal search for a new church, I had already been offered another position close to home with lots of attractive amenities. But the need, and the calling, appeared to be here.

My previous history revealed a bit of an unusual journey into the ministry from a Special Agent from the U.S. Treasury to an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacraments. Although maybe unusual, I believe in some ways my journey gave me a real- life perspective advantage that others had to learn on their own.

Personal struggles helped me to understand the world outside the church as well as within. Learning to get past my training of "just the facts" however, sometimes may have made me appear a little abrupt to some of you. For this I truly apologize to those of you that may have experienced this! However, my intent has always been for the benefit and spiritual nurture of the congregation as a whole rather than the loudest voice (Unless that voice was God).

My physical health ended my career as a Special Agent but provided for an open door for God's ministry. I came to each church I have served with a medical disability which I have learned to deal with. and push through, for almost twenty years. As I have finally approached my Social Security retirement age and desire to make the most of the years I have left in this life,

it's time to move to the next stage. My goal when I came to this church was to provide a little healing for the congregation. God provided the hope!

As I walk down the hallway to the pastor's office, I look at pictures of twenty pastors who have each served as servants to the next phase of God's plan. Each one has brought a particular gift to the life of this community and its spiritual journey. Thank you to all who have allowed me to walk along side of you in yours. As the Session sees fit, I would like to continue to serve with you towards the end of the year. For my own health and the health of this congregation, get excited for what God has in store for us all next. My heart will be with you always. May you remember mine in yours.

Blessings,

Pastor Mark

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Church Reopening!

The sanctuary has reopened for in-person worship and will continue with restrictions as before (wear a mask, enter at narthex, social distance) unless otherwise notified.

Virtual services will still be available on Facebook for those that wish to remain at home until they feel safe to return. Sign-ups will continue each week by emailing office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org or by phone, 276-632-3431. **Please call by NOON each Friday.**



Please join us on the **Fifth Sunday of Easter** either **in person** or via **Facebook live** at 10 am.

sermon by Pastor March Hinchcliff

Abide in Him, and He Will Abide in You

Based upon John 15:1–8 and Psalm 22:25–31



Youth Sunday plans are being made and is scheduled to take place **Sunday, May 16**. Kellene Wotring, who is a graduating senior from Martinsville High School this year, will be delivering the spiritual message. If your child(ren) is interested in participating in this special service, please contact Sam (sam@peaksprebytery.org).

This will be an outdoor service at the Smith River Sports Complex at 10am. Plan to bring a lawn chair & pack a lunch. After the service we'll enjoy lunch & fellowship time together. We hope you'll make plans to attend this special service!



Please give generously to support the PC(USA) Pentecost Special Offering, which will help support our own children as well as youth ministries around the world. **This year, Pentecost Sunday falls on May 23.**

On the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit draws us together as one people, helps us to comprehend what He is doing in the world, and empowers us to proclaim, in word and in deed, His plan of reconciling all people in the name of Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world. 40% of the offerings collected from our church stays with our church, and 60% is used by national programs and initiatives that support young adults, ministries with youth, and children at risk.

By supporting this offering, you are helping to shape a positive future for young lives, for our church and for our world. Please give generously to this offering.



"Reading the Bible with New Eyes: Finding a Life-Giving Faith in Guatemala"

Without travel to Guatemala to connect us, our mission partner CEDEPCA (Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America) is offering a "Virtual Journey." For years, Protestants in Guatemala have been taught a narrow Fundamentalism, and now are making new discoveries as they read the Bible.

On this Virtual Journey, learn how a theology based in the love and justice of Jesus Christ is transforming the lives and communities of people in Central America. You will hear testimonies from pastors and laypeople in CEDEPCA's Biblical and Theological Formation program and be led through an eye-opening study of scripture by Dr. Paulo Ueti, Anglican theologian, New Testament scholar, and friend of CEDEPCA.

Wednesday, May 19, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvfu-orTwiE9yIIYNqI_a-H6F9WfGGbwX2

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

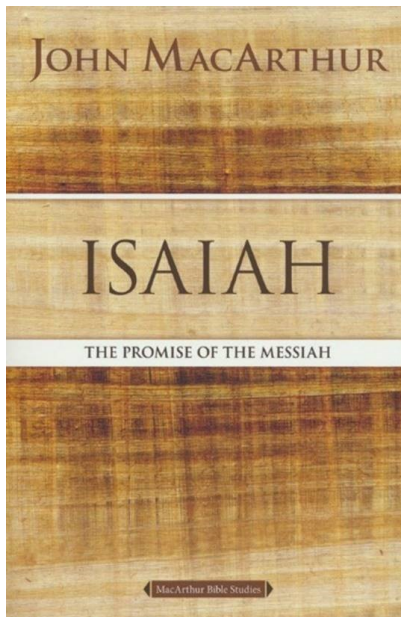
Suggested donation \$11.

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).

MacArthur Bible Studies: Study of Isaiah

Begins: April 11 at 8:30 AM - June 13 by Zoom



The *MacArthur Bible Studies* provide intriguing examinations of the whole of Scripture and continues to be one of the bestselling study guide series on the market today. In this study, Dr. MacArthur examines the words of the prophet Isaiah, showing how God proved to be faithful to his people (and us) by promising to send Messiah who would save them from sin. These latest all-new studies join the ranks of the previously released study guides, now offering readers a comprehensive selection of Old Testament Bible studies by bestselling author and theologian John MacArthur.

Each lesson includes:

- **Drawing Near:** An opening question based on the key theme or topic of the lesson
- **The Context:** Background information on the passage of Scripture being studied
- **Keys to the Text:** Detailed commentary on the passage being studied
- **Unleashing the Text:** Application questions on the passage highlighted in the lesson
- **Exploring the Meaning:** Three key takeaways from the passage
- **Reflecting on the Text:** Reflection questions on the passage highlighted in the lesson
- **Personal Response:** A journaling section to help readers apply the principles

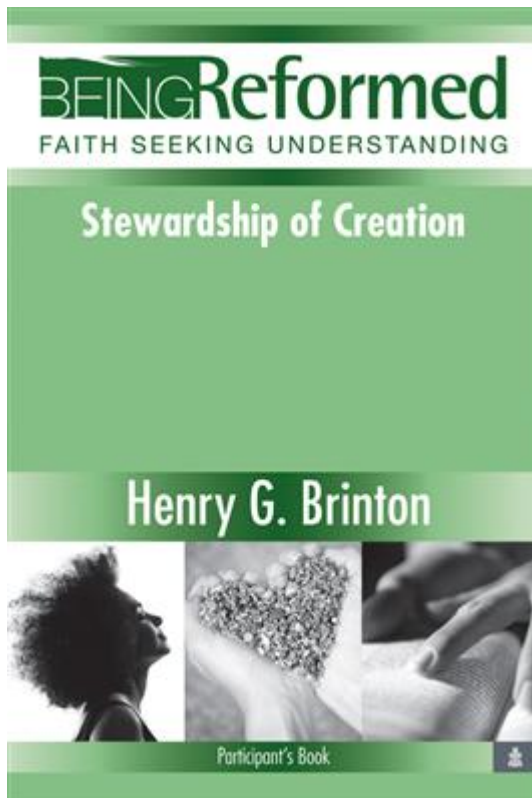
Each study includes an introduction that provides background information to each book of the Bible being studied and a closing "Reviewing Key Principles" lesson to help cement the main themes of the study.

To sign up or for more information, contact Denny Casey (d.a.casey@comcast.net).

Bible Study: Stewardship of Creation

Begins: April 21 at 7 PM by Zoom for six weeks

This is being organized by the FPC Earth Care team



Description from the publisher:

“Explore the biblical bases for our care of creation along with sessions on being environmentally friendly at home, at church, and in the world.”

Being Reformed: Faith Seeking Understanding is a series of biblically based mini-courses that provides adults with a foundational understanding of the Reformed faith. Each six-session study--written by well-known and respected scholars--features Scripture, prayer, in-depth commentary, and questions for reflection. Each study addresses its subject from a Reformed theological perspective. Lessons are enhanced through the Leader's Guide, which offers helpful suggestions and direction for group study. The main structure for

these guides is the rubric Head, Heart, and Hands.

We have borrowed a few books from the presbytery office that will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Sam Smith, sam@peakspresbytery.org, to borrow a copy or you may purchase a copy from the PCUSA bookstore.

Here's a link to the book (with a link if you'd like to order a copy):
<https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/680720/stewardship-of-creation-participants-book.aspx>

To sign up and get the Zoom link, contact Denny Casey d.a.casey@comcast.net

Earth Care Congregation Certification

To become an Earth Care Congregation, this congregation affirmed an Earth Care Pledge to integrate environmental practices and thinking into their worship, education, facilities, and outreach.

The Earth Care Congregation certification is designed to recognize churches that make the commitment to take seriously God's charge to "till and keep" the garden.

Started in 2010 by the PC(USA), the goal of this program is to inspire churches



to care for God's earth in a holistic way, through integrating earth care into all aspects of their church life. The Earth Care Congregation certification honors churches that make that commitment and encourages others to follow their example.

"It is exciting that **First Presbyterian Church is one of the 276 churches that chose to dedicate themselves to intentional care of**

God's earth this year. Particularly in a time of much uncertainty and worry about the future, this congregation's activities and commitment even in the midst of navigating limitations brought about by COVID-19 brings hope to their community. We believe that First Presbyterian Church will inspire others to respond intentionally to God's call to care for the earth," says Jessica Maudlin, Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

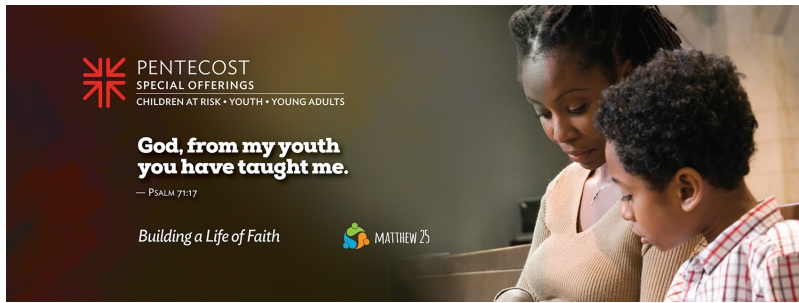
For more information about First Presbyterian Church's earth care program contact Denny Casey at d.a.casey@comcast.net or (276) 224-3906.

To learn more about Earth Care at First Presbyterian Church, visit <http://www.firstpresbyterianmartinsville.org/page.cfm?topic=Earth>
For more information on the Earth Care Congregations program visit www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations.

Sam Smith, Discipleship Program Director with Presbytery of the Peaks Reports:

- Camp Peaks will remain on hiatus until summer of 2022.
- Planning meetings are beginning to take place for another virtual VBS for summer of 2021 (tentative release date: week of July 26-30).
- A summer outdoor adventure camp for middle & high schoolers, sponsored by the Presbytery, will be offered June 20-25 at Camp Bethel in Fincastle, VA. Covid safety guidelines will be followed & space will be limited to insure appropriate social distancing. Registration is now available for that on the Presbytery website.
- Planning discussions are beginning to take place with church partners for another virtual VBS for summer of 2021 (tentative release date: week of July 26-30).

Pentecost At Home Faith Formation



Pentecost is the day when we celebrate God’s gift of the Holy Spirit, which unites us together as one and helps us to see God at work in our world. The Pentecost Offering also “unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world.”

Beginning the week of April 25, and each week leading up to Pentecost Sunday, families, of any size and all ages, are encouraged to utilize the at home faith formation resources linked below as a devotional. Each week you will read the guiding scripture passage, Psalm 71:17 as well as a story of how the Pentecost Offering impacts ministries for children, youth, and young adults. You’re also encouraged to work on coloring the Pentecost Mandela and much like with the prayer doves last year, please send pictures of your completed creation to me!

Collect a weekly gift to the Pentecost Offering in your faith formation space and then bring or mail to the church your offering on or before Pentecost Sunday. Your gift not only supports ministries within the PC(USA), but also ministries for children and youth within our own congregation.

Blessings,
Sam

[Pentecost 2021 Intro](#)

[Pentecost 2021 At Home Faith Formation](#)

[Pentecost 2021 Mandela](#)

Happy Birthday in May

- 1** Janet Fentress
- 3** Georgette "Jerry" Bishop
- 4** Doug Knighton
- 5** Amy Mason
- 8** Gavin Luther
- 10** Sandra Shank
- 11** Bonnie Price, Emily Beard
- 12** Monica Stevens, Patricia Christenbury, Pearl Minter

- 16** Susan Hatchett
17 Heath Russell
19 Annie B. Boyd, Taylor Shank
20 Christal Kelly
22 Hayden Cundiff, Joanna Wood
27 Jacob Wingfield, Kent Williams, Virginia Seamon
29 Edward M. Linker
30 Ronald Rebman



In honor of Doc Altizer
Joan and Monty Montgomery

In honor of Jim Rothrock
Margaret Cundiff

Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Sarah Altizer, Carl and Georgette Bishop, Ernest and Marilyn Bremner (S. Ford), Jim Brunt (N. Davis' brother), Laura Buffkin, Tommy Cobb (M. Dunn), Sandra and Mark Dobrinski (brother and sister in-law of Cynthia), Daniel Handy, Leonard Kelley (Monica Stevens' brother), Betty Carol Lamm, Eddie Levi, Mary Manning, Laura Stevens Milton, Jim Murray (Judy King), Regenia Noel (M. Stevens), Anne Peterson, Gene and Betty Stanley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski (Susan Pilson), Sarah Vicki Wells, 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.

Please remember

Cornbread Mix



The 2nd quarter food donation item is **Cornbread Mix (i.e.: Jiffy)**.

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

Church Office Phone: 276-632-3431

Our mailing address is:

First Presbyterian Church
1901 Patrick Henry Ave.
Martinsville, VA 24112

STAFF

Rev. Mark Hinchcliff, Pastor, pastor@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

Sam Smith, Youth and Family Ministries Director, sam@peakspresbytery.org

Cynthia Dobrinski, Music Director & Organist, 276-734-0212

Rita Bateman, Secretary/Office Manager, office@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

Drema Austin, Bookkeeper, bookkeeper@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

Carol Carter, Weekday School Director, wds@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

Deborah Burgess, Contemporary Music Director,
contemporarymusic@fpcmartinsvilleVA.org

THE SESSION

Moderator: Rev. Mark Hinchcliff

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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