

March 24, 2022



Steeple Views

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSVILLE, VA

Devotional Meditation

Elder, Monica Stevens

March 23, 2022

Called to Freedom

Galatians 6:13-26

"You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses, but serve each other through love. All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour each other, be careful that you don't get eaten up by each other! (Gal.6:13-15, CEB)

Paul preached to the Gentiles in Galatia that faith in Christ was sufficient to become a follower of Christ and a part of the church. Gentiles were not required to first convert to Judaism for as Paul said, "We know that a person isn't made righteous by the works of the Law but rather through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. We ourselves believed in Christ Jesus so that we could be made righteous by the faithfulness of Christ, and not by works of the Law—because no one will be made righteous by the works of the Law." (Gal. 2:16, CEB)

Instead, Paul calls believers to "live by the Spirit" and not by our own selfish desires. Paul continues by saying that a life that is governed by selfish motives will demonstrate obvious behaviors such as "fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, [and] carousing." (6:19, NRSV) I'm sure you noticed that I bolded and/or italicized some words in that list. I did that because we have a tendency to look at such lists, see that we aren't involved in a number of these behaviors and then skip over the rest. The items I highlighted seem to be especially prevalent in today's society when much of public discourse has turned into unhinged shouting matches. To use a really bad pun, blatant or thinly veiled anger seems to be all the rage. Many people would argue that they have the freedom to indulge in whatever desires, opinions, and actions they want. Even when people aren't shouting, they often gather with others in corners where they can grumble and complain about things that don't suit them—not to necessarily find solutions, but to spread their discontent and feel justified in doing so.

Paul tells us that when we choose to live our life in the Spirit we will live in a different way. When we live in the Spirit, we will strive to love God by loving our neighbors as ourselves. When we do this we sow the seeds of life in Christ and the fruit that those seeds will bear include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Picture a world where these traits are abundant. What a difference from the one described above! No one—not Paul, and not even Jesus—ever said this type of life would be easy to achieve and maintain, but if we are serious about following Christ, this is the life we are called to lead. We have been set free from the selfish, angry, sinful constraints of humanity to find the joy, peace, patience, and the rest that comes from a life lived in the love and service of our Lord, Jesus.

In Paul's words, "...The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another."

Fill us, Heavenly Father with the fruit of the Spirit so that we may share the love of Jesus Christ and help make your true freedom known on earth as it is in heaven.
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 OMICRON 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 **Fourth Sunday in Lent** at 10:00 AM

Sermon by **Elder Kym Wiederholt**

Transition and Reconciliation

Based on 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 and Joshua 5:9-12



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation,

education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People — all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA) • Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees • Receives 32% of funds raised

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP) • Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed • Receives 36% of funds raised

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE (SDOP) • Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues • Receives 32% of funds raised

Please consider giving generously. Collection date is April 17, 2022

Virtual Journey to Guatemala: "Confronting Climate Change with Actions of Hope" Wednesday, April 20.7:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time



During Earth Week, take a Virtual Journey to Guatemala to see how Central Americans are "Confronting Climate Change with Actions of Hope." You will be challenged by the Rev. Dr. Karla Koll, Professor of Mission at the Latin American Biblical University in Costa Rica, who will speak about what it means to live holy lives in the midst of the threat of destruction. And you'll be inspired by the stories of ordinary people in Central America whose actions in relationship with creation reflect extraordinary hope.

This virtual travel opportunity is designed for an English-speaking audience and will include breakout room discussions. Pre-registration is required.

Register at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqceChqT0iHdKIiyDaxHtukyx7FKuvdgu>
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After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



It is hard to believe, but this school year is flying by! The Weekday School is currently taking pre-registration for the 2022-2023 School Year.

We have classes for 1, 2, 3, and 4 year old children. Our preschool is from 9:00-12:00 Monday-Friday.

We also have Early Drop Off and Lunch Buddy programs for families who need longer hours.

Please help us by spreading the word about our wonderful school and terrific teachers to anyone you know who has children ages 1 to 4.

Contact us at: 632-3431 or 1stpresbyterianwdsmartinsville@gmail.com

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Choir rehearsal and handbell rehearsal started Wednesday, March 16.

Handbells - 6-7:00 p.m.

Choir 7-8:00 p.m.

Easter lilies can be ordered now through Sunday, March 27. Order forms are located in the pews. Put them in with the offering or drop them off at the office.

Plans are underway for **confirmation class** to take place this Spring. If your child (8th grade or older) has not been through confirmation and would like to take part, please contact Sam (sam@peakspresbytery.org). For those already signed up, more details will be coming soon!

Prayer Requests

These members and friends of the congregation need our prayers:

PRAYER CONCERNS

Ruth Aaron (Pinkards), Pat Baumann, 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, Iliene Hite, Leonard Kelley (Monica Stevens' brother), Betty Carol Lamm, Mary Manning, Laura Stevens Milton, Dru Rothrock, Troy Spencer (Pam Rakes' father), Scott Stevens (M. Stevens), Bruce Thomas (M. Stevens), Carl Utley, Tammy Tucker Wardinski (Susan Pilson), persecuted Christians and all refugees and immigrants forced to flee their countries due to violence and tyranny.



Please submit prayer requests to Rita in the church office, [\(276\) 632-3431](tel:2766323431), 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 Pearl Minter at [276 340-3476](tel:2763403476).

Grace Network Donations

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



The 2nd quarter 2022 food donation item is **Saltine Crackers**



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: fpcsteepleviews@gmail.com**. 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



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)

Our mailing address is:

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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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