

Fincastle Presbyterian Church

May 2024

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From David's Desk

A church member recently sent me an article from the Wall Street Journal entitled: "Some Mental-Health Benefits Are Linked to Going to Church" written by Clare Ansberry. She makes her case well. Let me begin by simply quoting several of her well researched points. (Please note that her work emphasizes "active participation by the congregant.")

- "Active religious practice, such as going to churches, synagogues and mosques, is linked to mental well-being,..."
- "One possible explanation: ... Places of worship can provide community and belonging,..."
- Believing in a higher power can foster a sense of connection,... Helping others... Can improve mental health."

However Ansberry's work also acknowledges the undeniable "hard reality" about religious life in America: "The findings come at a time of declining regular attendance ... Across nearly all faith denominations and rising rates of depression and anxiety."

Younger people are having an especially tough time connecting to a faith community, reports Ansberry. Abigail Visco Rusert, associate dean at Princeton Theological Seminary observes: "I just think young people are doing church differently—with or without our permission." Alexandria McCrory, 28, helps to lead a teen group at a Baptist church. She observes that her peers... are active—helping with food pantries or youth programs, but don't come to Sunday services. "It feels more shallow", she said.

Ansberry's research also concludes: "In recent years, many people have left churches, or never attended in the first place, because they don't feel accepted. Young people, in particular, have expressed feelings of alienation over some religions' stances on gender, abortion and sexual orientation, and of exclusion because they don't fit a religious community's mold."

Our Lord Jesus said of Himself: “I came, not to be served, but to serve.” The church, as the body of Christ, is called into that same mission: to serve the world—the whole world—not just part of it. In the light of Ansberry’s article, let’s think about how we can fulfill our Lord’s calling to the church to serve others:

- To reach out to the older person who feels forgotten by family and friend and world;
- To reach out to the “sandwich-generation”, the middle-aged couple, or single parent, who is caught between giving care to aging parents and care to busy, growing (and demanding) children;
- And to young people who are searching for acceptance even as they are experimenting with independence and autonomy.

No one said being the church would be easy. In fact Jesus says of the cost of discipleship that “we will need to pick-up our cross” in order to follow Him. However, the rewards of being the church will include being the means of God’s grace to the world who desperately needs God’s grace, who desperately needs to grow in the good health of body, mind, and spirit.

“As (Jesus) went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.” (Mark 6:34)

May God bless us and keep us as we seek together to be our Lord’s Church.

David



This is a picture taken by Sue Porter on July 30, 2023. Here is a quote from Diane Ackerman, an American poet and author.

*“Look at your feet.
You are standing in the sky.
When we think of the sky,
We tend to look up, but the sky
Actually begins at the earth. . .
We breathe it deep within us.*

From the Bench (Piano and Organ):

Unique Composition

This reflection was shared recently and as a musician, it resonated with me in a special way. Let us remember that we are all musicians and have been given the gift of music from our Creator!

"Several weeks ago, my wife and I went to a piano concert held at a local music hall. The pianist was a young professional who had received the second award at the International Chopin Piano Competition held a few years ago. We were deeply impressed and listened to the beauty of the melodies of Chopin and Beethoven.



When I looked closely at the pianist following his musical score carefully, I likened it to the relationship between God and humankind. God created a special, unique composition for each of us, and we are expected to play the music carefully. The sheet music can be found in the Bible. If we neglect the written notes, we may fumble through life without attaining the joy God has created for us all. Encouraged and guided by God's words in scripture, our lives will play the songs of love and grace God wrote for us."

Make a Joyful Noise, Lori Turner

Thought for the day: God had (has) composed songs of love and grace for me to sing.

Saturday, May 18th at 3 pm, The Botetourt County Chapter of NSDAR will hold a dedication of our American 250 Patriots Marker at the Botetourt Museum of History & Culture

Rain Location will be at the Fincastle Presbyterian Church. All are invited.





*Celebrating Fincastle's
Historic Churches - 2024*

Celebrating the Fincastle Presbyterian Church

108 Back Street, Fincastle, VA

Thursday, May 30 starting at 6:30 pm

Through History and Music

Lori Turner—gathering music starting at 6:20 pm

Bo Trumbo—History of Fincastle Presbyterian Church

Musical Program by Hannah Cox



The music program will be
"The History of Music" by Hannah
Cox, Roanoke Symphony Orchestra,
**Community Engagement and
Education Coordinator .**

Upcoming Events: June 30 at 3 pm: Fincastle United Methodist Church Celebration;
September 28 at 2 pm: St. Mark's Episcopal Church Celebration.

**For the June Newsletter: Please submit by email
(psdicke@yahoo.com) or turn in a copy of your favorite sum-
mertime recipe (s) to Patsy. Please do this by May 30.**