



Alexandria Presbyterian Church ~ September 2011

Upcoming Dates

Corporate Prayer

1st Sat mornings
3rd Wed evenings

Monthly Newcomer Fellowship Time

4th Sunday mornings

Choir Retreat

September 16-17

Worship Seminar with Skip Ryan

September 18

Progressive Dinner

September 24

Realities of Marriage Class Begins

September 25

Inquirers Class

Sept 30 - Oct 1

Jr. High Modgnik

Sept 30 - Oct 2

Father/Child Camping

October 9-10

Indelible Grace Concert

October 18

All-Church Picnic

October 22



The Challenge of our Mission Statement

by Pastor Tom Holliday

"Alexandria Presbyterian Church is a welcoming community of believers, rejoicing in the gospel, transformed by its power, and responding with grateful hearts in service to our God and world."

These are familiar words to most of us inasmuch as they appear on the bulletin cover week after week. In the Inquirers Class we talk about this core vision of APC. Yet the paragraph on the front page of the bulletin is longer than that one sentence. It goes on to say, "we long to taste the glory of God in such an astonishing way that the city of Alexandria will be drawn to the majesty and mercy of our great God. It is our desire that our worship will serve as an authentic model to our city of the possibilities for transformation of individuals, families and a city encountering the glory and grace of God."

This is our mission: to taste God's glory in transforming ways—in such astonishing ways that not only will we bow down in praise and worship of our great God, but that others will join us in worshipping the one true God. These words remind us that the goal of worship is not gathering more information about God, but rather transformation, by God's Spirit. To this end, we do in fact need to be learning more about Him, but in such a way that leads us on to growth in holiness as well as usefulness, to Him.

This mission statement challenges us: do we long to taste the glory of God? Often, we don't. We can't do this by ourselves, in ourselves, or for ourselves. In other words, worship can become rather routine and even boring, when we decline

the Holy Spirit's invitation in worship. We can easily end up on our own, hoping to be entertained, or eager to learn some new thought or truth that we have not yet considered (doing virtually little if anything with the information).

We need God to create this taste within us, for His glory. We are people who need to be drawn to the majesty and mercy of our great God. There are so many other things in our lives pulling in the opposite direction. In worship, we ask God to reveal glimpses of Himself to us, from His Word, that will draw our minds and hearts to Him—to adore Him, praise Him, thank Him and yes, confess to Him all the ways that we long more for our glory than His.

The older I get, the more I am realizing how desperately I am dependent upon him to create a thirst for such things. The gravity of spiritual indifference and apathy have a very strong pull, do they not? I need help—lots of help. Most of all, from Him. I am learning to ask Him to reveal Himself to me in worship. I am learning to expect Him to meet me in worship. I am learning that He expects me to engage in spiritual transactions in worship.

Learning? Absolutely. I often feel, even now, like a small child in terms of how much more I have to learn. But that's a good place to be. Asking Him, pleading with Him to change my heart. Becoming more convinced that He welcomes me in worship, inviting me to go new places and directions with Him.

Our bulletin reminds us of one other thing: "we long to taste the glory of God...." This is a corporate activity.

(continued on p.2)



Welcome Back

by Pastor Chris Sicks

Washington, DC is a strange place. Sure, it's typical in most cities for summertime to be different. School is out, the weather changes, etc. But here, where so much of the economy is connected to the federal government, summertime is especially different. Congress is gone, the roads out of town are packed on the weekend, and military families transfer in and out of the area.

Things change at APC, too. Many of our Covenant Fellowship Groups take a break for the summer. The Thursday and Friday Women's Studies are suspended, along with the choir and some of our children and youth programs. Much of the church staff goes on vacation at some point, so we get to hear from other preachers and worship leaders.

Summer is a good time, a break time, but it's short. Before you know it the schools are open, the pools are closed and the Beltway is clogged with federal employees once again.

Life on earth has been about cycles from the very start. Changes in routine are part of God's design. "While the

earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." *Genesis 8:22*

So, now it's September. Things are firing up once again at APC. What's in store for you this fall? Perhaps you haven't joined a fellowship group yet. Great time to do it. We'll have some excellent Sunday School classes to choose from starting September 11th. A Marriage Class begins September 25th. Many other ministries get underway this month, too.

Those are all things that will bless you. How about being a blessing? The choir is looking for new members. The nursery has lost a number of volunteers over the summer and needs quite a few new folks. The Explorers children's ministry could use a few more hands on Sunday nights. Or maybe you'd rather teach Sunday School, or serve coffee or help with hospitality.

If you're still not sure, or are trying to figure out just what God's calling you to do in this family of believers, give Tom or me a call. We'd love to pray with you about it.

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Staff Spotlight: Leslie Bridge, Director of Children’s Ministries

I hail from the Boston area and grew up a huge fan of all the Boston teams, much to the disappointment of many of the APC children. Even though we were a church going family, it wasn’t until I was in college that I heard a clear and relevant gospel message. I got involved with an organization called Campus Crusade for Christ, now Cru, while studying Physical Education and health. My intention was to be a Physical Education teacher and a coach. After six months of that, I sensed God was calling me to work with college students. In 1979, I joined the staff of Campus Crusade and have served in New England, Pennsylvania and then at the University of Maryland, which essentially brought me to the D.C. area. When I joined the D.C. Metro campus team, I moved across the River to Falls Church, Virginia. A volunteer who worked with us at American University invited me to APC in March of 1995. Because of my love for children and sports of all kinds, it was VBS and APC softball that got me to stay, and I have been attending ever since. I volunteered in various children programs and years ago accepted the position of Director of Children’s Ministries. Who would have thought my coaching degree would have come in so handy!



20/20 Vision in the Rear-View Mirror by Adam LeRoy, Director of Youth Ministries

I’d like to tell you a story of a boy who was devastated when his family moved from his childhood home of 14 years in Scottsdale, AZ to spend his senior year of high school in Rocky Mount, NC. His senior year was filled with anger towards his parents, brokenness over his girlfriend and life left back in AZ, seemingly pointless family counseling sessions, and a lack of purpose in life.

No one asks to go through a season of trials like that, but would I change the details if I had the chance of knowing how my life would play out? God’s plan was not to bring me harm. But try telling me that when I was a teen and you were likely to get a rough response. 17-year old Adam did not want to hear about having a hope in the future when the present hurt so much. Thankfully redemption was near to 17-year old Adam and I can now clearly see the purpose of all that pain and heartache, the restoration process continues to this day...

Our stories are important to the next generation as they tell of God’s faithfulness and never-failing love. Our stories also have the blessing of drawing others into community and out of isolation as they see their struggles through others. The teaching theme for this Fall’s Saturday night youth group is all about finding rest in the waiting. We’ll be turning over painful areas in our lives to God and looking to Jesus to draw us to himself, that our present trials might grow dim and His glory might shine brighter still.

Yep, that is not a typo, PROTAS large group ministry is moving to Saturday nights from 6-8pm in the Fellowship Hall at APC. Our hope is that God will bless this shift in ministry space, timing and content. I know there will be some downsides, but we hope that the upsides will really bless our teens and create better space for deeper relationships in our teen community.

The fall is packed full of social events, discipleship groups, service projects, retreats, 2012 mission trip planning, Sunday school, etc... Please pick up a copy of the brochure outside my office in the Fellowship Hall, email me at adam.leroy@alexandriapres.org or visit our webpage at www.rockalexandria.com to learn more about teen ministries here at APC.

Our ministry vision: PROTAS is a dynamic teen-led adult-mentored relationship-based youth community with the goal of teens becoming strong disciples of Christ as they reach out to their lost friends through exciting outreach events, relevant and challenging instruction from a biblically reformed perspective, and loving Christ-like service to those in need.

Giving at a Glance	YTD Giving (8/31)	\$915,494
	YTD Budget	\$868,154
	Difference	\$ 47,340 (+5%)



Children’s Chatter by Leslie Bridge, Director of Children’s Ministries

Do you hate to see the lazy, hazy days of summer coming to a close? I know I do. Even though it is almost too hot to be outside, like it was this summer, I still hate to see it end. And yet, its end always brings about the start of something new. Our calendar says the beginning of a new year is in January, but many of us function on an academic calendar. Many of the children’s programs go on throughout the year, but for us September signifies a new beginning.

This is the time of year children move up to a new grade in Sunday school. Those turning 5 begin to attend Children’s church and Explorers kicks off on September 18th. Coming back after lots of travel for some of us this summer creates excitement as we re-connect and see what God has done and is doing in our midst. Often new families join us over the summer months with changing assignments and we greet them with excitement and anticipation of new relationships. September is filled with a sense of expectation of newness.

As we prepare to launch into the Fall children’s programs, I am excited and thrilled to see returning Sunday School teachers after a summer sabbatical. Children are starting to ask when Explorers is going to start again and new volunteers are being recruited all the time. In the midst of all this transition time, I am still brought to my knees as I think about teaching and training our children about the Christian Faith and about a relationship with Jesus. Growing as a covenant child of God is still the central theme of all we are and all we do.

If you would like to know more about our children’s activities or how you might be involved, please contact me at leslie.bridge@alexandriapres.org.

(Mission Statement—continued from p.1)

We’re not doing this alone. We learn how to worship in a family. We need each other, others beside us praying for God to reveal more of His glory to them, as well. When was the last time you and your friends prayed for such an astonishing thing: that God would create in you a longing to taste His glory in astonishing and transforming ways? To actually pray that God will meet you in worship—and that you are preparing your heart for such an encounter.

In this year of worship at APC, my prayer is that more and more of these kinds of prayers are being prayed. I can’t possibly imagine our God denying such requests. “Lord, Let these words on this page become a growing reality in our lives.”

Why attend the Day of Worship with Skip Ryan?

This year we are focused on Worship as our theme. Skip Ryan’s book, *Worship: Beholding the Beauty of the Lord*, has been one of the primary resources we have used in our focus on this theme. We’ll get a double installment of Skip’s insight and teachings on worship on Sunday morning, September 18th—from the pulpit during worship and again at 11am in lieu of Sunday School. That Sunday evening from 5-7pm, we’ll switch gears and take a look at the idol of perfectionism. How do we recognize this idol, and how do we find freedom in the gospel from its power? Come Sunday evening to get answers.

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Holy Worship ~ 8:50am | Time of Fellowship & Coffee ~ 10:30am | Sunday School for All Ages ~ 11:00am
Communion Celebrated the Second Sunday of Each Month