



Alexandria Presbyterian Church ~ September 2013

Upcoming Dates

PROTAS begins
September 8

Explorers begins
September 15

KOINONIA Fall Kick-off
September 17

Fall Fest
September 21

Men's Breakfast
September 28

Inquirers Class
October 4-5

Women's Tea
October 19

Fredericksburg Battlefield Tour
October 19

Baptism
October 27

Christmas Candlelight Service
December 14

All-Church Retreat
May 16-18, 2014



Covenant Fellowship Groups—Prepared to be Changed? by Josh Diack, Director of Congregational Life

I remember the first time I joined a small group at the church I attended in Australia. I was nervous, and yet also excited at the chance to be part of a group of people committed to meeting together each week. I was being led to jump out of my comfort zone with a group of people I hardly knew. Would they be the type of people I would hang out with on a regular basis? Did they like sports (my entry point in conversation)? Would they accept me or talk to me when I first arrived? Would they be a clique, leaving me feeling more like an outsider? Did I really want to commit to this? It turned out that God had something in store for me far grander than I had ever imagined, and it began with some of these very simple questions.

You may be able to resonate with some of these fears. Perhaps you are new to APC, perhaps you're a regular attender who hasn't been part of a group before, or perhaps you're a new leader who is leaving the comfort of an existing group to lead another.

In her book, *Community that is Christian*, Julie Gorman speaks to the validity of these fears as we search for change. She says "change is seldom neutral. We talk of 'change for the better' or 'change for the worse.' We are exhilarated by the prospect of change or threatened by its demands. The Christian life is expected to be filled with transition and transformation

as believers are continually formed more wholly in the likeness of Christ."

This is in fact what we hope our CFGs will be: agents of change—into the image of Christ—by the power of the Gospel. Thankfully, we have a Savior who understands all our concerns, fears and needs. He is gentle and lowly of heart. He stretches us to grow but does not break us, all the while comforting and guiding our steps. He elicits our trust and proves to be absolutely worthy of it.

As we approach the time of year when many CFGs start up, I encourage you to earnestly think and pray about joining a group. I can assure you that being part of a "community of a few" here at APC will be one of the most rewarding and worthwhile things you will do. Meeting with a small group of people on a regular basis to dive deeper into God's word and to apply His truth to our lives is a means by which God brings about transformation. By God's grace we will know and experience Him in ways we have never known Him before. Although it doesn't always look the way we envision it, it will be far better and well worth the journey.

If you have any questions about joining a CFG or learning more about the CFG training and discipleship Sunday School class on offer this fall please feel free to take a CFG brochure at the information booth or contact me at josh.diack@alexandriapres.org. I would love to talk with you.

Fall Fest is coming up! September 21, 11-3pm

This year's take on the all-church picnic: welcome the autumn season with fellowship, food, games, activities and music right here in the church parking lot.

Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall to bring a side or pie!

Volunteers are also needed to make this a great event.



Love and Respect by Bryant and Lynn Streett

We would like to invite you to join us for a six week course called "LOVE AND RESPECT Building Blocks," by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs. For those of you on this adventure called marriage, you know that it is filled with highs and lows, joys and tears, comedy and drama—like any good epic story. This course is for couples who are just starting out; for those in the midst of raising a family, building careers or both; and for those like us who have been married a long time. It might also be good for those who aren't married at all, but who have seen others, like their parents perhaps, struggle and eventually give up on the marriage relationship. "What happened anyway? How did they get there? How did we get here?"

This is a great course—the best on marriage we've ever attended. It's based on Ephesians 5:23. The videos cover such topics as: Pink and Blue, Not Wrong, Just Different; Not Communication, But Mutual Understanding; and My Response is My Responsibility. The DVDs are humorous, but also profound.

Come learn with us how we can give our spouses the very simple gifts of love and respect, especially when we feel like doing the opposite. How we handle ourselves in the midst of conflict and disagreement sets the course for our relationship. Join us. The course will meet at the church on Sundays, 5-7pm beginning Sunday, October 13.

2405 Russell Road, Alexandria VA 22301 ~ 703-683-3348 (office) ~ 703-683-2392 (fax) ~ alexandriapres.org

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. 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.



Staff Spotlight: Trevor Manor, Music Assistant

I first attended APC as a high school sophomore when my parents became the new music directors in fall 2001. I quickly settled into my new church as a piano accompanist for worship and eventually a student leader for PROTAS youth group. Serving the Lord through worship music has always been the most fulfilling musical activity for me, so it's not surprising that after an undergrad degree in piano performance (go JMU Dukes!) and a Master's at Cincinnati Conservatory that I should return to make music at my home church.

My role as Music Assistant is now in its third year, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to assist my parents—and currently my bosses!—in planning worship. My responsibilities have broadened greatly beyond just accompanying: I now enjoy writing corporate prayers for worship, teaching Sunday school classes on sacred music, and arranging music for the Adult and Youth choirs, to name some. I also teach piano privately and do freelance accompanying in the area. I enjoy running, reading, and singing in two area choirs. With the start of the new school year, I look forward to seeing how God will work at APC in 2013-2014!



Atlantic City Mission Trip Recap by Adam LeRoy, Director of Youth Ministries

It has been a wild and busy summer of youth ministry! I am particularly grateful to God for the opportunity to serve alongside New City Atlantic City Church (PCA, www.newcityac.org) via their summer urban ministry team program run by Hope For Atlantic City (www.hope4ac.org). Our group of 18 learned to love and serve a city not our own, and in return, received far more than what we left behind. One poignant example happened when we showed up to our target neighborhood for children's Bible Club. We pulled up to Buzby Village in the APC bus and children immediately started running towards our bus. Keep in mind that we were total strangers to this community and we received a hero's welcome by the children. They expressed the love of God to us in an unconditional way with such enthusiasm and trust. The children were hungry for attention and their desire to be known created an easy foundation to present Jesus to them in song, craft and Bible lesson each night.

The daily schedule was incredibly helpful for building up our hearts that we might pour ourselves out on behalf of the city for God's glory. We started the day in worship and urban ministry training, leading into hours of painting and drywall work as we participated in the physical rebuilding of Atlantic City. Many personal homes and churches are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Sandy. Our evenings were spent leading Bible Club and then debriefing the whole day back at the church as we shared what God was teaching and revealing to us.

It was awesome to witness our students "wringing out" the gospel that they have been soaking up most of their young lives. Cross-cultural ministry is only possible because Jesus' finished work on the cross broke down every wall and barrier. In Christ alone are we able to work towards glimpses of heaven here on Earth (here in Alexandria) as we follow the Lord's call to love our community shoulder-to-shoulder.



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

The close of summer seems to bring a sense of dread to us—fun is over, school is beginning and we believe we will never get outside again. Our calendar says the beginning of a new year begins in January, but many of us feel a new year begins right after Labor Day. Many children's programs go on throughout the year, but September often signifies a new beginning.

This is the time of year children move to a new Sunday School class. Those turning five begin to attend Children's Church and Explorers kicks off September 15. Coming back after lots of travel this summer creates excitement as we re-connect and see what God has done and is doing in our midst. New families often 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.

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 asking when Explorers starts again and new volunteers are joining the ministry. In the midst of this transition, I am still brought to my knees thinking about teaching and training our children about the Christian faith and 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 to get involved, contact me at leslie.bridge@alexandriapres.org or at 703-538-2594.

Inquirers Class—October 4-5

Interested in membership or hearing more about the heartbeat of APC? Attend this Friday-Saturday class with Pastor Tom Holliday for an in depth look at Christianity, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and APC. Contact the church office for more information and sign up at the Information Booth in the Fellowship Hall.

Join the APC Adult Choir!

*I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad.
Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!*
Psalm 34:1-3

After a summer break, the APC adult choir will start off the new choir year with a retreat at the church on Friday evening and Saturday, September 13 and 14.

The fall choir retreat is a great way to reconnect with former choir members and meet new singers, in addition to getting a jump-start on learning the new music. That weekend, we'll also rehearse some new Christmas music for the Christmas Candlelight Service.

The APC choir seeks to magnify and exalt the Lord's name together in songs and hymns and spiritual songs in worship. If you are a singer, a believer and 14 years or older and have a desire to worship through beautiful choral music, please prayerfully consider joining us. We rehearse Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:15pm. Please see the bulletin or e-announcements for details and contact Music Director Gale Manor with any questions at galemanor@gmail.com or 703.516.0796.

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| Giving at a Glance | YTD Giving (08/31) | \$ 899,991 |
| | YTD Budget | \$ 900,238 |
| | Difference | \$ 247 (-0.4%) |

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