



Alexandria Presbyterian Church ~ January/February 2011

Upcoming Dates

Corporate Prayer

1st Sat mornings
3rd Wed evenings

Monthly Newcomer Fellowship Time

4th Sunday mornings

Game Night

January 29

Inquirer's Class

February 4-5

Adult Choir Easter Music Rehearsal

February 12

PROTAS

Winter Retreat

February 18-21

Lay Counselor Institute Level 1 Training

February 19

DC Air & Space Museum Tour

February 26

Youth Choir Rehearsals Begin

February 27

Quiche Extended Fellowship

February 27



Worship in 2011

by Pastor Tom Holliday

In an article entitled "To Leap or to Weep," Gerrit Gustafson asks a pertinent question relative to the subject of worship: we need to know—do we buy tambourines or Kleenex? He argues that as we approach God's awesome presence, we need a greater capacity to do both: to leap with unspeakable joy, and to weep in prayers of supplication and repentance.

In the first three Sundays of the new year, we have been thinking much about the subject of worship. We noted in Psalm 27 that David's "one thing" was to learn how to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord. Beauty is compelling, it draws us in. We must continually ask the Lord to open our eyes to see the wonders of His beauty in ways that deepen our heartfelt worship of Him. It's humbling to realize that our eyes can be so dull that we fail to see ultimate beauty. We are dependent upon the Lord to reveal His beauty to us each Lord's Day, as well as the other six days of the week. But this is our prayer.

The second Sunday we learned about worship from the prophet Isaiah. It was as Isaiah saw more of the Lord's holiness and majesty that he realized like never before his own unworthiness. Isaiah taught us that as our own understanding of our sinfulness continues to grow, so also does our appreciation for the gracious pardoning that the Lord alone grants us. And yes, worship always leads to a response. As our hearts experience the transforming

power of God in worship, we respond in heartfelt ways.

Isaiah also teaches us that worship is dialogical. Worship is a conversation between God and his people: God's people listen intently as God speaks; God listens as his people respond to him in worship, through prayers, singing, listening to his word, the giving of our wealth, etc. In the year of worship at APC, let's remember that worship is a dialog, not two monologues.

Last Sunday we learned from the book of Hebrews that worship is bigger and more grand and awesome than we ever realized. By faith, we enter into heaven's worship. We come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. We join in with an innumerable company of angels in joyful assembly, worshipping along with all the saints, praising the Lamb who sits on the throne. Worship is intended to be the joyful celebration by God's people, of the God who created us and redeemed us, for his glory.

So, do we buy tambourines or Kleenex? Both! As we bring all of us into worship—mind, emotions, will—we have every reason to expect that our minds will be renewed by His Word, our emotions will be touched deeply, and our choices will demonstrate hearts that desperately want to obey Him. Tears of joy and repentance. Deep joy in response to amazing Grace. Bring the Kleenex! Does anybody have a tambourine hanging around the house?



Officer and Staff WRAP Retreat—2010

by Chris Joyce, Executive Director of Ministries

When I used to hear the word *retreat*, my mind would immediately picture a hilltop cloister, populated with male endomorphs in long brown robes and funny haircuts. 2010 was my 12th APC officer/staff retreat, and that monastic mental image has long since left me.

Every November, immediately following the election of officers, your elders, deacons and staff directors go off-site for two days. There is time for reflection, sure, but that's about the only parallel to my earlier retreat word picture. We try to pick a location that allows for some good walks in the woods, using the setting to reinforce our appreciation of God's beautiful creativity. Massanetta Springs in Harrisonburg is one of our favorites.

OK, Chris, that's all very nice, but where does WRAP

come in? WRAP is my acronym for the focus of the retreat—Worship, Relationship, Assessment and Prayer.

Worship is the high point of our time together. We celebrate the Lord's Table on Friday evening, in an aged stone and wood beamed chapel, just large enough to accommodate our group. In this intimate setting, we're blessed to celebrate the beautiful sacrament that God has given us.

That celebration is one example of the relational focus of the retreat. We get to spend time in the word, with God, with his creation and with each other. The campus reinforces that relational focus, through the communal meals, the shared living quarters, and the circa 1927 cottage where we spend most of our time. It includes a hand-laid, seven

(continued on p.2)



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.



Officer Spotlight: Bruce Barham, Deacon

I am very blessed to have had God lead me to APC, and to be part of the APC community!!! I am currently working as a polymer chemistry researcher on contract with the US Patent and Trademark Office. For the decade prior to being in my current position, I owned my own patent research business.

Originally I was born in Newport News, VA and was mainly raised in the Richmond, VA area. Since being at APC, I have been extremely blessed at the opportunities afforded to me in serving on the Mercy Committee. Perhaps the biggest area of blessing that the Lord has extended to me since being at APC is the extremely close-knit community that the Lord has established here that encompasses not only opportunities for service, but also the opportunities that exist here to be encouraged, stimulated, and instructed in seeing, knowing, and worshiping the Lord Jesus better. I am looking forward with great anticipation to what the Lord will do at APC in the days and years to come!!



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

I am now back in the saddle leading Children's Ministry programs. It has been so fun to be see how the children have grown over the past five months. It has also been amazing to see growth in numbers of children that are attending Children's Church, Sunday School and Explorers. We are an ever growing church, which is exciting and challenging, as we are on the brink of busting out of classroom space.

As I ponder the last five months, I find myself both humbled by and thankful for the volunteers who work with the children. Everything continued to run smoothly thanks to Dave Todaro, Jessica White, Diane Wadsworth and Tim Petrie while I was away struggling to recover from a serious staph infection. Volunteerism is the backbone of what makes children's ministry work. Currently, there are 44 adults who give of their time, talents and energy to help the children in our church grow in godliness. This is not only characteristic of the people of APC, it allows us to provide wonderful programs and relationships for the children.

Teaching our children about the Christian Faith and about a relationship with Jesus is challenging to say the least. It is easy to believe that if they are enrolled in Sunday school, go to church and attend some other kind of program, like Explorers, they will surely get all they need. You know that is only part of their development. There is so much more they catch by being around believers, and having teens and adults interacting with them. I am so thankful for the volunteers I get to work with and the impact they have on the children of APC. Please pray that God equips and empowers them to be influencers for Him.

(Retreat—continued from p.1)

foot stone fireplace that, at some retreats, we've made good use of. There's a good dose of fellowship, too, as we use the time away to reinforce the strong bonds within your leadership team. God has indeed blessed us in the way He has knit us together.

Assessment has to do with reflecting on where God has brought us in the past year, and discussing as a team what we believe he calls us to in the year ahead. This includes a discussion of every ministry area, as well as the APC theme of the current year (in 2010, Encouragement), and then determining the congregation-wide focus for the upcoming year...for 2011, Worship.

Prayer is a continual backdrop to all of our activities. Our desire is to bathe every element of the retreat in prayer, both individual and corporate. In addition, your officers and staff greatly appreciate your prayers in the preparation for and during the actual retreat.

There are many other aspects to the retreat that I could reveal, e.g.— which of your APC leaders are masters of Trivial Pursuit? Is it true we have a reformed NFL-quality passing arm among us? Which leader snores the loudest?— but it's probably best to keep those insider tidbits within the team.



A Bitter Cup to Drink From by Adam LeRoy, Director of Youth Ministries

I meet with a group of students for discipleship before school on Thursday mornings, and if you knew me well, you would know that getting up early for anything is not on my wish list. As we are going deeper in our current study by JC Ryle called *Thoughts For Young Men*, I have been recalling many of the scars of my youth. This Anglican bishop's exhortation of young men to live for Christ and his examples from the 19th century are surprisingly relevant today, as the times may have changed but the heart of man remains the same.

The latest chapter warned of the bitter taste of a conscience burdened with a long list of youthful sins. These deep wounds from our youth are not easily forgotten. Graciously, God can redeem these broken memories. As the spirit longs for a do over, Jesus provides the hope and foundation of being made new. As we are reminded of our scars that still ache and bring blemishes to our character, we recount the wounds inflicted on our savior that bring life to all who believe.

I can now see how I left "the eternal thing" unsettled in search of temporary pleasures in my youth. I couldn't see the pitfalls and traps the enemy had set on my every side; they appeared more like casual opportunities. Even though I knew they weren't in my best interest at the time, I didn't have any better interest on my mind. I recall bringing myself glory, time wasted and harm done to myself. Oddly enough, I even remember discarding opportunities that would have brought great joy to the Lord, had my heart desired what He desired for me.

I want to be like David as he recounted the Lord's great mercy and love as he remembers the sorrow of his youth, "Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good." I don't long to relive the days of my youth, as just enough of that (sometimes) bitter vintage lingers in my cup. Would you share your scars with the next generation, to display the abundance of our merciful savior, who adopts us as sons and daughters, in spite of our history of running away from the Father? Would you pray the for the youth to know such great love?

APC Giving at a Glance	YTD Giving (12/31)	\$1,275,296
	YTD Budget	\$1,166,340
	Difference	\$ 108,956 (+9%)

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