

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday School and Sunday evening activities are not meeting today, in light of the holiday weekend.

Year-End gifts to APC. As you plan a year-end gift to APC, keep in mind that the church office is closed through January 3, and today is the last worship service of the year. Gifts received in the mail the first week of January—if dated and postmarked in 2021—will be included in your 2021 year-end giving statement. You may also make your year-end gifts through APC's online giving portal thru December 31, 2021. In addition, if you like to donate securities or stocks to APC's general fund or the Arise Capital Campaign, please contact Kathy Sens at kathy.sens@alexandriapres.org and she can give you the information needed to make a transfer. If you would like to designate a special year end gift to the Arise campaign, simply annotate the memo section of your check "Arise" and mail it to the APC office or put it in the offering box. You may also do your donation online. Thank you for considering APC in your year-end planning.

Call to Prayer— January 2022. As we embark on a New Year, the elders invite you to join them in APC-wide prayer opportunities: Sunday, January 2 at 5pm in the Fellowship Hall, Wednesday, January 5 at 7:30pm in the Chapel or via Zoom; and Saturday, January 8 at 9am in the Fellowship Hall. We encourage you to mark your calendars to join at least one of these three corporate prayer times.

Newcomers' Fellowship Dinner, Saturday, January 22, 6-8pm. If you've been attending APC for one week or several months, please join us for food and fellowship. You'll have a chance to meet church officers and staff, ask questions and learn more about the ministry God is building here. Please RSVP to Katie Coombs at katie.coombs@alexandriapres.org, and indicate if you have childcare needs.

Walking in the Spirit (WitS) begins January 23! APC is offering a discipleship ministry called Walking in the Spirit (WitS), which will be led by Pastor Tom and Sharon Holliday. The first class will begin Sunday, January 23 from 5-7pm (location TBD). This is a 10 week in-depth study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. It consists of an hour of teaching and an hour of small group interaction, as well as reflection and homework during the week. Since each week builds upon the previous week, we ask that you commit to being present in at least 8 of the 10 weeks. **Sign up through the link in the APC email or website by January 9.**

The next Inquirer's Class is Friday evening, February 4 and Saturday morning, February 5. If you are interested in membership or in gaining a deeper understanding of APC, you should attend this class. You will receive an introduction to Christianity, the PCA, and the specific vision/mission and philosophy of ministry at APC. Membership is open to all who profess faith in Christ and believe the basic teachings of the Christian faith. Attending the class does not obligate you to join the church. Further details about time and location will be forthcoming. Please RSVP to Katie Coombs at katie.coombs@alexandriapres.org if you wish to attend.

Upcoming Dates

December 26 No Sunday School or Sunday Evening Activities
January 2, 9 New Adult Sunday School classes begin
January 2, 5, 8 Week of Prayer
January 22 Newcomers Dinner
January 23 Walking in the Spirit (WitS) begins
February 4-5 Inquirers Class

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CHILDREN AND TEENS

Nursery registration is required and offered up to age 4. We have a limited capacity based on how many volunteers we have. Please register at the link found in the APC email. Registration is open Wednesday through Friday each week.

Children's Church Room 124, 2nd and 4th Sundays during the sermon for children ages 5-7

Children Infants: ages 0-1 in Bunnies Room; Ages 2-3 in Tigers Room; Age 4 in Elephants Room; Grades K-1 in Lions Room; Grades 2-3 in Room 305; Grades 4-5 in Room 306

Teens Chapel

Sunday evening | 5-6:30pm

Explorers *Children age 5-5th grade, Fellowship Hall and classrooms.*
We welcome children to experience gospel living and discipleship as they build relationships with one another and with the leaders of their small groups.

Contact: Erin Furgerson at erin.furgerson@alexandriapres.org.

PROTAS *Teens 6th-12th grade*

Connect each week in community with your peers — the schedule includes games, worship, small group discussions, a short devotion at a teen level, and more. Discipleship groups are also meeting during the week.

Contact: Adam LeRoy at adam.leroy@alexandriapres.org.

ADULT EDUCATION

Sunday school | 10:30-11:30am

Jesus in His Middle Eastern Context, Led by Elder Gary McGee, Room 302/303. Begins January 2.

This 10-week course will focus on Jesus and the women with whom he interacted, as well as, a selection of His parables. The Gospels and the events they recorded were written in a particular environment that included certain styles, language, morals, and customs specific to their time. To come to a more full understanding of their meaning, those attributes must be considered in the interpretation. Jesus was a metaphorical theologian. His primary method of creating meaning was through metaphor, simile, parable and dramatic action rather than through logic and reasonings. He created meaning like a dramatist and a poet rather than like a philosopher. To unlock the secrets of His actions, statements and metaphors, we should realize that when taken in the context of the culture in which they were delivered, the gospels can provide new meanings that otherwise would be missed. We must realize further that this is not just the Word of God, but the Word of God spoken to men in history. And finally, we must distinguish what meaning or meanings can be attributable legitimately to the person of Jesus and his teachings.

*The source material for this course will be the scriptures and "Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes" by Kenneth E. Bailey

A Study of Colossians, Led by Elder Ryan Furgerson, Room 104. Begins January 9.

Please join together for a 9-week journey through the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians. This four-chapter book is easy to read in one sitting, and yet it provides stunning vistas of the perfections of Christ that few other New Testament documents can match. The Colossians needed to be reminded of the supremacy of Christ, as do we. In a world competing for our every waking minute, let us pray that this study will grip our hearts and lead us to more devoted lives magnifying Jesus.

Sunday Evening | 5-6:30pm. **Resumes January 9.**

Discipleship & Mentoring: Filling to Overflow, Led by Staci Root, Lynn Streett, and others, Room 104 and Zoom (link in APC email).

Imagine our cups being filled so abundantly that they overflow to others! Spend 6 Sunday nights between November and January exploring ideas of discipleship and mentoring in the Body of Christ. We'll look at foundational concepts from various resources including "Growing Together" by Melissa B. Kruger, hold conversations with APCers involved in discipleship, and utilize a small group practicum to encourage one another's faith. Come as often as you can.

Early History of Christianity, Led by Elder Jim Taft, Chapel and Zoom (link in APC email).

Over the course of six weeks, we'll examine some of the key milestones as we witness the spreading flame of Christianity -- from the early days described in the book of Acts up until the time of the Reformation. We'll examine how God used ordinary men and women in extraordinary ways and ordered events to ensure that the Gospel spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

CORPORATE PRAYER IN 2021

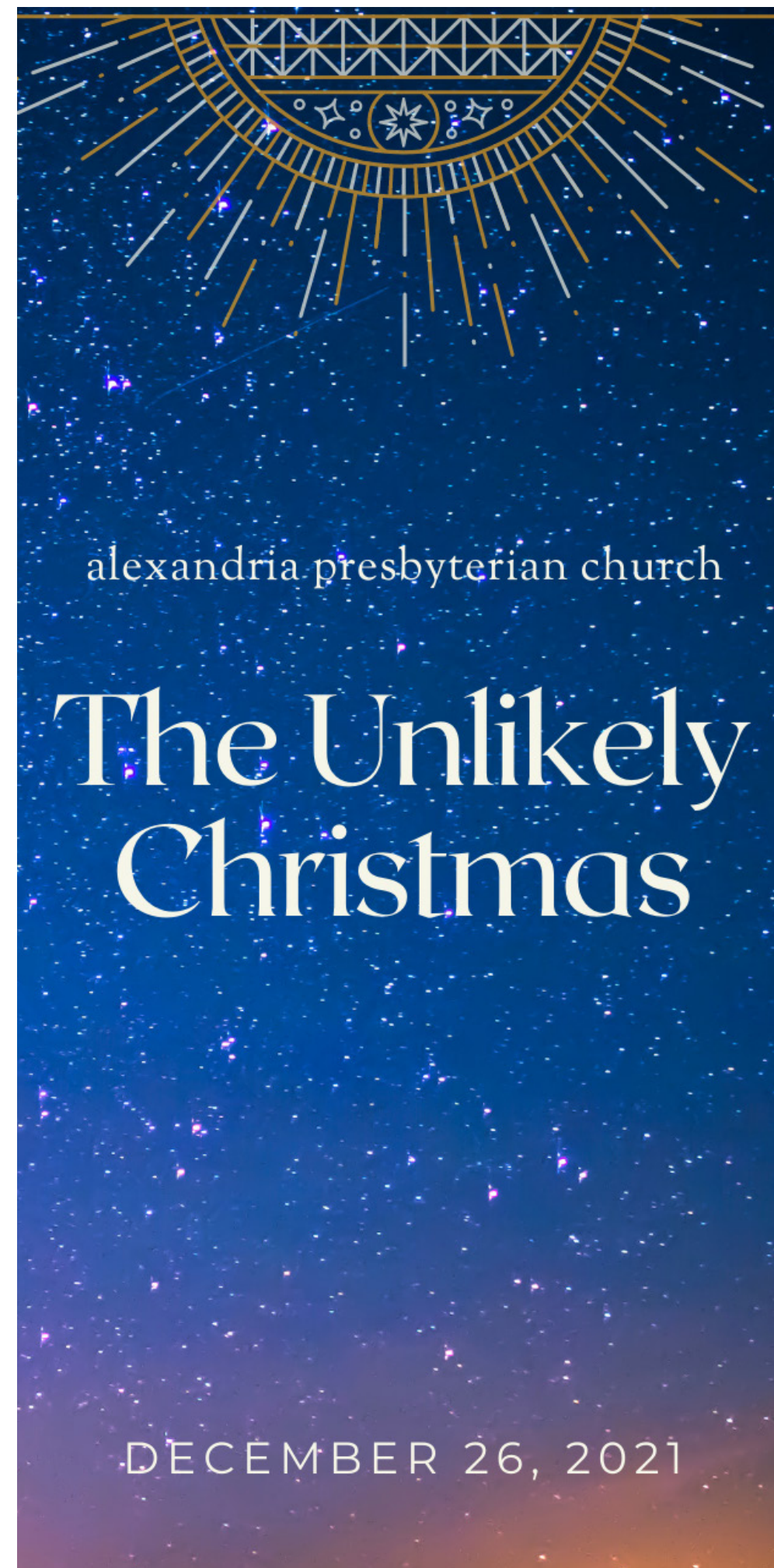
Every Sunday, 8am—Chapel or via Zoom. Praying for our Worship Service.

Second Saturday of the month, 9am—Zoom. Praying with our Elders for our church.

Third Saturday of the month, 11am—Zoom. Praying with the Prayer Committee.

Fourth Sunday of the month, 5pm—Zoom. Praying with our church community.

Intercessory Prayer Team. Contact Pastor Tom Holliday for details.



Holy Worship Service

GOD INVITES HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

■ **prelude** | *Serenity Novak, Worship Assistant*

■ **call to worship** | *Josh Diack, Pastor of Congregational Life*

Please stand and read responsively from Isaiah 2:2-5.

Leader: ²It shall come to pass in the latter days

that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,

All: ³and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Leader: ⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

All: ⁵O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

■ **hymns of praise**

See Amid the Winter’s Snow (Trinity #199 vv. 1, 2, 3, 4)

See amid the winter’s snow
Born for us on earth below
See the tender Lamb appears
Promised from eternal years

*Hail thou ever blessed morn
Hail redemption’s happy dawn
Sing through all Jerusalem
Christ is born in Bethlehem*

Lo within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies
He who throned in height sublime
Sits amid the cherubim

Edward Caswall, John Goss; © Words and Music: Public Domain; CCLI Song # 260784

Joy to the World (Trinity #195)

Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room
And heav’n and nature sing
And heav’n and nature sing
And heav’n and heav’n and nature sing

Joy to the earth the Savior reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat repeat the sounding joy

Edward Caswall, John Goss; © Words and Music: Public Domain; CCLI Song # 260784

■ **prayer of adoration**

GOD’S PEOPLE RESPOND

■ **scripture reading** | *Rob and Ruth Fisher*

John 1:1-18

The Word Became Flesh

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

■ **confession of sin**

Please stand and read in unison. Based on 2 Corinthians 8:1-15.

Leader: Dear Father, we praise You for giving us Your Son. He left the splendors of heaven so that we could become Your sons and daughters.

All: Lord Jesus, thank You for giving Your life for me. Your death on the cross has opened up my heart to Your lavish grace!

Leader: Holy Spirit, please help us to grow in “the act of grace” (v. 7), giving abundantly to others, generously and joyfully.

All: Please forgive us for putting our hope in material things on earth. King of heaven, we release all that we are and all that we have to You. Rule in our hearts, that others may know the blessings of Your growing kingdom. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

■ **congregational prayer** | *Tom Holliday, Senior Pastor*

■ **offertory prayer** | *Elder Gary McGee*

■ **musical offering**

Parents: Please note that Children’s Church is NOT meeting today.

GOD FEEDS HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

■ **sermon scripture reading**

Luke 2:8-21

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

²¹And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

■ **prayer for illumination**

■ **sermon** | *Josh Diack, Pastor of Congregational Life*

“The Unlikely Guests” *Sermon series: The Unlikely Christmas*

GOD’S PEOPLE RESPOND

■ **song of response**

Behold the Lamb (Around the Table of the King) vv 1 and 2

Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away
Slain for us and we remember
The promise made that all who come in faith
Find forgiveness at the cross
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of peace
Around the table of the King

The body of our Savior Jesus Christ
Torn for you eat and remember
The wounds that heal the death that brings us life
Paid the price to make us one
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of love
Around the table of the King

GOD FEEDS HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS TABLE

■ **sacrament of the lord’s supper**

Explanation, Invitation, Participation

All baptized Christians who are members in good standing of a church that proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ are invited to participate. Children who have been admitted into the church as communicant members are invited to participate as well. If you have any questions, please ask one of our pastors or elders.

GOD’S PEOPLE RESPOND

■ **song of response**

Behold the Lamb (Around the Table of the King) vv 3 and 4

The blood that cleanses every stain of sin
Shed for you drink and remember
He drained death’s cup that all may enter in
To receive the life of God
So we share in this Bread of Life
And we drink of His sacrifice
As a sign of our bonds of grace
Around the table of the King

And so with thankfulness and faith we rise
To respond and to remember
Our call to follow in the steps of Christ
As His body here on earth
As we share in His suffering
We proclaim Christ will come again
And we’ll join in the feast of heaven
Around the table of the King

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■ **benediction**

■ **announcements**