



## Alexandria Presbyterian Church ♦ November 2009

### Upcoming Dates

**Bi-Monthly Prayer Meetings**  
1st Sat. / 3rd Wed.

**Newcomer Receptions**  
4th Sundays

**Pancake Brunch**  
November 8

**Multi-Church Prayer Meeting**  
November 13

**Joint APC/DRBC Men's Breakfast**  
November 14

**Air & Space Museum Tour**  
November 14

**Joint Worship Service**  
November 22

**Thanksgiving Service & Dessert**  
November 22

**Christmas Candlelight Service**  
December 13

**Inquirer's Class**  
February 5-6

**Church Retreat**  
June 4-6

### Give Me One Good Reason to Take Sonship! by past Sonship graduates

We asked the APC Sonship Alumni the following question: "If some one came up to you in the Fellowship Hall one Sunday and asked, 'Give me one good reason to take Sonship', what would you say?" Here are 32 answers, listed alphabetically, with unattributed quotes first.

*The first time I took Sonship, God used Sonship to save my marriage and to rescue an angry and disappointed orphan from herself.*

If you give yourself wholeheartedly to the homework and being vulnerable in the small group, you run the wonderful risk of becoming a bigger lover of and for the Lord.

*It's a great opportunity to deepen your relationship with God through scripture, study, lecture, discussion and self-analysis, as well as be challenged and encouraged by others that share the love of Christ.*

Even though I had grown up in the church, the Lord used Sonship to drive the gospel down deep into my marrow. It was the first time that I really saw my sin and how much I needed Jesus. Thankfully, that was just the first step to understanding better God's grace and the joy and freedom that it brings.

*Sonship teaches you how to examine your heart and exposes misconceptions about sin, Christian living, and who God is, which brings a better understanding of the gospel, and who we should strive to be in Christ.*

Because the Redskins haven't been that fun to watch on Sunday anyway!

*Sonship illuminates the true joy of the Gospel message in ways not experienced elsewhere. [Tom Balmer]*

I "met" myself, my brother, and Christ at a deeper level. [Diane Brown]

*It's a heart changing process. It helped me take a long and hard look at my heart and how it responds to God, people and life around me, but only because it helped my understanding of the grace of the Gospel to sink deeper into my heart. [Maggie Cho]*

It's a small investment that keeps on giving an overflowing return for a lifetime. [Luke Godshall]

*Sonship is not a course you take Sonship is a God who takes you into a deeper relationship. [Luke Godshall]*

You know you need Sonship when you start living like an orphan. At the root of orphan-ness is unbelief. [Lionel Lee]

*So you can more fully understand the blessing of being adopted by your Heavenly Father. [Dorothy McDaniel]*

It will change your life for the better! [Kathy McGee]

*Being with a group of believers for an extended period of time who desire to experience deeper the fullness of Sonship. [Mike McMullen]*

Hey, sign me up! Seriously, I'm thinking I'm probably going to take it again this time around. [Tim Petrie]

*Sonship will give you a deeper understanding of the gospel, and not just in your head, but in your heart. [Tim Petrie]*

You've got to learn how Jesus not only paid all your debts, but has maxed out your bank account! [Rob Pittman]

*Sonship is the application of the Gospel to the individual soul of one who already knows the "facts" of the Gospel but may not see how it can guide and comfort the child of God in very practical ways. [Renee Porter]*

Only take Sonship if you want to have a deeper, eye opening understanding of God's grace and what it truly means to rely ONLY on Christ for your salvation and daily sustenance. [Jeremy Rockett]

*Because when your relationship with the Father is improving, it impacts your relationships at work, home, school - everywhere. Who you will be in those places is determined by who possesses your heart. [Chris Sicks]*

There is no better investment of those 48 hours than taking Sonship. Prepare to be challenged, but, remember, the dividends are guaranteed. [Stacey Stephens]

*Sonship helped me to face up to the depth of my sin, to take the mask off, and it helped convince me of the power of the gospel to change a prideful, self-centered sinner like me. [Steve Stonehouse]*

The LORD took me from being secure in His salvation to being secure in His love and that makes all the difference! [Lynn Streett]

*It confirmed that I'm a big sinner and that Jesus is a bigger savior. [Bryant Streett]*

Sonship helps bring redemption to the glorious mess of our lives! It is an intense, energizing, exhausting and fundamentally basic courtship with the Lover of our souls. Worth every ounce of investment of time. [Dorothy Taft]

*Because you'll feel like part of the "club" that can finish some of Tom's sentences in his sermons. [Dorie Thompson]*

Despite your best efforts to convince yourself you are an orphan, God's word begs to differ. Which will you trust? [David Thompson]

*God will mess with your idols...and that's a good thing. [David Thompson]*

Because, if you've never looked in a mirror before and had it reflect back both truth and love, you won't want to miss this opportunity to let God reveal the one thing holding you back from experiencing Him, and your neighbor, in amazing ways; then you surely won't want to miss this life changing experience. Do it for yourself, your family and your friends. Just do it! [Diane Trepper]

*Lose the guilt, find the joy. [Justin Wells-Morgan];*

*You are worse than you think you are. [Justin Wells-Morgan]*

*You will have a deeper appreciation of God's grace, which causes you to ask, "Why me Lord?" Then you will answer and say, to serve Him and be filled with compassion for those in need and under the yoke of sin. [Stuart Yikona]*

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*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.*



## Competing for the Heart of a Teen By Adam LeRoy, Director of Youth Ministries

Adam, a disciple of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the church of God in Alexandria, together with all the saints throughout the DC Metro area: grace and peace to you from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ (credit to Paul—2 Corinthians, I've always wanted to do this).

Every fall seems like a season of competition as youth ministry vies for a seat at a sold-out arena. The competition grows as sports schedules, academic endeavors, artistic performances, and other good and profitable opportunities arise. Other, more pervasive competition exists as well. Research tells us that teenagers and tweens are spending a whopping **45.5 hours** each week inundated in music, media, electronics and technology (“The M Generation: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year Olds”). That's more time than they spend in class, **SEVEN** times as many hours as they could spend in youth group, and comparable to a full time job.

Our competition field is our schedule. Musicians, youth directors, actors, gaming programmers, NFL owners, and academic advisors are all vying for your commitment and more importantly your precious time, which, once given away can never be returned! But Jesus is less concerned with what we consume, and more concerned with what our hearts produce in Mark 7. Our guilt comes from within and is not based on what enters a man from the outside. The heart of a teen needs gentle instruction to know who they really are, enabling them to see their need for a savior and worship God in truth. We want to see vibrant students living out of their new reputation in Christ Jesus through the arts, on the ball field, and in the classroom, as they see the Holy Spirit revealing every spiritual blessing from Jesus in light of their heart's condition.

Pastor Tom and I have been teaching a modified version of Sonship to the Sr. High Sunday School class this quarter. We want to see teens whose hearts are growing in their knowledge of God's love for them. Pray for our discussions on what it means to “cheer up” as we grow in our appreciation of our need of the gospel. Pray for students who are coming to understand that the heart is the operating center of their being, the competition field of their life.



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

I recently had the opportunity to tell one of the children's Sunday school classes what the role of a volunteer is in their lives. Colossians 1:28-29 says, “*We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*” I went on to tell the class how much their teachers love them and labor to help them experience the life changing message of the gospel. The audience who received this message was stunned with silence. These kids never thought about the role of their Sunday school teacher or their Explorer leaders or the Children's Church in their lives. This created a teaching opportunity to talk about a theme I wanted to introduce to the children for this year.

As I continued on in my conversation with the class, I talked about the role they each have in one another's lives. Since we are a community of believers, we are called to grow in Christ together, to encourage one another and to love one another. It has been a desire of mine to help the kids embrace these truths and to collectively take on the task of helping each other grow up in Christ. Hebrews 10:24 says, “*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*” We talked about how to spur one another on to love and good deeds and what it might look like. Many of the kids said they would do what their parents asked them to do the first time they asked. You parents would have been proud of the things that were said by your children.

This is our mantra for this year: ***kids spurring each other on to love and good deeds.*** Over the past few weeks, I have seen the children take this on and really encourage one another. I walked into this same Sunday school class last week and the children were seated playing some board games before Sunday school started and actually having some good conversations. All I could do was smile and thank God for them. I hope you have a chance to see how seriously the kids have taken on this challenge and are encouraging each other. Please pray for each of our covenant children as we seek to help present them complete in Jesus Christ.



## I Need My Desires by Chris Joyce, Executive Director of Ministries

In The Marriage Builder, Larry Crabb reminds us of the need to separate our needs from our desires. For the Christian man and woman, our needs—for security, for significance—are fully satisfied through the all-sufficiency of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We need nothing more.

Desires, those things we would like to see happen, but which are not in our control—e.g., a family member coming to faith, a job after a season of unemployment—must be the focus of our prayers, as we ask God to intervene and deliver a particular outcome. Accept that your needs are fulfilled, and pray for your desires... that's a handy way to think about this.

I find it a powerful reminder. Simple, though not simplistic [as Crabb states]. I also find it extremely difficult to practice. My prayers often, upon inspection, turn out to be appeals for things that I claim I need. Things that, when they do not occur in the timely fashion or manner I demand, make me angry, or hurt, or despondent. I respond to these desires as if they are needs, which belies the truth of the gospel. Will I ever get to the point that Paul did, when he states that in all things he is content, because of the all-sufficiency of Christ? Was Paul just saying that, or did he believe it? Did he live that?

I believe he really lived that, imperfectly. I'm sure he believed it. You read Paul and you become convinced he really believed what he was writing, and the more you study his life, the more convinced you become that he lived his faith.

So what about my need for my desires? How do I disconnect the two? How can I saw off that long plank of desires from the needs platform of my life, and declare them for what they really are—desires, not prerequisites for my security or my significance?

Here's an example: I really need for my writing to get recognized. I've been at it for five years; have pumped out three novels; invested a truckload of time and [I hope some] talent; put myself out there in many ways. I need some recognition, even if that recognition is for an agent or publisher to tell me to give it up, and go back to writing tax returns and financial statements. Instead of just getting the ever-so-polite, two paragraph blow off. That's the truth.

But it's not the TRUTH. The truth, according to God, is that I don't need that recognition. All I need is Him. And since I have Him...since I am His adopted son, I have pledged my allegiance to Him as Lord and Savior...I have no need of anything else. My NEEDS tank is topped up.

His statement to me: go ahead and desire that recognition, Chris. You can even pray about it. It might even be honoring of Me...we'll see. But don't give me any more of this nonsense that you need that desire to be satisfied. When you frame it that way, son, you're telling Me that I am not enough for you. That you need Me plus that. If that's the way I approached you, dear Chris, I would have made My love of you conditional on your performance. That's not good news, son. Don't buy into that lie.

I desire all of you. That's why I sent my Son to redeem you. That's how much I love you. And I am all you need. Keep desiring. Keep praying. But rest in Me. I am all you need.

<b>YTD Giving at a Glance</b>	<b>YTD Giving (through October)</b>	\$884,246
	<b>YTD Budget</b>	\$895,042
	<b>Difference</b>	\$-10,796 (-1%)

### 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