



Presbyterian Link



PASTOR'S CORNER

GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF ALTAVISTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:

I am so excited about the opportunity that God has sent my way to serve you as Interim Pastor. My prayer is that this “time between pastors” will be a time for growth and renewal for Altavista Presbyterian Church (APC) and for me as well. I learned a long time ago that this thing of being a pastor is not just about me dropping great pearls of wisdom on you, but rather a mutual time of sharing and growing together in our faith and service to God. So, I expect to learn from you as we work together to prepare the way for your next installed pastor.

As I have interacted with members of the Interim Selection Committee and with Elders on the Session, I have been pleased to discover that there already is a good understanding of what an Interim Pastor is all about. However, just so we are all on the same page I would like to highlight some of the crucial tasks to which we are committed.

First, we are all committed to maintaining and growing the current ministry here at Altavista. This means that worship, outreach programs, Christian education, youth groups, fellowship, and other programs already in place will continue. My goal, as Interim, is to find ways that I can help strengthen what you already have in place.

Secondly, as Interim I have been empowered by the Presbytery of The Peaks to guide the Session and the whole congregation in a meaningful mission study which will help chart the course for the next few years of APC’s future, and set the stage for a new installed pastor. Working through the Session’s cluster groups, we will attempt to involve every member and friend in the data gathering and visioning process. During this process we will work together to understand our history and envision our future. Our job together is not to reinvent the wheel, but to discover new and creative ways to put the wheel to work for the glory of God.

Thirdly, as Interim, I will be your Pastor. This is not something that I take lightly. My job includes being there for you and your families during times of high joy and moments of sadness. Please do not hesitate to call me when someone is hospitalized. I love to visit, to get to know you in your homes, drop by your places of work, greet your friends. I hope you will be comfortable with me enough to say to your friends, “This is Bob, my pastor.” Or, if you wish, “This is my Interim Pastor.” In *Continued on Page 2*

REMINDERS FOR OCTOBER

- October 5 ~ Rev. Sherwood Smith preaching
- October 7 ~ Men’s Lunch at Main Street Emporium
- October 19 ~ Stated Session Meeting
- October 25 ~ Men’s Fellowship: Tailgate Party and LU Game



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PASTOR'S CORNER

the summer, I want to be available to go to Hat Creek with your kids, or lead them on a hike in the Blue Ridge.

And, if your mission team plans to involve us in a Habitat build, I will be right there with hammer in hand.

Finally, I want to reiterate something that is stated several times in my contract with The Session. I am a temporary employee of APC. I have committed my life in retirement to assisting congregations during the time between pastors. Under no circumstances will I be a candidate for a call to Altavista Presbyterian Church. I am here to work myself out of a job. So, with that in mind, we can focus on the tasks at hand, knowing that with God's help, we can prepare the way for the person whom God has already ordained to become the new pastor here at Altavista Presbyterian Church.

I look forward to our working together and the friendships that will develop during this time.

May God bless each of you,

Rev. Robert E. (Bob) Button

ALTAVISTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WELCOMES INTERIM PASTOR

The session is delighted to welcome as Interim Pastor, **Rev. Robert E. (Bob) Button**. Bob is a retired Presbyterian minister who grew up in Winchester, VA. He attended King College in Bristol, Union Seminary in Richmond and has pastored mostly small rural congregations in West Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina before retiring in 2002. He is a trained Intentional Interim minister, having just completed a two year interim at Broad Street Christian Church in Martinsville. He and his wife, Elaine, live in Snow Creek, Virginia (Franklin County) where they have built their home on her family home place. They have two children and four grandchildren.

Bob will maintain office hours, Monday through Thursday from 9 am until Noon and will be otherwise available whenever needed. Bob invites members and friends to call the church office to schedule a visit or just to drop by and chat. In case of emergency, please call the church office or Bob's phones : 276-632-3047 or 336-402-2904. Bob's email addresses are:

(Church) rebaltapres@embarqmail.com

(Home) rebcreek@b2xonline.com



MISSION NEWS

FROM MINISTRY BEYOND THE CONGREGATION

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR ALTAVISTA LOCAL MISSIONS

The final special offering for "Altavista Local Missions" will be collected October 5, 2008. The amount collected during the three week period in September and October will be matched by ACT for Mission funds and divided equally for DAWN, Habitat for Humanity, Frannie's House, and the Altavista Adult Day Care Center.

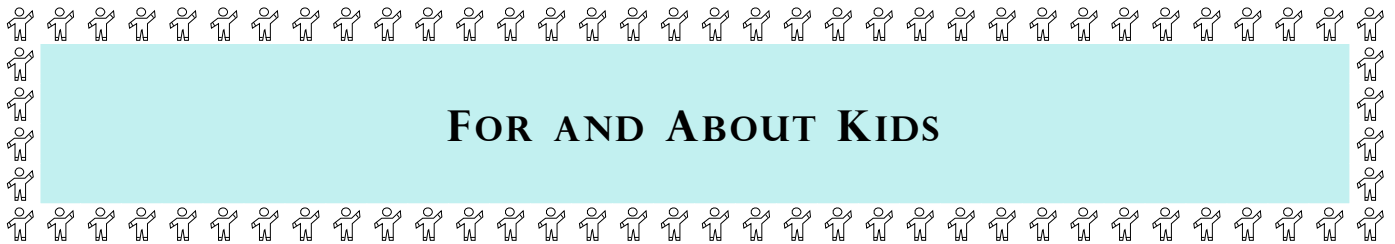


OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

The *Ministry Beyond the Congregation Committee* invites you to join us again this year in participating in the Operation Christmas Child project, a worldwide outreach of Samaritan's Purse that touches the lives of millions of hurting children each year through the power of a simple gift. Last year Operation Christmas Child helped 7.5 million children in some 100 countries experience the joy of Christmas as they received a gift-filled shoebox. APC was part of that miracle filling 33 shoeboxes with toys, school supplies, candy and hygiene items. This year our goal is to fill 50 shoeboxes and we're asking your help.

As you are able- families, individuals or friends going in together- we're asking that you purchase items to fill a shoebox. Lists of suggested items will be posted on the bulletin board and included in the bulletin over the next few weeks. If you are unable to shop for the gifts, but wish to contribute, Operation Christmas Child suggests a donation of \$7.00 to cover the shipping and project costs for each shoebox. On Sunday, November 2, we're asking the youth, and anyone else who would like to help, to join our committee in the fellowship hall from 4-6pm to pack the boxes and prepare them for shipping. We'll also provide pizza and snacks.

This year we are encouraging our children to include a simple letter telling about themselves, their families, church and school. They can even include a picture of themselves if they wish. Operation Christmas Child has provided colorful "form letters" that can be filled in by the children and included in the shoebox gift. These forms will be given out in Children's Church in October. *Ministry Beyond the Congregation Committee* hopes you will join us in this wonderful ministry not only with your time and money, but also with your prayers. Please pray that God will touch the heart of every child who receives a shoebox gift, that they and their families will come to know God's love and the Good News of Jesus Christ.



FOR AND ABOUT KIDS

Sunday School for 4th and 5th Graders will continue to be held during Children's Church

TAKE NOTE



PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S LUNCH CHANGES DAY AND LOCATION

The Presbyterian Men's Lunch will now be meeting on the first Tuesday of the month at 11:45 a.m. at the Main Street Emporium beginning October 7.

If you have a lunch hour free, come join us for food and fellowship!

MEN'S FOOTBALL FELLOWSHIP

A Men's fellowship has been planned for ***Saturday, October 25***, to attend a Liberty University football game. Chip Roark has purchased a block of tickets. The cost for each ticket will be \$10. The men will meet in the LU parking lot for a tailgate party at 1:30 p.m. followed by the game at 3:30 p.m. When you arrive at the parking lot, call Chip on his cell phone (434-401-0253) so he can let you know where the tailgate has been set up.

RSVP to Chip Roark by **October 11** to reserve your ticket

Roark02@comcast.net or 434-309-1156

THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOVE

My sister was teaching herself classical Greek. Why, I asked her, at such a ripe age? (We're twins, by the way.) She couldn't give me an answer, but I think I figured out why.

It's because Greek is such a beautiful language. It's not just the shape of the letters, the familiarity of Alpha and Beta, the twists and turns of Zeta and Xi, playful as they are. Greek is beautiful because it's precise.

Take our word, love. In English that means one thing to a teenager, another to a great-grandma. An AIDS worker, a platoon of Marines, a Nashville singer, and a parent all love, but in different ways. We have only one word to express the condition: LOVE.

Classical Greek has four words for the different kinds of love. I wasn't aware of this until Ralph Hawkins mentioned it one morning in Sunday School. The words are *Eros*, *Philos*, *Storge* and *Agape*. Talk about being precise.

Eros is that state of being when the hormones, testosterone, pheromones and serotonin get all mixed up in what is akin to madness. One exists only to long for the beloved's presence and beauty. It's a delight for the subjects, a pain for the onlooker, and a condition that does not last. English words derived from *Eros* are erotic and eroticism, which can describe our popular culture today.

Philos is the bond that exists among people who share a common interest or activity. Soldiers on patrol possess this bond, as does a football team and a political party in a campaign year. It's a relationship that looks beyond itself, either for good or for bad.

Storge is the natural love a parent has for a child or other family members, or the love that is felt by a group of people who have found themselves together by chance. In ancient Greek, it described relationships within the family. In modern Greek, it describes affection felt through familiarity. Think of *Storge* when you're dealing with a two-year-old or the next time you wait in a queue.

Agape is perhaps the most cerebral kind of love. It's a conscious effort transformed by grace that enables us to show compassion: for the unlovable, the lost, the broken and flawed, our enemies and tormenters, those persons who nibble and those who strike, yes, even for our own unforgiving selves. I can find no English words derived from *Agape*. It's a love that stands by itself.

~Elder Margaret Liebchen

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 21, 2008 MEETING



- Moderator David Etheridge called the meeting to order. He led a brief devotional, referencing Revelations 1, whose message to the Session of APC was “God has a purpose and a plan for APC”.
- Moderator David opened the meeting with prayer and then spoke briefly about Intentional Interim Ministry. He defined the five tasks which an Interim minister must lead a Congregation in accomplishing:

1. Coming to grips with our history,
2. Discovering a new identity,
3. Allowing needed leadership change,
4. Renewing Denominational linkages,
5. Committing to new directions in ministry;

Five areas which the Congregation must assist the Interim minister:

1. Joining the system,
2. Analyzing the system,
3. Connecting with the Denomination,
4. Focusing and assuming responsibilities, and
5. Exiting in a healthy way.

He reminded the Session that its highest priority is conducting a Mission Study.

- Mark Younkin (Ministry beyond the Congregation) announced:
 - Food collection for DAWN will continue through the month of September
 - Project Christmas Child (Samaritan’s Purse):
 - Shoe boxes will be assembled on November 9, 2008 at 4:00 pm, and
 - Each shoebox requires \$7.00 for shipping and handling. There was a motion to pay for this \$7.00 fee from ACT for Mission funds if there are sufficient funds remaining to cover this expense. Motion passed.
 - The Altavista Local Missions offering will continue to be collected on September 28 and October 5, 2008
 - ACT for Missions fund balance as of September 9, 2008 was \$5,250.
- Kelly deBernard (Ministry within the Congregation) announced:
 - There will be a Koinonia lunch following worship on October 26, 2008
 - There will be a Koinonia dinner followed by the Christmas program on December 14, 2008 at 5:00 pm.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS *(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)*

- Anne Mabry (Worship and Discipleship) announced:
 - Sunday School for 4th and 5th graders will continue to be held during Children's Church
 - The Advent Workshop will be held the morning of December 6, 2008
 - The Choir Christmas music program will be held on December 21, 2008
 - Anne presented Pastor Bob's request to do an Advent Devotional Book where APC members will be asked to write devotionals based on scripture passages and what that passage means in their life. Karen Blaesing has agreed to do the artwork for this project. Following discussion, there was a motion to grant this request. Motion passed.
- John Erb (Ministry Support) led a review of the August, 2008 Financial report.
- Manse rental: Following discussion, there was a motion to rent the Manse and empower the Ministry Support Committee to make all decisions regarding this decision (negotiation of rent, securing renter, development and signing lease, etc.). Motion passed.
- Chip Roark (New Members, Men's Group) announced:
 - The men's lunch will be changed from first Fridays at 11:45 am at Napoli's restaurant to first Tuesdays at 11:45 am at the Main Street Café
 - There will be a men's outing to the October 25, 2008 LU football game.
- Minutes of the August 17, 2008 Stated meeting and the August 27, 2008 Called meeting were approved as presented.
- Mission Study Task Force: the Nominating Committee was asked to provide a committee for this purpose comprised of at least two members of the Session and at least two or three members of the Congregation, including one teenager, if possible. There was a motion to call a Called Session meeting following worship on October 5, 2008 for the purpose of appointing a Mission Study Task Force. Motion passed.
- Congregational Life Survey: At Pastor Bob's request, there was a motion to participate in a Congregational Life Survey for the purpose of gleaning information about the Congregation to begin the Mission Study process. Cost will be \$250 + \$1 for each survey completed to be funded from the 2008 budget. Motion passed.
- Elder Mark Younkin made the Session aware that Carolyn Doss has done an excellent job in handling the business of APC during our transition period.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

	August 2008	YTD
Pledges	\$11,600.00	\$78,738.00
Non-Pledges	\$645.00	\$5,005.00
Plate Offering	\$367.00	\$3,709.89
Total Expenses	\$6,629.26	\$70,134.46

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2008

October 1 Wednesday

9:30 am Prayer Fellowship - Pastor's Study
 11 - 12:30 Second Helping Lunch
 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

October 5 Sunday

9:00 am Adult Sunday School
 10:00 am Rev. Sherwood Smith preaching
 Communion
 2 Cents-A-Meal Offering
 Canned Food Sunday
 Children's Church & Sunday
 School for 4th and 5th Graders

October 7 Tuesday

11:45 am Presbyterian Men's Lunch at the
 Main Street Emporium

October 8 Wednesday

9:30 am Prayer Fellowship - Pastor's Study
 11:00 - 12:30 Second Helping Lunch
 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

October 12 Sunday

9:00 am Adult Sunday School
 10:00 am Worship
 Children's Church & Sunday
 School for 4th and 5th Graders

October 15 Wednesday

9:30 am Prayer Fellowship - Pastor's Study
 11:00 - 12:30 Second Helping Lunch
 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

October 19 Sunday

9:00 am Adult Sunday School
 10:00 am Worship
 Children's Church & Sunday
 School for 4th and 5th Graders
 6:00 pm Stated Session Meeting

October 22 Wednesday

9:30 am Prayer Fellowship - Pastor's Study
 11 - 12:30 Second Helping Lunch
 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

October 25 Saturday

1:30 pm Men's Fellowship - Tailgate Party &
 LU Football Game

October 26 Sunday

9:00 am Adult Sunday School
 10:00 am Worship
 Children's Church & Sunday
 School for 4th and 5th Graders

October 27 Monday

Link Deadline

October 29 Wednesday

9:30 am Prayer Fellowship - Pastor's Study
 11:00 - 12:30 Second Helping Lunch
 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice



ALTAVISTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

707 Broad Street
Altavista, VA 24517

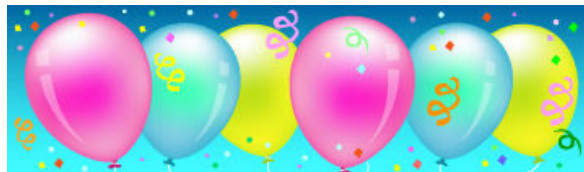
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PRESBYTERIAN LINK

October 2008

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Barbie Andrews | 27 Susan Alley |
| 1 Jenny Roark | 28 Elijah Hanson |
| 2 Glenn Berger | 31 Patty Eller |
| 2 Murrell Routon | 31 Earl Copes |
| 3 Jeffrey Blaesing | |
| 4 Jennifer Strebel | |
| 5 John Erb | |
| 7 Ronald Coleman | 8 Darrell & Annie Shelton |
| 9 Maxine Montague | 10 CE & Jean Murphy |
| 13 Bob Steele | 17 Gary & Jane Strebel |
| 14 Jeannie Smith | 21 Jimmy & Diann Martin |
| 21 Dan Kauffman | 29 Murrell & Joyce Routon |
| 24 Linda Janiak | |
| 26 Jimmy Martin | |
| 27 David Sease | |



& ANNIVERSARIES



LINK STAFF

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Editor

Ministry Within the
Congregation Committee

*Previous Links can be found on the
website
www.altapres.org*