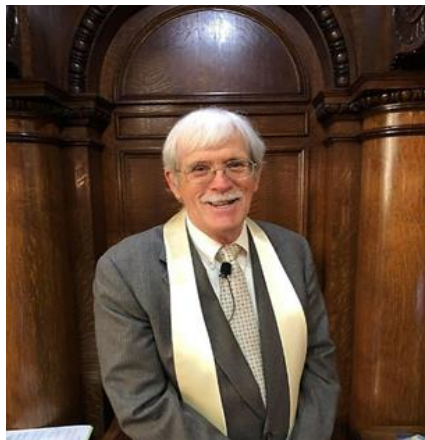


PRESBYTERIAN LINK

Monthly Newsletter of the Altavista Presbyterian Church

*Equipping the Saints for Ministry, Building up the Body of Christ.
Eph. 4:12*



From the Pastor's Desk

On February 21, 2018, the man who was once called our nation's pastor died. Billy Graham was indeed an influential preacher who counseled presidents and witnessed to Jesus Christ in more than one hundred eighty-five countries. Graham's televised crusades were a part of my childhood. Our family would gather around the television whenever Billy was preaching. What I learned from his sermons helped form my faith in Jesus Christ. Billy Graham's ministry became a part of my personal faith story.

When I was a college student near Black Mountain, North Carolina I had the privilege to meet Billy. I had been invited to join a dinner party where he was the keynote speaker. He was promoting a fundraiser to build a local medical facility. I was impressed by his stature and a humble graciousness that was evident in his demeanor. I was also impressed by his ability to gather Christians from various protestant denominations to support a worthy cause. Throughout my subsequent life I continued to tune in to Graham's broadcasts and read the several books he wrote. I came to cherish his example of humble commitment to Christ and his stewardship of fame and fortune in service to God.

My final encounter with Billy Graham was also the result of an invitation. My youngest son John was serving as counsel for the House Judiciary Committee in 2018 when Graham's body was lying in state at the Capital Building. John had been invited to attend a special viewing for government employees. He was allowed to bring a guest, and knowing of my regard for Billy, he invited me to come. My son and I rode the metro-train early that morning. When we arrived, there were long lines waiting to view the casket. But our viewing was a special time set aside for government employees that was scheduled for the afternoon. We filled the morning hours, very appropriately, at the new Museum of the Bible. This trip became a pilgrimage to honor powerful influences on my spiritual formation. I felt very privileged to have the opportunity to pay my respects and honor Billy Graham.

We waited about an hour and a half in the line to enter the rotunda. Many Senators, Congressmen/women, were in line with a great number of staff. When we finally entered the great circular room, our eyes were drawn to the center of the room. We saw a plain pine plywood casket with a wooden cross on the top guarded by military and police honor guard. I found out later that the casket had been crafted by inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, Louisiana. Learning about the origin of the casket deepened my appreciation for the experience, as I knew that Billy and Ruth Graham were great supporters of prison ministry.

I wanted to share this story with you in order to highlight two ideas:

First, that within the Church of Jesus Christ God provides us with worship experiences and people who can serve as mentors and role models in our spiritual formation.

Secondly, I wanted to highlight the importance of sharing our faith stories and important influences upon our spiritual formation. Much of the Bible is composed of individual faith stories inspired in God's people for the purpose of building faith in others. Consider the stories of Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Esther, Ruth, and the many other Old Testament people as well as Peter, Paul, Timothy, Mary, Mary Magdalene, Dorcas, and Prisca and Aquila, in our New Testament.

What is your faith story? Would you be willing to share that story with the church family here at APC? We have a fifth Sunday coming at the end of September when we will have an informal worship service. That service would afford a great opportunity to share faith stories and glorify God for our faith journey. Let me know if you would like to share on September 29.

APC Volunteers Assist with Summer SPARK Program



Please share with your congregation our heartfelt thanks for all that APC does for Altavista Outreach and Enrichment. We especially thank the volunteers that braved the heat at SPARK this year and for the food bags. We couldn't do it with your support. Thank you so much and...

God's blessings to you all!

Debbie Thurman
Altavista Outreach and Enrichment Inc.
SPARK Volunteer Coordinator

** APC purchased groceries (with funds from the ACT for Missions Payout) to provide bags of food for each family to take home that week, \$302.67.

Session Highlights August 18, 2024 meeting

- Reviewed the July Treasurer's report.
- Decided to return to celebrating the Sacrament of Communion during Worship the first Sunday of each month beginning September 1, 2024.
- Decided to spend up to \$1,000 from the 2024 ACTS for Mission payout to purchase items needed by Valor Farms to refurbish their farmhouse.
- Decided to ask DAWN to remove APC from the list of resources it provides to its clients & amp; to refer to DAWN for screening all individuals who contact APC for assistance.
- Decided to take \$2,000 from the 2024 ACTS for Mission payout to establish a fund to be used to provide assistance as requested by DAWN after they have screened a client.
- Approved minutes of the July 9, 2024 Stated Session meeting as presented.
- Joys & concerns of the congregation were identified. Moderator Glenn prayed for those listed & to close the meeting.

ITEMS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD, SEPTEMBER

Steno Pads, Notebooks, Erasers (pencil top or other)
Journals (be sure they will fit in a regular shoebox)

Resources from the Presbyterian Church USA and Peaks Presbytery

Did you know that you can subscribe to the Outlook magazine, published by PCUSA, and the weekly newsletter from our Presbytery, the Presbytery of the Peaks, to learn about and stay informed on themes and events in our church? You can do so by going to www.pres-outlook.org (subscription price applies) and www.peaks-presbytery.org (free). The following topic comes from The Outlook:

Louisville — The Presbyterian Office of Public Witness has launched an online video series to help members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other interested voters prepare for the general election in November.

The series, “Prepare for the Polls,” consists of videos focusing on General Assembly policy and other information that Presbyterian voters need. The videos, featuring OPW summer fellows, are being posted on PC(USA) social media platforms starting this week.

“The ‘Prepare for the Polls’ social media series seeks to remind Presbyterians of the value of civic discipleship, and we hope this series will help all eligible voters stay informed regarding registering to vote,” said the Rev. Christina Cosby, OPW Representative for Domestic and Environmental Policy Concerns. The series also will help voters “to learn about candidates on the ballot and determine their poll locations for the 2024 U.S. election.”

The series was created by summer fellows Olivia Phelps and Ariyah Sadler in collaboration with OPW staff for this important election season, which includes the presidential race between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump.

Working on this project “to mobilize voters at such a crucial time in history has been a beautiful experience,” said Phelps, who appears in the first video.

OPW believes that voting is not only a civic duty but a sacred responsibility, Cosby said. “As stewards of justice and compassion, we are called to be informed on the many issues that impact our communities and to use that knowledge to support basic access to human needs for vulnerable individuals,” she said. “By being a multi-issue voter focused on issues rather than parties or people, we, as Presbyterians, affirm our faith and commitment to love our neighbors by working towards a world that reflects the value of the common good.”

In addition to the multi-media series, OPW recently announced the PC(USA) Election Center, another resource for Presbyterians to gather voter information.

Last month, PC(USA) Advocacy Director the Rev. Jimmie Hawkins and the Rev. Denise Anderson, director of the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, participated in a prayer vigil focused on the upcoming elections. Among other things, Hawkins prayed that God would “open our eyes that voters might elect those whose hearts resonate with a determination to do justice, to love kindness, in a humble walk with our God.”

by Darla Carter, Presbyterian News Service

The Office of Public Witness is one of the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Deuteronomy 1:13

“Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you.”

Romans 13:1

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. “



September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10 AM Communion Worship Two Cents-A-Meal Offering	2 Labor Day Office Closed	3	4 12 PM Men's Lunch Taste of Italy	5 4 PM The Reflective Woman	6	7
8 10 AM Worship	9	10 4:30 PM Admin. Mtg. 5 PM Outreach Mtg.	11	12 4 PM The Reflective Woman	13	14
15 10 AM Worship Session Mtg.	16	17 4PM AOE Mtg.	18 12 PM Men's Lunch EL Cazador	19 4 PM The Reflective Woman	20	21
22 10 AM Worship	23 Oct. Newsletter Deadline	24	25	26 4 PM The Reflective Woman	27	28
29 10 AM Worship Fellowship Picnic	30	Discipleship Meeting: TBD				

HIGHLIGHTS

	July 2024	YTD
Pledges	4362.00	36,872.00
Non-Pledges	3,620.00	26,046.00
Plate Offering	150.00	898.00
Total Expenses	10,119.68	80,526.42

CELEBRATIONS

September	Birthdays	Anniversaries
4	Keegan deBernard, John Roark	Dennis & Linda Janiak
13	Davis Hewett	
22		Jeffrey & Samantha Janiak



The Reflective Woman

A Time of Devotion & Fellowship

Altavista Presbyterian Church

Thursdays, 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Fall Quarter, September 5 to December 12

(Thursday, November 28 excluded)



The Reflective Woman is a time where women can gather around God's word and also enjoy each other's fellowship. After our devotion, bring something you can work on while we celebrate our fellowship time together.

We meet in the Adult Sunday School Classroom
Please follow the signs for the classroom