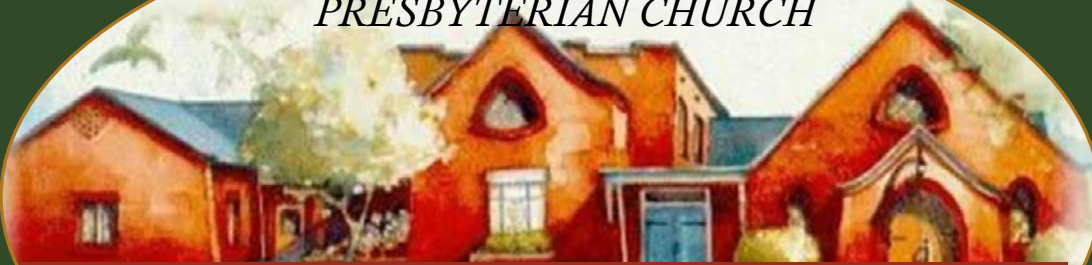


*ALTAVISTA  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH*



***THE LINK***

*DECEMBER 1, 2020*

***OUR VISION, OUR HEARTS, AND OUR DOORS ARE  
ALWAYS OPEN***



**ALTAVISTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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ALTAVISTA, VA 24517  
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Rev. Eduardo Soto, Jr.  
434-369-5286, office  
334-237-1895, mobile

*"I strongly encourage each of you to pray and read the Bible daily"*



## FROM OUR PASTOR...

As December rolls around and we being Advent and looking toward Christmas, I can't help but recall the words of Rev. John Leith, in his book *Basic Christian Doctrine* (pp. 146-147) concerning the season of Christmas.

“The birth of Christ came to be celebrated in Rome on December 25 sometime between [A.D.] 325 and 354. Again, the determining factor in the choice of the date was a pagan festival. The non-Christian world observed December 25 as an important festival in honor of the sun. In the festival of Epiphany on January 5-6 and Christmas on December 25, the Christian community deliberately set the Christian celebrations over against the pagan celebrations of the power of nature.

“For Christian communities Jesus Christ was the Son of righteousness. Augustine declared that we celebrate not the sun but Him who created the sun. The choice of a birth-date for the celebration of the coming of Jesus Christ was done not on historical grounds but on theological grounds.

“It is also significant that Christmas developed after the promulgation of the Nicene Creed. In the case of the Epiphany and Christmas festivals, the Christian community on theological grounds was saying that the ultimate fact in life is not the forces of nature—neither the mysterious powers of the Nile nor the light of the sun—but God, who is incarnate in Jesus Christ.

“The celebration of Christmas in the northern hemisphere came at the time of the winter solstice. The Christmas festival was the theological answer that Christians gave to the encroaching darkness, a darkness that must have been overpowering before the days of electric lights or even good gas lanterns. From the beginning the significance of Jesus was expressed in terms of light. As the Nicene Creed says, he is ‘light from light.’

“Christmas was the Christian community’s answer to a paganism that sought to find the meaning of life in the enhancement of the vitalities and energies of life. Yet the ironic fact is that the Christian community has always been subject to the temptation to turn Christmas back into a nature festival. For this reason, the Protestant Reformers, especially Calvin and the Puritans, opposed the observance of Christmas. Christmas had become the occasion for gluttony and for excessive drinking as well as idleness. Instead of being the Christian community’s answer to paganism that found the meaning of life in the exultation of the vitalities and energies of life, Christmas became itself the time when those vitalities and energies were exploited.

“Christmas is appropriately a time for great joy—and, in particular, joy in the created world. The God who became incarnate in Jesus Christ is also the God who created the world. Hence, no good theological purpose is served by denying that Christmas is a time for joy, for love, for the sharing of gifts and greetings, and for family festivals.”

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*A big thank you to everyone who participated in our Operation Christmas Child Mission this year. With your generous donations we were able to pack and send 50 shoebox gifts, Gospel Opportunities! We do the tracking labels for shipping and I will let you know where our gifts are delivered when I receive that information.*

*Please continue to be in prayer for all who receive these gifts that through them they will feel the love of Christ.*

*Barbie Andrews*

*Ministry Beyond the Congregation Committee*

# Sunday Sermons This Month

December 6<sup>th</sup> • Second Sunday of Advent

Mark 10:17-22

“The One Thing You Lack”

December 13<sup>th</sup> • Third Sunday of Advent

Mark 10:23-27

“Earthly Riches, Eternal Denial”

December 20<sup>th</sup> • Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mark 10:28-31

“Eternal Riches, Earthly Denial”

December 24<sup>th</sup> • Nativity of Christ

Matthew 1:18-21

“Santa Christ”

December 27<sup>th</sup> • First Sunday after Christmas

Mark 10:32-45

“Leadership Defined”

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## DECEMBER

	<i>Birthdays</i>	<i>Anniversaries</i>
3	Martha Moore	
4	Jeffrey Janiak	
7	Sang-il Lee	
12	Barbara Podrebarac	
13	Lee Ann Head	
15	David Mabry	
17		Glenn & Debbie Berger
18	John Eller	
20	Joyce Coleman	
24		Ron & Joyce Coleman

# Happening This Month!

## Bible Study — Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, & 29<sup>th</sup>

Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to join as Pastor Ed leads us through various studies and discussions of Scripture, theology, and church history.

*There will be no Bible study Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>*

Pastor Ed continues in his series on Reformation theology through the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

## Evening Study — Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, & 30<sup>th</sup>

Evening study and fellowship meets every Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to join us in a time of prayer, study, and fellowship.

*There will be no evening study Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>*

Pastor Ed continues in his series on the commands of Christ.

## Youth Group — Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>

Youth Group meets every Sunday at 6:00 PM at rotating locations. All youth between Sixth and Twelfth grades are welcome. The Youth will be fed and will fellowship throughout the evening.

The youth will wrap up a study of the Book of Romans.

## *Winter Weather Policy*

*In the event of winter weather, please check your email, the church's Facebook page ([facebook.com/altavisapc](https://facebook.com/altavisapc)), and the WSET ticker for closures.*

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A collection of Pastor Ed's sermons and studies can be accessed on his new website:  
[revsoto.weebly.com](http://revsoto.weebly.com)

Expository Sermon Series

# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

## Westminster Confession of Faith

A Systematic Study of Reformed Theology

# Jesus' Rules

"If you love me, keep my commandments."

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

# Defending the Faith

With Pastors Ed Soto & Sam Knaus

# UNRAVELED

SEEKING GOD WHEN OUR PLANS FALL APART

DEVELOPING

# A CHRISTIAN THOUGHT LIFE

true honorable just  
commendable pure excellent lovely  
praiseworthy

## PAST TEACHING for Present Trial

Sermon Series on First Thessalonians

# MADE NEW

Living as Easter Christians

Midweek Devotionals with Ed & Betsy

# Pastor's Q&A



*Month of December 2020*

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
		<b>1</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary 6 PM Ministry Beyond Mtg.	<b>2</b> 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10AM-Noon Advent Workshop
<b>6</b> 10 AM Worship Children's Church Collect Two Cents-A-Meal Offering  Return Angel Tree Gifts  6 PM Youth Group Mtg. at the Moehlenkamps	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary	<b>9</b> 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9AM-7PM Ring the Bell for the Salvation Army at Altavista Wal- Mart
<b>13</b> 10 AM Worship Children's Church Collect Joy Offering  5 PM Youth Group Mtg. at the Church	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary	<b>16</b> 1 PM DAWN Board Mtg. in the Fellowship Hall  6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 10 AM Worship Children's Church  Deadline for Pledge Cards	<b>21</b> January Link Deadline	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Church Office Closed  7 PM Christmas Eve Service	<b>24</b> Merry Christmas!!  Church Office Closed	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 10 AM Worship Children's Church	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary	<b>30</b> 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	<b>31</b> Church Office Closed for the New Year's Day		

	<b>October-2020</b>	<b>YTD</b>
<b>Pledges</b>	6,903	91,777
<b>Non-Pledges</b>	1,664	19,623
<b>Plate Offering</b>	14	254.50
<b>Total Expenses</b>	9,672.17	110,519.18

**SESSION HIGHLIGHTS  
November 2020**

- Reviewed the October, 2020 Treasurer’s Report.
- Adopted a 2021 Operating Budget showing Income of \$141,530 & Expenditures of \$153,385; a deficit of \$11,855.
- Decided to pay a \$750 bonus to the Pastor & the church secretary from PPP funds, payable prior to the end of the 2020 Fiscal Year.
- Approved minutes of the October 18, 2020 Stated meeting & the November 1, 2020 Called meeting as presented.
- Approved Pastor Ed’s Housing Allowance for 2021 of \$14,400.
- Canceled the December, 2020 Stated Session meeting.
- Joys & concerns of the congregation were identified. Moderator Ed prayed for those listed & to close the meeting.

**Altavista Presbyterian Church 2021 Pledge**

Please write your name below, followed by the amount of your pledge for 2021. We encourage children to participate as well. If you feel moved to provide an additional pledge, please use the field marked “other.” Thank you for your generosity, please return this card by December 20.

<b>Name</b>	<b>2021</b>

**Other**

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