



# SEPTEMBER MESSAGE FROM JOE RAIA

It's hard to believe that eighteen years ago this month, I made what seemed like the longest drive of my life. The car was loaded with a trunk, a bag of clothes, and a surfboard on the roof. After all, I was going to Virginia Beach, you know? I took one more thing along...a heart full of memories. Eighteen years have gone by, but the vision is still so clear. I made a right turn off my street, a turn onto a friend's block for one last good bye, and a breakfast that started with Dunkin Doughnuts and ended with a few tears. There was the normal New York traffic, but eventually this eighteen-year-old college student made his way down the Jersey turnpike and eventually crossed the seventeen mile bridge better known as the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel.

After eighteen years and a lot of time to ponder, it has occurred to me that the moment I left New York, I was putting off the old and was ready to put on the new. Today this sounds exciting, but those who are leaving today for their new beginning would probably testify that it can come with fear and anxiety.

So what has been so great about my new beginning? Well, at age twenty-five I received the greatest gift that man can accept—eternal life. I have had the joy of a new relationship with a Savior who loves me. I have had the greatest opportunity to serve this very Savior in full-time ministry. I have been taught by those wiser than me how to study my Savior's Holy Word. This study has brought me to a very special place that reminds me of the true meaning of new beginnings. For me this is the focus and the purpose of Jesus' coming.

In the parable of the new cloth on an old coat, Jesus explains that He is the new beginning and that He came to do what the law could not do. His statements clearly say that you would not try to adhere to an old system, the law, that cannot lead you to forgiveness of sins, while at the same time try to live and accept the new beginning that is found in the grace of Jesus. "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse" (Matthew 9:16).

For me, the real cross in the road came at age twenty-five. My life was forever changed and the decision that had to be made was—let go and let God. Let go of the old life and let God be my new beginning. I invite those who haven't to do the same.

# The Tidings

4316 Pamela Court ~ Chesapeake, VA 23321 ~ abch.org ~ 757-405-5572



September 2010

Dr. Bryan J. Ray, Senior Pastor

Isaiah 43:19

Behold, I will do a *new thing*,  
Now it shall *spring forth*;  
Shall you not *know* it?  
I will even make a road in the *wilderness*  
And *rivers* in the *desert*.

I am so glad that our God is the author of "new things." Catch God's heart regarding our new life in Christ, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). I certainly realize that we don't always like change or new things. Yet, we can all appreciate God's doing a new work in our hearts and lives, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

This time of year, for many churches, is a season of new beginnings. We begin a new Sunday School year in September. The new church year begins in October. Ministries and committees begin serving with a fresh start. It is also a new beginning for Alexander Baptist Church as God has graciously called me here to be your senior pastor. My family and I are excited about this new beginning for us and for Alexander.

Let us join together in prayer for God to do a *new thing*. That God will let His great Kingdom work *spring forth*. That we will *know it*. That He will make a heavenly highway in the midst of this world's *wilderness*. That He will bring forth *rivers* of eternal life in the midst of a spiritual *desert*. I pray that God would do this *new thing* in the days to come—all for His Glory!

Love,

*Pastor Ray*

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED


Alexander Baptist Church  
4316 Pamela Court • Chesapeake, VA 23321  
Dr. Bryan J. Ray, Senior Pastor • Ph. 405-5572

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September  
At ABC



**FIRST COMES Love**  
Alexander Baptist Church  
MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT CONFERENCE  
Led By: Pastor David Bounds  
November 5-6, 2010



Cost is \$200 per couple

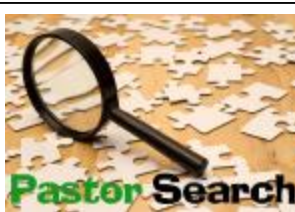
\$150 deposit due ASAP  
Remaining balance due October 3

Includes—  
Luxurious Accommodations  
Registration Fee  
(Conference Manual Included)  
Dinner - Friday Evening  
Lunch - Saturday

Williamsburg Hospitality House  
Hotel & Conference Center

415 Richmond Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
www.williamsburghospouse.com

For more information, call Jill Willoughby  
Church Office (757) 405-5572  
Home (757) 638-0371 or  
email: jillwilloughby@msn.com



One of the many quotes that we have heard in our lives, "Nothing Good Ever Came Easy" has proved to be genuinely true in our search for Gods' man for the Pulpit of Alexander Baptist Church.

Much time and prayer, in the last two years, has gone into where we are today as a church body. There were times when we were sure we were SO close, only to find that God had different plans. We have been blessed with such good interim preaching from so many men of God, that we've never gone home "unfed", but still we've missed the consistency a Senior Pastor brings to the life and work of the church.

All of that has changed, and every prayer, every moment involved in seeking Gods' man has proved to be worthwhile. Alexander is positioned to reach the community for Jesus with a purpose and excitement we have not seen for quite some time.

From the Pastor Search committee to Alexander Baptist Church we say "Thank you SO much for ALL your prayers, understanding and the way everyone has stepped up during this process.

Thank you, Dr. Bryan J. Ray, for being receptive to Gods' leading, and we look forward to the time ahead as we all strive to be who God wants us to be "To The Glory Of God".

Sincerely,  
Your Pastor Search Committee

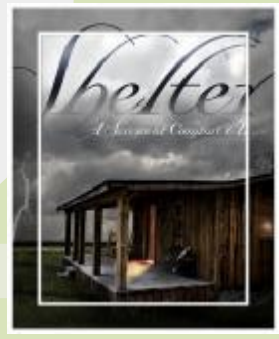
# SEPTEMBER MUSIC NOTES

JILL WILLOUGHBY

What a joy it is to see God at work through His church during this time! Every week I find myself looking forward with excitement and anticipation to the next worship experience we will have together. It is obvious that many are not just "coming to church" on Sundays, but instead, have come genuinely prepared to experience worship and are "entering His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise" (from Psalm 100:4) as we lift His name and worship Him in song. I thank God for His faithfulness in the past and am watching in awe as He continues to reveal His plan for us as a church family. These lyrics to the song "God of This City" make a challenging statement to ABC: *Greater things have yet to come and greater things are still to be done here.* I am grateful to Him for allowing me to join you in being a part of this amazing work of His! May we be laborers together for the glory of our Lord!

ABC Celebration Choir  
Presents the Musical *Shelter*  
a Service of Comfort and Hope

Sunday  
September 12  
6:30 PM



If we are willing to admit it, there are times that all of us experience feelings of loneliness, anxiety, restlessness, hopelessness or helplessness. As we find ourselves struggling during life's challenging times, *Shelter* offers a refreshingly authentic worship experience that will open our hearts and minds to embrace our pain and His promises of comfort simultaneously.

ABC Children's Choir Ministry  
begins Sunday, September 19, at 6:30 PM.

Choir is for preschoolers & children ages 3 (as of September 30) through 5th Grade.

Come be part of the fun as we worship God and praise Jesus through music. Choir is also a great way for children to learn about music through singing, playing instruments, movement and games.

Don't miss a beat...  
be with us the very first night!

Parents & Other Adults...if you feel the call to help with our Children's Music Ministry, please see Jill Willoughby!



## Meeting

with Pastor Bryan  
Sunday, September 19th at 5:00 PM

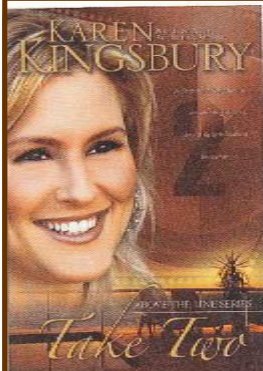
Members of the church council, as stipulated in the Constitution, to attend this meeting shall be: pastor, other pastoral staff members, moderator, chairman of the deacons, treasurer, chairman of trustees, chairman of church committees (or representative from each committee if there is no official chairman), directors of church program organizations, and heads of church program services.

**"We Believe" Sunday**  
Join us Sunday, September 5, as we kickoff our new Sunday School year with a special emphasis detailing what we believe as Believers and Baptists. The worship service will highlight the conclusion of Pastor Bryan's 1 John Sermon Series with the "We Believe..." emphasis. You won't want to miss it!

**ATTENTION ALL Committee Members**

The Operations Manual Committee requests a review of your individual committee description of duties. (Copies of committee descriptions are located in the church office and church library). Any recommended revisions should be submitted to the Operations Manual Committee no later than Sunday, September 8.

Operations Manual Committee Members  
Dixie Benton  
Susan Clark  
Hilda Cuddington  
Thomas Goodwin  
Jean Miller



**NEW! Take Two**  
Karen Kingsbury  
The follow-up to Take One, Take Two is the story of Chase and Keith, independent Hollywood filmmakers at the center of wheeling and dealing. They learn that success in Tinsel Town could cost them everything—relationships included. It's another faith-inspiring novel from best-selling author Karen Kingsbury.

**In the media library now!**

Celebration Choir for Adults and High School Students...  
September and October are "Be a Guest" Months!  
You are invited to come to choir as our guest...no commitment necessary...and check us out to see if God is leading you to be part of this ministry.  
Choir meets each week for rehearsal on Wednesday at 7:35 PM.

**Do You Play an Instrument...Are You Looking for a Place to Play It?**  
We are seeking players for our Sunday Evening Praise Team. If you are interested, please see Matt Thomsen or Jill Willoughby for more information.

We would like to "officially" welcome Matt Thomsen as our new Worship Leader.

We also offer an enormous heartfelt "Thank You" to Tommy Heath for his faithfulness in serving as Worship Leader over the past years. You are greatly loved and appreciated for your service!