



LOGOS

The Newsletter for St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1:5

From the Rector: Christmas Angels

Angels figure prominently in the Christmas stories. In Luke, the angel Gabriel announces the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus. In Matthew, an unnamed angel appears to Joseph and tells him to take Mary as his wife because her child is of the Holy Spirit instead of putting her away quietly. An angel tells the shepherds not to be afraid of the heavenly appearance at the birth of Jesus and a multitude of the heavenly host sings to God's glory. Then there are the angels after the birth. One tells the three kings to return home by another way instead of going back to Herod. Another wakes Joseph in the night and tells him to take Mary and Jesus and flee to Egypt because Herod wants to kill the child. Yet another comes to tell the Holy Family that Herod is dead and it is safe to return from Egypt.

Angels are widely popular figures. They are found in most of the world's major religions. In this day and age when many people consider themselves spiritual rather than religious, angels are acknowledged by many who are uncertain of belief in God—or at least God as defined by major religious traditions. People who are afraid of God for whatever reason are more comfortable with angels. They see them as full of light and goodness, beings that can be trusted. The popularity of TV shows such as *Highway to Heaven* and *Touched by an Angel* as well as the success of John Travolta's rather quirky portrayal of the archangel in the movie *Michael* underline the cultural popularity of these heavenly beings.

Angels in the Bible function most often as messengers. They bring news from God in heaven to God's beloved human children on earth. Angels bring surprises. Elizabeth, whom people thought could not have children, is pregnant. Mary is pregnant by the Holy Spirit with the Savior of the world. Surprise! God is doing a new thing and angels let people know.

Angels help people change their minds. Joseph was too good a man to have Mary stoned when he found out she was pregnant, but he was going to divorce her quietly. An angel comes to him in a dream and says, "Don't worry Joseph, it is OK to marry Mary. She is pregnant by the Holy Spirit and God is doing a new thing in her." Then there are the three kings. They are coming to worship the child Jesus. They cannot conceive that Herod might want to kill him, and they plan to go tell him where the baby is, but an angel says, "No, you need to go home another way." And they do.

Angels bring messages of hope, as they did to the shepherds. "Unto you this day is born a Savior, Christ the Lord." Angels also bring messages of guidance and direction. Joseph is told when to flee to Egypt and when it is safe to return. Angels guide his steps with Mary and Jesus to ensure their safety.

The thing about angels, though, is they don't talk to everyone. They bring a message to one person, maybe a few people. It was not the angels who carried the message of the birth of

Jesus to Bethlehem, it was the shepherds. Mary had to pass on the message she received from the angel to Joseph and her family and anyone else concerned. Angels begin the chain of communication from God but it is often up to us to complete it. It is up to us to be Christmas angels for others.

There are many ways we can bring messages. This year, St. John's will again participate in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree project. We will get the opportunity to bring a message of hope through a gift to those who are less fortunate than we are. We can also be angels to others by telling them how much they are loved and valued, because that is always what God wants to say to us. Start with your family and friends and move to co-workers, neighbors and strangers on the street. A hug, a smile, a warm greeting may mean more to someone than we could ever know.

We may bring messages of surprise to people, too. When people talk to me about how they see me, I am often surprised. Sometimes I get a new insight into myself that helps me see more clearly who I am. It is an angelic task to bring a message of truth to someone about the goodness you see in them.

Sometimes God sends us as messengers to help people change their minds. Holiday times can be very difficult for families if there is animosity or lack of understanding between people. We can bring a message of reconciliation in our words and actions that can help to restore peace and harmony.

We can also be messengers of guidance and direction to someone. That doesn't mean we always know we have some big important message to deliver. It may just be a suggestion to try something different, or a sharing of something that has worked for us that gives someone that little push they need toward a path of healing and wholeness.

And we always need to remember that angels work both ways. Especially during this blessed season, but all year long, if we look, we can see the angels God sends into our lives with gifts for us of surprise, hope, joy and direction. Advent, Christmas and Epiphany bring us many biblical angels. During these blessed seasons may we be available to receive God's heavenly—and God's human—messengers, bringing us tidings of comfort and joy.

Ann †

Using Your Gifts

Stewardship of Creation

We are working with our Sunday school youth on issues relating to the stewardship of creation. This topic is wide open and we are looking for people who would be willing to teach a session (9:00–9:50) on a Sunday morning on a topic that relates to stewardship, including care for our grounds, care for pets, first aid, caring for others in some way, exercise (how we care for ourselves) and any other topic that would fit the category. Our teachers are doing a great job, but they could really use some help from others. A one-time commitment is all we're asking for. Please consider this request prayerfully.

Photo Board Assistant / Assistant Photographer

We need some help updating our photographs downstairs. Some pictures need to be removed and others updated. Our vestry board will soon need to be changed as well. The photography assistant will need to keep the boards up to date and work with Virginia (or alone) to print new labels to go under new photos. Photographer Bill Pritchard sometimes needs help taking photos of events or people as well.

Children's Education

Our young people of all ages took the money for pumpkins you donated and decorated many beautiful pumpkins to show us and to give to others. We blessed the pumpkins and then watched with delight as they were decorated downstairs during coffee hour as well as during Sunday School time. They took the pumpkins and added their talents to them to present gifts to others. This is what stewardship of creation is all about. The money left over from the pumpkin contributions will be given to Coats for Kids.

Our children will continue their stewardship of creation theme in the new year.

Children's Christmas Pageant

Our young people will present their annual Christmas pageant Sunday, December 21, after the 10:00 a.m. service. The service will be shortened. After Communion and the blessing, the children will present the pageant and we will all sing carols with them. We will have hospitality after the pageant is finished. The children

work very hard on this presentation every year. Please be here to support their efforts. The collection taken up during the pageant is used to support the Heifer project, a ministry our youth support.

Adult Formation

This semester the adult class has experienced an eclectic mix of topics. We have worked on theological topics such as Creation, God and Father and have now taken a break to work on parables. We'll return to the theological topics of Jesus, salvation and the Trinity during Advent.

In October, Anna Minor spent two Sundays sharing her summer trip to Standing Rock Lakota Sioux Indian Reservation with us. On November 9, Mitzi Budde, the Virginia Theological Seminary Librarian, shared some new books with us on a variety of topics ranging from youth spirituality to religion and politics to spiritual stories and studies on the hard passages in the Bible. Thank you, Anna and Mitzi, for sharing yourselves with us.

In the new year, possible topics we'll be looking at include setting boundaries as Christians, seeing what we can learn from some of those hard biblical sayings, and Celtic Christianity.

Youth Adventures

On November 8, five youth went on a field trip to Luray Caverns. Galen Henderson, Maddie Harbin, John Petrich, Paul Petrich and Thomas Held had a beautiful drive and a fun day exploring this natural wonder. Thank you to youth leader Bill Thomson and to Betty Vertiz for chaperoning this trip.

The youth group also supports the Christmas pageant by providing pizza for our hardworking actors. They plan to do so again this year.

Parish News

Thank you

- To Del Hunt for doing such a marvelous job on our stewardship of creation pumpkin project.
- To Michael and Stephanie Beavin for serving as stewardship chairs.
- To Kay Wells, Diane Henderson, Paul Stenger, Jan Hull, and John Restall for sharing stewardship stories with us.

- To Bill Thomson and Betty Vertiz for chaperoning the youth trip to Luray Caverns.
- To Kay Wells, Liz White and Dave Dunlap for getting LOGOS issues, stewardship letters, and volunteer lists ready to distribute and mail.

Thank You From David Bako

St. John's collected \$620 for a used car for David Bako, a priest from the Sudan who spent some time at St. John's many years ago. We have previously provided other funding, including money needed to send his daughter Clementina through high school. He sent us a note saying, "The word thank you is no longer enough to convey to... all the living saints at St. John's Episcopal Church the joy, happiness, gratitude, thankfulness, appreciation and feelings my heart holds for all that you fellows in Christ (have) and are doing (for) me and my family over the last almost ten years."

David's e-mail address is david_bako@hotmail.com. He would love to hear from anyone who would like to send him a note.

We have sent the check to the diocese, and Buck Blanchard, who is in charge of mission for the diocese, will make sure it gets to David safely.

Thank You for Your Generosity

As the recipient of a generous gift from St. John's, I'd like to say thank you to everyone who gave so willingly to help me and my family in these difficult times. I'm grateful to all of you for the difference you made in my housing situation. May God's blessings be with all of my St. John's family.

LOGOS

The LOGOS is published nine times a year in February, March, April, May, July, September, October, November, and December near the beginning of the month.

Dave Dunlap, LOGOS Editor

Jane Edwards, LOGOS Editor and Page Layout

Email Dave at dave_dunlap@yahoo.com (preferred) or leave info in newsletter box in the office.

The next deadline is Friday, January 16 at 10:00 am.

Bishop Eastman Visits on January 18

The Rt. Rev. Theodore Eastman, retired Bishop of Maryland, will visit St. John's on Sunday, January 18 to confirm and receive people at the 10:00 a.m. service. Please plan to be present to greet the bishop and to honor those people who were confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church.

Bibles Needed

by Bill Schenck

There are more than 500 different English translations of the Bible, from the King James to the "100-Minute Bible." The latter condenses the Bible from around 780,000 words to 20,000—about 60 pages.

Obviously we don't need all translations in our church library but we do want to have examples of all major translations. Why different translations? Consider just two examples. *The New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) translates Matthew 3:8 "Bear fruit worthy of repentance." This same passage becomes "Do something to show that you have really given up your sins" in *The Contemporary English Version*. Amos 4:6, literally translated in the NSRV, is "I give you cleanness of teeth." The *New International Version* puts this into the more understandable "I give you empty stomachs."

We already have some of the major translations, but we need to have the following Bibles. If anyone has one of these in good condition and is willing to donate it, please let me know.

- **New King James** This is a modern language translation that keeps the elegance of the original.
- **New International Version** This is the best-selling Bible of all time, first issued in 1978.
- **New Oxford Annotated Bible** This Bible uses the *New Revised Standard Version* and includes the Apocrypha—books not considered part of the official Old Testament. Published in 1973, it has extensive informational footnotes. (The NRSV is also used in the *Harper Collins Study Bible* and is used in the Episcopal lectionary.)
- **The Jerusalem Bible** This version was prepared by an ecumenical group in the 1960s who worked from the earliest Bible texts. It is rather scholarly.

Any Bibles in the library can be checked out; just sign the check-out sheet on the credenza.

Book Club Selections

Don't forget St. John's Book Club, which meets the first Tuesday of each month. Upcoming selections are:

- December: Sarah Gruen, *Water for Elephants*.
- January: Kate Jacobs, *The Friday Night Knitting Club*.

Articles and a Sermon to Read

The current issue of the *Journal of the Virginia Theological Seminary*, <http://www.vts.edu/news/publications>, contains the sermon preached at the memorial service for the Rev. Churchill Gibson. It also has some brief articles about the recent Lambeth conference (and some beautiful pictures of Canterbury). Copies are on the table in the transept (the one outside Ann Barker's office).

Angel Tree

We will be participating in the Salvation Army's Project Angel Tree again this year. Look for our tree around the first of December and take a tag to buy a needy child a Christmas gift.

Get Your LOGOS by Email

Every month, we send out several copies of the LOGOS by e-mail, which saves postage and paper. If you currently receive a paper copy of the LOGOS and would like to receive it on by e-mail, please let Virginia know. Call 703-671-6834 or send an e-mail to stjohnssecretary@verizon.net.

December and January Birthdays

Barbara Hill, December 5
Lindsey Miller, December 5
The Rev. Catherine Campbell, December 6
Del Hunt, December 6
Galen Henderson (daughter of Roger & Diane),
December 7, 1998
Madeline "Maddie" Harbin (daughter of Bryan &
Carrie), December 11, 1997
Angela Swarr, December 14
Lori Held, December 16
Angela Rollet (spouse of John Hart), December 19
Roger Henderson, December 24
Vernon Martin, December 24
Eileen Flynn, December 27
Camron Robert Tallent (son of Matt & Cristina),
December 27, 2005
Emily Tyson (daughter of Karin Ferriter),
December 31, 1990
Emily Lodsun (daughter of Beth Fowler),
December 31
Patricia Broida, January 1
Janet Spence, January 2
Keelyn Del Gallo (daughter of Andy & Cathi),
January 4, 2004
Chris Tyson (son of Karin Ferriter), January 5
Don Hess, January 5
Ashton Lemmer (daughter of Charles & Cheryl),
January 9
Tony Kollath, January 14
Paul Stenger, January 19
Greg Hall, January 20
Ariel Hall (daughter of Greg & Laurie), January 26

December and January Anniversaries

David and Carol Dunlap, December 13
Klaus and Lori Held, December 31
Don and Penny Hess, December 31
Robert L. Rawls, III and Harriet Sheehan Rawls,
January 11
Greg and Laurie Hall, January 22

Gospel Lessons for December 2008 and January 2009

December 7, Second Sunday of Advent, Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark begins with the ministry of John the Baptist. He is the messenger spoken of in the scriptures, the voice which cries aloud in the wilderness. He is sent to prepare the way of the Lord through his call for repentance and baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins. The people flock to him, but he tells of a mightier one still to come who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

December 14, Third Sunday of Advent, John 1:6-8, 19-28

In the opening passages of his Gospel the fourth evangelist firmly characterizes the mission of John the Baptist: he is the forerunner and witness to the Christ. He bears testimony to the one who is the light of all human life. John is not just the Christ or a figure for Elijah or one of the other prophets. He prepares the Lord's way and baptizes, while even now the one whom John is unworthy to serve stands unknown in their midst.

December 21, Fourth Sunday of Advent, Luke 1:26-38

Our Gospel relates the story of the visit to Mary by an angel: Gabriel tells her that she is to bear Jesus who will be called the Son of God. This happens during the sixth month of the pregnancy of Elizabeth, a kinswoman of Mary, who will soon give birth to John the Baptist. Mary is assured of God's favor and that this is the work of the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of the prophecy to David of an eternal kingdom. The narrative points to the transcendent origin of this child born into history.

December 24 & 25, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day I, Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel presents the story of the birth of Jesus. He is born amid very humble human circumstances. A government registration program requires Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, the city of David. Because there is no other place for them to stay, Mary lays her new son in a stable manger. An angel announces the joyful news of the Savior's birth to shepherd's who come to Bethlehem and report the angelic vision.

December 25, Christmas Day II, Luke 2:1–20

Our Gospel tells how the shepherds, after the angelic vision that announced Jesus' birth, come to Bethlehem to see for themselves the promised child. They share with Mary and Joseph the word of the angels. In this little baby, laid in a manger, they perceive the fulfillment of the song of the heavenly hosts. Glorifying and praising God, they return to their fields.

December 28, First Sunday after Christmas

Lessons and Carols

January 4, The Feast of the Epiphany (observed), Matthew 2:1-12

Our Gospel is the story of the wise men from the east, who guided by a star, came to worship the child born to be king. Despite the wicked plotting of Herod, the Magi are able to bring their gifts to Jesus without betraying his exact location. Early Christians found in the rich symbolism and motifs of the story the early fulfillment of both Old Testament prophecy and the dreams of many peoples. The meaning of this birth, amid terrifying human circumstances, enlightens and transcends human history.

January 11, The Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (Observed), Matthew 3:13-17

This is the story of Jesus' baptism. John wonders why Jesus should come to him to receive a baptism for the remission of sins, but Jesus tells him that it is right and

fitting. After he is baptized, the Holy Spirit is manifest. A voice from heaven proclaims who Jesus is with words that echo ancient oracles concerning the king and the calling of the Lord's chosen servant.

January 18, The Second Sunday after the Epiphany, John 1:43-51

Our Gospel is the story of Philip and Nathaniel becoming disciples of Jesus. Nathaniel first doubts that the one whom Moses foretold would come from the virtually unknown town of Nazareth. But Jesus astounds Nathaniel by telling him what normal sight could not have disclosed. He then promises Nathaniel that he will have his own still greater vision, a heavenly revelation of the Son of Man as an intermediary between heaven and earth.

January 25, The Third Sunday after the Epiphany, Mark 1:14-20

Our Gospel records the beginning of Jesus' ministry: his proclamation of the coming kingdom and the calling of his first disciples. After the arrest of John the Baptist, Jesus returns to Galilee preaching the nearness of God's ruling and the need for a change of heart. Two sets of brothers are bidden to leave their nets and become fishers of people.

Lesson introductions are used by permission and adapted from *Introducing the Lessons of the Church Year* by the Rt. Rev. Frederick H. Borsch, retired bishop of the Diocese of Los Angeles. The guide was published by Trinity Press International, Philadelphia.

St. John's Mission Statement

To discover and share the transforming love of Christ

St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's is dedicated to making disciples for Jesus through

- attracting and welcoming newcomers;
- sharing faith-deepening worship, education, outreach, and pastoral care; and
- together carrying God's vision of the kingdom into the world around us.

St. John's Annual Meeting and Vestry Election

Annual Meeting

St. John's annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 11 in the undercroft right after the ten o'clock service. The order of business for the annual meeting includes:

- A review of our mission achievements in 2008;
- Election of new vestry members;
- Recognition of those who have served throughout the past year; and
- Presentation of the 2009 budget by the Finance Committee.

We will also discuss issues relating to St. John's future.

Thank You to Vestry and Officers

Those who serve on the vestry and in other leadership positions are essential to St. John's mission to share the transforming love of Christ. Our lay leadership works continually to make sure St. John's is a good steward of our resources, a servant community to those around us, and a vision-based parish, always working to discern God's will. We appreciate their devotion of time, energy, and talents.

We thank the vestry members who complete their terms this year:

- Linda Trochim, senior warden for two years, finance committee member for three years;
- Pamela Corey-Archer;
- Bill Pritchard, junior warden;
- Paul Stenger, who graciously agreed to fill the vacancy left by Jack Turner's illness and death.

We also thank those vestry members who continue their service:

- Bill Thomson, senior warden;
- Marshall Adair;
- Jan Hull.

We are also grateful to those who serve in other capacities:

- Jean Harrison, who has served faithfully as treasurer of the parish for more than ten years;
- John Restall, our assistant treasurer;
- John Wilson, finance committee chair;
- Bill Schenck, finance committee member and insurance monitor extraordinaire;
- Barbara Hill, our long-time pledge clerk.

St. John's Calendar

December

- Tue 2 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 3 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 4 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 7 Second Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 9 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 10 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 11 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 14 Third Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 17 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 18 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 20 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m. in the undercroft
- Sun 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
Neighborhood Christmas caroling, 6 p.m.
- Wed 24 Christmas Eve
Holy Eucharist for all ages with children's sermon, 5 p.m.
Christmas music and caroling in church, 10:40 p.m.
Festival Holy Eucharist, 11 p.m.
- Thu 25 Christmas Day
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 10 a.m.
- Sun 28 First Sunday After Christmas
No 8 a.m. service, no Christian formation
Lessons and Carols, 10 a.m.

January

- Sun 4 Feast of the Epiphany (observed)
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 6 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 7 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 8 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 11 Baptism of Our Lord (observed)
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
St. John's Annual Meeting, right after the 10 a.m. service
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 13 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 14 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 15 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 17 Men's fellowship, 8 a.m. in the undercroft
- Sun 18 Second Sunday after Epiphany
Rt. Rev. Theodore Eastman visits St. John's at 10:00 a.m. service
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 21 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 22 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 25 Third Sunday after Epiphany
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 28 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 29 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.

Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany at St. John's

Sunday, December 21, Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, followed immediately by children's Christmas pageant and hospitality

6:00 p.m. Christmas caroling in the Glencarlyn neighborhood, followed by hot chocolate and cookies in the undercroft. Music and lyrics will be provided. Bring flashlights and dress for the weather.

Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist with children's sermon

10:40 p.m. Christmas music and caroling in the church

11:00 p.m. Festival Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 25, Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

Sunday, December 28, First Sunday after Christmas

10:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols

Sunday, January 4, Feast of the Epiphany (observed)

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

9:00 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

St. John's Episcopal Church
415 South Lexington Street
Arlington VA 22204
703-671-6834
<http://stjohnsarlington.thediocese.net>

Next deadline is Friday, January 16 at 10:00 a.m.

Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Seminarian: Anna Minor
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Carol Dunlap
Secretary: Virginia Pearson
Sexton: Justiniano Garay

Parish Leaders

Jean Harrison, Treasurer
John Restall, Assistant Treasurer
Don Hess, Co-chair, Building and Grounds Committee
John Wilson, Co-chair, Building and Grounds Committee

Vestry

Bill Thomson, Senior Warden
Bill Pritchard, Junior Warden
Marshall Adair
Pamela Corey-Archer
Jan Hull
Paul Stenger
Linda Trochim

LOGOS Volunteers

Editor: Dave Dunlap
Page Layout and Webmaster: Jane Edwards