



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: The Heart of the Matter

Everyone knows that our hearts are the center of our body's functioning. The blood that pumps through them connects all our various organs and systems and makes us living, breathing human beings. If our hearts stop working, we die.

But the concept of heart has also made it into our emotional lexicon as well. There are many references to hearts in the way we talk about people—and the way others talk about us. Hearts can be big or small. When people refer to us as big-hearted, they mean we are welcoming and kind, giving generously of what we have to others.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, I think of the Grinch and Ebenezer Scrooge. The story of the Grinch even says his heart was two sizes too small and that led to his hatred of Christmas. When he hears the Whos in Whoville singing their Christmas song even after he has taken all their Christmas decorations and gifts, the story tells us the Grinch's heart grew three sizes that day. After visits by the ghosts, Scrooge's heart grows too at his good fortune of having a second chance to be a big-hearted celebrator of Christmas and every day.

What size are our hearts and how do we think people might refer to us? Are we connected to the needs in our own backyards as well as the world around us? If not, we can ask God to help increase the size of our hearts, so that our hearts can grow in love for others.

Hearts are also symbols for our emotions. We can be people who wear our hearts on our sleeves. This phrase means our emotions are readily accessible. The opposite of that image is keeping our emotions "close to the vest". The word heart is not in the phrase, but the location of the heart is. Which end of the spectrum do we fall nearest? We may not need to wear our hearts on our sleeves—and it is certainly prudent if we do not know who to trust—but open hearts are ones that can communicate better and thus create better relationships and better connections, just as our physical hearts do with our bodies. If we cannot express our emotions, it is like having a heart with plaque built up in it. Our communication does not flow as well and we are not as able to make and retain the intimate relationships we all need.

The root word for heart in Latin is the "cour" of encouragement and discouragement. If we are encouraged and supported in our life and work, we will be happier and healthier people. If we find only discouragement, it pulls us down, making us less productive and more resentful. It is also important to consider whether we ourselves are encouragers or discouragers. Do we help make people's hearts glad, supporting them and building them up, or are we always "Eeyores" (that's the depressed donkey in *Winnie the Pooh* for those who have

forgotten) with a pessimistic outlook on life no matter what good comes our way. Do we see the glass half full or half empty for ourselves a majority of the time? Do we rejoice at blessings or magnify our troubles? If we find ourselves on the discouraging side, it is good to remember that our negative attitudes can be changed if we practice hard enough and ask for God's help.

And then there is the word courage itself. We apply the word courage or courageous to people who have the heart to do whatever they must do in the face of what life has given them. Two storybook images I think of for courage and its opposite are the knight Lancelot in *Camelot* and the Cowardly Lion in the *Wizard of Oz*. In one of his songs, Lancelot proclaims his courage in the face of many things and he is speaking the truth. He is brave and bold and strong. The poor lion's life was miserable because he was anxious and afraid about everything. But to his credit, he wanted courage and knew he could not manufacture it himself.

Closer to home, we all know people who are courageous and persevere through sickness and trials and financial set-backs and every other kind of challenge. We know people who are courageous in some things and cowardly in others. And we know people we would term chronically anxious. What is our courage level? The Wizard of Oz gave the lion courage by telling him he had it, but for us it is not that easy. Fortunately, God will give us courage when it is called for, just as God will help us be encouragers, deal better with our emotions, and become big-hearted.

This is the obvious month to write about hearts. As always, Valentine's Day falls on February 14. This year Ash Wednesday falls just three days later—February 17. On Valentine's Day we express our love for one another. We buy cards, we give candy hearts, we send flowers and do various other nice things for ones whom we hold dear in our lives—children, sweethearts, friends and others. In Lent we meditate on Jesus' showing God's love for us by sacrificing himself to die on the Cross for our redemption. Our word "creed" comes from the Latin word "credo" another heart word. Literally, it means "I believe," but in its fullest sense, it means "What I give my heart to".

As we walk through Lent this year let us ponder what we give our hearts to. Jesus calls us to give our hearts to God and to one another, expressing our love not

only with hearts and flowers, but with the necessities of life. We need to have big and open hearts, be encouragers and be courageous in what we do so that we can do Christ's work in the world.

Ann†

Region III Lenten Series Begins February 23

St. John's and the other Arlington Episcopal Churches (Region 3 of the diocese) are again offering a weekly study program during Lent. This year's series is entitled "Mind, Matter, and Mysteries" and kicks off at St. George's at 6:30 on February 23. Each Tuesday evening study program will be held at a different church in Arlington. The series will conclude with a joint celebration of the Great Vigil of Easter.

Region III began its rotating Lenten study program in 2008, and it has proved very popular. Each evening program begins with a simple supper at 6:30 p.m., continues with a speaker at 7:30 p.m., and concludes with Compline at 8:30. Nursery care will be provided.

St. John's will host the last Tuesday program on March 30. Everyone is invited to attend. In addition, we will need people to help with food, setup and cleanup. Watch for sign up sheets and plan to attend and to help out.

The sessions for this year's Region 3 Lenten Study are:

- February 23 at St. George's—Ian Markham on "The Physics of Prayer."
- March 2 at St. Michael's—Bishop David Jones on "The Power of Love."
- March 9 at Trinity Church—Lisa Kimball on "Soul Searching."
- March 16 at St. Peter's—Peggy Parker on "The Mystery of the Trinity."
- March 23 at St. Mary's—Walter Eversley on "The Mind of the Spirit."
- March 30 at St. John's—Martin Smith on "The Life To Come."
- April 11 at St. Andrew's—The Great Vigil of Easter.

Mark Your Calendars

This promises to be an active year at St. John's. At its January meeting the vestry discussed activities for the coming year and put together a calendar of things planned. Already there are events and activities in almost every month of the year—and more may be added. There are social events, church clean-up days, and times you can help prepare the church for a new liturgical season. Mark your calendar so that you don't miss anything.

Date	Event (Contact)
February 16	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper , 6–7:30 p.m. (Del Hunt)
March 20	Game Night—Games, Movie, Popcorn, Pizza , 7–8:30 p.m. (Lynn Robinson)
April 1	Loaves and Fishes Meal and Service, 6:30 p.m. (Guild members)
April 3	Flowering of the Church for Easter with Altar Guild (Eileen Tallent)
April 17	“Potluck with a Purpose”—Small Groups— (Debbie Carter)
April 24	Spring Clean-Up 9 a.m.–noon (Del Hunt, Junior Warden)
May 8	Morning Guild Spring Tea 1–3 p.m. (Morning Guild)
June 5	Glencarlyn Day—sell hotdogs— 10 a.m. (Men's Club)
June 26	Ice Cream Social (Morning Guild / Congregation)
September 19	Kick-off for children's Sunday School—Service and picnic in Glencarlyn Park
October 3	Blessing of the Animals, 5 p.m.
October 16	Fall Clean-Up 9 a.m.–noon (Del Hunt, Junior Warden)
November 6	Spaghetti supper / potluck, 6 p.m. (Carolyn Corlett)
December 19	11:15 a.m.—Children's Christmas Pageant 6:30 p.m.—Neighborhood caroling (Lynn Robinson)
December 23	Greening of the Church for Christmas (Eileen Tallent)

St. John's Hosts Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 16

St. John's will host its annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on Tuesday, February 16 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. The dinner is open to all and is a fun way to observe Shrove Tuesday, or *Mardi Gras*, the day before Lent begins.

Shrove Tuesday observes the ancient tradition of using up eggs, butter, and meat before the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. The dinner menu features the traditional pancakes, ham, and applesauce. The men of St. John's do the cooking and serving for this meal.

Prices are unchanged from last year: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6–12, and everyone under 6 is free.

Mark your calendar and join the fun at St. John's for a traditional pre-Lenten dinner.

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 Thursday, February 18, at 10:00 am.

AFAC Needs Food

The Arlington Food Assistance Center provides food for families in need. For the week of January 2, that meant helping over 1,000 families—more than 2,800 adults and children—in Arlington. That is a lot of food.

AFAC's web site <http://www.afacinfo.org/> provides a list of AFAC's food needs:

Canned Goods (low salt preferred):

Meat and Fish—tuna, salmon, spam, ham

Soup and Stew—all varieties of soup, stew, chili

Beans—all varieties

Pasta—ravioli, spaghetti

Cereal (low sugar preferred)—hot and cold, all varieties

Pasta (dry packaged)—all varieties

Peanut butter

You can drop off your donations in the baskets at the back of the church and they will be picked up and delivered to AFAC—and the people you help will bless you.

Remembering the Church

At St. John's annual meeting in January, Linda Trochim reminded everyone that one of the reasons St. John's has been able to weather recent financial storms is that it has reserves that are invested for the long term. She noted that these reserves had not been laid away in some far-distant time when St. John's had more income than it could use, but that the reserves were largely the product of former parishioners who had made bequests in their wills to the church that had nurtured them in life. She suggested that we should all be thinking about doing the same in our wills. She noted that many of us support St. John's as best we can, but still express regret that we cannot do more. Here is a way that we can make good on our intentions. She suggested that a bequest of just ten percent of a person's estate would do a great deal of good for the parish, without doing a great deal of harm to the remaining heirs.

Leaving a bequest to St. John's is an easy process and does not require a total re-writing of our will. A simple bequest can be handled by adding a codicil to an existing will. A codicil does not change a will but simply adds one specific clause. In this case the addition is a bequest to St. John's. The bequest could take the form of a percentage of the estate, or it could be a flat dollar amount. It just needs to be hand-written, or typed, signed and witnessed.

Think about what those who have gone before us at St.

John's have done in leaving us the reserves we now have and ask if we should not do the same for those who will come after us.

Linda Trochim, who is an attorney, has volunteered to do the legal work on a pro bono basis for anyone who would like to remember St. John's in their will. Linda's contact information can be found in the latest church directory or call the church office if you can't find your directory.

Adult Education Focuses on Bible for Spring Term

The adult education class has begun its spring term with a three part study led by Bill Schenck about the differences in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). There are variations in the stories about Jesus' life and ministry and we're discussing what they are and whether it matters. The class will focus next on a Bible study using the Lord's Prayer as the central focus. We also have a study on Ephesians in the works as well as lessons about learning from the mistakes of Jesus' disciples.

Ann Barker will lead a Bible Study class on Paul's letter to the Philippians. The group will meet Monday afternoons beginning February 8 from 2 to 3 p. m. Let Ann know if you are interested, there is still time to join.

Musical Notes

Favorite Hymns At the annual meeting, everyone was asked to list any favorite hymns and get them to Lynn Robinson by email or on paper so that the music committee can be sure to program them when it is appropriate. You can note titles, first lines or page numbers from our three hymnals: *Hymnal 1982*; *Wonder, Love and Praise* or *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. Let us know by the end of February. Songs that we have recently sung will be programmed later than those we have not done for a while.

Lenten Music The season of Lent begins on February 17 and lasts through April 3. Lent is a penitential season during which we meditate on Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and on our sins that required him to lay down his life to reconcile us with God. Music during this season is therefore more penitential in nature. Hymns are apt to be slower. We do not use any hymns with Alleluias in them. We also switch from the Gloria to the Kyrie Eleison (Lord Have Mercy) and we sing the Agnus Dei as a fraction anthem.

Hymns as Prayer The music committee selects hymns for each service that reflect the church season and the lessons for the day. The words of the hymns are additional prayers to help us worship God. You are encouraged to listen to the words carefully as you sing.

Vestry Highlights

by Bill Schenck, Vestry Register

December

Absentee Voting The Vestry debated whether an absent member could vote by proxy on an important issue. The consensus was that a member who had to be absent could convey their vote to the senior warden but anyone could object to that vote being counted if he/she believed the discussion had raised issues not originally considered.

Building and Grounds Brian Cavey forwarded two suggestions for projects. One is to paint the interior of the church; the other is to put shelves in the Sacristy (the room off the vestibule).

Budget The majority of the meeting was taken up with recommendations for the 2010 budget from the Finance Committee. After extensive discussion, the 2010 budget was approved. (Note: this budget is posted on the bulletin board in the Undercroft.)

Cristo Rey There was agreement that there is a need for better communication between the two congregations—an issue which the new Vestry will be considering.

January

New Vestry The three new Vestry members—Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, Diane Henderson—were welcomed. Brian Cavey was elected the Senior Warden, Del Hunt the Junior Warden (with Paul Stenger serving as back-up when Del is away).

Goals Discussion centered on how the Vestry could be implement the goals developed last fall in conjunction with the Stewardship Campaign. Liz White distributed a list of suggested events to be held during the year and, with some modifications, this was approved. The list will appear in LOGOS (see page 3) and be publicized in the local community.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

St. John's Annual Meeting was held in the undercroft on January 10, following the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist. Thirty people attended. The Rev. Ann Barker presided and opened the meeting with a prayer.

The minutes of the 2009 meeting were distributed and approved.

Making Disciples:

The Rev. Ann Barker reported on accomplishments from 2009 and looked forward to 2010.

Stewardship of God's Resources:

Finances Bill Thomson, Senior Warden, presented an overview of St. John's finances. Endowments, invested with Vanguard, increased from \$187,000 to \$205,000 due to an increase in the stock market. Expenditures exceeded income by \$8,000, primarily because of the repair of the steeple, which cost about \$7,000. For 2010, pledges are lower and, as a result, the budget is lower. After the Vestry approves the final budget, Bill will post it on the bulletin board. Salaries and benefits (unless mandated) will remain the same as last year; other areas cut include tree service and money for supply clergy and supply organist. Marshall Adair (outgoing Vestry member) said that the Finance Committee and the Vestry had made difficult financial decisions. This year we need to experiment with fund raisers and, in particular, to think more dynamically.

Junior Warden Brian Cavey summarized the Building and Grounds situation. In addition to the steeple repair, the repair of the oven cost \$700. Several fire extinguishers were replaced and some trees trimmed. Landscaping in front of the church was paid for with a generous donation from a former parishioner who grew up at St. John's. We had an energy assessment done which, among other things, recommended replacing some existing lighting with energy-efficient bulbs. However, worthwhile as this is, it involves a significant up-front cost, as would putting in more programmable thermostats.

The floor in the bell-tower was strengthened. Water leakage from the outside remains a problem in the second kitchen. We have an internal fix but a permanent (and expensive) repair may be necessary. The boiler, which heats water for the heating system, is old but working well.

Projects for this year include replacing the other panels of painted glass in the steeple, painting some of the interior of the church, and repairing the cracked concrete slab on the church's front steps.

Vestry Bill Thomson introduced the current Vestry members. Continuing on the vestry are Paul Stenger, Del Hunt, Brian Cavey and Liz White. Retiring from the Vestry were Bill Thomson, Marshall Adair, and Jan Hull. Paul Stenger, runner-up in the last election, had been appointed to fill the remainder of the late Jack Turner's term and the congregation confirmed his tenure in a vote. In 2009 four new members were elected to fill vacancies on the vestry. In order to even out when terms would expire, the vestry decided two candidates from 2009 would serve three-year terms (Del Hunt and Paul Stenger) and two would serve for two years (Brian Cavey and Liz White).

Bill Thomson introduced the candidates for the three Vestry positions, giving a brief service biography of each—Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, and Diane Henderson. As there were no other nominations, a motion was made and passed to elect the three by acclimation to three-year terms.

Recognitions Ann recognized people for their service and contributions, with an apology in advance for anyone inadvertently missed.

Special thanks, and with a gift for her service, went to Jean Harrison for her twenty years as St. John's treasurer. She is replaced by Bill Thomson. John Restall was thanked for his continuing work as Assistant Treasurer.

Ann also offered thanks and appreciation to:

- The Altar Guild and Eileen Tallent, its leader: Eileen mentioned a suggestion from Anne Stenger that there be a greening of the church for Easter and Advent seasons.
- The Building and Grounds Committee: John Wilson and Don Hess, co-chairs
- The Finance Committee: John Wilson, chair, and members Paul Stenger, Jean Harrison, Barbara Hill, Bill Schenck.
- The Sunday School Teachers: Del Hunt, Diane Henderson, Leslie Mead, Carrie Harbin.
- Those who help with the Bag Lunch Program, including the youth and all who contribute, both financially and physically.

- The Card Ministry: Beth Cavey and all who help with this ministry.
- Our Administrative Assistant: Virginia Pearson, and others who help in the office—especially Liz White and Kay Wells.
- Others thanked include the choir, Morning Guild, acolytes (youth and adult), ushers, tellers, and all who contribute to worship and fellowship at St. John's. After thanking all who make our community what it is, Ann said that volunteers are needed and welcome.

Other Items:

Hymns: Lynn Robinson asked members to tell her their favorite hymns so that they can be used in the music program.

Bequests: Linda Trochim reminded us that previous bequests made to St. John's (which comprise our investments) have helped us during difficult financial periods. She urged members to consider remembering St. John's in their wills and, as a lawyer, she volunteered to do the necessary paperwork pro bono.

AFAC: Leslie Mead reminded us of AFAC's need for food to distribute.

Planning: Marshall Adair said planning was even more important in these times of economic uncertainty.

Goals: Carolyn Corlett mentioned that St. John's had agreed on some goals in a congregational meeting last fall and urged the new Vestry to revisit them.

Ann closed the annual meeting with a prayer.

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.

Ash Wednesday Services

Holy Eucharist Rite II and imposition of Ashes • Noon and 7:30 p.m.

A Letter from Brad White

November 5, 2009
St. John's Episcopal Church
415 S Lexington
Arlington, VA 22204

To the Wardens and Vestry of St. John's:

I used to avoid Jack Turner's calls. My Mom would answer the phone and Jack's booming "Hi Liz!" would leap from the telephone receiver and fill the room. By the time Mom responded with a warm "Hi, Jack," I would have been safely in the bathroom, garage, basement or anywhere that Mom couldn't find me. I knew why he was calling. He needed Acolytes—again. In retrospect, I should have hidden less because being an Acolyte at St. John's was a formative experience. I learned not to worry about tripping with the offering plate, dropping the wine cask, smacking the American flag on the wall, sitting when I should stand, standing when I should kneel or even falling asleep during a sermon (ok, maybe I should have worried a bit more about that last one). Being an Acolyte helped me to learn that it was OK to make mistakes. I learned that congregation—watching my every move every Sunday—was rooting for me, giving me the benefit of the doubt. They loved me and by brothers and my parents without conditions. I learned not to worry about imperfections—they would be forgiven. I didn't know it yet but as an Acolyte (and beyond) at St. John's, I learned what the "love of Christ" really meant.

As you may know, many years ago St. John's sponsored Boy Scout Troop 644. It had a long and respected history and was one of the most prolific Troops in the entire Metropolitan area. Despite an average membership of only twenty scouts, the troop was able to produce almost one Eagle Scout every year. It was also among the most active troops in the area, with an average of more than one overnight outdoor camping trip every month. It was a formative experience for many young men in the Glencarlyn area. The church benefited from the relationship with Troop 644. Many Eagle Scout projects and other service projects were designed to improve the building and grounds at St. John's. In many ways, Troop 644 acted as stewards of St. John's.

Over 20 years ago I combined my stewardship as a member of St. John's with my service to the Boy Scouts into an Eagle Scout project that re-landscaped the front slope of the church. The Azaleas on the slope had become tired and overgrown. There had been some attempted break-ins to the choir room by people using the cover of those large Azaleas. My project transplanted those Azaleas to the far corner of the property (4th and Lexington) and replaced them with Dwarf Alberta Spruces. These small evergreens were intended to provide year-round color but a smaller profile. We also planted ground cover and used landscaping timbers to bring more definition to the beds. The process and result was, at the time, among the most satisfying experiences of my first 15 years.

I understand that those Dwarf Alberta Spruces are not so "dwarf" anymore and that the front slope landscaping has outlived its useful lifetime. Honestly, I am surprised that it has lasted over 22 years. So much has happened since then. I'm now married and we have three happy and healthy daughters. I've moved from D.C. (via Cleveland and Chicago) and have settled in Atlanta. We have joined an Episcopal church where I serve as an usher and on several committees, my daughters sing in the choir and my wife teaches Sunday School. A lot happens in 22 years but I have not forgotten the foundation from those years upon which my life has been built—my parents and brothers, my education, Troop 644 and St. John's.

Thank you for giving me a place to grow and learn. Thank you for your continued love and support for my Mom. Thank you for the strength of your love for God's wonders and your commitment to His service.

I want to continue to be a part of St. John's, especially the work I began over 22 years ago. Please accept the enclosed gift to help cover the costs for landscaping the grounds, specifically re-landscaping the front slope. It is a small contribution compared to what my family has received from St. John's but one that I know will be invested with continued love and careful stewardship.

Warm Regards,
Brad White

Parish News

Our Thanks to:

Betty Vertiz for her continuing service as our Arlington Interfaith Council representative

The worshipers at the 8:00 service for doing the bagged lunches in November

Liz White for coordinating our Thanksgiving pot luck lunch

All who worked so hard on our parish cleanup

Marshall Adair, Del Hunt and Liz White for coordinating the new landscaping for the front slope

Our youth tree planters Paul and John Petrich and Connor and Kenji McCartney

John Wilson and the finance committee for their careful and difficult work on the 2010 budget

Kay Wells and Kim Houghton for decorating the undercroft for Christmas

The altar guild, especially Eileen Tallent, Faye Pritchard, Bill Pritchard, Paul Stenger, Betty Vertiz (and guest member Liz White), for help with decorating the church for Christmas

The altar guild, musicians, and all those who made our Christmas services so wonderful

Carolyn Corlett, Roger Ludwig and the Morning Guild for coordinating our Angel Tree project

Jean Harrison for her 20 years of service to St. John's as treasurer

Bill Thomson, Jan Hull and Marshall Adair for their service on the vestry

Bill Thomson for serving as senior warden for two years

Brian Cavey for serving as junior warden for 2009-2010

John Wilson and Don Hess for their continued service as building and grounds committee co-chairs

Jan Hull for taking food to AFAC in 2009 and to Leslie Mead and Del Hunt for volunteering to do this service in 2010

Dave Dunlap for editing LOGOS

Jane Edwards for LOGOS layout and for maintaining St. John's web site.

Congratulations (and our thanks) to

New senior warden: Brian Cavey

New junior warden: Del Hunt

New treasurer: Bill Thomason

Angelina Alvarado, Jackson King and Charles Barksdale who were received into the household of God through the sacrament of Holy Baptism in November

February Birthdays

Feb-2	John	Restall
Feb-3	Lisa	Broida
Feb-5	Tina	Cavey
Feb-7	Anne	Stenger
Feb-8	Heather	Kollath
Feb-8	Alexis	Lodsun
Feb-11	Jeff	Petrich
Feb-12	Sheryl	Pardo
Feb-16	Lynn	Christopher
Feb-16	Amanda	Eiman
Feb-18	Colin	White
Feb-20	Robert	Carter
Feb-23	Peyton	Del Gallo
Feb-23	Carole	Hunt
Feb-25	Michelle	Aitken
Feb-26	Eileen	Tallent
Feb-28	Henry	Held

February Anniversaries

Feb-11	Keith & Kaipo McCartney
Feb-21	Bryan & Carrie Harbin
Feb-28	Bill Schenck & Lynn Christopher

Gospel Lessons for February

February 7, 2010—Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany—Luke 5:1-11

This is a story of commitment to Jesus—to his message and his destiny. Luke first mentions Simon (Peter) in 4:38; now Jesus calls him to be a disciple. In the preceding chapter, we read of hostility to Jesus; we also learn what preaching the good news of the kingdom of God involves. We can see the similarity of this passage to stories in Mark and John: vv. 1-3 are like Mark 4:1-2; vv. 4-9 are like the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus in John 21:1-11; # vv. 10-11 are like Mark 1:18-20.

Perhaps Luke has taken parts of two sources used by Mark and John and merged them into one story, but perhaps he is using a story not found in other gospels.

The “lake of Gennesaret” (v. 1) is the Sea of Galilee. Gennesaret is the plain on its southwestern shore. The “word of God” in Luke and Acts is the Christian message. Are Peter and Jesus in one boat and “James and John” (v. 10) in the other, or they are all in the same boat? The question probably arises because Luke has merged two stories. Reading on through the gospel, we come to realize that Luke has a great respect and appreciation for Peter—called “Peter” for the first time in v. 8, but not again until 6:14, when Jesus chooses twelve of his disciples. In v. 8, Peter responds to Jesus’ action with personal self-judgment—because he recognizes in Jesus more-than-human power. In v. 5, in calling him “Master” (equivalent to teacher), Peter is willing to obey Jesus’ command out of duty; then in v. 8 he calls him “Lord”, showing his belief. V. 10 is a milestone (“from now on”). The Greek verb *zogron* (“catching”) was commonly used of teachers: they caught their students and thereby brought them new life. Peter, James and John make a total commitment (“left everything”, v. 11).

February 14, 2010—Last Sunday after the Epiphany—Luke 9:28-36,(37-43a)

Jesus has predicted his suffering, death and resurrection to his disciples; he has called on them to “take up their cross” (v. 23), has warned that those who hear the gospel but fail to trust in it will be condemned, and has promised that some present will see the kingdom of God. Now he and the inner circle of disciples ascend “the mountain” (v. 28). In Luke, Jesus always prays before an important event.

An aura of unnatural brightness is linked with mystical appearances in Exodus and Acts; “dazzling white” (v. 29) is a symbol of transcendence. In Jewish tradition, both “Moses and Elijah” (v. 30) were taken into heaven without dying. Jesus’ agenda is in accord with the Law and the prophets; he is doing God’s will. “Two men” also appear at the resurrection and at the ascension. Jesus’ “departure” (v. 31, *exodos* in Greek) is his journey to Jerusalem and his passage from this world. Peter clearly doesn’t understand; perhaps he thinks he is witnessing a super Feast of Tabernacles (“dwellings”, v. 33)—a time when the whole city was brightly illuminated. The “cloud” (v. 34) is a symbol of God’s presence; the words from it recall Jesus’ baptism, and add “listen to him!” (v. 35). Vv. 37-43a, the healing of an epileptic child, present three contrasts:

- from the mountain to the needy world;
- Jesus’ great power over evil (vs. the disciples’); and
- Jesus’ fidelity to God vs. general human infidelity.

The child is in miserable condition. In healing him, Jesus shows God’s “greatness” to “all” (v. 43).

February 21, 2010—First Sunday in Lent—Luke 4:1-13

Luke has told us of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, of “a voice... from heaven” (3:22) saying “You are my Son...”. On that occasion “the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form”, but is this what we today, living in an age with supposedly only one reality, would consider bodily? Ancient people conceived of several levels of spirit worlds with occasional contact between them and earth.

Perhaps Jesus transcends between earth and a spirit world in the story of his testing by the devil. (Note the imaginative images in vv. 5 and 9.) During his time there (“forty days”, v. 2, meaning a significant period of time), the Holy Spirit sustains him in his travails; human as he is, Jesus is totally dependent on the Spirit being with him, for “he ate nothing”. (Moses ate nothing during the time he was on the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments.) In this dependence, Jesus is humanly helpless; he humbles himself before the Father.

The devil speaks, but is this like “a voice from heaven” speaking? The devil recognizes him as “Son of God” (vv. 3, 9), the one who fulfils God’s plan in creation

and, given Luke's genealogy in 3:23-28, in Israel's history. Jesus answers the devil's questions with quotations from the Law, i.e. Deuteronomy, then considered to be the words of Moses.

In v. 4 Jesus, hungry as he is, says: God sustains humans through other means than eating. Whether the devil has the authority to offer Jesus world-wide political power is unlikely (vv. 5-7); however Jesus' answer is plain: God is the ultimate master; only he is to be worshipped (v. 8). In vv. 9-11, the devil invites Jesus to do something extraordinary—a thing not in accordance with God's plan of salvation. Again Jesus refuses to be taken in (v. 12). Jesus opposed the forces of evil throughout his ministry, but the greatest chance ("an opportune time", v. 13) the devil had was on the cross. There he again faces identified temptations.

February 28, 2010—Second Sunday in Lent—Luke 13:31-35

Someone has asked: "Will only a few be saved?" (v. 23). Jesus has warned that few who have eaten with him will enter the Kingdom; many apparently pious people will be excluded. Many others, from across the world, will eat with him.

Now "some Pharisees" (v. 31), in perhaps the only favourable mention of them in the gospels, advise him to leave Herod Antipas' territory ("here", i.e. Galilee and Perea). (Herod the Great died soon after Jesus was born.) To Jesus, Herod is "that fox" (v. 32): destructive, tricky, sly, politically motivated. Herod will not cut short Jesus' earthly ministry. His journey to Jerusalem "must" (v. 33), in accord with the Father's will, continue day-by-day; in and at his resurrection ("third day", v. 32), he will complete, consummate, his mission of restoring mankind to the relationship God intended at creation.

Jerusalem, not Herod, has first claim on God's messengers! (v. 33b). This city is to be the place of, and the agent of, his murder. In vv. 34-35, Jesus laments over the city and (probably) its religious leaders ("house"). Perhaps v. 34b speaks of Jesus' extensive effort to bring Judeans to him, of efforts not recorded in the gospels. The city's residents, rejecting him now, will not see him again until they shout "Blessed..." (v. 35) as he rides triumphantly into the city on the first Palm Sunday.

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St. John's Calendar

February

- 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 Fifth Sunday after the 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.
- Tue 9 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 10 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 11 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 14 Last Sunday after the 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 17 Ash Wednesday
Holy Eucharist Rite II, Imposition of
Ashes, 12 noon, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 18 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat 20 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 21 First Sunday in Lent
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 23 Region III Lenten Program at St.
George's, 6:30 p.m.
- Wed 24 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 25 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 28 Second Sunday in Lent
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.

March

- Tue 2 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
Region III Lenten Program at St.
Michael's, 6:30 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 Third Sunday in Lent
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.
Region III Lenten Program at Trinity,
6:30 p.m.
- Wed 10 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 11 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 14 Fourth Sunday in Lent
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 16 Region III Lenten Program at St. Peter's,
6:30 p.m.
- Wed 17 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 18 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 20 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 21 Fifth Sunday in Lent
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 23 Region III Lenten Program at St. Mary's,
6:30 p.m.
- Wed 24 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 25 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 28 Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday
Liturgy of the Palms & HE Rite I, 8 a. m.
Liturgy of the Palms & HE Rite II, 10 a. m.
- Tue 30 Region III Lenten Program at St. John's
6:30 p.m.
- Wed 31 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church
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Next deadline is Thursday, February 18 at 10:00 a.m.

Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly

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