



# 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: Get Out of the Box**

One of my favorite performers was the mime Marcel Marceau. He was so good at creating space out of his imagination and making it seem real. One of his pantomimes I particularly enjoyed was his box routine, in which he found himself in a box and spent his time feeling the walls, sometimes frantically, trying to get out of it.

Marceau is not the only one with imaginary boxes. We create them all the time and we don't even know they are there. They represent behaviors and thought patterns that we are stuck in. They are not good for us and yet we do not know how to get out of them. We don't even want to leave them, sometimes. Instead of feeling the walls like Marcel Marceau, we sit in a chair in the middle of the box and keep doing things the way we have always been doing them.

One of the things that keeps us in our boxes is being too comfortable. We like where we are. Our jobs are going along fine. We've lived someplace for years. We have a dinner group and a bridge group and a tee time on Saturday mornings. We know where the shops are and the best deals on clothes. Our support systems are there in the box with us. We have routines. It is a good life. Why should we want to get out when we are happy there? What box? We don't see any box.

Another thing that helps us stay in our boxes is that we are too busy. Some days I run from one thing to another, pausing for very little but to eat and perhaps say a quick prayer. I have meetings; I have columns to write and sermons to study for. I have classes; I have phone calls to make. But being busy can become a habit that keeps us right where we are. A friend of mine says that sometimes she is so busy she doesn't have time to turn around twice when she gets home before she has to leave for the next engagement, but that is not her preference. She is very good at taking time to chill out, to relax, to think, to pray. All these things make her aware of the space she is in and help her think about whether she wants to be in that space or not. Being too busy keeps us from taking that time.

Negative thinking is another thing that keeps us where we are. Studies have shown that human beings are natural negative thinkers. It takes work for us to see the positives and to notice the good things that have happened to us. The Rev. Kathleene Card invites us to look around each day and make a list of every good act we experience. Someone could give us a kind word or a smile. Someone might help us complete a task. Someone could listen to us when we need to talk. It's also important to be grateful for the gifts of God's creation—flowers, rain, a particularly good meal. I am a big proponent (though not as big a doer as I should be) of gratitude lists at the end of the day, so we can see all the good things

God has done for us. Continual practice at this will give us a positive outlook on life.

If we continue to think negatively, though, the “I cannot”, the “I don’t want to”, the “this is too hard for me” become our way of life. We only see ourselves, others and the world around us negatively and that makes it very difficult to see the space around us where we could move ahead.

Another thing that keeps us in a box too often is failure. Sam Wells of Duke University recounts a story of a man who went to Duke 10 years ago. He started his own company with a group of friends. He had a chance to sell it back to his former employer but he chose not to. In January, the company fell apart and went into bankruptcy. The man lost his dream, his security, his prestige and his self-esteem. Wells, who wrote the sermon four months later, says the man’s mother and sister can’t even mention the subject to him because he is overcome by the word “failure”. He sits in a psychological space in which he is terrible because he has failed. He cannot even begin to look outward.

But life is not about staying in one place. The good life—and the Christian journey—are about growing. Therapist Kathy Kurtz, in her article “Pot-Bound” says in *Sacred Space*, the newsletter of the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia, that many people are pot-bound or “box-bound” in our terminology. Even if they remain the same in some areas of their lives, they continue to grow and find themselves too large for their containers. Their roots get all tangled up, but they are afraid to move to a new container, one that is larger and has more room for them to grow.

Sometimes we are forced out of our boxes. Most, if not all people, experience growth and development in their lives because they are living. Everyone adds new things to their lives every day. They grow until they grow too big for their boxes. Their noses are almost pressed against the sides of the box, and they are almost completely stuck.

Kurtz mentions a time when she felt restless, but could not admit it. Then she was forced out of her box because her husband had to move for his work. She was angry and upset because she was comfortable where she was. She wanted to hold on to her pot, she

says, but she felt God pulling her up out of it and putting her in the next place she was to grow.

Sometimes we are forced out of our boxes by the death of a loved one. The comfortable things can no longer be comfortable because something is missing in our lives. The empty space inside us forces us to look for something to fill it, to fill us. The space is God’s space and God can fill it for us with new hobbies, new friends, new ways of doing things, joy and laughter if we let God.

Sometimes we are forced out of boxes because something happens to us or to family and friends that entails a move or a new kind of relationship. Taking care of a parent with Alzheimer’s for example, can turn our world upside down. The birth of a developmentally delayed child or the onset of a debilitating illness can make us need to relearn everything we do and establish new routines. I have a friend who is adjusting to the disability of Parkinson’s disease. Symptoms have already set in and the medicine helps but it does not take care of everything. She has had to work at making many changes in her life to accommodate her illness.

Sometimes when we grow, we see our box before it smashes against our nose and we choose to get out. We turn inward and examine the restlessness that overtakes us. We can make decisions based on meditation and prayer, on our lives as they are and the new vision we have. This is the best way to leave our boxes, to choose to open the door once we find it and walk outward toward growth.

Pentecost is a season of growth and development in the church, one in which we concentrate on growing our relationships with God and our fellow human beings. May we all see whatever boxes that have us trapped and do all that we can to press on the walls until we find the door that will let us walk out into a new stage of growth.

Ann†

### **UTO**

St. John’s donated \$165 to the United Thank Offering in May. Thanks to everyone who made a contribution to this worthwhile effort.

## What's Happening in September

This September, like every September, is a time for restarting activities that may have been on summer vacation since June. St. John's is no exception. Here's what is happening in September:

- Our new seminarian, Mary Mackin, begins her service with us on September 12. We welcome Mary and her husband to our parish family.
- Christian Education for adults and youth resumes on Sunday, September 12, with the adult education beginning at 9 a.m., the youth program at 9:20 a.m. (See the article on page 4 for more information on the adult education programs.)
- St. John's book club meets on at 7:30 p.m. September 7 for the first time since June. This month's book is *Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel. There's still time to read it, so plan to come.
- Candlelight Prayer Services Wednesday evenings resume on September 8. If you have not experienced this evening of peaceful prayer we urge you to come and to make it part of your regular weekly routine.
- Morning Guild meets 10 a.m., Thursday, September 9.
- The Men's Fellowship has its September meeting on Saturday the 18th at 8 a.m.
- Education for Ministry (EFM) starts its new year on Sunday, September 12. We continue to thank Pat Bleicher for her dedicated leadership of this ministry at St. John's.
- The highly successful and popular series of "Movies Under the Stars" will have its third presentation on Saturday evening, September 18. Watch the signs outside the church for the start time.
- On September 26, St. John's will host a community potluck lunch following the 10:00 a.m. service. Details will be forthcoming; mark your calendars so you do not miss this fun outreach event.

## Filling Empty Shelves

Have you ever gone to the grocery store intending to buy something and found that it was not on the shelf? If so, you may have asked the manager or one of the staff to check and see if they could find the item you wanted in the storeroom in the back of the store. You may have gotten it or you may not. You may have been told it would arrive on some certain day when the store expected a delivery.

Consider the families who rely on the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). If something they need is not on the shelf, there is no storeroom in back. There is no scheduled delivery. AFAC relies on people like you and me to stock the shelves. And those shelves need stocking every day of every week, and every week of every year.

AFAC serves between 1,200 and 1,300 families every month. They always need breakfast cereals (preferably low sugar); canned foods including fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, beans and pasta; dry pasta, and peanut butter.

Here are four ways to support AFAC.

1. *You can help by donating money.* This allows AFAC to buy food and apply funds to their most urgent needs.
2. *You can help by donating food.* If you pick up food for AFAC when you are at the store you can drop it off at St. John's at the back of the nave and it will be magically transported to AFAC and given to families who need help.
3. *You can help by volunteering: donating your time.* It takes a lot of people to buy food, receive food donations, and give food to families in need. Your time is a valuable donation.
4. *You can help through a virtual food drive.* The virtual food drive lets you select what food you want to donate to AFAC, then donate it at the prices AFAC can command. AFAC will use your donation to buy the food its clients need.

To donate your money or time or to donate through a virtual food drive, go to the AFAC web site—[www.afac.org](http://www.afac.org)—and click on the button that says "Donate." Then just follow your inclination to give, so that tomorrow when the families come to AFAC the shelves will not be bare but will be filled with the food people need.

## Summer Ice Cream Social and Movie

During the hot days of summer—and this has been a *hot* summer—St. John's tried out some new ideas for reaching out to the community with cool summer activities. Literally, the coolest was an Ice Cream Social on Saturday June 26. Everyone was having too much fun to count attendees, but somewhere between 30 and 35 people, including at least one family from the Glencarlyn neighborhood, came and had a great time. Proceeds from the cool evening were about \$200.

An effort to get out in spite of the heat was St. John's "Movie Under the Stars." About 30 people came in July, including some of our Glencarlyn neighbors, to see *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*. Snacks were provided and the freewill offerings for the snacks totalled about \$65. The event was so popular that it will continue on a monthly basis through September—so watch for information on the September showing.

## Adult Education Begins with Study of Heaven

Our adult forum resumes with a class on heaven taught by Lorraine Underwood. Starting September 12, the class will discuss such topics as concepts of the afterlife in the Hebrew Bible, Jewish beliefs at the time of Jesus, what Jesus taught and Christian concepts since Biblical times. Lorraine will use poetry, popular music, and art to illustrate people's understandings of heaven.

Further topics for the year include the eight core stories of our Biblical faith, suffering and hope, ways to study the Bible, Marcus Borg's *Embracing an Adult Faith*, and some sessions discussing whether the Bible is always right.

We hope you will make these sessions a regular part of your Sunday mornings.

## Parish News

Congratulations to Bill Pritchard on his retirement. (He's already signed up to be on FEMA response teams, so he'll stay busy.)

Congratulations to Carol Dunlap on her retirement from The Metropolitan Chorus. (She's going to continue as St. John's organist, though.)

## Rest in Peace

Judy Hall, sister of Kay Wells, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on June 28

John Hartigan, who died on August 13.

Catherine Harrison, daughter-in-law of Jean Harrison, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on August 10

## Thank you

To an anonymous donor for the gift of \$10,000 to St. John's, to be used at the rate of \$2,000 per year for operating expenses

To Anne and Paul Stenger for coordinating the July 11 and August 8 bagged lunch program for Bailey Crossroads Community Shelter, to Sherwood Hedrick for transporting the lunches and to all who helped prepare the lunch bags

To Bryan Harbin for continuing to support our parish programs with signs—most recently for our ice cream social and Movie Under the Stars

To Diane Henderson for coordinating our Movies Under the Stars, as well as to her helpers, Lynn Robinson and Del Hunt

To Marshall Adair and Del Hunt for efforts to get the parking lot cleaned up

To Jean Harrison for acting as treasurer while Bill Thomson was out of town

To Anne and Paul Stenger, Debbie and Henry Carter, Bill Pritchard, Del Hunt, Liz White and anyone else who has helped care for St. John's grounds by pulling weeds and doing other outside chores

To Carolyn Corlett for coordinating our Ice Cream Social as well as to all those who helped Carolyn

To Beth Cavey for arranging the going away party for the McCartneys

To Kay Wells and Liz White for decorating for the party

To John Wilson and Don Hess for their work on the lighting

## Birthdays

In the month of September we join in celebrating the birthdays of Ginger Adair, Jeff Aitken, Stephanie Beavin, Delaney Del Gallo, Karin Ferriter, Kay Gasker, William Gibb, The Rev. Dr. Eduardo Guerra, Laurie Hall, Nick Hall, The Rev. Sue Hardman, Connor McCartney, Anna Minor, Clara Naw Sweet, Lane Turner, Jeffrey Wallace, and Kay Wells.

## Anniversaries

We also celebrate the wedding anniversaries in September of Erin & Gerard Baynham and Matthew & Cristina Tallent.

## Gospel Lessons for September 2010

### September 5, 2010, Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost—Luke 14:25-33

In vv. 13-24, Jesus has told the “crowds” that even outsiders, the poor and the disabled are called to God’s kingdom. Now he tells what is required to become a follower. The word “hate” (v. 26) is surprising, until we recall that exaggeration was a common linguistic trait in Hebrew, as Jesus does here: “hate” means love less, be less attached to. The disciple must find his prime security in Jesus, not in his or her family, nor in preserving one’s “life”. One must be prepared to suffer, as Jesus did on the “cross” (v. 27). In vv. 28-32, Jesus uses two examples to advise full realization of the cost of being a follower, before enlisting. You must be so dedicated to the cause that you are willing to forfeit all that you have. Then vv. 34-35: don’t allow your allegiance to Christ to deteriorate and so become ineffectual. If you do, God will throw you away as useless. If you are prepared for the challenge, grasp it.

### September 12, 2010, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost—Luke 15:1-10

Jesus is keeping company with “tax collectors and sinners”, people avoided and despised by apparently godly people like “the Pharisees and the scribes” (v. 2). Their observation (v. 2) begs the question: are any beyond God’s mercy? Tax collectors were known for their unethical behaviour. The Roman authorities contracted out collection of taxes; how a tax collector got the money was up to him. Usury, fraud and excessive profits were common. Tax collectors worked for tax farmers, who were usually foreigners. As such, they were ritually unclean.

Now Jesus defends associating with these people, using parables. Our reading includes two: vv. 3-7 and 8-10. Jesus asks if you had many and lost one, wouldn’t you search until you found it? expecting the answer of course I would. Vv. 6 and 10 explain the parables: God is shepherd/housewife; the lost sheep/coin are people who repent, who turn to God. God willingly accepts them; in fact, he rejoices, as does the community (“friends and neighbours”, vv. 6, 9). Neither the sheep nor the coin can find their owner; God cares about those unable to find him; he seeks them. But, as so often in a parable, there are twists to them which helps people remember them: what shepherd would

leave his flock “in the wilderness” (v. 4)? The Pharisees would find God symbolized by a woman as outrageous, and first-century shepherds were considered lawless and dishonest. (The coin, v. 8 was a drachmas, a day’s wage.) Would a shepherd really care about one sheep out of 100? God is like that.

### September 19, 2010, Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost—Luke 16:1-13

As he continues to travel towards Jerusalem, Jesus says more about what is required of a disciple. Many in the crowd were poor, oppressed by the rich, so a story about a “rich man” (vv. 1-8a) would be popular. Jesus speaks in their terms, calling money “dishonest wealth” (v. 9) or filthy lucre. (A “manager”, v. 1, negotiated and signed contracts on his master’s behalf; the master was usually a (hated) absentee landlord.) Mosaic law forbade charging interest on a loan, but there was a way round this: the debtor in v. 6 had probably received 50 jugs of olive oil but the bill was for 100. The manager settles the account by forgiving the usurious interest, probably to his master’s benefit, not his own. Both the “master” (v. 8, the rich man) and the manager are businessmen; the master praises the manager for acting “shrewdly” (the Greek word means pragmatically). Both understand prudent use of financial resources.

From elsewhere in the New Testament and from the Qumran literature, we know that “the children of light” (v. 8) are the spiritually enlightened: business-people are more pragmatic in their sphere than are disciples in affairs of the Kingdom. Then v. 9: Jesus advises accumulation of heavenly capital by providing for the needy. If one does this in one’s own small

#### 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.

way, God will see one as trustworthy regarding Kingdom affairs (v. 10)—and if one isn't, he won't. Being "faithful" now involves sharing possessions; one who doesn't now won't be entrusted with "true riches" (v. 11), i.e. the Kingdom. Financial resources are God's gift; they belong "to another" (v. 12), i.e. to him. "Your own" is your inheritance as God's children, i.e. eternal life. So in v. 12 Jesus asks: if you have not managed your finances prudently, will God give you eternal life? Then v. 13: one cannot make a god out of money and serve God. Disciples must serve God exclusively, using material resources for his purposes, sharing with the needy. The alternative is enslavement to materialism.

**September 26, 2010, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost—Luke 16:19-31**

Luke has described Pharisees as "lovers of money" (v. 14). Now Jesus expands on a tale from popular folklore to tell a parable. Only the rich could afford cloth dyed with "purple" (v. 19), and "fine linen" undergarments from Egypt. No moral judgments are made directly on the "rich man" and Lazarus (v. 20), but they are implied: v. 30 infers that the rich man, and his brothers, have not repented of their sins, but "Lazarus" (v. 21) means God helps, so he has. ("Dogs" ate the bread guests had used to wipe their plates and hands and then tossed under the table.) Vv. 22-23 tell of the reversal of fates after death, in contemporary Jewish terms: Lazarus goes to a place of bliss, beside "Abraham", the founder of God's covenant people, but the rich man roasts in "Hades" (v. 23, the Greek name for Sheol, the abode of the dead). Recall the Abraham was wealthy, and obedient to God's will.

**LOGOS**

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*The next deadline is Thursday, September 16 at 10 am.*

In v. 27-28, the rich man changes tactics: upon learning that the gulf between him and Lazarus cannot be bridged ("a great chasm has been fixed", v. 26), he asks that his brothers be saved from the same fate. Abraham's answer (v. 29) amounts to: God reveals himself and his will in the Old Testament, so the "brothers" (v. 28) have been warned of the fate that awaits them. The Law required landowners, God's tenants, to share with the needy.

In v. 31, in speaking of "someone rises from the dead", Jesus is referring to his resurrection. Even then, "they" will not "repent" (v. 30). Like Lazarus, those whom God helps will come into his presence but, like the rich man, the ungodly will suffer irreversible punishment. God has revealed his will through "Moses and the prophets" (v. 29); those who neglect it will suffer after death. In this case, Jesus overturns conventional Jewish wisdom: it said that wealth was a sign of being blessed by God; if one was poor, one must be ungodly.

*Commentaries on the Revised Common Lectionary were prepared for the Anglican Diocese of Montreal, Canada, © 2003–2010 by Chris Haslam. Used with permission.*

Shrine Mont Weekend

will be

Friday, October 15 through Sunday, October 17

## St. John's Calendar

### September

- Sun 5 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
- Mon 6 Labor Day Holiday (office closed)
- Tue 7 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 8 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 9 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 12 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 15 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 16 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.  
LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat 18 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.  
Movie Under the Stars (Watch signs for time)
- Sun 19 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 21 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 22 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 23 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 26 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Community Pot Luck after 10 o'clock service  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 29 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 30 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

### October

- Sun 3 Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Blessing of the Animals, 5 p.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 5 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 6 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 7 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 10 Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 12 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 13 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 14 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Fri 15–Sun 17 Shrine Mont Weekend
- Sat 16 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 17 Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 20 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 21 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 24 Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 27 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 28 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 31 Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost  
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.  
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth  
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.  
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.

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*Next deadline is Thursday, September 16 at 10:00 a.m.*

## **Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly**

### **Staff**

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker  
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson  
Organist: Carol Dunlap  
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson  
Sexton: Justiniano Garay

### **Parish Leaders**

Bill Thomson, Treasurer  
John Restall, Assistant Treasurer  
Don Hess, Co-chair, Building and Grounds Committee  
John Wilson, Co-chair, Building and Grounds Committee

### **Vestry**

Brian Cavey, Senior Warden  
Del Hunt, Junior Warden  
Patricia Broida  
Debbie Carter  
Diane Henderson  
Paul Stenger  
Liz White

### **LOGOS Volunteers**

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Page Layout and Webmaster: Jane Edwards