



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: Home for Christmas

There was a story in the *San Francisco Chronicle* recently about a humpback whale who had become entangled in crab traps and lines. She could barely stay afloat. She also had hundreds of yards of rope wrapped around her body, her tail and her torso and a line tugging in her mouth. A rescue team was called in and discovered the only way to save her was to dive in and untangle her. They eventually freed her and she swam in what seemed like joyous circles. Then she came back to each diver and nudged them, pushing them gently around. She was thanking them for freeing her, so she could return to her home in the open seas where she could feel safe.

Around Christmas, many of us are drawn toward home. Human beings call places home where we feel safe or have felt safe. Some of us have had only one home. We were born in a certain place and we still live there, perhaps even in the same house. I have a friend who lives in her childhood home. She was brought up in a particular area in a particular house and still lives there. She has filled it with things that are useful and dear to her. She knows her neighborhood well. She surely feels safe in that place and to my knowledge would not think of going anywhere else.

West Virginia will always be a home to me. It is the place where I grew up. Every time I drive through the state and see its beauty or hear John Denver sing "Country Roads", my eyes fill up with tears. Even though I would never go back to West Virginia to live and I have no immediate family living there, West Virginia is one of my homes because I feel it is a part of me and I of it. Living there shaped and formed me and I felt safe in its mountains.

Another one of my homes is North Carolina, specifically central North Carolina. I spent my college years at Chapel Hill and for whatever reason, I had an immediate connection with the place. Not so much because it was a place I became familiar with (I haven't been back in years and would probably not be able to find my way around), but because of the experiences I had there in college. It was a home for my intellect, a home to think and work and play. It was a school environment and that made me feel safe, too.

Sometimes people do not have long-term homes. They're in the military or they travel with the State Department on a frequent basis. Home for them may not be so easy to define. Some of them find the knack of feeling at home immediately in a new place, but some never do. They are always away from home if they have a home base. My neighbors who were in the military talked of going back home to Oklahoma when they finished this tour. The closer they got to the end of the three years the more excited they became. The husband finished his Ph.D. and hoped to retire from active duty, then teach history at one

of the local colleges. They went back to Oklahoma because that is where they grew up and that is where some of their loved ones live.

For most of us, that is the key to home. Home is where the heart is. It is where our loved ones are. Whether we have any religious faith or not, we are drawn home for Christmas. It is our center. It is what shaped and formed us. In the words of a Miranda Lambert song, she wants to heal from forgetting who she is by going back to the “house that built her”.

We want to go home for the tradition—the Christmas lights, the holiday meal, church on Christmas Eve and whatever other things we do during the holidays.

Sometimes it is not we who go home, but we who are home for others to come to. It is our tree, our lights, our traditions people love. But what we really love is the relationships with the older generation, with the younger generation, with all of our family gathered around us. For me, home at Christmas is wherever my family is. If we don't all meet up any other time, we try to get together at Christmas, even if it is only for one day. I get to catch up with the nephews and see the brother I seldom see, as well as my brother and sister whom I see more frequently. I feel free to make myself at home at my sister's house and be at home with my family.

Sometimes, though, we do not have a home to go back to. Sometimes, the relationships there are so difficult it would make Christmas miserable. Sometimes we are not able to get home. Sometimes we are estranged from our families and sometimes we have no family. That's the time we can hopefully form new families from our friends and neighbors. We can have our own traditions or become part of someone else's.

In addition to our traditional family homes, there is another kind of home for us—our church home. Many of us form close, long-term relationships at churches. We raise our families in a church community. We participate in shared activities. We commit a large part of our lives to our church; it forms and shapes us in the image of God. We come to pray and praise and receive the sacraments and we leave feeling renewed as we do when we spend time with our families—biological or otherwise—during the holidays.

We go home at Christmas, whatever that means for us, but there is one person who left home at Christmas to

come and make a home with us. Jesus left heaven to be born to Mary and Joseph, who were away from home at Christmas too, in order to bring God's love to us. Jesus lived his life as a human being so he could show us how God wanted us to behave toward God and our neighbor. He spent his ministry on earth healing and teaching and preaching, showing love wherever he went. He died on the Cross for us to reconcile us with God, and he rose again so that we might have eternal life with God.

Christmas is a busy time of the year. Traditions and decorations and shopping and traveling consume our lives. But Christmas is really about Jesus and his love for us. No matter where we are at home on earth, we all need to remember that our home is really with God. This Christmas, make sure to remember that Jesus wants to come home with us and share our lives, not only in this season but always. So make room in your homes and your hearts for Jesus this Christmas. Let him love you and make you feel safe wherever you may be. Home is truly where the heart is. May our hearts rest in God and his beloved Son, Jesus, for he is the source of all that is truly Love.

Ann†

Adult Education Offers Something for Everyone

Have you been coming to Adult Education on Sunday mornings?

If not, you missed an excellent course on heaven presented by Lorraine Underwood in September and October, followed by the first of a two-part series on Thomas Jefferson and Anglicanism in the 17th through the early 19th centuries. We also had our annual visit from Mitzi Budde, librarian at Virginia Theological Seminary, who discussed new theological books.

It is not too late to join us in December for the second part of Bill Schenck's series on Anglicanism. For the future, the class is considering a two-part Advent study discussing two interesting books: *Sex, Sacrifice, Shame and Smiting: Is the Bible Always Right?*, by Donald Kraus, and *Hard Times Come Again No More*, a book about suffering and hope, by Alex Joyner. We also have lessons planned on why certain books didn't make it into the Bible.

Watch your Sunday bulletin for updates and join the fun Sunday mornings at 9 o'clock.

Did You Know

The current sanctuary was completed in 1957 at a cost of \$48,000. The education annex was built in 1960.

Giving to St. John's

(The following is the talk that Bill Schenck delivered November 7 in support of this year's annual giving campaign).

Lynn and I agreed to head the annual giving campaign not because we enjoy asking people for money but because we care for St. John's and what it means to us and because we want to see it prosper and grow.

Today is All Saints Sunday; a day for us to remember those who came before us and made St. John's what it is today.

Many of you know that there was recently a devastating fire that destroyed the historic chapel at the Virginia Theological Seminary. Last week the dean of the seminary sent a letter to alumni and friends of VTS saying, in part, "I know that Christ's church is not a building, but spaces do become sacred and memories are deeply embedded in the material things of our incarnational faith."

Here at St. John's we are surrounded by many memories. Let me mention just a few—there are so many I can't mention them all. The beautiful cross behind the altar was made and installed by Barbara Hill's father, Sheperd Hamner. Mr. Hamner not only made this cross; among other things he built and assembled the pews and built the desk in the narthex. Kneelers were made by the women of the altar guild.

The altar rail was given in memory of Elisabeth and Charles Johnson, long-time members of St. John's. Two of the windows were given in memory of Margaret and Frank Todd. And the doors into the sanctuary from the narthex were given by Evelyn Sullivan in memory of her husband Charles.

I mention these (and there are many others around us) as a way of reminding all of us, myself included, that this space is sacred and full of memories. I hope you will remember both this space and its memories as you consider your pledge to keep St. John's and its memories alive, now and into the future.

Coming Up At St. John's

- St. John's book club meets Tuesday December 7 at 7:30 in the undercroft. This month's book is *Peace Like A River* by Leif Enger. See Lynn Robinson for a copy of this heartwarming story.
- Candlelight Prayer Service, Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Come and relax in the middle of your stressful week.
- Community Christmas Caroling, 5 p.m. Sunday, December 19. Come to walk through the Glen Carlyn neighborhood, sing Christmas carols, and then warm up back in the undercroft with a cup of hot chocolate. Be a part of this St. John's community tradition.
- The vestry is planning for a Game Night this winter. The tentative date for this event is Saturday, January 22 for an evening of playing your favorite games with people from St. John's and the surrounding Glen Carlyn community. Watch for details of this event as the date approaches.

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, January 20 at 10 am.

Seminarian's Diary—December 2010

by Mary Mackin

On October 22, the historic Immanuel Chapel at Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) was destroyed by fire. As with any life-changing event, I have a vivid memory of the day of the fire and the weeks following it. I would like to share that memory with you.

I was at home when a friend called from the campus and told me the chapel was burning. That kind of news is difficult to take in; I couldn't imagine it. Cooper turned on the TV and there on Channel 4 was live coverage of the fire and the fire trucks as they streamed water onto the building. We were stunned, upset, beside ourselves, as we tried to take in the news and what it meant. That night we could hardly sleep. The next day, we went to the seminary to see the devastation and begin to grieve in earnest. As we walked over toward the chapel, we were met by Dr. Mitzi Budde, the Head Librarian. She hugged us both and stood with us for awhile as we looked at the bare brick walls, the charred rafters, and the hole where the Ascension window had been. After a while, we went home, called people, talked, and got through the day.

Dean Markham called meetings of the seminary community on Saturday evening and Sunday evening in Scott Lounge, a large room attached to the refectory that is used for receptions and gatherings, to brief us on news gained from the authorities, to answer questions, and to join us in Evening Prayer. The dean's presence was crucial and comforting, as he provided pastoral care and leadership at a critical moment. He led us as we expressed our grief, disbelief, anger, and sorrow at the destruction of our sacred worship space. He also began in those meetings to move us forward, to what would come next. Because it was the end of the first quarter, school was in session for only three days the following week. During that time we met to worship in Zabriskie Chapel, the home of Immanuel Church on the Hill, whose congregation had worshiped each Sunday for many years in the seminary chapel. They too had suffered a grievous loss. As we worshiped in their chapel, we felt connected to them in our shared loss. We were also comforted to be in a

sacred space and to be together as a community.

On Monday, November 1, we were back in school after the short fall break. It was, of course, All Saints' Day, and it was also the day that we would move into our temporary worship space in Scott Lounge, which faculty and students had transformed over the fall break into a place for worship. That day, we began our service in the Grove, the green space in the middle of the campus. We gathered there facing east, looking at the remains of Immanuel Chapel. Then, Dr. Roger Ferlo, one of the liturgy professors on campus, led us as together we prayed a Litany of Thanksgiving for all the days and years we and all who had preceded us had worshiped in Immanuel Chapel. Dr. Ferlo read a list of all the people who had been memorialized there, some forty people, noting their contributions to the seminary and to its communal life. We remembered in thanksgiving all the seminarians who had prayed there daily and had gone out from there in service to God.

Then we all turned around, 180 degrees, and faced west. We walked across the Grove, led by a seminarian drumming on an African drum, toward our new worship space in Scott Lounge, now called the Prayer Hall. As we entered through the huge windows that open up towards the Grove, Dr. Bill Roberts, Professor of Music, was playing on the piano, most gloriously, "When All the Saints." We were all there—faculty, staff, seminarians, and all the saints—inaugurating this new space and making it holy through our prayers to God. During communion, a seminarian played "Come and Fill This Place" on his guitar, and we could feel that the Holy Spirit was there with us, with all of us, as we began a new chapter in our lives at VTS.

At this point, we don't know exactly what will happen in the future. But a new chapel will be built. We will have a new temporary worship space. We will continue to worship God in our daily services of Morning Prayer, Noon Eucharist, and Evening Prayer. We will go on. And we will look for the blessings that will arise out of this sorrow, blessings that God will surely provide in abundance.

Helping Hands: Arlington Food Assistance Center

Last month we wrote about the Arlington Interfaith Council, which brings together faith communities in Arlington who work together to meet ongoing human needs. Much of the community work of the Arlington Interfaith Council is done through Helping Hands Agencies which provide a wide range of services. We continue our series this month by focusing on one of those helping Hands Agencies: The Arlington Food Assistance Center.

For most of us, hunger is not something that we experience longer than it takes to prepare our next meal. For most of us, there is always food in the kitchen, or at least at the nearby grocery store, and there is always money for food. As a result, sometimes it is hard for us to realize that there are many people living around us for whom hunger is an ongoing problem, who do not have food in the pantry, and for whom going to the store to re-stock is not always an option. The magnitude of this issue in our community is illustrated by the number of people served by the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC).

In its last fiscal year, AFAC served an average of 1,208 families each week and distributed 2.3 million pounds of food. Volunteers donated over 25,000 hours of time to prepare food and prepare packages of food for families. AFAC relies on its community to provide the food and the volunteers to help families in need.

Of that 2.3 million pounds of food AFAC distributed last year, sixty percent was donated by people like you and me. The thousands of hours of volunteer time came from people like you and me. We are called to care for those in need, and AFAC represents an opportunity to do just that.

There are several ways to donate to support AFAC and the people it helps. You can:

- Donate Food—drop it off at church and Leslie Mead will pick it up and deliver it to AFAC.
- Donate Funds—you can donate online at the AFAC web site, or you can donate through your work by giving through the United Way or Combined Federal Campaign.
- Donate Time—AFAC has many volunteer opportunities—check their web site for dates, times, and what it entails.
- Donate to a Virtual Food Drive.

Does anything sound interesting? Check the AFAC web site: www.afac.org for more information, or talk to Leslie Mead what she does for AFAC and who benefits from AFAC's efforts.

Parish News

We give thanks that Bill Pritchard is recovering well from the injuries he sustained in a fall from a ladder while painting the nave.

Thank you

- To Kay Wells for helping mail the LOGOS, the annual giving letter, and the volunteer list
- To Bill Schenck and Lynn Christopher for chairing the annual giving campaign
- To Lorraine Underwood for teaching our adult forum course on heaven and to Bill Schenck for showing us a glimpse of Anglicanism in the 17th through the early 19th centuries as a background for the beliefs of Thomas Jefferson
- To Mitzi Budde, librarian at Virginia Seminary, for once again bringing us her presentation on new books in theology
- To Jean Harrison for chairing the UTO campaign
- To Carolyn Corlett for chairing the Morning Guild's Angel Tree project
- To Del Hunt for his many hours of preparing for painting the nave
- To all our painters: Del Hunt, Beth and Brian Cavey, Anne and Paul Stenger, Angie and Bill Turner, Bill and Faye Pritchard, Dave Dunlap, Bill Thomson, Debbie Carter, Lynn Christopher, Eileen Tallent and Bryan Harbin
- To Cristo Rey for mowing, blowing and cleaning the front yard during their fall cleanup day as well as cleaning the stairwells, Catherine's office, and the room across from her office upstairs.

December and January Birthdays

In December and January we celebrate the birthdays of Patricia Broida, The Rev. Catherine Campbell, Eileen Flynn, Keelyn Del Gallo, Greg Hall, Ariel Hall, Madeline "Maddie" Harbin, Lori Held, Galen Henderson, Roger Henderson, Don Hess, Barbara Hill, Del Hunt, Tony Kolath, Emily Lodsun, Vernon Martin, Lindsey Miller, Angie Rollet, Janet Spence, Paul Stenger, Angela Swarr, Camron Tallent, Emily Tyson, Chris Tyson, and Laura Wallace.

December and January Anniversaries

In December and January we celebrate the anniversaries of David & Carol Dunlap, Klaus & Lori Held, Don & Penny Hess, Greg & Laurie Hall, Robert L. Rawls III & Harriet Sheehan Rawls, and Anna & David Scherer.

Gospel Lessons for December 2010 and January 2011

December 5, 2010

Second Sunday of Advent—Matthew 3:1–12

Matthew has told us of Jesus' descent from King David, his birth and infancy, and the coming of the wise men. Now he leaps forward to about 26 AD. John appears in the "wilderness", the arid region south and east of Jerusalem, an area where only hermits lived. His call to repentance, to turning back to the way of life to which Israel committed herself in its covenant with God, is like that of Old Testament prophets. His message about the nearness of God's kingdom, of the time of complete fulfilment of God's promises for humans, is a central message of Jesus. A new era, in which God rules, is almost here! Originally applied to the exiles returning from Babylon, Isaiah's words in v. 3 also fit John. He is dressed like a hermit ("camel's hair", v. 4) and he eats off the arid land ("locusts", "wild honey"), as did Elijah. People came to him from both sides of the Jordan (v. 5) and were baptised by him with water, in recognition of, and confession of, sin—with complete acceptance of God's judgment and forgiveness. "Vipers" (v. 7) are poisonous snakes, a danger in the wilderness. John doubts the sincerity of "Pharisees and Sadducees", thinking they are trying to avoid God's adverse judgment ("wrath"); he challenges them to show their return to God in their lives (v. 8). He warns that being ethnically Jewish, a member of God's people, is no guarantee of entry to the Kingdom; God shows no partiality (v. 9); he can have other "children". Those who do not show in their lives that they have returned to God will be destroyed (v. 10). In v. 11, John foretells Jesus's mission: giving people power to reshape the world ("with the Holy Spirit") but also judging the ungodly, and purging them ("fire"). V. 12 puts this in farming terms: "wheat" was separated from "chaff" on a "threshing floor"; the wind blew away the "chaff".

December 12, 2010

Third Sunday of Advent—Matthew 11:2–11

John the Baptist has been arrested and imprisoned. Discouraged and in doubt, he sends messengers to ask Jesus: "Are you the one ...?" (v. 3) But Jesus does not simply say yes. Instead, he points John (and the crowd) to the signs of the Kingdom (v. 5). Echoing Isaiah, he points out that the blind, the deaf, the lame

and the lepers are being healed and good news is given to the poor. Anyone can claim to be a herald of the kingdom, but only in the presence of the Messiah will the true signs of the Kingdom be evident. These are not mere claims, but incontrovertible proof. Yet apparently there are some who take offense at Jesus (v. 6). Perhaps even John himself has been disappointed because his expectations of the Messiah do not seem to be fulfilled by Jesus, e.g. he does not "wear soft robes" (v. 8). Perhaps this has given rise to doubts. Jesus refers to the signs of the Kingdom in Isaiah. John is "more than a prophet" (v. 9) for he heralds the dawn of the final era of history and announces the coming of the Kingdom. Now Jesus validates John's ministry as a true prophet (by quoting a prophecy from Malachi, v. 10), going on even to identify John as Elijah, returned (v. 14). (Jews understood the time of the prophets to have ended, but took Malachi's words to mean that Elijah would come again.) Jesus criticizes the people who went out to see John the Baptist in the wilderness with a variety of incorrect expectations. What they actually saw was greater than they could have imagined. Yet even John, as great as he was, only pointed the way to an even greater reality (v. 11). Up to and including John the Baptist was the time of prophetic promise; now this promise is starting to be fulfilled (v. 13). When we are disappointed, or our expectations of God's Kingdom are dashed, perhaps it is because we are not looking for the signs of the Kingdom that are all around us.

December 19, 2010

Fourth Sunday of Advent—Matthew 1:18–25

Matthew has told us of Jesus' descent from David. He is the anointed ("Messiah") king God has promised. Joseph's and Mary's families ("engaged") have signed a marriage contract but Joseph has not yet taken her (v. 20) into his house. If Mosaic law on sexual relations was fully observed then, Joseph could have brought charges against her, and she could have been stoned to death ("public disgrace", v. 19) for adultery (then including pre-marital sex). Joseph, while observant of the Law ("righteous"), is compassionate: he "planned to dismiss [divorce] her quietly". God had intervened in the birth of some he has chosen — Isaac, Jacob and Samuel—but never before has he replaced the whole male role. Even so, the messenger from God points out

Joseph's role: Jesus is legally descended from David through him. In Aramaic and Hebrew, "Jesus" (v. 21) and "he will save" sound similar. Matthew is keen to show that Jesus fulfills God's promise made through Isaiah (v. 22). In v. 23, the Greek word translated "virgin", *parthenos*, is rendered as unmarried daughter in Acts 21:9. Perhaps maiden is a better translation; it has the same range of meanings as *parthenos*. Through Jesus "God is with us" (v. 23) but Joseph names him Jesus, not Immanuel.

December 25, 2010 Christmas—Luke 2:1–14,(15–20)

Luke is concerned to place Jesus in the time-line of history, as a real human being. We know of Augustus' attempt to clean up the taxation system: as well as requiring more reasonable practices of tax collectors, he introduced a truly equitable tax: a poll-tax. Every 14 years, a census was held: people were required to present themselves in their ancestral towns, to register for the tax. Records are fragmentary but we do know that a census was held by "Quirinius" (v. 2) of Syria in 6–7 AD. Perhaps Judea was included in a census of 8–7 BC, "the first registration". From Matthew 2:16, we know that Herod the Great sought to kill Jesus by slaughtering all children aged two or less. Because Herod died in 4 BC, Jesus was born no later than 6 BC. The dates agree. Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, the city of David, to "to be registered" (v. 5). Jesus is born in Bethlehem in fulfilment of the prophecy of Micah 5:2–5: a shepherd-king is to be born there.

In v. 7, Jesus is treated like any other newborn of the time: he is wrapped in cloths, but there may be a message in his being born in "a manger": animals normally fed from it; Jesus is sustenance for the world. In vv. 8–14, we learn the meaning of Jesus' birth. Those who hear the pronouncement by the angel are "shepherds" (v. 8), lowly people. David too was a shepherd; in Luke, Jesus comes to the poor, the lowly. The message of Christ's birth is indeed a joyful one—for all.

V. 11 mentions our great claims as to who Jesus is: "Saviour", "Messiah" and "Lord". As "Saviour", he restores us to wholeness, rescues us from sin and alienation from God. In Jesus, God is present with sinners and saves us from destructive self-isolation to union with him, in a nurturing community. As "Messiah", he inaugurates the era of heavenly peace: the end-time

has begun. As "Lord", he is God come in human form. The kingdom is for all those whom God has chosen (v. 14b). In vv. 15–20 the shepherds visit Jesus, Mary and Joseph. They tell them and many others the good news the angels have told them.

January 2, 2011, Feast of the Epiphany (observed)—Matthew 2:1–12

Matthew, in writing "In the time of King Herod", sets a late date for the birth of Jesus: Herod the Great, puppet king of Judah, died in 4 BC. "Wise men" (Latin: *magi*) were members of a Persian caste of astrologers and interpreters of dreams. (Astrology was widely accepted then.) A star was associated with each person; the way the star rose told the wise men that a king had been born. If the story of the star is intended to be historically significant, the star may have been a supernova or a comet, or a conjunction of planets. Numbers 24:17–24 prophesies that "... a star shall come out of Jacob, a sceptre shall rise out of Israel", and that this ruler will conquer surrounding nations.

Herod's fears are aroused because his dynasty may be ended. He consults the religious experts to find out where the magi should look for the Messiah. They answer with Scripture: they loosely blend Micah 5:2 and 2 Samuel 5:2. (Such license was common at the time.) At David's anointing as king, the elders quote God as saying "he shall be shepherd of my people Israel". The maximum age of the children to be killed per Herod's edict (v. 16) tells us the "exact time" (v. 7) that he learnt from the wise men. V. 8 is classical political duplicity. The star guides them to Bethlehem, where they are "overwhelmed with joy" (v. 10). The gifts are extremely generous; "gold" (v. 11) and "frankincense" are mentioned in v. 6 of today's first reading.

We read that Gentile wise men visited Jesus. A later church tradition called the wise men kings, based on v. 10 of today's psalm, and still later the Church said that there were three of them. The Western church gave them names.

January 9, 2011 The Baptism of the Lord—Matthew 3:13–17

John the Baptist has appeared, calling people to repentance, to turning back to God's ways, to the way of life to which Israel committed herself at Sinai. He tells of the nearness of God's kingdom, the time of complete fulfilment of God's promises to humans. A new era, in

which God rules, is almost here! John seeks to dissuade Jesus from seeking baptism but (in words that we do not fully understand) Jesus insists: for the present, being baptised by you is to perfectly fulfill the Father's will. In being baptised, Jesus joins the community now walking in God's ways. His baptism shows his continuity with God's will seen in the Old Testament:

- the coming of the "Spirit of God" (v. 16), an Old Testament term, shows he is the Messiah;
- the words spoken by the heavenly "voice" (v. 17) are much like Isaiah 42:1: Jesus is the agent of God who will suffer for others—not the kind of Messiah people expected.

"Beloved" is not sentiment; rather it indicates God's will. The "voice" (v. 17) says three things:

- Jesus really is God's "Son";
- he is chosen for ministry to God's people, and
- God approves his coming for baptism and his joining with his people in preparing for the coming crisis.

January 16, 2011, Second Sunday after the Epiphany—John 1:29–42

John the Baptist has denied that he is any of the figures expected by Jews to inaugurate a new era: he is neither the Messiah, Elijah, nor the prophet like Moses; rather he prepares people for the coming of the Lord. He has also told some religious authorities that one is already among them who is far more worthy than he.

"The next day" John acclaim Jesus as "Lamb of God". He is probably thinking of the fourth Servant Song: there the servant is "like a lamb that is led to the slaughter". John recognizes that Jesus outranks him ("ranks ahead", v. 30) and "was" (existed) before him. In vv. 31–33 he recalls his experience of Jesus' baptism, and justifies what he has proclaimed. He says: I didn't recognize him as Messiah ("know him"), but I now realize that I baptised with water in order that Jesus might be shown to Jews. The coming of the Spirit showed me that Jesus is the one chosen by God. I am convinced that he is, and I have told others (v. 34). (Later on, on the lips of Martha, "Son of God" and "Messiah" are synonymous.)

In vv. 35–42, two of John's disciples begin to follow

Jesus. First, they are curious about Jesus when John tells them who he is. They follow him, recognizing that he is an authority ("Teacher", v. 38). Jesus invites them to "Come and see" (v. 39), to investigate what he teaches. "Staying" and "remained" are technical terms in this gospel: the two begin to understand the way of life Jesus offers and expects. V. 40 tells us that one of the two is "Andrew"; the other is unnamed. Andrew tells "Simon" (v. 41) the good news and introduces him to Jesus. (The Greek word translated "Anointed" is Christos.) Jesus prophesies that Simon will be nicknamed "Cephas" (v. 42), the Aramaic word for rock. Petros, the Greek word for "Peter", also means rock.

January 23, 2011, Third Sunday after the Epiphany—Matthew 4:12–23

Jesus has been tempted by the devil in the wilderness. His responses show his complete dedication to the will and purpose of God. He has refused to use his divine power to his own human ends. Now he withdraws from "Nazareth" (v. 13) to "Capernaum", so he can begin his mission safe from government interference. (John the Baptist has been arrested. Sepphoris, near Nazareth, was a Roman administrative centre. If the authorities seek to arrest him, he can escape more easily from Capernaum—by boat—than from Nazareth.) Matthew is keen to show Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies: he quotes Isaiah in condensed form (vv. 15–16) to show that Jesus is the future ideal king, the Messiah. (In Isaiah, the "sea" is the Mediterranean; here it is the Sea of Galilee.)

"From that time" (v. 17) marks a milestone: the launch of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus proclaims: turn back to godly ways, to making God part of your way of thinking, for the completion of God's plan for all created beings is close! Vv. 18–22 tell of the calling of the first four disciples. (We know "Simon" as "Peter".) Jesus the teacher invites them to follow him, speaking in their terms ("fish for people", v. 19) and fulfils Jeremiah 16:16; there the LORD is "sending for many fishermen" to Israel. They give up their trade and "immediately" (v. 20) begin a radically different way of life. Jesus expects, and receives, prompt obedience. He proclaims the "good news" (v. 23) in both word and deed (healing). His ministry is to Jews, but people from "Syria" (v. 24), "the Decapolis" (v. 25, Hellenistic towns) and "beyond the Jordan" also come to him to hear his message.

January 30, 2011, Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany—Matthew 5:1–12

Jesus ascends a mountain in Galilee where he speaks to his “disciples”, his followers, in the Sermon on the Mount—but the “crowds” hear too: see 7:28, the end of the Sermon. He speaks of the new era he has come to initiate. Vv. 3–12 are known as the Beatitudes, from the Latin for blessed. To be “blessed” is to be happy. All the qualities are expected of the faithful, for the consequence is the same: they will enjoy God’s end-time rule. In fact, the Kingdom has already begun, but it not yet completed. They will attain (and are attaining) eternal life.

The “poor in spirit” (v. 3) are probably detached from wealth and dependant on God alone. Those who “mourn” (v. 4) the reign of evil forces on earth will be “comforted” and strengthened in the Kingdom. The “meek” (v. 5), people who do not press for personal advantage, will share in God’s rule. Those who “hunger” (v. 6, who ardently pursue God’s will and purpose for his people), and do so single-mindedly and sincerely, “the pure in heart” (v. 8), will come to know God intimately (“see God”). The “merciful” (v. 7) are those who pardon and love others (especially the poor). The “peacemakers” (v. 9), those who seek shalom, the total state of well-being God provides through Christ, “will be called children of God”, for

they share in God’s work. Finally vv. 10–12: those spreading the good news, striving to reconcile the world to God, will be persecuted because of the message they carry (as were the Old Testament “prophets”). They too should “rejoice and be glad” for God will reward them. Jesus tells his audience that the values for admission to the Kingdom are the reverse of those valued by materialists.

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St. John’s Mission Statement

We welcome everyone, including believers, seekers and doubters, to share God’s love and acceptance in a community of worship and service.

St. John’s Vision Statement

St. John’s is dedicated to nurturing disciples for Jesus by:

- Offering faith-deepening worship, education, outreach and pastoral care;
- Attracting and welcoming newcomers; and
- Sharing God’s love with our community and the world around us.

St. John's Calendar

December 2010

- Wed 1 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 2 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 5 Second Sunday of Advent
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 7 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 8 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 9 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 12 Third Sunday of Advent
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 14 Vestry Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed 15 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 16 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 18 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 19 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Community Christmas Caroling, 5 p.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 22 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 23 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Fri 24 Christmas Eve
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 5 p.m.
Holy Eucharist, 11 p.m.
- Sat 25 Christmas Day
Holy Eucharist with hymns, 10 a.m.
- Sun 26 First Sunday after Christmas
Lessons and Carols, 10 a.m.
- Wed 29 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.

January 2011

- Sun 2 Feast of the Epiphany (observed)
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 4 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 5 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 6 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 9 Baptism of Our Lord
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Education: 9 a.m. adults, 9:20 youth
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Annual Meeting, following the 10 a.m. service
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 11 Vestry Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed 12 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 13 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 15 Men's fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 16 Second Sunday after Epiphany
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 19 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 20 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m.
- Sun 23 Third Sunday after Epiphany
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 26 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 27 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 30 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
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.

Christmas Season and Epiphany at St. John's

Sunday December 19 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

5:00 p.m. Community 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.

Friday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist for all ages with children's sermon, musicians and choir

11:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist with hymns

Saturday, December 25 – Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with hymns

Sunday, December 26 – First Sunday after Christmas

10:00 a.m. Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, January 2 – Feast of the Epiphany (observed)

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

9:00 a.m. Christian Education for adults

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 Thursday, January 20 at 10:00 a.m

Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Seminarian: Mary Mackin
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
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Editor: Dave Dunlap
Page Layout and Webmaster:
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