



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: Love Does

It is the middle of January and I just heard an advertisement for Valentine's Day. It's the next holiday to come up when retail sales are very important. My mother, who was a bit of a cynic, used to say these holidays were all inventions of the card companies and other retail outlets to get you to buy things, and perhaps she wasn't too far off. But we have all taken to Valentine's Day as a time to express our love for one another.

When I was a little girl, Valentine's Day meant little cards and candy hearts for every member of my class. You couldn't just send Valentines to a few because others would be hurt. It wasn't really a symbol of love, it was a symbol of like or even tolerate or just because you're in the same class with me.

As we get older our expressions for Valentine's Day become more serious. There may be that special someone that we buy a bunch of flowers and a candy heart for. There are family members to send cards to—even our bratty siblings are ones we express love for on this day. Our cards become more serious—and more expensive.

When we arrive at the point in life when we have a very special someone, there is a big card, big flowers, big candy (if the special someone is not on a diet) and the sparkly stuff starts coming into the picture. (I just realized I was talking about men getting women's gifts. I don't know what women do who are really creative. I always just gave a nice card.)

Valentine's Day is supposed to be an expression of the feelings we carry for our loved ones all year long. Today, my Valentine's Day is an adult holiday in my family. The kids get money on their birthdays and gifts at Christmas—the siblings and friends and Kristy and Evan get Valentines to say how much I love them.

I used to think love was a mushy sentiment that made one feel good inside when the relationship was going right or sad if it was going wrong or if there had just been a breakup. But love is not just a feeling. Love is lived in actions. That is something we all know from what Jesus taught us. To love our neighbor as ourselves is not to tell someone to go with your blessing to get warm and fed. Love means giving food and warmth to others.

Love is service to others. We give service in a lot of places—at home, in volunteer work, in our church community. When we love our fellow human beings the way God loves us, we want to make sure that they are taken care of as we would want to

be taken care of. At St. John's we give food to AFAC to support the hungry of our community. We give to the United Thank Offering for projects at home and abroad to make life better for struggling communities. We give Angel Tree gifts to make life better at Christmas time for children who will not get gifts otherwise. All of that is love in action and that is what we learn to do as Christians to serve our neighbors.

But there are other ways to do love as well, especially to those close to us. Love means giving people space to grow into their own best selves. I once knew someone whose father was always disappointed in him because he wanted his son to go into a business career and his son instead was a gifted musician. Everywhere there are people doing jobs they hate because it is a career a parent pushed them into without a second look at what really made the child happy. Love is about letting children try things to see if they like them and then letting go if they don't. Kids don't have to play soccer for years and years if that isn't their passion. When music practice becomes painful to the ears, perhaps it is time to quit those piano lessons and move on to something else. Sad to say, in this day and age, there are people who still think girls and boys should do different things. Bless my mother for saying to people when asked about what I was going to do with my life, "Ann can do anything she wants to do." She and Dad let me try all kinds of things, even trying out for cheerleading and starting my knee on the road to arthritis.

When we have adult friends who are trying to change and grow, we are there to be sounding boards, not advice givers. If someone is trying to change careers, we listen for their passion. We might ask questions about how they are going to do it financially and with their current family obligations, but we support them in living and growing and changing because God calls us all to do that in our Christian journey.

Loving someone is also about knowing when to intervene and knowing when to give someone space to make his or her own mistakes and deal with their own struggles. Children who won't share their toys need help to learn this skill of course, but

if they don't, then friends will not want to play with them because they don't want to go somewhere where they can't enjoy their friend's toys. Young people can be reminded to do their homework and even helped with it, but if they fail to turn it in, it is their problem to deal with the grades they get. (Of course, some children do need help with this sort of thing because of physical conditions that cause problems in this area.) Children who are bullies need to understand the seriousness of the damage they can cause and live with the consequences imposed on them, such as grounding or taking away cell phones, if they persist in this behavior. College freshmen learn a lot of lessons. Evan learned to find a way to wake up and make it to class after the first semester "C" average. He ended up with "A" averages his last several semesters and he graduated with honors.

If you have an adult relationship, your job isn't to give time outs or help with grades; it is to speak the truth in love. Sometimes you feel like a friend is going to make a mistake or is doing something that will hurt him or her. It is important if you love your friend to speak what your best knowledge of the truth you see is. We love friends by listening to them share their joys and their sorrows, and we love friends by working with them and playing with them. Love is not people pleasing. If we say what we know someone wants to hear and are not being honest because we want to be liked, that is not love. Love is also not care-taking. It is not trying to control the people or situations around us. Rather it is to work on ourselves and how we react to those situations or people.

Love means compromise. It does not mean being a doormat and letting others walk all over you. It does not mean giving in to what the other person wants because it is just easier to do it that way. It means working to find a way to satisfy both parties involved.

Jesus says we must love our neighbor as ourselves and that means loving ourselves too. Love is about forgiving. Forgiving someone we love for wrongs done can be hard. It's not just a matter of saying, "No problem", to an "I'm sorry"; it is about working on our own feelings until we no longer bear a grudge toward that person. It is about praying for the person that they might receive all the blessings

we want for ourselves. It is about remembering that we all make mistakes and we all have flaws.

We must extend to ourselves the same space, the same accountability the same listening skills and the same forgiveness we extend to others. When we listen to the Holy Spirit speaking in our hearts, we will hear what God wants us to do and we will learn a lot about ourselves. Loving ourselves means allowing ourselves to change and grow and learn and become different. By the same token loving ourselves means allowing ourselves to stay the same person we are no matter what situation we are in. Loving ourselves means maintaining our integrity.

Buying flowers and candy on one day of the year may not be difficult, but love is a year-round job and it is hard work. It is tough to know when to intervene and when to detach. It is tough to know when to compromise and when to hold your ground. It is tough to know when to listen and when to speak. And it is especially tough to take care of our own needs—to let our own feet be washed, as my spiritual director says—before we can wash the feet of others in love and service.

God's greatest gift to us is God's unconditional love. God loves us because of who we are, not in spite of it. God loves us wherever we are in our journey, whether we make mistakes or not, whether we are weak or strong at a particular moment. God never gives up on us, always trying to love us and help us be who God calls us to be by loving others. This year on Valentine's Day remember that loving is a life-long task and the most rewarding thing we can ever do with our time, our money and our talents. Love one another as God in Christ loves you.

Ann✠

Love Does, Part 2

As the rector discussed in her column, love shows itself in what we do. Here are a couple of ways in which the members of St. John's have shown their love by their doing in recent months.

The fall ingathering for the United Thank Offering on November 13 was \$681.75—a generous offering from the generous members of St. John's. We thank all who gave and who continue to support this worthy cause.

St. John's members also showed their love by providing presents and cheer for needy children at Christmas. Our angel tree was completely subscribed, and thanks to the generosity of our "angels" many children had a happy Christmas who might otherwise have had nothing. We note and thank particularly the people who took more than one name from the angel tree and helped more than one child.

Bulletin: Vestry Election

St. John's annual meeting was held January 22. A full report on the meeting will appear in the March issue of LOGOS. We thank the two members of St. John's vestry who completed their terms this year: Senior Warden Brian Cavey and Junior Warden Del Hunt. Both deserve our heartfelt thanks for all their work, time, and effort over their full terms and during their tenure as Senior and Junior Warden.

Elected to replace the outgoing vestry members are Lenore Schmidt and Pete Olivere. The vestry will elect new officers at their February meeting. A reminder that in addition to the elected new members, the vestry also needs a register, who serves as the recording secretary for the vestry. Please consider taking on this important position.

I would like to thank you all for the lovely celebration for my 10th anniversary at St. John's. I really appreciate the card and the gift of the *New Interpreter's Study Bible*.

Ann Barker

Region III Lenten Series

Lent begins the last week in February this year—Ash Wednesday is February 22. Once again this year the churches of Region III have planned a weekly Lenten series that will meet each Tuesday for a light supper of soup and salad, followed by a study session. Tuesday night sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. and end about 9:00 p.m. Nursery care will be available, but you need to call ahead to make arrangements.

The theme for this year's program is *Enjoying the Episcopal Liturgy and Letting Life Be Different*. The series' featured speaker is the Very Reverend Ian Markham, Dean and President of Virginia Theological Seminary.

The series begins with a Lenten Quiet Day on Saturday, February 25 at St. Michael's, and concludes

on Palm Sunday at Trinity Episcopal Church with an afternoon multi-media program entitled "Palm Sunday Portrait of the Passion". This program will feature instrumental and choral works from Haydn's *Seven Last Words of Christ* and Handel's *Messiah*. Be sure to mark your calendar particularly for the March 13 program which St. John's will host, and plan to help with setup, dinner, and cleanup for the program.

You do not have to attend all the events, but this is a wonderful way to observe the Lenten season and prepare for the coming of Easter. Flyers on this year's Lenten Series will be available in the back of the church before the first session. Pick one up and make it a point to join the weekly sessions.

Region III Lenten Program Schedule

Theme: Enjoying the Episcopal Liturgy and Letting Life Be Different

Saturday, February 25	Quiet Day with Margaret Guenther St. Michael's Episcopal Church 1132 Ivanhoe Street, Arlington, VA 22205	703-241-2474
Tuesday, February 28	Living in Sacred Times St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 4000 Lorcom Lane, Arlington, VA 22207	703-522-1600
Tuesday, March 6	Trusting the Word St. Peter's Episcopal Church 4250 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207	703-536-6606
Tuesday, March 13	Learning to Put "Things" in Perspective St. John's Episcopal Church 415 S. Lexington Street, Arlington, VA 22204	703-671-6834
Tuesday, March 20	Dealing With the Past St. George's Episcopal Church 915 N. Oakland Street, Arlington, VA 22203	703-525-8286
Tuesday, March 27	Preparing for Easter St. Mary's Episcopal Church 2609 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207	703-527-6800
Sunday, April 1, 4:00 p.m.	A Palm Sunday Portrait of the Passion Trinity Episcopal Church 2217 Columbia Pike, Arlington, VA 22204	703-920-7077

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 16 at 10 am.

Parish News

Thank you to Liz White and Bill Thomson for organizing our Thanksgiving potluck / 10th anniversary celebration.

Thank you to all the people who made our Christmas celebrations so beautiful—the altar guild, the choir, the instrumentalists, those who helped with the greening of the church, the readers and everyone else who helped with a service.

Thank you to Kay Wells for decorating for Christmas, despite having a sore shoulder.

Thank you to Beth Cavey for organizing our *Happy Hour for Moms and Kids* movie and socializing. We look forward to more of these during the winter months.

Editorial: What Do You Read?

by Dave Dunlap

For the most part, editing LOGOS is an exercise in one-way communication. I write some articles, I edit others, I incorporate material from the rector, put it together, and send it to Jane Edwards for layout. I proof the final (usually finding an embarrassing number of errors that I should have fixed already) and another issue of LOGOS goes out electronically or in print to St. Johns' members and friends.

Many parts of LOGOS are regular features. The rector's column begins each issue, there is a calendar at the end, there are short articles or announcements about upcoming events, there are reports on activities, and there are Gospel commentaries on the coming month's Gospels in each issue. And

of course we spend some time and space thanking people for their contributions to the activities and welfare of the parish.

But we who put together each issue get little feedback on what you value most. Do you read the Gospel commentaries or skip them? Is the format of the calendar useful to you or would you be happier with one that looks like a calendar page that you could stick up on the refrigerator? Do you really need to have a set of reminders of upcoming events?

I appeal to you: Tell me what you read in LOGOS. Do you read everything? Are there features that you routinely skip? Are there changes that would make LOGOS more useful to you? Are there things that do not appear that you would like to see? (I, for one, would dearly love to have a monthly report on what happened at the vestry meeting.)

I need to know what you read, what you want and what you need in order to make LOGOS better able to meet your needs.

There are a lot of ways to share your thoughts and ideas with me. You can waylay me after church on Sunday, and bend my ear. You can email me or even use Mr. Alexander Graham Bell's invention to call me. Both my email and telephone number are in the church directory. If you want to comment but want to do so anonymously, you can send me an unsigned letter. You could chalk your suggestions on my driveway in the middle of the night...

But you get the point. I would like to hear from you about LOGOS and I hope you will take the time to help me by sharing your thoughts and suggestions.

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.

Gospel Commentaries

February 5, 2012

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, Mark 1:29-39

Mark has begun to tell us of a day, a Sabbath, early in Jesus' ministry spent at Capernaum. In the synagogue, Jesus has taught "as one having authority" (v. 22) beyond knowledge of the scriptures; he has healed a man possessed by evil—simply by commanding the evil force to leave him. Now, with the four disciples he has called so far, he heals the mother of Peter's wife. That she serves them shows that she is completely and immediately cured (v. 31). Note that Jesus "took her by the hand": no respected religious leader would do so, especially not on the Sabbath. Was she so seriously ill that Jesus could not wait a few hours to heal her until the Sabbath ended, thus avoiding controversy as to whether this healing could be done on the Sabbath? Mark doesn't tell us of any. Then, after the Sabbath, at the start of the next Jewish day ("that evening", v. 32), many who are in like condition to the man in the synagogue (mentally ill) and to Peter's mother-in-law (physically ill) are brought to him. Many gather around the doorway ("door", v. 33) of the house to see his miracles. The evil forces recognize his power over them but he intends to show himself as God's agent later, so he does not "permit the demons to speak" (v. 34). Jesus then withdraws to be alone to commune with God (v. 35). Perhaps Peter and the others see him as missing an opportunity to heal, but Jesus insists that his mission extends beyond Capernaum (v. 38). He travels throughout the region, proclaiming the good news to Jews who meet for worship and study, and overcoming evil forces in people (v. 39).

February 12, 2012

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, Mark 1:40-45

At Capernaum Jesus has surprised those worshipping and studying in the synagogue by teaching with a new kind of authority and by healing a mentally disturbed man by command alone. He has then cured Peter's mother-in-law of a fever. Later people in a crowd have witnessed him curing many. After communing with God in "a deserted place" (v. 35) he moves on to spread the good news in other towns. Now a leper approaches

him in supplication ("kneeling", v. 40). The man recognizes something of the essence of God: God chooses whom he heals (and saves). Jesus is "moved" (v. 41) emotionally: he touches the man—thus making himself ritually unclean and risking leprosy himself. Jesus' stern "warning" (v. 43) is to "say nothing to anyone" (v. 44), but the man ignores it (v. 45). Jesus does not wish to be misunderstood: physical healing is only an indicator of the Kingdom; he is not merely a wonder-worker. For the man to be readmitted to Jewish society, the healing needs to be confirmed by a "priest" (v. 44)—a requirement of Mosaic law ("what Moses commanded"). Leviticus 14 requires him to make certain sacrifices ("offer for your cleansing") so he could be ritually purified. (The "testimony to them" may either be to the crowds or be to the power of God now available to all believers.) Lest he be misunderstood, Jesus continues his ministry secretly, "out in the country" (v. 45), away from the crowds.

February 19, 2012

Last Sunday after the Epiphany, Mark 9:2-9

Jesus has foretold his death and resurrection, and that God's kingdom will begin soon. "... the Son of Man must...be rejected...and be killed, and...rise again. He said this quite openly" (8:31-32). Then: if any want to follow him, let them renounce their self-centeredness. Those who play it safe will perish; those who give their lives for him and the gospel will be saved (8:34-35). Now "six days" (v. 2) after Peter's recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus takes the inner circle of disciples ("Peter and James and John") up a mountain. There he is "transfigured", changed in form, metamorphosed. He appears in "dazzling white" (v. 3), a sign of God's presence (as did Moses when he had been "talking with God", Exodus 34:29). "Elijah" (v. 4) was taken up into heaven. Moses' burial place was unknown (see Deuteronomy 34:6); in late Judaism, he was also thought to be taken up. (Others point out that Elijah represents the prophets and Moses the law, the basic authority in Judaism.) Peter rejoices in this experience ("good", v. 5): it is a preview of Jesus' glorification as God's Son. He wishes to prolong the event by making "dwellings", temporary shelters as erected at the Feast of Tabernacles, a joyous festival of God's presence. V. 6 may

say that he was so dumbfounded by the experience that what he said was irrational. The “cloud” (v. 7) is a symbol of God’s presence. The proclamation spoken by the divine voice is like that at Jesus’ baptism (see 1:11). The Son of Man is revealed to be Son of God. The vision ends “suddenly” (v. 8). Then v. 9: only when Jesus has risen will the vision make sense to others.

February 26, 2012

First Sunday in Lent, Mark 1:9-15

John the Baptist has come, “proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (v. 4). Many have taken the opportunity to start new lives in God. Jesus, too, is baptized by John—Mark does not tell us why. The opening of the heavens symbolizes the start of a new mode of communication between God and humankind. Perhaps “like a dove” (v. 10) is an allusion to the spirit hovering in Genesis 1:2. To Mark, the “voice... from heaven” (v. 11) confirms the already existing relationship between God and Jesus. Matthew and Luke describe Jesus’ temptation in some detail, but Mark mentions it only briefly: all three say that

Jesus overcame tempting, enticement, by the devil. “Satan” (v. 13) is the supreme demon whose kingdom is now ending. “Forty” recalls Israel’s 40 years in the “wilderness”; it echoes the 40 days of testing Moses endured when the covenant was renewed after the gold calf incident (Exodus 34:28). Elijah too spent “forty days” on Mount Sinai (1 Kings 19:8). In the “wilderness” (probably the Judean desert, the home of demons), “wild beasts” may attack him, but “angels” protect him. The word Mark uses here for arrest (v. 14) also occurs in the story of Jesus’ passion and death: John’s fate foreshadows Jesus’ fate. In v. 15, Jesus returns to Galilee. His message begins with “the time is fulfilled”: the time appointed by God, the decisive time for God’s action, has arrived. “The kingdom of God has come near”: the final era of history is imminent. Jesus calls people to start a new life in God’s way, to “repent, and believe in the good news.”

Commentaries on the Revised Common Lectionary were prepared for the Anglican Diocese of Montreal, Canada, © 2003—2011 by Chris Haslam. Used with permission.

St. John's Calendar

February

- Thu 2 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
- Sun 5 Fifth Sunday after the 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.
- Tue 7 St. John's Book Club, discussing *Big Short* by Michael Lewis 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 9 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Fri 10 Family Happy Hour Movie—4:00 p.m.
- Sat 11 Spaghetti Supper, 6:00–7:30 p.m.
- Sun 12 Sixth Sunday after the 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.
- Tue 14 Vestry Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Thu 16 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat 18 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 19 Last Sunday after the 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.
- Tue 21 Shrove Tuesday pancake supper,
6:00–7:30 p.m.
- Wed 22 Ash Wednesday
Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes,
12 noon, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 23 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 25 Region III Lenten Quiet Day, St. Michael's
- Sun 26 First Sunday in Lent
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 28 Region III Lenten Dinner, St. Andrew's,
6:30–9:00 p.m.

March

- Thu 1 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Fri 2 Family Happy Hour Movie, 4:00 p.m.
- Sun 4 Second Sunday in Lent
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 6 Region III Lenten Dinner, St. Peter's,
6:30–9:00 p.m.
St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 8 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 11 Third Sunday in Lent
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 13 Region III Lenten Dinner, St. John's,
6:30–9:00 p.m.
- Thu 15 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 17 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 18 Fourth Sunday in Lent
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 20 Region III Lenten Dinner, St. George's,
6:30–9:00 p.m.
Vestry Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Thu 22 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 25 Fifth Sunday in Lent
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 27 Region III Lenten Dinner, St. Mary's,
6:30–9:00 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church
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Next deadline is Thursday, February 16 at 10:00 a.m

Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly

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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
John Wilson, Chair, Building and Grounds Committee

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Patricia Broida
Debbie Carter
Carrie Harbin
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