



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: Good Grace

Last week when I got to the office, I saw two pennies by the church door. I would have picked them up anyway, but I couldn't help thinking about the old adage, "See a penny, pick it up. All the day you'll have good luck." I can't remember if I had good luck or not that day, but I started pondering on the many ways we appeal to luck.

We cross our fingers for luck and ask others to do the same so that we might get something we want. We pick lottery numbers based on our birthdays, various ID sequences or other numbers we feel are lucky for us. We enter sweepstakes and radio contests, hoping our name will be chosen or we will be the lucky winning caller. We read our fortune cookies, we consult the astrology section of the newspaper, we go to psychics. In this month of St. Patrick's Day, cards talk about the luck of the Irish and the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

All of this talk and action around luck is about hoping to get something we want and doing what we can to get it. We actually have no control over any of these things, but following old superstitions and wishing one another luck makes us feel better. Sometimes we win the sweepstakes or have a run of luck at gambling, but more often we don't.

So luck is not a very good thing to depend on to make your life what you want it to be. Life happens and there is often very little we can do about it. People are fortunate or unfortunate, and the Christian response is for the fortunate to help those less fortunate.

If we cannot rely on luck, what is there to rely on? Well, we have skills. As we go through life we learn skills that will stand us in good stead when we want to get ahead in life. The skills we learn in school help us prepare for a good job when we are finished. Colleges are advertising all the time about additional skills you can acquire to move into a new and better-paid career field. We hone our abilities by working with them all the time. We learn relationship skills at home and in the world and we learn values that hopefully will help us deal honestly in the ways of life. We even learn skills for crisis situations, such as first aid, CPR and disaster preparedness.

Skills come closer to getting us what we want, but even skills are not enough. We may lose our jobs anyway, we may get sick anyway, our home may be destroyed in a hurricane anyway. There is no way we can shield ourselves from life's misfortunes. They happen to us all.

I would like to suggest we take a different approach to life: The approach of grace. Grace is God's overwhelming love for us, even though we don't deserve it. It is with

us whether we know it or not, even sometimes it seems whether we want it or not. It is God's grace, not luck or skill that we can always depend on. God gives us grace both in our good fortune and in our misfortune. God wants us to be healthy and whole people and God can do that for us whether we are having bad luck or good luck, whether we are highly skilled or less skilled. It is God and God alone who can bring good out of evil, emotional and spiritual healing out of disaster, love out of hate. Sometimes we say, "There but for the grace of God go I," when we see someone who is in trouble. It is meant to be an acknowledgment that we could be in the same situation as that person, but the implication is that God's grace is with us and not with them and that just is not true. God's grace is for all. The only choice we have is to accept it like the younger son in the Prodigal Son parable or reject it as the elder brother does.

The next time someone wishes you good luck or you want luck for yourself, try asking for the grace of God to touch them and you. God's grace is a more reliable source than luck or skill for it can heal and make us whole in any situation.

Ann †

Seminarian's Diary

by Mary Ruetten Mackin

This semester I am taking an interesting course in Medical Ethics and Ministry. For the first class, we read an account of Kirk Bains, a man dying of kidney cancer, as told by his physician, Dr. Jerome Groopman, in his book *The Measure of Our Days*. The story reminded me again that, as Christians, we have reason to live our lives and face our deaths with meaning and fulfillment.

Kirk comes to Dr. Groopman as a last resort. He has advanced kidney cancer, and, because he is such a poor risk, he has not been admitted to experimental research studies. Groopman, a researcher for biological therapies for kidney cancer and a well-known expert, is Kirk's "last hope." Kirk describes himself as a venture capitalist who makes quick investments, expects quick returns, and has no interest in the final product that he

has invested in. Kirk brings this same attitude to seeking a cure for his cancer. He wants to fight the cancer at all costs.

Groopman takes him on, develops a new and risky treatment for him, and the cancer goes into remission. So far so good. However, after several months the cancer returns. Groopman discovers that Kirk's fighting spirit is gone. Kirk has reflected on the way he has lived his life, and now he has deep regrets. He says, "When I went into remission...my deals and trades seemed pointless. Pointless because I was a short-term investor. Like I told you, Jerry, I had no patience for the long term. I had no interest in creating something, not a product in business or a partnership with a person. And now I have no equity. No dividends coming in. Nothing to show in my portfolio." Kirk realizes that he has lived an empty life and that it is too late to relive his life.

Groopman, who is sympathetic to his plight, reflects that "there is no more awful death than to die with regret, feeling that you had lived a wasted life." He says that the investments we make in family and career and relationships cannot be made without risks, but we need to make them, we need "to build long-term equity." Groopman urges Kirk to talk to his wife and two children about his feelings, so that, at least, they could remember his regrets and learn from them. However, we never find out if Kirk ever took that advice. After Kirk's death, Groopman composes a eulogy for him, a eulogy addressed to the living. He chooses some lines from Kierkegaard: "It is perfectly true, as philosophers say, that life must be understood backwards. But they forget the other proposition, that it must be lived forwards."

As I reflected on this story of a life ending with regrets, I thought how blessed we are as Christians to have purpose and direction in our lives. Our faith tells us to make long-term investments in our families, friends, and strangers—to love and care for ourselves and others—so that we all can come to be redeemed by God. Our faith also gives us an anchor outside ourselves to trust in and to turn to in times of difficulty. God is with us; God loves us and cares for us. We can depend on that. And when we die, we have the promise of the resurrection, of life eternal. We will live in the radiant presence of the God we learned to love while we were here on earth.

Glencarlyn Stream Cleanup & Hot Dog Roast

The Glencarlyn Civic Association (GCA) will host a hot dog and marshmallow roast following the annual Four Mile Run Watershed Cleanup on Saturday, March 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The area for clean-up starts under the Arlington Boulevard bridge and goes south to where Long Branch enters Four Mile Run. There will be trash bags and plastic gloves available for volunteers by the Third Street picnic pavilion starting at 9:00 a.m. Volunteers should wear a long sleeve shirt and pants, and bring work gloves if they have them.

After we complete the cleanup, we will have a hot dog and marshmallow roast at the Third Street picnic pavilion. Please give us a call or email, so we can plan for the number of workers and the number of persons we will need to feed. You don't have to live in Glencarlyn to help with this project. All you have to do is be civic-minded, let the GCA know you want to help, and then show up. Feel free to invite lots of friends to help in the clean-up and for hot dogs. Contact Pete Olivere at 703-626-2520 or polivere@aol.com.

Spaghetti Supper a Howling Success

In spite of a cold, strong wind and snow showers, St John's Spaghetti supper on February 11 was a big success. We had about 40 people join us for a hearty meal and great conversation, including several people who are not members of St. John's parish. Diners has a choice of half a dozen sauces to top off the pasta, ranging from vegetarian to spicy meat sauce. To complement the main course there were several salads, bread and a *large* selection of desserts. Guests had been urged to bring food for those in need, and as a result we collected a lot of food for AFAC.

Thanks go to all who helped make this event possible. It was organized by Lenore Schmidt and Pete Olivere who also served as the primary kitchen crew. Bryan Harbin provided the large signage and led the set up crew. Clean-up included Jeff Wallace and Linda Trochim. Special thanks to Paul Petrich who helped with both set-up and in kitchen and to Bill Schenck who manned the cashier table all evening. Food was provided by Lynn Robinson, Carole Hunt, Patricia Bleicher, Linda Trochim, Diane

Henderson, Carrie Harbin, Debbie Carter, Beth Cavey, Jean Harrison, John Wilson, Faye Pritchard, Barbara Hill, Kay Wells, Carolyn Corlette, John Restall. Bill Thompson and Mary Mackin. If any who helped have been forgotten here, please understand that your contributions are appreciated.

Parish News

Congratulations

To Faye Pritchard, our new senior warden, and Lenore Schmidt, our new junior warden.

To Pete Olivere and Lenore Schmidt, elected to the vestry at this year's annual meeting.

Thank you

To Brian Cavey and Del Hunt, our outgoing junior and senior wardens

To Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, Carrie Harbin, Diane Henderson and Faye Pritchard for another year of vestry service

To Bill Thomson and John Restall, our treasurer and assistant treasurer

To Eileen Tallent, our altar guild chair

To Lynn Robinson, our minister of music

To John Wilson and the finance committee

To Lenore Schmidt and Pete Olivere for coordinating the spaghetti supper

To LOGOS editor Dave Dunlap and LOGOS layout editor Jane Edwards

To Linda Trochim, our stewardship chair

To all who take part in the life of St. John's and make it the special place it is

Rest in peace

Annette Ince, friend of Anne Stenger, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on February 6

Frances Helbling, mother of Roger Ludwig, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on February 13

Worship and Study at St. John's

Sunday Worship Services

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday Christian Education

- 9:00 a.m. Christian Education for Adults
9:20 a.m. Youth Christian Education

The choir rehearses every Thursday at 7:30 in the undercroft. New members are always welcome!

Lectionary Readings

- March 4 Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:22-30; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38
- March 11 Third Sunday in Lent
Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22
- March 18 Fourth Sunday in Lent
Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21
- March 25 Fifth Sunday in Lent
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-13; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

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.

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, March 22 at 10 am.

St. John's Activities

- Thursday, March 1 Morning Guild, 10:00 a.m.
- Friday, March 2 Friday Happy Hour Movie, 4:00 p.m.
The Family Happy Hour movies are intended to beat the cold weather blues. These provide a monthly opportunity for St. John's and neighborhood parents (and their friends) to socialize, snack and enjoy beverages. There will be a movie for children to enjoy, and the playroom will be open for the more active ones. There will be a pack and play for the wee but mobile ones. The church will be open at 4:00 p.m. and the movie will start at 4:15. Join us March 2 and mark your calendar as well for April 13th's Happy Hour movie featuring penguins running amok in Manhattan.
- Tuesday, March 6 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
This month's selection: *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* by Malcolm Gladwell. First published in 2002, this book discusses the phenomenon of an idea, trend, or social behavior crossing a tipping point and suddenly spreading like wildfire. This applies to fashion trends and products the same way in which one sick person can initiate an epidemic. This bestseller discusses the tipping point effect, illustrates the effect, and shows how it is already changing the way in which people think about selling products or spreading ideas. Looking forward, April's book is *The Paris Wife* by Paula McLain.
- Saturday, March 17 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Tuesdays Region III Lenten Program
The Region III churches began their annual Lenten program with a quiet day February 25.

St. John's is hosting the March 13 program. Please remember to come and plan to help with setup and cleanup.

Theme: Enjoying the Episcopal Liturgy and Letting Life Be Different
- Tuesday, February 28 Living in Sacred Times
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
4000 Lorcom Lane 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

Editorial: What Do You Read, Part 2

by Dave Dunlap

I would like to thank everyone who responded to my appeal last month for comments on LOGOS. Many people made suggestions in person and one person even wrote me a letter on real paper, stuck it in an envelope, put a stamp on it, and entrusted it to the U. S. Postal Service.

The first results of your comments should be apparent to you by the time you get this far through LOGOS. To simplify the calendar and make it more useful I put the times of regular worship and Christian education in its own section. I also included there a reminder of weekly choir rehearsal times with an invitation to join the choir. Finally, the worship section lists what each Sunday is liturgically, and along with the listing of each Sunday's lectionary readings.

Non-worship activities are included in a separate calendar section, and I have included descriptions of some events. This is an attempt to provide more information about events without a series of separate articles. This month, for example, we have included a few sentences about the book club's March selection. We will provide a similar synopsis for the April selection next month. I also asked Beth Cavey to provide a short description of the Monthly Family Movies program to make sure everyone knows what they movies are and why we sponsor them.

I could find no one who would confess to reading the Gospel commentaries, so they have been dropped. If you miss them, let me know and I will at least give you the web site where they are available.

The changes are not all smooth and they are not complete. I pondered about how to remind the parish of the Region III Lenten Series before tacking it on the end of the calendar section. One could argue that it belongs in the worship section, but I decided to put it with the non-worship section. If you have strong feelings about this, or any other changes, please let me know. Continuing feedback will be needed if we are to continue to make improvements.

I have asked Jane Edwards, who does the layout for LOGOS to look into how we can make the newsletter easier to read in electronic formats. The two-column PDF files work well for printing, not so well for reading on a computer. And if no one reads LOGOS now on their smart phone or tablet, they will someday, so we are looking at how to accommodate these and other platforms.

Again, thank you for your comments—please keep them coming.

Addendum from Jane Edwards

I have made some changes for online reading for this issue. Please give feedback to Dave as to whether this works for you, as it will add an extra couple of hours per month for each issue in terms of my volunteer time. I am happy to do it if it makes easier to read for those of you who have made the switch to online reading. This month I will ask Virginia to send out two PDFs: one for printing to your printer and one for viewing online. Dave and I will await your feedback. I tested both versions on my iPhone and preferred the Print version there.

In terms of making ePubs for iPads and mobi files for Kindles, I am hoping that is in the future. The learning curve will be a minimum of 100 hours to learn the technology, so no promises as to a timeframe. If anyone else has experience with this already and can do it immediately, please contact Dave or me. My contact info is on the website.

I have been putting .swf files online on the website for several years. Does anyone view the newsletter as a .swf? Should I continue that format or drop it?

January Financial Summary

| | Budgeted | Actual |
|----------|----------|----------|
| Income | \$11,915 | \$12,080 |
| Expenses | \$13,810 | \$13,905 |

The vestry voted to keep the congregation informed of basic financial information on a monthly basis. The above figures show actual and budgeted income and expenses for the month of January.

St. John's Episcopal Church
415 South Lexington Street
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<http://stjohnsarlington.thediocese.net>

Next deadline is Thursday, March 22 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
John Wilson, Chair Finance Committee
Eileen Tallent, Chair Altar Guild

Vestry

Patricia Broida
Debbie Carter
Carrie Harbin
Diane Henderson
Pete Olivere
Faye Pritchard, Senior Warden
Lenore Schmidt, Junior Warden

LOGOS Volunteers

Editor: Dave Dunlap
Page Layout and Webmaster:
Jane Edwards (Monarch Training)