



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

April 2014

Mutual Ministry Review Report

On March 1, the Rev. Jonathan Bryan led the vestry and two other parish leaders in a mutual ministry review (MMR). (The Rev. Bryan was the rector of Holy Cross, Dunn Loring, from 1983 – 1999 and has been retired since then. His years at Holy Cross and consulting work have shown him the regular collaborative reviews of mutual ministries strengthen a parish.)

A mutual ministry review is a tool used by healthy parishes to periodically review their ministries. It is a process designed to examine the parish's ministries done by the rector, vestry and laity in the context of the whole. It addresses questions of such as what the parish is doing well and what ministries it may want to expand. The MMR involves moving toward a God-centeredness in our lives and a deeper and deeper understanding of our parish.

The Rev. Bryan started off by giving a brief introduction of himself, then led us in a role-playing exercise, where he acted as a potential new parishioner who asked questions about the parish that the participants answered. During the session one major category was identified where full care and attention is lacking: Young adult parishioners, both married and single.

The second part of the review involved an examination of various programs within St. John's. Some very good lines of communication were

opened. A major point that was made was that we are a congregation of widely varying individuals with different strengths and weaknesses. To some extent we are all so busy that we sometimes fail to identify a need to minister to a fellow parishioner. There is not only a need to minister to the needs of the outside community, but to the needs of the congregation as well.

In a discussion about how we reached this point, we centered on how to unify the vestry and congregation. Over time, we have had goal setting, creation of a mission statement, and various other gatherings where activities and how to achieve them were discussed. The Rev. Bryan pointed out that a mission statement is not useful if there is not unity and a cohesive force within the group to keep things together. More important is to come together and agree on what St. John will look like a year from now.

During the latter part of the session, the group discussed two major items. One was a search for how to infuse spirituality throughout the congregation; the second was how to take risks in implementing new programs.

The MMR exercise was not finished with just this morning session, but will continue. We will set aside time in each vestry meeting to discuss these topics.

A Note From the Rev. Jonathan Bryan

To the rector, vestry, and others at St. John's, greetings.

I thank you for inviting me to assist in your Mutual Ministry Review. And I congratulate you on your initiative in deciding to do it. It signifies strong and confident leadership willing to take a hard look to discover where you can improve your good ministries and add more.

Our conversation on that Saturday morning showed a parish family devoted to St. John's, a group of friends serving as the Body of Christ in the world. A loving, compassionate spirit became evident as open and candid discussion affirmed your many strengths and acknowledged your opportunities for further work. This is healthy and hopeful.

I am glad you intend to continue the process with regular exploration and awareness of your mutual ministries. And I would be happy to assist as needed.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

Jonathan

Vestry Meeting Highlights – March 2014

The vestry initiated an ongoing discussion to continue the mutual ministry review. This month, the focus was on the allocation of Rev. Barker's time on Sunday mornings. The Family Programs Ministry wants a pastoral presence accessible to

them on Sunday mornings. The vestry discussed several ideas for change and Rev. Barker will discuss these possibilities with Family Programs Minister Beth Cavey.

Rev. Catherine Campbell of Cristo Rey currently is reviewing the covenant between St. John and Cristo Rey. The vestry hopes to have a final draft for review at its April meeting. The vestry asked Rev. Barker to ask Rev. Campbell to attend the April meeting.

The Building Use policy remains under review with several sections to be redrafted for review by the vestry in April.

Rev. Barker is ready to hire a new sexton for St. John's. Justin Thomas will begin work on April 1 and will handle both inside and outside duties.

The vestry elected Debbie Carter to serve as delegate to annual council and to Region 3 with Lenore Schmidt to serve as alternate delegate.

St. John's now has a key locked safe to store cash after fundraisers and before tellers total donations on Sundays for deposit. A new totaling form for fundraising events was discussed. A revised draft will be presented at the April meeting.

Sandy Winger volunteered to be St. John's Junior Warden for 2014 and was elected by the vestry.

The vestry decided not to reschedule the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. A date was set for spring cleanup, and the vestry discussed the annual tea, which has been handed off to the vestry by the Morning Guild.

Holy Week Services at St. John's

- April 13, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. – Blessing of the Palms and Holy Eucharist
- April 17, 6:30 p.m. – Maundy Thursday Loaves and Fishes dinner, followed by Holy Eucharist and the stripping of the altar
- April 18, Noon and 7 p.m. – Good Friday Liturgy
- April 18, 8:30 p.m. – Cristo Rey Good Friday Liturgy
- April 20, 8:00 a.m. – Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist with hymns
- April 20, 10:00 a.m. – Festival Holy Eucharist with children's message and flowering of the cross.
- April 20 – Easter egg hunt and reception following the 10 a.m. service

Good News!

Wonderful things have been happening at St. John's in recent months that we all should be aware of, since we all are responsible.

St. John's average Sunday attendance was up 7.5 percent in 2013, due in part to the emphasis we placed on growing St. John's in 2013. We have had 11 new people attending St. John's in the last 16 months, accounting for this rise in attendance.

In 2013 we initiated an outreach ministry to work with AFAC. We began working at AFAC on a bi-monthly basis packing food for distribution to AFAC's clients. This ministry has been so successful that St. John's volunteers are now working at AFAC every month. In March about a dozen volunteers converted bulk bags of oatmeal into smaller quantities for individual clients. In an hour we packed 33 crates with bags of oatmeal, enough for nearly 600 families. (Remember it is never too late to join this effort – more hands are always welcome!)

Our family ministries program continues to come up with innovative ways to educate our youth and engage the parish in its activities. We have all been learning about saints as we follow "Lent Madness" and get weekly reports on who is advancing in the brackets and who has been eliminated.

The Hope of Healing

The laying on of hands for healing is an ancient practice, designed to offer special prayers for physical, emotional and spiritual healing. During healing prayers, a priest or a layperson puts his or her hands on you and prays as you have asked for you or someone whom you name. Oil for anointing the head may or may not be used.

St. John will begin offering prayers for healing on the first Sunday of the month starting April 6. Those who want prayers for healing may come to the altar after Holy Communion or may stay in their seats and receive these prayers.

As we know, healing is not always physical, but it is always present. God gives us strength to

live with our difficulties and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit to show us the good things God has in mind for us.

I hope you will take advantage of these special prayers. If there are any laypeople who feel especially called to this ministry, please see Ann.

Ashes to Go

"I haven't done this in such a long time," said one woman. "What do I have to do?"

"Nothing," I replied, and placed the ashes on her forehead. I turned to Bill Pritchard, who was helping me, and said, "This is the reason we do 'Ashes to Go'". We want to reach out to people and provide a moment of grace for them. Maybe it



In the snow of Ash Wednesday, our rector offers Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro station.

will spark some spiritual reflection and bring people closer to God.

About 30 people participated in our "Ashes to Go" event, held at the Ballston Metro station. We were there from 7:30 – 8:30 am and 5:15 – 6:15 pm. We imposed Lenten reflection booklets. One person told us she was giving up Coke and Netflix

for Lent. Another person sent a thank you note and a contribution to the church. Everyone who received ashes was grateful we were there, and we received many smiles from those who did not receive ashes.

"Ashes to Go" is a ministry that began several years ago to take the church into the world. Churches from this diocese and the Diocese of Washington covered several metro stations in the area.

Ann Barker

From the Rector: Under the Influence

When we think of the phrase “under the influence” the most common thing we think of is getting a DUI, a citation for driving under the influence of alcohol. There are perhaps hundreds of thousands if not millions of people in this country that live their lives under the negative influence of addictive substances: alcohol, drugs, food. Addictions make lives miserable and cause premature death.

But there are other things we can be under the influence of. In our Region 3 Lenten series, we heard from our speaker Dr. Tricia Lyons about the hundreds of thousands of people who have read the Harry Potter books in a plethora of languages. The books and movies of J. K. Rowling, a multi-million dollar enterprise, have influenced many people. People wear Harry Potter clothes to events, carry wands and wish they could be wizards. Though many evangelical Christians disapprove of the books because they have wizards in them, the message of the Harry Potter series is a good one: love wins out over evil.

In a blog post titled “Sixteen and Influential” Melissa Slocum cites a study showing that the MTV show “16 and Pregnant” was responsible for 5.7 percent reduction in teen births in the 18 months after its premiere on TV. Another positive result of media influence.

All of us are under the influence of something or several somethings. The influences can be positive or negative. For every book or TV show that produces positive results there are others that advocate violence as an answer, for example. TV is full of ads to influence people to buy their products so they can be trendy and popular.

When we are young, we do not have much choice in our influences. Our strongest ones are provided by our close family circle. They give us our ethics, our habits, our ways of dealing with relationships. As we grow up, we can be influenced by our friends, who can lead us into making good decisions or bad decisions.

We can be under the influence of money, struggling to make as much as we can to be secure

or to have enough to burn to impress people and get them to like us. We can set up charitable foundations or use the money for ourselves only.

Many of us are under the influence of our hopes and dreams, not just for ourselves, but for our children as well. We dedicate much of our time and effort to making sure what we want happens for us, a sometimes frustrating task because we really control so little in life.

As Christians, God’s influence should be our most important influence. We are God’s children, made in God’s image. We have some commandments we should follow, including Jesus’s commandment to love one another as he has loved us. God blessed Abraham so he and his people could be a blessing to the world and we are called to do that too. We are called to take care of the needy. In the season of Easter, we are called to be joyfully under the influence of the promise of eternal life given to us by Jesus through his life, death and resurrection. And we are called to influence others through our behavior as disciples of Christ.

The Bible is full of stories where we come under the influence of God and those where we choose to follow the influence of evil. We can never stay on the straight and narrow of being influenced only by God’s choices for us because we all sin. But God forgives and we are gently led back to the good influence of God that we should all be following every minute of every day. We are all working toward the time where God’s influence will be the one that we follow in front of all the others.

It is easy to be under the influence of so many things in this world bad, as well as good, but we are called to be loyal to the heavenly influence of God’s gracious love. As we prepare for Easter, examine the things that influence you. Ask God help to remove the ones that are destructive and to lead you to ones that are good for you. May we all have a joyous Easter, knowing we are under the influence of God’s promise of eternal life.

Ann †

Words on Hymns

I would venture to say that “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” is one of the all-time favorite hymns, and certainly no Easter would be complete without singing it, with its sixteen “alleluias”. In fact, the tune is entitled “Easter Hymn”, and that says it all. This is the only tune in our hymnal that is linked by title to a specific day. In many churches, including the one in which I grew up, the hymn is known as “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”.

Dating to about 1372, the tune was first published in a volume called *Lyra Davidica* in 1708



Early portrait of Charles Wesley

(and later, in 1749, in Arnold's *Compleat Psalmodist*). In some hymnals, “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” is in fact the three-stanza *Compleat Psalmodist* version with one or more additional stanzas appended. The hymn appeared under the title *Hymn for Easter Day* in *Hymns and Sacred Songs* by Charles and John Wesley in 1739. The stanza that begins, “Sing we to our God above,” was written in 1740 by Charles Wesley and added much later – apparently long after the 1779 publication of *Compleat Psalmodist*. Wesley wrote this hymn for the first service in the Wesleyan Chapel in London, England in 1739, one year after his dramatic Aldersgate conversion experience. The first chapel was a deserted iron foundry, which became known as the Foundry Meeting House.

Wesley's original version had eleven stanzas, but did not have the alleluias that distinguish it today. It is not known what tune Wesley employed. Someone decided to set the words to the tune that we now use. But the text didn't fit the tune, so he added the alleluias to make it work. Most hymnals have four verses, although a few use three, five or six. Saint Jerome, who translated the Bible into Latin, conveyed the joy of the “alleluia” when he

wrote that Christian houses of worship in the fourth and fifth centuries shook from the intense alleluias shouted by believers.

Charles Wesley (December 18, 1707 – March 29, 1788) was an English leader of the Methodist movement, son of Anglican clergyman and poet Samuel Wesley, the younger brother of Methodist founder John Wesley and Anglican clergyman Samuel Wesley the Younger. He was father of musician Samuel Wesley and grandfather of musician Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Despite their closeness, Charles and his brother John did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the Church of England into which they had both been ordained. Charles Wesley is mostly remembered for the over 6,000 hymns he published. As a result of his enduring hymnody, the Gospel Music Association recognized his musical contributions to the art of gospel music in 1995 by listing his name in the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth, reply, Alleluia!

Carol Dunlap

LOGOS

The LOGOS is published monthly except August, at the beginning of the month.

Dave Dunlap, LOGOS Editor

Articles for LOGOS may be Emailed to dave_dunlap@yahoo.com (preferred) or left at the church office.

Material for the May issue should be submitted no later than April 24.

Parish News

Rest in Peace

- Joan Gaughan, sister of Rosemari Sullivan, a colleague of Ann Barker

Congratulations

- To Sandy Winger on her election as junior warden
- To Maddie Harbin, who was selected to do a two week intensive internship with the Joffrey Ballet this summer
- To Paul Petrich on earning the rank of Eagle Scout

Thank you

- To Beth Cavey and the Family Programs Ministry for the Festival of Saints on March 16. It was great fun to learn about all these people we recognize during the church year for their devotion to God. It is also great fun to participate in Lent Madness, in which we try to guess which saint will win the Golden Halo Award.
- To Del Hunt for buying all the supplies for the pancake supper and to Bill Thomson for arranging volunteers, even though we had to cancel because of bad weather.
- To Karina Aviles and Guadalupe Garay for their service as sextons and welcome to our new sexton, Justin Thomas.

April Birthdays

- Gerard Baynham, Maggie Buchanan, Carol Dunlap, Diane Henderson, Jim Hull, Cooper Mackin, Caitlin O'Connor, John Petrich, Sharon Tallent, Jackson Tallent, Bob Tallent, Linda Trochim, Valerie Wilson

April Anniversaries

- Bill & Faye Pritchard, William & Nancy Gibb, Lisa & Jud Buchanan

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

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

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
John Wilson, Chair, Finance Committee
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild
Beth Cavey, Minister of Family Programs

Vestry

Bill Schenck , Senior Warden
Sandy Winger, Junior Warden
Jeff Aitken
Pete Oliver

Paul Stenger
Bill Thomson
Linda Trochim