



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

December 2014

From the Rector: Gifts from God

It is the season of gift giving. I find it is odd what gifts I remember getting at Christmas. My mother always gave each of us a book, with an inscription. One of them was a book of short stories. I didn't like the book much – many of the stories were odd and sad – but I have kept it because it has her note to me in it. My dad died on December 16, but absolutely contrary to form, he had bought all of us gifts before he died. Mine was a wallet. I used that wallet until it was literally falling apart, because it gave me something to remember him by. One of my most treasured gifts from Kristy and Evan is a wedding album that has pictures and quotes (two of which were written by Evan). I am so glad they did that because there is no way I could have begun to pick from the 250 pictures they got from the photographer. Everyone can remember some Christmas gift or other that has made a difference in their lives. And we can probably remember gifts we have given that have been special for others.

Of course the most important gift we receive at Christmas is the gift of Jesus. Sam Portaro says God could have sent anything – riches or power or a military deliverer or even control over our own lives – but God sent an infant, cute and cuddly certainly, but weak and needy, the very thing we do not want to acknowledge ourselves as being, the very gift that we wonder why on earth God would

send. God sent us the gift we needed instead of a gift we thought we wanted. God sent us a fully human, fully divine being to experience all the things we experience, yet overcome them and save us from sin and death.

God has given us other gifts in our lives too, not just at Christmas but as part of the way we live our lives. God has given us the gift of memory. Memories can be good or bad, but they are the story of our lives and we need them to help us know where we came from. Brother Kevin Hackett of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) says that when memory is used rightly, it helps us set our lives in some larger context so we can determine patterns of events over time. When we

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.

know these patterns, we can keep them if they are helpful and ask God's help to change the ones that hurt us.

God gives us hope. Just as memory helps us understand our present, hope gives us a gift for the future. Hackett says that hope gives us the capacity to imagine a future – one in which God is with us through good times and bad and always working to give us what is best for us. According to Hackett, “hope is an essential element of what it means to be fully human and fully alive. Without [it] we die.”

God blesses us. God gives us all the good things in our lives – sometimes even when we think they are not so good. God blesses us with abundance for ourselves and promises God's presence with us always. God takes our brokenness and makes us whole. God puts people and events in our lives to draw us closer to God in love.

God has created us good and blesses us in every conceivable way, especially in the gift of Jesus.

One of the ways we can thank God is to give ourselves to others. We can give the gift of friendship. Our friendships are precious to us. The bond between human beings is a strong one – two unique souls touching one another in love to enrich both our lives.

We can give the gift of service. We can offer our time, our talents and our treasure to help those in need. We can work for justice and peace and an end to the systemic evils that plague our society. Even in our giving back to God, we are blessed by our connections with others and given new life and new hope through them.

God's gift of Jesus at Christmas is the prime example of God's unending love for us, but God loves us and gifts us throughout our lives. As you remember your Christmases past and look in hope toward future Christmases, thank God for God's many blessings and share your greatest blessing – the gift of yourself – with the world.

Ann †

Instructed Eucharist – Part V

We now enter the second part of our liturgy, the Holy Communion itself. This is the drama at the heart of life. We recall and give thanks for the event that gives life to us all – Christ's giving himself, even to death on a cross, so that we might open ourselves to God's love and find real life more and more as we allow Christ's life to shape our lives.

We begin with the Offertory, during which our

gifts of money are collected, and bread and wine are brought forward. The money is the tangible sign of our daily work; it represents the first fruits of our labor. We give back to God in gratitude for what we have already been given.

The bread and wine are the products of both God's bounty in nature and the work of human labor. All of them placed on the altar are symbols of our offering all of our lives to Christ. St. Augustine once said, “See that bread and wine? That is you. You are there on the altar.” And just as in the Eucharist bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, so we, in this Eucharist, ordinary as we are, become Christ's Body.

As we enter into this meal, we are made one with Christians around the world. We experience here and now the hope of the world – a Kingdom, a place where no one goes hungry, where all are accepted and forgiven and gathered at the banquet table. In short we experience what life is for, what life could be, and what someday, by the grace of God, life will be.

Now we will hear the words, “Lift up your

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 December issue should be submitted no later than December 19.

hearts,” as the feast begins, and the Celebrant will mean it. A special Proper Preface for this season is read, and then we sing the Sanctus, “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...,” acknowledging that now we are passing into the deepest dimension of our lives as we draw toward the Lord’s banquet table.

Our ritual recalls the original Last Supper: “in the night in which he was betrayed,” Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. Here are the four actions of Communion: taking, giving thanks, breaking the bread, sharing in Communion.

We are now at the still point of our turning world – God’s love for us in giving us Christ and, through him, a new life.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Now, let us keep the feast.

Reprinted by permission from Forward Movement. Other resources about the sacraments of the church and devotional practices are available from Forward Movement at www.forwardmovement.org.

Words on Hymns

Our recessional hymn for December 21, *O come, O come, Emmanuel*, is probably the best-loved and most frequently sung of the Advent hymns. In fact, almost every organ book of Advent music I own contains an arrangement of this hymn. The text is, in fact, a translation of the Latin *Veni, Veni*. The 1861 translation in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* is the most prominent by far in the English-speaking world, but other English translations also exist as well as other languages.

The hymn is a metrical paraphrase of the O Antiphons, a series of plainchant antiphons attached to the Magnificat at Vespers over the final days before Christmas. They are called the “O Antiphons” because each verse of the hymn begins with “O” (Emmanuel, thou wisdom from on high, thou rod of Jesse, thou dayspring, thou Key of David, great Lord of might, thou root of Jesse’s tree, Desire of nations, Emmanuel). The words and the music of the hymn developed separately.

The prehistory of the text stretches back to the origins of the O Antiphons themselves, which were in existence by, at the latest, the eighth century. We know that they were paraphrased extensively by the English poet Cynewulf in a poem written before the year 800. However, despite popular imagination of an early origin for *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, the hymn’s history is first substantiated only much later.

While the text is often linked with the 12th century, the earliest surviving evidence of it is in the seventh edition of *Psalterium Canticum*

Catholicarum, which was published in Cologne in 1710. That hymnal was a major force in the history of German church music: first assembled by Jesuit hymnographer Johannes Herringsdorf in 1610 and receiving numerous revised editions through 1868, it achieved enormous impact due to its use in Jesuit schools. The text of this version was essentially expanded, rather than altered, over the subsequent centuries.

In 1844, *Veni, veni Emmanuel* was included in the second volume of *Thesaurus Hymnologicus*, a monumental collection by the German hymnologist Hermann Adalbert Daniel. The *Thesaurus* helped to ensure a continued life for the Latin version of the hymn even as the *Psalterium* came to the end of its long history in print. Even more significantly for the English-speaking world, it was from *Thesaurus Hymnologicus* that John Mason Neale would come to know the hymn. Neale would both publish the Latin version of the hymn in Britain and translate the first (and still most important) English versions.

The text has been used with several tunes. However, at least in the English-speaking world, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* is associated with one tune more than any other, to the extent that the tune itself is often called “Veni Emmanuel”. This tune was first linked with the text in 1851, when Thomas Helmore published it in the *Hymnal Noted*, paired with an early revision of Neale’s English translation of the text. The volume listed the tune as being “From a French Missal in the National Library, Lisbon. However, there was no way to

verify this, leading to long-lasting doubts about the accuracy of this statement. There was even speculation that Helmore might have composed the melody himself.

The mystery was settled in 1966 by British musicologist Mary Berry, who discovered a 15th-century manuscript containing the melody in the National Library of France. The manuscript

consists of processional chants for burials. The tune and text together then appeared in the 1861 *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, which by 1895 was used in three-quarters of the English Anglican churches. That led to the widespread use of this version even today.

Carol Dunlap

Parish News

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events:

- Tuesday, December 2, 7:30 – St. Johns Book Club will discuss *The Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline
- Sunday, December 14 – St. John's annual Christmas pageant will be presented during the 10 a.m. service
- Sunday, December 21, 3:00 p.m. – Greening of the Church. Come and help prepare the sanctuary for Christmas by putting up greenery!
- Sunday, December 21, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. – Neighborhood Christmas Caroling. Come and join the fun singing carols in the Glencarlynn neighborhood!
- Sundays in Advent our Adult Education our will discuss a study called *The Messiah*. It focuses on the titles of Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace given in Isaiah's prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures and explores how well Jesus exemplified those titles. Be sure to join us!
- Tuesday, January 6, 2015, 7:30 p.m. - St. John's Book Club will discuss *Solar* by Ian McEwan

Christmas Services

There will be three services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:

- December 24 5:00 p.m. – Family Christmas service with special music and a Children's sermon
- December 24 11:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve service and carols
- December 25 10:00 a.m. – Christmas service with carols
- Sunday, December 28, 10:00 a.m. – Festival of Lessons and Carols. There will be no 8:00 a.m. service on December 28.

We thank all who have contributed their time and energy to the mission of St. John's, especially:

- Brian Cavey, Keith McCartney and Peter Oliver for obtaining and installing the air conditioner/heater in Ann's office
- Everyone who helped with cleaning up the garden
- Those who donated gifts for bingo night – Paul and Anne Stenger, Eileen Tallent, Carol and Dave Dunlap, Lisa Pope, Kaipō and Keith McCartney, Debbie Carter and Kay Wells
- Sandy Winger for providing us with the bingo set
- Brian Cavey for taking down the dead tree in the yard and grinding up the stump
- Del and Carole Hunt for picking up the bark from the tree
- The dedicated volunteers who showed up at AFAC on November 14 to transform bulk packages of oatmeal into family-sized packages.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in December:

The Rev. Catherine Campbell, Eileen Flynn, Madeline "Maddie" Harbin, Lori Held, Galen Henderson, Barbara Hill, Del Hunt, Vernon Martin, Barbara Olivere, Angie Rollet, Angela Swarr, Camron Tallent, Laura Wallace

We celebrate with all who have anniversaries in December:

David & Carol Dunlap, Cooper & Mary Mackin, Don & Penny Hess, Klaus & Lori Held

Outreach Opportunities

School Supplies

Carlin Springs Elementary School was very grateful for the supplies we gave them in November. Faye Pritchard says they are expecting shortages soon in girls' and boys' underwear, sizes 3 and 4 – 10 as well as socks and jeans, pants and sweat pants, all in gender neutral colors and designs. Faye requests that as you do your Christmas shopping you keep your eyes open for these clothing items. She will place a box once again in the undercroft where you can drop off your items. Thank you for your generosity to these children in need.

Angel Tree

As LOGOS goes to press, there are still unclaimed angels on the Angel Tree in the Fellowship Hall. Do not hesitate to take an Angel and fulfill the Christmas needs of a less fortunate child in our community. When you take an Angel, be sure to sign your name so we know who each benefactor is. Presents should be returned no later than December 7.

AFAC Food Bagging

St. John's volunteers will be packing bulk food into family-sized packages on December 12 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. This is a wonderful chance to accomplish much to help many in need during the Christmas season. Each month in just an hour we have been producing five to six hundred individual food servings for AFAC clients. Please let Faye Pritchard know that you will be joining us this month.



At AFAC St. John's volunteers turn 50-lb. bags of oatmeal into crates of individual packages for families – and have time to chat and joke while they work!

St. Johns joined with Iglesia de Cristo Rey for a family bingo night on November 7 which included tasty treats, prizes, and fun for all ages!



Shrinemont weekend was a time of relaxation and retreat from the everyday world. This year's Shrinemont group came back refreshed after a weekend in the Shenandoah valley.



Friends and Family Sunday on November 16 featured special treats prepared for the hospitality time by the young people of St. John's. In spite of cooler temperatures than we all would have liked, it was a fun time for the St. John's community!



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: Juan Figueroa

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
 John Restall, Pledge Clerk
 Lenore Schmidt, Chair, Finance Committee
 Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild
 Martha Ambrose and Jonathan Muehlke,
 Ministers of Family Programs

Vestry

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

Paul Stenger
 Bill Thomson
 Linda Trochim