



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

October 2015

St. John's Animal Blessing Expands to Two Locations

St. John's traditional animal blessing, held on the Sunday closest to St. Francis day, will take place in two locations this year. Animals will be blessed at the S. Oxford Street entrance to the Shirlington Dog Park on Saturday, October 3, at 12:30 p.m., and then outside the church on Sunday, October 4, at 5 p.m. If it rains on Sunday, the blessing will move inside. If you would like a blessing for an animal that does not play well with others or for some other reason cannot be let loose, you may bring your pet in a crate or bring a picture. Please invite your friends, family, and neighbors, as all are welcome!



Enthusiastic participants in past animal blessings at St. John's.

From the Rector: Painting a Picture

Remember the famous unfinished portrait of George Washington? If we imagine our lives to be an artist's canvas, ours would all look like that. We can reflect on the past, but we cannot see very far into the future. We have to trust God for that as it comes. Despite the static state of the George Washington portrait now because the artist died, paintings are not static things. The imagination of the artist sees different things from day to day and paints over what he or she has painted the day before.

When we paint the canvas of our lives, we are like that artist. We may see things from different perspectives on different days. We may look at the glass as half empty one day and then half full another. We may see ourselves as loved by God when we stand in front of the canvas, or we may see ourselves as not good enough. However we see the world and ourselves is what the painting will look like. So I would like to suggest we look at some of the qualities that are assets as we get ready to paint the day's image, so that we can look at the picture and know we have done the best we can for God, ourselves, and our neighbors.

Where have we been generous—with our time, our talent, and our treasure? Have we given liberally to the church, have we supported good causes, have we offered our time and talent to bring about transformation and change? Have we been good servants? Brother David Vryhof of the Society of St. John the Evangelist says that "it's important to do something even though we find it difficult to imagine how our small contribution can have any impact at all on this immense and hopelessly complicated problem."

Where have we been peacemakers? Do we have a natural tendency to smooth troubled waters or to stir them up even further? Where have we come down on the side of non-

violence? Have we ever put our thoughts into action in our voting, our demonstrating, our conversations with people? Where have we been healers? Where have we lent an ear or a shoulder or fed or clothed someone who has nothing? Where have we put away our anger to talk lovingly to someone, healing a rift?

When have we taken Sabbath time? Are we able to take rest and relaxation or do we always have to be productive in some way? Can we sit down and read a book, watch a football game, or go to a movie? (This is one I don't do very well at all.)

Have we been an encourager, empowering others to paint pictures of their true and gifted selves? Have we encouraged our children, our friends, our families to pursue hopes and dreams, to be all they want to be? St. Barnabas was called the encourager because he shared the good news with God's people and brought them to Jesus. Have we ever helped someone open their hearts to Jesus?

Gratitude is a vital part of our relationship with God. Have we been thankful for the many gifts we have been given? Even when bad things happen, can we give thanks for God's role in helping us? Acceptance is another part of our picture. Where have we been accepting, both of ourselves and others? Often it is harder to accept ourselves than to welcome others, but we must play our part in that too, particularly the outcasts of society.

And when the day is very difficult, can we say we have persevered? We have put one foot in front of the other and slogged through the day, hoping to make it through to what God would have us do.

When we reflect on what to put in our painting, we need to remember all these good things we do, instead of all we don't do, though that has to be part of our painting as well. What we don't want is for it to be all of

our painting. So I invite you to paint your life as you reflect and paint yourself honestly, assets as well as liabilities. When you improve the liabilities, paint over them with some color that will leave a shadow of what was under it,

but will also signal a new move in your life. Perhaps reflecting on the painting in this way will give you a perspective you have never had before.

Ann †

Sunday Seminar Features “The God We Can Know”

Starting September 27, the adult Sunday Seminar will feature a study series called “The God We Can Know,” based on the “I Am” sayings of Jesus. The DVD series was filmed in the Holy Land and offers Scripture, activities, and discussion questions. On October 25, the Rev. Robert Prichard from Virginia Theological Seminary will offer his insights into what happened at this year’s General Convention. And sometime during the fall season, Bill Pritchard will offer a class on papal encyclicals and how they affect Catholics and non-Catholics alike. All these sessions will offer a wealth of thought-provoking questions. Please join the discussion at 9 a.m. in the parlor.

St. John’s Monthly Financial Statement

August income:	\$8,517
Pledge + Plate:	\$7,387
Year-to-date income:	\$102,991
August expense:	\$11,283
Year-to-date expense:	\$107,554

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.

A Time of Rest and Reflection: Shrine Mont Weekend

Come enjoy a time of prayer, reflection, rest, and recreation October 16–18 during St. John’s Shrine Mont weekend. Located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the Shrine Mont conference center offers the peace of the mountains and the opportunity to get away from the pressures of everyday life. The 2015 fall retreat will focus on “The Art of Listening to God: Introduction to Contemplative Prayer.” Workshops and worship will intermingle with time for hiking, socializing, reading, board games, playing horseshoes, fellowship around the campfire, and just plain resting. On Sunday morning, worship will be held at Shrine Mont’s open-air cathedral, first consecrated in 1925.

More information and registration forms can be found in brochures located in the pews. The retreat is open to all ages. The cost per person for two nights and six meals is \$170 for adults (under age four: free; ages four to seven: \$44; ages eight to 13: \$88; ages 14 to 17: \$100). Financial assistance is available if needed. Please turn in your registration forms or email Debbie Carter at ddgcarter@yahoo.com by October 9 at the latest to reserve a place. Forms and checks can be placed in the Sunday collection plate or mailed to the church office (make your check payable to St. John’s Church and write “Shrine Mont” on the note line).



Shrine Mont’s open-air Cathedral Shrine of the Transfiguration.

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

Vestry

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

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Lenore Schmidt, Chair, Finance Committee
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Paul Stenger
Bill Thomson
Linda Trochim



God the Giver

Supporting Our Community of Faith through Christian Stewardship

Christian stewardship is the grateful and responsible use of God's gifts in the light of God's love as revealed in Jesus Christ. It includes contributing time and talents, volunteering for ministry, and giving money to support our community of faith.

St. John's stewardship campaign for the upcoming year is titled "*God the Giver.*" Throughout the Bible, we are reminded that God is a giver of all good things. God gives us life and "this fragile earth, our island home. One of the most important passages of the Bible, John 3:16, states, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only son.' God so loves each and every one of us that God gave and continues to give."

You should have received a letter describing the campaign from chair Peter Olivere the week of September 20. You should also have received a letter from Rev. Ann Barker the following week with some reflections on the impact your generosity has had on St. John's and the community.

On Sunday, October 4, each family will be given a pledge package when they enter the church. If you are unable to attend that day, we will mail it to you. Beginning that Sunday and each week until the end of the campaign, you will hear stories from your fellow parishioners of the importance of St. John's ministries to the church and the community and the personal and spiritual satisfaction they receive from participating. There will also be reflections written by Episcopal leaders covering stewardship and faithful giving in the bulletin.

On November 1, we will celebrate Commitment Sunday, the culmination of our campaign when pledges will be completed and offered as an act of worship.

Our goal is to receive 100 percent participation in pledge commitments from our worshipping community. We ask that you prayerfully consider all that God has given you. Think about the impact this community of faith has on your life and the wider community, and then respond as generously as you can.

Peter Olivere, Stewardship Chair

Words on Hymns: *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

Our recessional hymn for October 11, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*, is a paraphrase of Psalm 90, one of the choices in the lectionary for the psalm that day. If you want to compare the psalm with the text of the hymn, the psalm is on page 717 of the prayer book, and the hymn is number 680 in the 1982 hymnal. The hymn gives a grand commentary on the subject of time and how God stands above human time.

The son of a schoolmaster, Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, England, on July 17, 1674. He is said to have shown remarkable precocity in childhood, writing respectable verses at the age of seven. Sometimes he even rhymed his ordinary conversation. At the age of 16, he went to London to study in the Academy of the Rev. Thomas Rowe, an Independent minister. He developed expertise in several fields, including both religion and philosophy. Isaac Watts' father was a Dissenter—a Congregationalist at odds with the Church of England. His father was a strong advocate for his faith and was jailed twice because of his dissent. That was the environment in which Isaac Watts' character was formed, and he was a lifelong Dissenter. However, some years after his death, officials erected a monument in his memory in Westminster Abbey—proof that his contributions were too significant not to be acknowledged.

At 20 years of age, Watts expressed annoyance with the psalm tunes sung in the Congregational tradition at Above Bar Chapel in Southampton. He complained that the metrical psalms were grim and ponderous. But to sing anything other than the actual words of Scripture was said to insult God. When Watts expressed his low opinion of the music that they were using, his father is reputed to have responded, "Why don't you give us something

better, young man!" Watts went on to write some 600 hymns during his lifetime and is known today as the Father of English Hymnody.

In 1719, he published an important hymnal titled *The Psalms of David in the Language of the New Testament*. In it he paraphrased the entire Psalter with the exception of twelve psalms he felt were unsuited for usage. It included *Joy to the World*, based on Psalm 98, and *Jesus Shall Reign*, based on Psalm 72.

The tune associated with *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* was composed by William Croft. He named it "St. Anne" in honor of the church where he served as organist, St. Anne's in Soho, London. It was originally intended to be used with a version of Psalm 62. It was not until sometime later, when set to Watts' text, that the tune gained recognition. Croft was later chosen to serve as the organist at Westminster Abbey.

Originally, *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past* contained nine verses. Today most hymnals use only verses 1, 2, 3, 5, and 9. In 1738, John Wesley changed the first line in his hymnal, *Psalms and Hymns*, from "Our God" to "O God." Some feel that the change makes it easier to sing and also causes the singer to expect the "Thy" of the second stanza.

Later composers incorporated the tune in their own works. For example, George Handel used the tune in an anthem entitled *O Praise the Lord*. J.S. Bach's "Fugue in E flat major" is often called the "St. Anne" in the English-speaking world because of the similarity of its subject to the first line of the hymn tune. (There is some debate as to whether Bach used the actual tune after hearing it or coincidentally created the very similar tune used as the fugal theme.) Arthur Sullivan used the tune in the first and last sections of his *Festival Te Deum*, first in a relatively

standard setting but eventually pairing it with a military march accompaniment. The hymn and words are also featured in Vaughan Williams' anthem *Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Refuge*, using both the Book of Common Prayer's words and those of Watts.

Among many other occasions, the hymn was performed in 1941 on board the *HMS Prince of Wales* at a religious service attended by Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of the conference creating the Atlantic Charter. It was also sung at Churchill's funeral at St. Paul's Cathedral in London on January 30, 1965.

Carol Dunlap

LOGOS

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

Lisa Pope, LOGOS Editor

Articles for LOGOS may be emailed to logos@stjohnsarlingtonva.org (preferred) or left at the church office.

Material for the November issue should be submitted by October 19. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.

Join the St. John's Book Club

Join another year of book talk and fellowship as the St. John's Book Club meets on **Tuesday, October 6, at 7:30 p.m.** to discuss Virginia Woolf's groundbreaking *Mrs. Dalloway*. The 1925 novel is the portrait of a single day in a woman's life. Upcoming selections also include:

November 3: *The Weird Sisters* by Eleanor Brown.

December 1: *H is for Hawk* by Helen MacDonal.

January 5: *The Astronaut Wives Club* by Lily Koppel.

All are welcome!



Parish News

Congratulations to:

- Jones and Sharon Tallent on the birth of Sawyer Albert Tallent on August 20, 2015.

Thank you to:

- Roger Ludwig for helping to get the gutters cleaned out.
- Doris Page, Sandy Winger, and Roger Ludwig for providing such beautiful music during the August worship services.
- Peter Olivere for doing so much work to plan the upcoming animal blessings.
- Barbara Wien for leading the Sunday Seminar in the topic “Sex and World Peace.”
- Marshall Adair for planting new plants in the front garden.

Welcome back to the choir, after a summer of rest and relaxation.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in October:

Erin Baynham, Jacob Beavin, Betsy Cullen, Bryan Harbin, Carrie Harbin, John Hart, Monica Lozano, Taylor Robinson, Rev. Peter Swarr, Bill Thomson, and Liz White.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in October:

Marshall and Ginger Adair; Cathi and Andy Del Gallo; Eileen Flynn and Paul Harless; John Hart and Angie Rollet; Heather and Tony Kollath; Dave and Lynn Robinson.

Keep in touch with the McCartney family as they settle into life in New Mexico:

Keith, Kaipo, Kenji, and Connor McCartney
7729 Cedar Canyon Ct., NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122