

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

January 2016

Plan to Attend the St. John's Annual Meeting on January 24

St. John's annual meeting will be held January 24 after the 10 a.m. service. We will elect vestry members, present the budget, thank our volunteers, learn about what's been happening in the church over the last year, and discuss items of interest to the congregation. Please be sure to be there for this important time in St. John's life.



St. John's events and ministries over the past year included (clockwise from left): The Christmas pageant, Ashes to Go at Ballston Metro station, Vacation Bible School, and animal blessings held in two locations.

St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington • The Rev. Ann Barker, Rector
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From the Rector: Bring into Being

On January 10, the family programs ministry is sponsoring a family vision board activity. Families will get together and use magazines, stickers, and other various art forms to set out their goals for the coming year. It is a fun and enjoyable way to make New Year's resolutions.

Brother Mark Brown of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) says that "we can actually bring into being what we are waiting for, what we envision for the future." Imagine yourself with a vision board. What are some of the things you might include so that you can act on your mission to help bring the kingdom of God on earth?

Maybe we will have a picture of the sun, because we can shine. Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world. We need to ponder how brightly our lamps burn now and how much brighter we can make them. Are we putting them under a bushel so we can't shine? We need to take that basket off and let God's glory shine through us. One of the ways we can shine is to increase our connection with God's creation. We can spend more time with nature, enjoying the miracles of each season, reveling in each flower, each snowflake, each gorgeous leaf that God has given us. We can also be kind to one another. It doesn't take much. Thanking people for a job well done. Helping people do things that need doing. Just smiling at people will bring a return smile from them and fill you with gladness.

Maybe we will have a picture of someone bungee jumping because Jesus asks us to dare, to take risks. Dare to do something different in our lives, something Jesus is nudging us to do through the Holy Spirit. Maybe it is to take up a new job or a new hobby. Maybe it is to risk sharing our emotions with someone. Maybe it is to make a new friend. For me it might be to find out more about social media and smart phones and how the right use of those can be

helpful in spreading the kingdom. Or it might be to get some extra sleep, eat better, or take care of your health in other ways.

A picture of someone sitting on a porch with a glass of tea might be a good picture to have on your vision board. That person is just being. And that is what we are sometimes called to do. To be is to rest in yourself and who you are. It is learning to accept and love yourself as God loves you. It sounds easy, but it is a very hard thing to do. We are so accustomed to doing and to having distractions that we really don't know how to collect ourselves and just exist in the quiet of some time alone or with like-minded friends. Good friends can also be as they sit together and chat. No pretenses, no artifices, just people who know and accept each other as they are.

A smile might stand for a goal of contentment. There is a familiar saying that says, "Happiness is not having what you want, it is wanting what you have." We might practice contentment this year. Less striving to get ahead, fewer wish lists, more gratitude for all that God has given us. When we are content, we are more peaceful, and we can greet the day and go to sleep without worries.

Playing is important. What is play for you? Paste a picture of it on your vision board. It is necessary for a well-rounded life to get in some play time, time just to enjoy yourself and your loved ones. My family and friends are people I play with. We may not throw the football around, but we have lunch and we do crossword puzzles and we sing and hike and play cards. While your work may be very enjoyable, in the end it does not really give you the let-loose feeling that just clowning around does.

Finally, be sure to have someone laughing on your vision board. Science has shown that laughing is good for you and even promotes

healing. A good sense of humor can get you through a world of difficulties and make the world seem brighter and hard things more possible.

Even if it is only a mental vision board, I urge you to create one and remember it as you go through the year. God's blessings to you in 2016.

Ann †

St. John's Monthly Financial Statement

November income:	\$8,706
Pledge + Plate:	\$7,884
Year-to-date income:	\$125,553
November expense:	\$11,153
Year-to-date expense:	\$140,212

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Family Programs: Whitney Coleman
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

Vestry

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

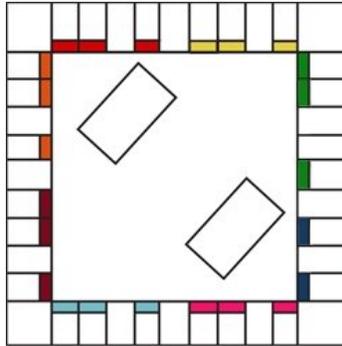
Paul Stenger
Bill Thomson
Linda Trochim

January Is Jumping: Join in a Family Activity

Family Vision Board Party, Sunday, January 10, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join in a fun experience in which parents and children use magazine cutouts, stickers, and drawings to create a family board that visually represents what they hope to achieve together in the upcoming year. This not only helps families gain a visual picture of what they would like to see happen in the New Year, but it also fosters care and accountability within the family unit. For more information or to sign your family up

to participate, call the church office at 703-671-8364 or send an email to familyprograms@stjohnsarlingtonva.org.

Family Game Night, Saturday, January 23, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Bring a board, strategy, or children's game that you would like to play with old friends, neighbors, or new friends. St. John's will supply the hot chocolate and popcorn. Please also bring a non-perishable food item to donate to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC).



Sunday Seminar Discusses the “I Am” Sayings of Jesus

In January, the Sunday Seminar will finish up its study, “If You Want to Walk on the Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat,” and begin a new study called “The God We Can Know,” which will feature the “I Am” sayings of Jesus. Please join the gathering at 9 a.m. in the parlor.

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 Christmas Pageant to Remember



The children of St. John's presented the annual Christmas pageant on Sunday, December 13.

Words on Hymns: *We Three Kings*

A Christmas season tradition for David and me is to watch our VHS recording of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, a one-act opera by Gian Carlo Menotti with an original English libretto by the composer. The first opera specifically composed for television in America, it was commissioned by NBC and first performed on December 24, 1951, in New York City at Studio 8H in Rockefeller Center. This performance was broadcast live as the debut production of the *Hallmark Hall of Fame*. *Amahl* was written for children, and David and I remember listening to records of it when we were growing up.

The opera tells the story of a destitute lame shepherd boy, Amahl, and his mother. They have no food or money left, and the mother says they have no alternative but to beg. Amahl cheerfully tells her of a scenario where he plays his pipe while she dances, and people throw money. After they settle down to go to sleep, there comes a knocking at the door. It is the Three Kings, Balthazar, Caspar, and Melchior (who sing in three-part harmony). After being entertained by neighbors who dance for them, everyone tries to sleep for what is left of the night.

The mother is soon apprehended stealing the gold meant for the Christ Child. After her impassioned plea that her son is equally important and deserving of the gold, Melchior lets her keep it, explaining, “The child we seek doesn’t need our gold. On love alone he will build his kingdom.” He describes the kingdom the Child will rule. The mother wants to return the gold, lamenting she has no gift for him herself, as “For such a king I’ve waited all my life.” Amahl then wants to give his crutch (without which he cannot walk) to the Child, saying “Who knows, he may need it someday.” Amahl goes to hand the crutch to the kings and is miraculously healed. He persuades his

mother to let him go with the kings to take the crutch to the Child himself in thanks.

We will sing the hymn *We Three Kings of Orient Are* as the processional on January 10. The context of the carol centers around the biblical magi, who visited Jesus during his Nativity and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh while paying homage to him. Though the event is recounted in the Gospel of Matthew, there are no further details given regarding the number of magi who were present, their names, or whether they were even royal. Hence, the names of the magi—Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar—and their status as kings from the Orient are legendary and based on tradition. The notion of there being three kings stems from the fact that there were three separate gifts given. There are many stories in various countries concerning the origins of the wise men and their lives and deaths following the Nativity.

At the time he was writing *We Three Kings* in 1857, John Henry Hopkins, Jr., was serving as the rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Although he originally worked as a journalist for a New York newspaper and studied to become a lawyer, he chose to join the clergy upon graduating from the University of Vermont. Hopkins studied at the General Theological Seminary in New York City and became its first music teacher five years later, holding the post until 1857 alongside his ministry at Christ Episcopal Church.

The story of the carol’s composition, like *Silent Night*, is an example of necessity being the mother of invention. During his final year of teaching at the seminary, Hopkins wrote *We Three Kings* for a Christmas pageant held at the college. By authoring the lyrics and composing the music, he did something extremely uncommon among carol composers,

who would usually write either the lyrics or music but not both. Originally titled “Three Kings of Orient,” the piece was sung within his circle of family and friends. Because of the

popularity it achieved among them, Hopkins decided to publish the carol in 1862.

Carol Dunlap

The Ten Commandments of Congregational Singing

I. Thou shalt sing!

II. Thou shalt sing with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

III. Thou shalt sing fearlessly, striving to ignore the possible wondering glances of thy neighbors. Thou shalt know in thy heart that they would like to sing with thee, if they only had the nerve. Never lose faith that they will sing with thee if only thou dost continue.

IV. Thou shalt sing joyfully, as it is written by the prophet Isaiah: “Sing, O Heaven, be joyful, O Earth, and break forth into Singing, O mountains.”

V. Thou shalt sing reverently, for music is prayer.

VI. Thou shalt sing without hesitation, for though an individual may pray in a whisper or even in wordless silence, a congregation must sing.

VII. Thou shalt not resist new melodies, for we have been taught never to let our prayer become rigid. Seek to fulfill the words of the Psalmist: “Let us sing a new song unto the Lord.”

VIII. Thou shalt never mumble but sing out loud. Never be deterred by an occasional mistake.

IX. Thou shalt not hesitate to sing with the choir for they fervently want you to join with them.

X. Thou shalt never forget the words of the Psalmist: “I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live.” True and certain it is that God loves us when we work, but he loves us all the more when we sing.

(Reprinted from the Fall 2015 edition of *Keynotes*, the newsletter of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Author is unknown.)

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 February issue should be submitted by January 18. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

➤ Join the St. John's Book Club on **Tuesday, January 5, at 7:30 p.m.** as they discuss *The Astronaut Wives Club* by Lily Koppel. The **February 2** selection is *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy* by Rachel Joyce. All are welcome!

Rest in Peace:

➤ Wilma Stoper, Paul Stenger's cousin.

Thank you to:

➤ Lynn Robinson for delivering the Angel Tree gifts.
➤ Peter Olivere for his service as stewardship chair.
➤ All those who helped with the Christmas pageant, especially Family Programs Minister Whitney Coleman, Beth and Brian Cavey and Vladi Wien for organizing set up and take down, Peter Olivere for taking photos, Carol Dunlap for providing music, and all other unseen adults who helped.

Congratulations to:

➤ The Christmas pageant cast members—Jack Birmingham, Tina Cavey, Amalya Tello, Graciella Tello, Miguel Tello, and Nora Wien. You all did a great job, and everyone enjoyed it.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in January:

Patricia Broida, Keelyn Del Gallo, Don Hess, Tony Kollath, Mary Mackin, Janet Spence, Paul Stenger, and Cynthia Todd.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in January:

Robert L. Rawls, III, and Harriet Sheehan Rawls; Anna and David Scherer.

Thank you so much to the anonymous donor who left me a very generous Christmas gift. I'm taking a cruise at the end of February around the tip of South America, and it will be great fun to have some discretionary souvenir spending. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

Carol Dunlap