



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

June 2016

Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love: VBS 2016



VBS 2015 participants shared fun and fellowship while learning about the first followers of Jesus.

Get ready to learn about God's amazing love as St. John's prepares for Vacation Bible School (VBS) 2016. VBS will be held July 18–22 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Dinner is included each day. The theme for 2016 is "Surf Shack—Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love."

Each day will center on a water-themed Bible story. Participants will also experience music, games, arts and crafts, mission projects, and a day featuring water recreation.

Preschoolers to rising fifth graders are welcome to enroll. The cost is \$25 per child (\$5 for additional siblings). For more information and a registration form, visit the St. John's web site at www.stjohnsarlingtonva.org/Family_Programs/Vacation-Bible-School. Additional information is also available by calling 703-671-6834 or sending an email to familyprograms@stjohnsarlingtonva.org.

From the Rector: The Power of Resilience

One of the topics at the recent clergy conference I attended was wellness. Of course there were the presentations on food and exercise, but there was also a presentation on resilience as a part of overall health. Resilience is the ability to handle stress, changes, and challenges. The more resilient you are, the healthier you will be.

Handling a stressor in a resilient way takes several steps. First, pinpoint the problem. Exactly what is causing the stress? Sometimes the cause is obvious, but other times it is less so. Make sure you know what the challenge is you are addressing. Sometimes it helps to talk about it with someone you trust. Other times it helps to write about it. Often things will come to you in writing that won't appear any other way.

Change negative thinking into positive thinking. Last week I went into the bathroom on Sunday night and found that the cold water was running in the faucet, left over from when I had washed something the night before and forgot to turn it off. My first thought was the water bill, but my second thought was, "Thank God I walked into the bathroom tonight to get something else. I can go days without entering the guest bathroom. It could have been much worse." Thinking positively is harder for some of us than others, but it is a habit just like any other that can be acquired through practice. Once you have looked for the positive, let go of the negative feelings. You will be less overwhelmed.

Learn to handle rejection, whether it is not getting a job or the end of a romantic relationship or someone you asked to volunteer saying no. Remember, it is not because you are bad, but because the fit wasn't right. (Of course there are people rejected for all sorts of unacceptable reasons like race and class and sexual preference, and that is a stressor in

itself, requiring political and social action that you may need to join. Trying to break down social barriers requires extra resilience.)

Go do something else for a while. It is good to focus on the challenge to try to find a solution, but too much focus can lead to obsession, separating you from possible resources. Take a walk. Dig in the dirt. Go to the gym. Go out with a friend. Put the situation on hold when you need to. Sometimes new thoughts will surface when we are distracted.

Ask for help. We are meant to live in community and that should be one major source of strength during stressful times. Someone you know—or maybe someone you don't—has a little bit of information to add to what you are learning about your issues and how to deal with them.

See the possibilities in the situation rather than the limitations. It might take a while to find them but like negative thinking, looking for the openings in a situation instead of the barriers is a habit we can develop. It may sometimes take some time to find them, but you will. What might you try that you haven't tried before? What new action could you take? Cooperate with God, who is in the midst of the problem with you. Ask what your job is and what God's job is, then wait for an answer. Meanwhile work on what you can and leave the rest until later. God's time is not always our time, and our situation may take longer to resolve than we want it to, but know that God is fully involved with you and your work.

Believe that God is taking care of you. God wants the best for you out of this situation. Sometimes the stress has gone on so long that you just don't believe that. You feel like you have been asking God for answers for ages, and they are not coming. Go ahead and act like God is taking care of you even if you don't

believe it. Thank God for whatever you can. Gratitude will take us far, and we will come to know of God's care.

Stress is a part of life, and the way we handle it has a big impact on our health. So

when you have a challenge to face, put your stress toolbox together and ask for help from God and your neighbor. You will cope much better and enhance your overall well being.

Ann †

An Introduction to EfM

Education for Ministry (EfM) has been an integral part of St. John's for 17 years. Many parishioners have studied and reflected through the 4-year program, but for those who have not, what is EfM?

EfM is a four-pronged journey consisting of a year of focus on each of the emphasis areas: Hebrew scriptures, Christian scriptures, church history, and philosophy and theology. The program also features weekly fellowship and worship. The cornerstone of the program is theological reflection, which helps bring belief into personal action.

The worldwide EfM program is currently in its fourth year of transitioning to a new system of study. Instead of the previous binders with study material, the program now relies on existing texts by respected academics. St. John's EfM program is also going through a transition. Dr. Patricia Bleicher, who has been the faithful leader of the St. John's group over

the past 17 years, is retiring. I am humbly taking the reins.

My request to the congregation is simple. For those who have been through the program, but think they might like a refresher on a particularly meaningful year of study, you are invited to repeat a year under the new system. We currently have needs for participants studying Years 2 (Christian scriptures) and 4 (philosophy and theology) in particular. You are also welcome to repeat the entire program. For those who have never been through EfM, I encourage you to consider signing up for Year 1 in the fall. We meet on Sunday evenings from 6-9 p.m. from September through June.

We look forward to continuing St. John's tradition of strengthening and enlightening the laity. If you have questions or want to register, please contact me at 703-362-4331 or efm@stjohnsarlingtonva.org.

Beth Cavey

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 Thomson, Senior Warden
Sandy Winger, Junior Warden
Jeff Aitken
Teresa Birmingham

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Del Hunt
Lisa Pope
John Restall

Words on Hymns: *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

The text for our processional hymn on June 5, *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*, was written by Charles Wesley. Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns, many of which were subsequently reprinted, frequently with alterations, in hymnals, particularly those of Methodist churches.

Charles Wesley was suffering a bout of pleurisy in May 1738 while he and his brother were studying under the Moravian scholar Peter Böhler in London. At the time, Wesley was plagued by extreme doubts about his faith. Taking to bed with the sickness on May 21, Wesley was attended by a group of Christians who offered him testimony and basic care, and he was struck by this. He read from his Bible and found himself deeply affected by the words, and at peace with God. Shortly after, his strength began to return. He wrote of this experience in his journal and counted it as a renewal of his faith. When his brother John had a similar experience on May 24, the two men met and sang a hymn Wesley had written in praise of his renewal.

One year after the experience, Wesley had the urge to write another hymn, this one in commemoration of his renewal of faith. This hymn took the form of an 18-stanza poem, beginning with the opening lines, “Glory to God, and praise, and love/Be ever, ever given.” It was published in 1740 and entitled, “For the anniversary day of one’s conversion.” The seventh verse, which begins, “O for a thousand tongues to sing,” and which now is invariably the first verse of the shorter hymn, recalls the words of Böhler, who said, “Had I a thousand tongues I would praise Him with them all.” The hymn was placed first in John Wesley’s *A Collection of Hymns for the People Called Methodists*, published in 1780. It appeared first in every (Wesleyan) Methodist hymnal from that time until the publication of

Hymns and Psalms in 1983. Today the hymn is often condensed into a smaller number of stanzas (typically between six and eight). Our 1982 hymnal stops at six verses.

In the United States, the hymn is commonly sung to Lowell Mason’s 1839 arrangement of the hymn tune *Azmon*, written by Carl G. Glaser (1784–1829) in 1828. Glaser was born in Germany, where he received musical training. He became a teacher of voice, violin, and piano. Glaser also composed choral music and was a well-known conductor.

Lowell Mason (1792–1872) was a leading figure in American church music and the composer of over 1,600 hymn tunes, many of which are often sung today. His most well-known tunes include his arrangement of *Joy to the World* and *Bethany*, his setting of the hymn *Nearer, My God, to Thee*. He was largely responsible for introducing music into American public schools, and is considered to be the first important music educator in the United States. He is also widely criticized for his role in helping to largely eliminate the robust tradition of participatory sacred music that flourished in America before his time.

Mason was born and grew up in Medfield, Massachusetts, where he became the Music Director of First Parish (now First Parish Unitarian Universalist) Church at age 17. He spent the first part of his adulthood in Savannah, Georgia. Mason had very strong amateur musical interests and studied music with the German teacher Frederick L. Abel, eventually starting to write his own music. He also became a leader in the music of the Independent Presbyterian Church, where he served as choir director and organist before settling in Boston.

Following an earlier British model, Mason embarked on producing a hymnal whose tunes

would be drawn from the work of European classical composers, such as Haydn and Mozart. He encountered great difficulty in finding a publisher for this work. It was ultimately published in 1822 by the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, one of the earliest American organizations devoted to classical music. Mason's hymnal was highly successful.

On the one hand, the editors of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* criticize Mason for his focus on European classical music as a model for Americans. The *New Grove* editors believe that Mason's introduction of European models for American hymnody choked off a flourishing participatory native tradition of church music. The new music generally required the support of an organ, which was a Mason family business. On the other hand, Mason is given credit for popularizing European classical music in a region where it was seldom performed.

The tradition that Mason largely succeeded in defeating retreated to the inland rural South, where it resisted efforts at conversion, surviving in the form of, for example, Sacred Harp music. This choral music tradition takes its name from the 1844 *The Sacred Harp* songbook. The genre has grown in popularity as Americans in all regions rediscover the vigor of pre-Lowell Mason American sacred music.

Carol Dunlap

The Sunday Seminar's focus for June is on racial issues. The group is discussing the book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James Cone. Even if you have not read the book, come and join the discussion at 9 a.m in the parlor.

St. John's Monthly Financial Statement

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| April income: | \$11,567 |
| Pledge + Plate: | \$9,597 |
| Year-to-date income: | \$41,276 |
| April expense: | \$11,469 |
| Year-to-date expense: | \$48,163 |

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.

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

- St. John's will once again sell hot dogs and beverages as the neighborhood celebrates Glencarlyn Day on June 4. Stop by from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and support Bill Thomson and the many other St. John's volunteers leading this effort!
- Join the St. John's Book Club on **Tuesday, June 7, at 7:30 p.m.** as they discuss *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. The club will take a break during July and August, but get ready for the **September 6** meeting by diving into *Alexander Hamilton* by Ron Chernow. This riveting biography is the basis for the hit Broadway musical *Hamilton*. All are welcome!

Thank you to:

- Diane Henderson, Lisa Pope, and Lynn Robinson for their wonderful work in organizing the Spring Tea on May 7. We had more than 50 people in attendance and raised over \$1,100. Thank you to everyone who helped with set up and clean up and brought the delicious food that always makes the St. John's teas so popular.
- Pat Bleicher for preaching on May 8.
- Church members, Offender Aid and Restoration of Arlington workers, and others who have worked so hard to complete the nursery renovations. A particular thank you to Teresa and Mike Birmingham for coordinating the efforts, Lynn Robinson for making the curtains, and Del Hunt, Pete Olivere, Bill Pritchard, and Anne Stenger for their support.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in June:

Charles Adair, Sam Beavin, Michael Cavey, Cathi Del Gallo, Angie France, Paul Harless, Adrienne Hubbard, Matthew Hubbard, Kaipo McCartney, Leslie Mead, Stacy O'Connor, Lisa Pope, Faye Pritchard, James Robinson, Jones Tallent, Matthew Tallent, and Christopher Van Wyk

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in June:

Peter and Patricia Broida; Romana and Vernon Martin; Ray and Stacy O'Connor; Barbara and Pete Olivere; Rev. Peter and Angela Swarr; Eileen and Bob Tallent; and John and Valerie Wilson.

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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 July issue should be submitted by June 20.