



# 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*

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November 2017

## Invite Welcome Connect

Rooted in the Gospel command to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), Invite Welcome Connect is a ministry that equips and empowers both clergy and congregations to cultivate a spirit of evangelism, hospitality, and connectedness. Rev. Ann Barker and the St. John's vestry are exploring how the church can draw inspiration and learn from the program as St. John's expands its welcoming ministry.

Created by Mary Parmer and developed through the Episcopal Diocese of Texas Newcomer Ministry Project, Invite Welcome Connect is now a ministry of the Becken Center at the University of the South (Sewanee) School of Theology. Designed to accommodate congregations of all sizes, the program challenges complacency and inaction to promote what Parmer calls "The Way of Welcome." Do newcomers see Christ in us? Are we sharing the faith inside of us and listening to and learning from what is inside of other people? How can we creatively invite our local community and make them feel welcome and connected once they walk through our doors? Visit [www.invitewelcomeconnect.com](http://www.invitewelcomeconnect.com) to learn more about the Way of Welcome, begin to think about how you can support this ministry, and stay tuned to *LOGOS* for more information as the program develops at St. John's!



## Open Arms and Open Hearts: Offering a Special Welcome

St. John's recently placed an ad on the prescription bags for Arlington Pharmacy on Wilson Boulevard that will run for the next 18 months. "We hope the ad will prompt some of those who see it to visit the church," said Rev. Ann Barker. Some of these individuals may be facing difficult situations in their lives, such as a serious medical diagnosis or the loss of a family member. As with all visitors, St. John's needs to welcome them with open arms and listen to their stories. Be on the lookout for newcomers, ask them how they heard about the church, and listen to what they have to say. You can always let them know that Rev. Ann Barker is happy to visit with them and steer them to Ann as needed. Thank you for being the loving and open-hearted community that you are.

## Join the Discussion with the Sunday Seminar

The Adult Sunday Seminar is working its way through *The Evolution of God* by Robert Wright. The group recently took a break to study Buddhism and will also break away from its normal schedule to engage in an Advent study. Everyone is invited to join the lively discussions!



St. John's shared food and fellowship with community members at the Spaghetti Supper on October 21.

## From the Rector: Choose Life

Every day we make all kinds of choices. We choose what to wear, what to eat, and which lane to drive in. We make choices about what we are going to watch on TV, whether we are going to paint the den, and what time to go to bed. These choices are based on preferences. They don't have a deep impact on our lives. But there are choices that affect us deeply. Brother David Vryhoff of the Society of St. John the Evangelist says that every time we make one of these choices, "we are turning some deep and inner part of ourselves into something a little different than it was before. We are slowly turning this inner part of ourselves into something that is in harmony with God and with God's purposes in the world—or into something that is contrary to them."

To choose to turn toward God, we need to make decisions that will bring life. One decision we can make is for abundance. We can begin to consciously look at all the things God has given us, to focus on what we have rather than what we don't have and to be grateful to God. A speaker I heard recently spoke of the abundance Jesus gave in the feeding of the 5,000. He said Jesus gave them all the food they needed when they perceived there was not enough food. He didn't teach them how they should go without. God chooses abundance for us every time. God wants our cup to be full, pressed down, and running over, as the Bible says. We need to look at the ways that is true for us, which will help us trust that God will keep providing for us.

Choose acceptance. Every person on earth belongs to God, even the people we just can't stand, and we are told to love them just as they are, even if we don't like their ideas. Remember, nothing can be changed unless it is first accepted. Choose to be inclusive, to be Christ's hands and feet welcoming everyone.

And in that tolerance, choose not to label people, not to put them in a tidy corner labeled friend or foe. Another opponent to tolerance and acceptance is comparison. Too often we put ourselves above or below others, when we are just other human beings doing our best to get along.

Choose an open heart. Be open to the possibilities that God brings to all our lives. Instead of seeing road blocks, see opportunities for growth and follow them. God can enter our lives and direct them much more fully if we have an open heart that mirrors God's and not a hardened heart, a non-changeable, non-listening heart, which is what got God's people in trouble in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Choose change. Often of course change happens and is not our choice, but when we can choose, a change for the better will stand us in good stead. Of course some changes for the better are easy to spot, such as quitting smoking, taking a promotion, or giving money to a homeless person. Others are more difficult and harder for us to jump into—opening our own business and taking the risk that goes along with it or daring to do something different to put our daily routine in a better balance so that some of the things we often unconsciously long for can take place. God puts it in our hearts to make changes according to God's way, and we need to listen.

Choose encouragement. Everyone needs encouragement to help them handle difficult situations, to help them feel good about themselves, to give them a boost to make one of those changes. We can so easily choose to judge and to discourage, to tell people that what they want to do is impossible without looking deeper into the idea. Sometimes we discourage our children from doing something or fail to encourage a budding talent, and we don't want to do this. Encourage your friends,

your co-workers, your children—and don't forget yourself. God encourages us in our endeavors, and we need to do the same.

Choose relationship. Relationship is what our faith and our lives are based on. We are interdependent on one another, needing one another's help to make it through life. Others help us with skills and abilities we don't have, pray for us, and form loving communities around us that give us strength. Choose to build up those relationships in your life. We are one body in Christ and that means we must all work together to spread the gospel.

In God's world, there are many choices we can make that turn us toward God or away

from God. But there is one choice we can't make. We can't choose not to be God's beloved children. That is God's choice, and God has eternally chosen for us. What we can do is make a choice to deny or accept this reality. To accept this reality is to experience the love of God in all its fullness. To deny it is to lose a part of ourselves. That's the biggest choice we can make and the one in which ultimately all our choices are a part. Choose God. Choose life.

Ann †

### *St. John's Monthly Financial Statement*

September income:	\$6,438
Pledge + Plate:	\$5,481
Year-to-date income:	\$86,770
September expense:	\$13,478
Year-to-date expense:	\$123,797

### **St. John's Staff and Leadership**

#### **Staff**

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker  
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson  
Organist: Judith Marcinko  
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson  
Nursery Attendant: Kaitlyn Osteguín  
Sexton: Julio Sorto

#### **Vestry**

Lisa Pope, Senior Warden  
Bryan Harbin, Junior Warden  
Jeff Aitken

#### **Parish Leaders**

Bill Thomson, Treasurer  
John Restall, Pledge Clerk  
Dave Dunlap, Chair, Finance Committee  
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Diane Henderson  
Del Hunt  
John Restall

## Parish News

### Upcoming Events:

- The St. John's Book Club will meet **Tuesday, November 7**, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *The Rules of Civility* by Amor Towles. The **December 5** selection is *Commonwealth* by Ann Patchett, which tells the story of how an unexpected encounter changes the lives of two families forever.
- Bring your favorite dish and join St. John's and Cristo Rey for a Thanksgiving Potluck on **Sunday, November 19**, at 2:30 p.m. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

### Thank you to:

- Sandy Winger for coordinating the "Build Your Own Sub" event on October 8 and managing the Fall Cleanup Days on October 14 and 21.
- Everyone who came out to help with Fall Cleanup.
- Debbie Carter for organizing this year's Shrine Mont retreat.
- Peter Olivere for setting up the church's new DVD player and working on the 2018 stewardship letters.
- Carrie Harbin and Barbara Wien for organizing the Spaghetti Supper on October 21 and all those who helped by bringing food, setting up, and cleaning up afterward.
- Kendrah McDonald, Lynn Robinson, and Lisa Pope for once again stepping in to coordinate the Halloween Party on October 22 and to Nora and Barbara Wien and all others who helped.
- Michael Birmingham, Barbara Olivere, Lynn Robinson, and Bill Thomson for giving stewardship talks.

### We celebrate with all who have birthdays in November:

Bronwen Berliner; Gage Buchanan; Jud Buchanan; Dave Dunlap; Beth Fowler; Douglas LeSage; Roger Ludwig; Keith McCartney; Robert "Larry" Rawls, III; Dave Robinson; and Laura VanWyk.

### We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in November:

Jeff and Michelle Aitken; Beth and Brian Cavey; Del and Carole Hunt; Kendrah and Robert McDonald.



St. John's held its annual Blessing of the Animals on October 1 at Shirlington Dog Park and the church.

## Shrine Mont Retreat Offers Rest and Reflection

Our annual Shrine Mont retreat from October 13–15 was attended by 12 parishioners and guests. All enjoyed the opportunities for rest, reflection, and recreation. Rev. Ann Barker led a workshop on "Seeing God in your world," which encouraged us to venture out in nature, while I introduced the Chicago Diocese's wellness program, "Living Compass." Diane Henderson provided a 30-minute guided meditation as well. For Sunday worship at the outdoor shrine, we were joined by two other congregations.

Other activities included an ice cream social, hiking, fishing, and porch sitting. As always, we also enjoyed the fellowship at mealtimes (comfort food served family style).

If you were unable to join us this year, we invite you to next year's retreat: October 12–14, 2018!

Debbie Carter



Twelve St. John's parishioners and guests enjoyed the annual Shrine Mont retreat in October.

### St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's Episcopal Church is an inclusive congregation that nurtures Christian spiritual growth and community through worship, education, outreach, mutual care, and fellowship.

### St. John's Mission Statement

St. John's mission is building a strong spiritual community in Christ; welcoming all who enter our doors, including believers, seekers, and doubters; and reaching out to those in need both within our congregation and around us.

### LOGOS

LOGOS is published monthly at the beginning of the month, except for a combined July/August issue.

Lisa Pope, LOGOS Editor

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

The deadline for the December issue is November 17. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.