



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

March 2018

Taking Church to the World: Ashes to Go



St. John's distributed Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro station on Ash Wednesday.

St. John's once again observed Ash Wednesday by offering Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro station on February 14 during the morning and evening rush hours. Approximately 40 commuters received ashes during that time. From Arlington to New York City to Chicago, Episcopal churches across the country aim to bring church "into the streets" and to the world through Ashes to Go. It is a reminder of Lent, an opportunity to touch the community around us, and a moment to feel closer to God.

From the Rector: The Power of Inclusion

One of the things that Jesus did best was be inclusive. Jesus included people in his life and ministry that others were uncomfortable with and had excluded from the rest of society to keep themselves feeling good. Jesus even included a Syro-Phoenician woman whose daughter was ill. Though he rejected her at first from being part of his ministry, he changed his mind when he saw her faith in him. He modeled the positive results that inclusivity can have.

It's important to be inclusive in our lives too. We need to have all sorts of experiences to be happy, healthy, and hopeful people, ready to seek God's will and pursue it and secure in the knowledge that God loves us and wants the best for us and for those we include in our lives.

Perhaps one of the most important things we need to let into our lives is grace. First, we need to allow God to grace us. Many of us have grown up with the idea that it is all up to us or we will never get where we need to be. But we have at best only a dim view of where we need to be. God has the clear vision and God is willing to give it to us, without us having to earn or deserve anything. It is important to include that vision of God in all that we do. God is always there, even when we don't recognize it. God can be really silent sometimes, making us wonder and worry whether God is with us, but God has promised to be there and God keeps God's promises. If we look back on our experiences, whether they be of something that went well or something that was a challenge, we won't be able to see the whole picture unless we put God in it. Seeing where God is and was strengthens our faith.

We have been blessed with so much grace that we need to include it in our daily lives. Brother Mark Brown of the Society of St. John

the Evangelist says that it is important to be gracious to people who have only unkind words to say or those who wish us harm. We are to love our enemies, right down to the people who are an annoyance and a bother. That doesn't mean accepting unacceptable behavior. It just means being God's good people when our equanimity is challenged. Graciousness also includes giving when people cannot give in return, he says. When we give from the generous abundance we have been given, we are doing Christ's work on earth and receiving that wonderful feeling that comes when we help someone who needs it.

We need to include some diversity in our lives to give them sparkle and color and variety. Whenever possible, we need to be in relationship with people who are different than we are in characteristics such as age, race, socioeconomic level, sexual preference, and religion. Others' perspectives broaden our horizons and vice versa.

We need to include space in our lives. Space where we are not scheduled. Space where we can allow God to come in and direct us. Space for spontaneity. Paradoxically, when we include space, we also sometimes need to exclude. Sometimes we need to give up things in order to create emotional as well as physical space. There is even a website called LettingGo that provides a place to sell things we have trouble shedding. There are also all sorts of organizations that would be happy to receive the things we need to discard in order to thrive.

We need to belong. Just as we need to include, we need to be included and we need to have some places and people we belong to. Our families, our neighbors, our colleagues, our church communities, and other social groups all help us to connect, to be in relationship, and that is what God made us for.

Above all we need to include belonging to God in our world view. And God belongs in all parts of our lives—not just when we need God for an intercession or an emergency but all the time.

Jesus modeled inclusivity for us. He included God and others in his life. He

received grace, and he bestowed grace. He left space in his life for God to happen, for miracles to happen, for love to happen. The more inclusive we are, the closer we get to being the whole person God intended us to be.

Ann †

Sunday Seminar Studies Sin and Restoration

During Lent, the Adult Sunday Seminar is studying “Restored: Finding Redemption in Our Mess.” This study centers on human beings created in the image and likeness of God and defines sin as a coating of grime over that image. The image of God in humans can be restored through repentance and God’s grace. Seminar participants are looking for another book study for April and May. Come join the discussion at 9 a.m. in the parlor.

St. John’s Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Judith Marcinko
Family Programs Director: Galen Henderson
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Nursery Attendant: Kaitlyn Osteguin
Sexton: Julio Sorto

Vestry

Lisa Pope, Senior Warden
Bryan Harbin, Junior Warden
Diane Henderson
Del Hunt

Parish Leaders

Peter Olivere, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Dave Dunlap, Chair, Finance Committee
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Peter Olivere
John Restall
Bill Thomson

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

- Join the St. John's Book Club on **Tuesday, March 6**, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *My Cousin Rachel* by Daphne du Maurier. The **April 3** selection is *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. This novel tells the tale of Count Alexander Rostov, who is sentenced to house arrest in Moscow's grand Metropol Hotel.
- St. John's will participate in the Region III Lenten project, Rise Against Hunger, on **Saturday, March 17** at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex and drop your contributions in the red bucket in the sanctuary. During the three-hour event, volunteers will package more than 15,000 meals.
- Bring your favorite board or card game and come participate in Game Night on **Saturday, March 17**, at 7 p.m. Invite your friends and neighbors to be part of this fun-filled evening.

Thank you to:

- The Shrove Tuesday pancake supper volunteers: Bill Thomson, coordinator; Del and Carole Hunt, who purchased the food and did set-up and clean-up; Marshall Adair; Jeff Aitken; Brian Cavey; Pete Olivere; Paul Stenger; and Jeff Wallace.
- Kay Wells for providing the decorations for the pancake supper.
- Roger Ludwig and Linda Trochim for their help with Ashes to Go.
- Lynn Robinson for coordinating the monthly game nights.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in March:

Rev. Ann Barker, Bobby Candelieri, Beth Cavey, Pierce Kaufman, Ian Kunkle, Kendrah McDonald, Peter Olivere, Cristina Tallent, Dave Vistica, and Nora Wien-Herman.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in March:

Debbie and Henry Carter; Jim and Janice Hull; Anne and Paul Stenger.



Members of St. John's and the community enjoyed the annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on Feb. 13.

Words on Hymns: *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Our processional hymn for March 11 will be *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*. Perhaps all hymns are to some extent autobiographical in that they reveal something of the author's spiritual experience. In some hymns, however, the autobiographical thread is stronger and more obvious. Such is the case with British Baptist hymn writer Robert Robinson (1735–1790).

A favorite line in the second half of the last stanza, “Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love,” is thought to be particularly autobiographical, referring to Robinson's early life, when his mother sent him to London to be a barber's apprentice. It was during this time, according to hymnologist Kenneth Osbeck, that “he associated with a notorious gang of hoodlums and lived a debauched life” until he came under the spell of George Whitefield's preaching.

After his conversion in 1755, Robinson first preached at a Calvinistic Methodist chapel at Mildenhall, Suffolk, and then founded his own independent congregation at Norwich. He was rebaptized in 1759 after taking up Baptist theological perspectives. This led to his nearly 30-year tenure (1761–1790) as pastor of Stone Yard Baptist Church at Cambridge. Baptist hymnologist William Reynolds notes that Robinson “was an unusual man, and, while lacking formal education, he rose to great prominence as a preacher, scholar.” Robinson published *A History of Baptists* in 1790.

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, written in 1758, when Robinson was only 22 years old, was published in 1759 as the first in a collection of hymns. Martin Madan included the first three stanzas in his *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (1760), which established the practice of eliminating the original fourth stanza. The missing stanza follows:

*O that Day when freed from sinning/I shall see
thy lovely Face;
Clothed then in blood-washed Linnen
[sic]/How I'll sing thy sovereign grace;*

*Come, my Lord, no longer tarry/Take my
ransom'd Soul away;
Send thine Angels now to carry/Me to realms
of endless Day.*

One of the most obvious biblical allusions appears in the second stanza: “Here I raise mine Ebenezer/hither by thy help I'm come.” The Hymnal Revision Committee for the 1989 *United Methodist Hymnal* received requests to alter this stanza by omitting the term “Ebenezer,” which means “Stone of Help,” a reference to 1 Samuel 7:12: “Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah, and named it Ebenezer; for he said, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’” But not finding a suitable substitute, the committee chose to keep the original language.

In later years, Robinson again lapsed into a “debauched” life. The story is told that he was one day riding a stagecoach with a woman who was deeply engrossed in a hymn book. During an ensuing conversation, the lady asked Robinson what he thought of the hymn she was humming. Robinson burst into tears and said, “Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then.” It is said that she responded by telling him, “Sir, the ‘streams of mercy’ are still flowing.”

In the United States, the tune *Nettleton* has been the most common but not exclusive musical setting for this famous and well-loved text. The tune first appeared in John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second* (1813). It has been attributed to Wyeth (1770–1858), a printer by trade, who was known in the history of hymnody as a compiler and publisher of early shape-note tune books. However, there is no evidence that he also wrote music, as he was not himself a musician.

Nettleton has also been attributed to Asahel Nettleton (1783–1844), who was a well-known evangelist of the early 19th century. Nettleton published *Village Hymns* (1825), but this

compilation had no music and there is no indication that Nettleton wrote any tunes at any time. The tune is very singer-friendly, in that it is all contained within one octave. It repeats the same phrase three times, with only one variance for a line and a half before returning to the familiar. Since the tune is so easily sung, plenty of attention can be given to the text.

Carol Dunlap

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.

Understanding Planned Gifts

Planned giving is a way for you to integrate your personal, financial, and estate planning by making lifetime or other forms of charitable gifts. Following are some common types of planned gifts. To learn more about the benefits of each and how you can set up these gifts, visit dvagiving.org or contact the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia at 804-622-3175 (email: jsimonton@thediocese.net).

Bequest—A gift made through your will or trust. This is the simplest type of planned gift.

Charitable Remainder Trust—Your cash or property funds a trust that makes payments for your lifetime or a number of years and then what remains is passed to the church. You receive income without having to pay capital gains tax.

Life Estate Reserved—Your personal residence or farm is transferred to the church. You retain the right to use the property for your lifetime and also receive an income tax deduction.

Charitable Gift Annuity—You make a gift of cash or property and receive fixed income in return.

Family Lead Trust—You transfer your cash or property to a trust that makes payments to the church for a defined number of years. The trust property is then passed to your family without them having to pay any additional tax.

Bargain Sale—Your property is purchased for less than fair market value. In return, you receive cash or debt relief and a charitable deduction.

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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 (preferred) or left at the church office.

The deadline for the April issue is March 20. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.