



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

November 2018

Renewing the Spirit at Shrine Mont

Last month, 10 St. John's parishioners and guests attended a wonderful weekend of fellowship and spiritual renewal at Shrine Mont. Rev. Ann Barker guided us in spiritual reflection based on our wanderings in the splendors of nature. Diane Henderson led us through a beautiful guided meditation. Saturday night many of us attended a gospel concert and sing-along sponsored by Grace Church Kilmarnock. We also enjoyed free time socializing at the newly refurbished Meade Cottage. We hope you consider joining us next year!

Debbie Carter



Shrine Mont activities included meditation, worship, crafts, ice cream, and relaxation amidst nature.

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From the Rector: Listen With Your Heart

One of the activities we did at Shrine Mont was using our senses to take in the world around us. We all went somewhere outdoors and sat in quiet and reflected on what we saw and heard and smelled and touched. We all found little details from using all our senses, but one of the most telling was listening, maybe because it is something we don't take time to do very often. People heard the wind blowing and brooks babbling, birds singing, and a dissonant airplane flying overhead. The exercise helped us stop and use our ears to take in what the world was saying and how we fit in.

The practice of listening is something we all need to develop. Reflections on what we hear are a major way to learn about ourselves and our connection with God's world. It is important to listen without judgment, to ponder what we have heard, and to respond to what our ears (and our heart) have told us as we move forward into life. Some of the most important things we can listen to are ourselves, others, and God.

Listening to ourselves is often an exercise in frustration because we have a lot of negative self-images. As a friend of mine says, this leads to having a constant to-do list of self-improvement projects that we never get done. That's not to say there are not things we should be working on, but it is to say that many of us block our own ability to listen to ourselves because we've learned that listening usually brings criticism. If we want to develop active listening to become the best we can be, we have to be quiet long enough to let the critical images disappear. They will, if we are patient, and then we can really listen.

What do we listen to? First, we listen to our desires. What is it we really want to be and do? Would we rather be in another career? Do we want more friends? How about more

sleep or taking time for recreational activities? Do we want to help our children grow and support our adult children as they need it? Bishop Johnston has a desire to play the cello when he retires. My brother-in-law wants to go to Machu Picchu. My sister is pretty ambivalent about that because her desire is not to fly unless she absolutely has to. Not all of our desires are equally beneficial for us. We may want to hide our emotions with food or alcohol. We may want to manipulate family members into acting certain ways. We may want to hold on to every cent and not be generous with our financial gifts. These will not serve us well and will hurt others. Once we listen to our desires, we can sift them with the help of a trusted mentor or in prayer.

Another important thing to listen to is our weaknesses. We all have them; they are nothing to be ashamed of. Most of us think we shouldn't have any weaknesses; some of us even think that we don't have any weaknesses. But they are a part of us, defining our lives just as much as our desires do. We need help where we are weak. I am miserable at most technology, so I ask for help. I am directionally challenged and the GPS isn't completely trustworthy, so I rely on people to help me with directions beyond what Google Maps provides. Weakness helps us connect with our true selves as well and helps us be in relationship with others, which is what we are made to be.

We also need to listen to others. People outside of us can provide insights into who we are and what would suit us sometimes better than we can. They don't hear that critical voice in our heads and if they have a critical voice, we are better off not listening. That doesn't mean we don't listen to justified criticisms, it just means that we ignore people who are mean. We listen to friends, family, and

colleagues and we reflect. We don't necessarily take something at face value. Again we need to sift what has been said to see what makes sense—and know that often it is the good stuff that hits the mark.

Another person who can help may be the last person whom we would consider—a stranger, a barely-known colleague, a homeless person, someone we do not like. Sometimes folks outside our circle have listened carefully to what we say and do and present an accurate assessment that makes us pause and consider.

We need to listen for God. Some of us are afraid that if we listen, God will call us to do something we don't want to do. I used to think God would call me to be a missionary—one of the things I definitely didn't want to do. But funny things happen. I do not live in a foreign country with no running water and no electricity, but I try to help people deepen their relationships with God and live into their baptism. God's voice is not often the first voice you hear when you are meditating. Those voices that come fast and furious are often our

own thoughts and we need the still small voice that comes through in our hearts. That means being quiet for a while, letting our inner voices fall away, and listening for God's call. God calls us to be all we can be. Sometimes that is not what we expect or think we desire and sometimes it is just what we have been longing for. God wants joy and abundance and hope to be in our lives; God's voice may chastise, but it is never mean and nasty.

Listening with our ears—and our hearts—is a skill we can develop through practice. Practice listening to what others are saying without trying to formulate your response while they are still talking. Make it a point to ask yourself about what has been said. Does something someone else said resonate with me or not? Stay open to God's call on your life. Listening to God, ourselves, and others gives us new life and helps us move forward into the future with new insights and new hope.

Ann †

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Judith Marcinko
Interim Family Programs Director: Jonathan Muehlke
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Seminarian: Chip Russell
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

St. John's Monthly Financial Update Through September 2018

Income and Expenses	September	Year to Date	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Income (all)*	\$ 10,095	\$ 104,946	\$ 121,600	86%
Expenses (all)*	\$ 14,802	\$ 145,162	\$ 174,871	83%
Income minus Expenses	\$ (4,707)	\$ (40,216)	\$ (53,271)	75%

* Both general operations and designated funds.

All Fund Balances	End of September	End of 2017	Change through Sept.	% Change from 2017
	\$ 170,946	\$ 207,103	\$ (36,157)	(17%)

September is 75% of the year, and St. John's expenses continue to exceed the income as the budget had forecast. To finance this imbalance, St. John's is drawing from its investments, using 17% of the 2018 starting balance through September with a projection of using about 25% by the end of the year.

St. John's Welcomes Chip Russell

St. John's welcomed new seminarian Chip Russell in September. A second-year student at Virginia Theological Seminary, Chip will serve at St. John's until December 2019. He hails originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, but lived in four states by the time he was 10 years old. Eventually his family settled in Indiana. Growing up, he played soccer, became interested in computers, and sang in many choirs both inside and outside of church. Chip met his wife Carissa while in Texas attending college. "I am grateful every day for the blessing she is in my life," he says. After college and while Carissa pursued her master's degree, Chip worked in information technology as a systems administrator. Now that he is a seminary student, "I spend some of my more practical free time scheming about how to use the Internet as a tool for ministry," notes Chip. His free time is also spent writing science fiction and leading role playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons. "My hopes for my time at St. John's are many," says Chip. "If I had to pick one to share, it would be to grow into a genuine and caring preacher whose work touches and inspires."



Words on Hymns: A Tribute to Peace

The hymns for our November 11 service commemorate the ending of World War I, “the war to end war,” in the phrase coined by H.G. Wells. The holiday was called “Armistice Day” for many years before being celebrated as Veterans Day. The armistice was signed to go into effect at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 1918. Our three hymns for that day as a tribute to peace are *God of Our Fathers, It Is Well with My Soul (When Peace Like a River)*, and *Go Forth for God; Go to the World in Peace*.

Daniel C. Roberts (1841–1907) wrote *God of Our Fathers* in 1876 for July 4 centennial celebrations in Brandon, Vermont, where he was rector at St. Thomas Episcopal Church. This text was later chosen as the theme hymn for the centennial celebration of the adoption of the United States Constitution. It was published in the Protestant Episcopal *Hymnal* of 1892. The prayer of the third verse says:

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
be thy strong arm our ever sure defense,
thy true religion in our hearts increase,
thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

It Is Well with My Soul was written by Horatio Spafford after several tragic events in his life: the death of his son at the age of two; the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which ruined him financially due to significant investments in property in the affected area of Chicago; the economic downturn of 1873; and the sinking of the ship *SS Ville du Havre* after a collision with the *Loch Earn*, with his wife and four daughters on board and only his wife surviving. Shortly afterward, as Spafford traveled to meet his grieving wife, he was inspired to write these words as his ship passed near where his daughters had died. Composer Philip Bliss called his tune *Ville du Havre*, after the name of the vessel.

The Spaffords later had three more children, but their son died at the age of four of scarlet fever. Their Presbyterian church regarded their tragedy as divine punishment. In response, the Spaffords formed their own Messianic sect, dubbed “the Overcomers” by the American press. In 1881, the Spaffords, including baby Bertha and newborn Grace, set sail for Ottoman-Turkish Palestine. The Spaffords settled in Jerusalem and helped found a group called the American Colony. Colony members, later joined by Swedish Christians, engaged in philanthropic work among the people of Jerusalem regardless of their religious affiliation and without proselytizing motives—thereby gaining the trust of the local Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities. Spafford died in 1888 of malaria and was buried in Mount Zion Cemetery, Jerusalem. During and immediately after World War I, the American Colony played a critical role in supporting the local communities through the great suffering by running soup kitchens, hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable ventures.

Go Forth for God is one of the great sending-forth hymns of the last half of the 20th century. Each stanza sends the congregation into the world armed with an essential trait of Christian character: peace, love, strength, and joy. Its author, John R. Peacey (1896–1971), was born in Brighton, Sussex, England. After his basic education at St. Edmund’s School in Canterbury, Peacey served in France during World War I, receiving the Military Cross. He then went to seminary at Selwyn College, Cambridge, and served there after his ordination in 1921. In 1927, Peacey was appointed headmaster at Bishop Cotton School in Simla, India. He returned to England after World War II, serving as residentiary canon at Bristol Cathedral until his retirement in 1966.

In his last years, Peacey wrote hymn texts. His texts were first published in *100 Hymns for Today* (1969). *English Praise* (1975), a supplement to the 1933 *English Hymnal*, was the first hymnal to include *Go Forth for God*, albeit posthumously. Hymnologist Ray Glover, editor of *The Hymnal 1982*, comments that the hymn “amplifies the admonitions of the Eucharistic post-communion prayer, ‘Send us now into the world in peace...to love and serve you.’”

The Spiritual *Down by the Riverside*, which we were unable to squeeze into the November 11 service, must be mentioned with other peace-oriented hymns. Its roots date from before the American Civil War, although it was not published until 1918. The hymn begins with “Goin’ to lay down my sword and shield, down by the riverside, to study war no more.” It goes on to say the singer will “lay down his war shoes” and “put on my long white robe,” as he is “goin’ to meet my loving savior,” with the refrain being “I ain’t goin’ to study war no more.”

The song's central image is of casting off aggression and putting on spiritual garb at the side of a river before crossing it. The image can have several meanings: It refers to baptism, which in the Southern Baptist tradition usually involves wearing a white robe and being submerged in a body of water. It also refers to ascending to heaven after death, using the metaphor of the River Jordan, which in the Old Testament was the final passage before the Hebrews entered the Promised Land after their years in the desert. And as with many African-American spirituals, the biblical imagery can also be read as a hidden allusion to escaping slavery, with the river representing the Ohio River, a border between slave and free states.

The refrain of "ain't gonna study war no more" is a reference to a quotation found in the Old Testament: "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This quote occurs twice in the Bible, in Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3, and is part of the swords to ploughshares theme.

Carol Dunlap

Adult Sunday Seminar Studies The Way of Love

St. John's seminarian, Chip Russell, is teaching a class on “The Way of Love,” Bishop Curry's offering of seven spiritual disciplines to help us be the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement. The seminar will start an Advent study on December 2. Come and be part of the discussion on Sunday at 9 a.m. in the parlor.





St. John's hosted the Blessing of the Animals on October 7 at the church and the Shirlington Dog Park.

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 (preferred) or left at the church office. The deadline for the December issue is November 21. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.

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.

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

➤ Join the St. John's Book Club on **Tuesday, November 6**, at 7:30 p.m. as they discuss *The Wangs vs. the World* by Jade Chang. The **December 4** selection is the classic *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. All are welcome!

➤ St. John's will join Cristo Rey for Bingo Night on **Saturday, November 17**, from 7 to 9 p.m. Mark your calendar, invite a friend or neighbor, and come out for a fun-filled evening. Cristo Rey will provide the prizes, and St. John's will supply dessert. Please keep an eye out for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

➤ St. John's will also hold a Thanksgiving Potluck with Cristo Rey on **Sunday, November 18**, at 2:15 p.m. Plan to bring a favorite dish and start your Thanksgiving festivities a little early with this time of food and fellowship. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the narthex.

Thank You to:

➤ Patricia Broida, Lisa Pope, Lynn Robinson and anyone else who brought items for the build-your-own-sub event on October 7.

➤ Sandy Winger, Bryan Harbin, Bill Thomson, and the Offender Aid and Restoration workers for their Fall Cleanup efforts on October 13.

➤ Lin Novak, who is spearheading the work on the Frank Todd Memorial Garden, the cross garden, and the flower beds near the 5th Street door with the master gardeners.

➤ Debbie Carter for coordinating the Shrine Mont retreat, acting as Commitment Campaign chair, and serving as delegate to the annual convention.

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.