

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

October 2019

Bring Your Pets to the Blessing of the Animals

St. John's annual Blessing of the Animals will take place on Sunday, October 13. The names of pets, past and present, will be read in church that day. Animals will also be blessed in two locations: the Shirlington Dog Park at 1:30 p.m. (dogs only) and outside St. John's at 5 p.m. (the blessing at the church will be moved inside if it rains). Bring your pets for blessings and invite your friends and neighbors. It is always a special time!



An enthusiastic group turned out for the St. John's Blessing of the Animals in 2018.

From the Rector: Frustrations

Life is full of frustration. We can't get it all done. We want to do something but we can't. Our work is constantly sidelined so we can do an immediate job. We don't have enough to do. We worry about the stock market but we can't do anything about it. Sometimes we think we are all alone in our frustrations. Yes, we know other people have them, but ours are ours to handle alone. Not true. God is present in our frustrations, wanting to help us grow through them and deepen our relationship with God.

God is present in our limitations. Limitations are so annoying. They keep us from doing things we want to do. They mean we can't be two places at once. They mean there are certain things we can't control. I am directionally challenged. I have a really hard time finding my way to new places. To others, it is a piece of cake, but I am staring at a map, knowing it is not as easy as it says it is. I also have a limitation on how much I can lift. I tried to get the new microwave out of the car and it wouldn't budge. My arms strained and I bent my knees like you are supposed to do, but I was out of luck.

But God is there. God made us with limitations, and God is ready to help us. God sends people to help us. I knocked on my young and strong neighbor's door and he got the microwave into the house and set up. The trick to getting help this way is that we have to ask for it. It is amazing how hard this is to do. We don't want to bother anyone, we don't want to get rejected, we want to do it ourselves. There are all sorts of reasons we don't ask. But if we do, help can come in surprising ways. One day last winter, the snow plow pushed the snow off the road and onto my sidewalk. According to the county, I am responsible for cleaning the sidewalk, but there was no way I could move that pile of snow. My neighbor had come and helped me with snow

before, but I wasn't sure even he could handle this. So I left a note on his door and went out. When I got back, it was all cleared off. My other neighbor who helps actually likes to shovel snow. Those two are literally godsend.

God is present in our interruptions. There is an old saying that life is what happens when you've made other plans. Evan's job as a project manager is to be interrupted. He has multiple jobs going at once, so he gets questions all day long, so many in fact that he goes to work at 5 a.m. to get some quiet time. I am often called by people asking for help. They don't know I am in the middle of taking sermon notes. They just know they are hungry.

Our interruptions are often places of opportunity, says Brother David Vryhoff of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE). Interruptions are places where God can use us to help others. Evan helps his crews do their HVAC work in a timely and professional manner. I listen to the folks who are in need and give them money if I can. Our children and grandchildren often interrupt us, but that's part of who they are. They need us for something. Or even better, they just want to talk. I will put down anything I am doing when Evan calls just to say hi (which is twice a year, usually on my birthday and Mother's Day). We are interrupted by new work assignments when we haven't even finished the ones we have. God will give us the strength to meet the challenge or the ability to delegate the work. We don't often think of God and our work lives together. However, I have noticed time and again that God enables me to finish the sermon notes or write the sermon or do a project in the nick of time. (It can be a very, very short nick.) Notice how God gives us opportunities to help, to listen, to rise to new challenges in our interruptions.

God is present in our insecurity. We are constantly looking for something to make us feel secure. We wish the stock market would quit yo-yoing. We look for relationships to fill the empty spaces. We look for things to do that will ignite our passions. We want to be safe. We want to live a life that keeps us feeling secure and blessed. But the problem is, we can't. We can't find security because we already have it, says Brother Nicholas Bartoli of SSJE. The truth is that the only safety that will ultimately satisfy us is God's embrace. That's a hard one for us too. We have trouble admitting that we can't do it all, get it all, have it all solely through our own efforts. It is so

frustrating not to be in control. We have trouble trusting—trusting that God will be there to give us spiritual security no matter what happens.

So when you get frustrated with some aspect of life—look for God's presence. God is there, just waiting to help us be human beings that rely on God for everything. Our frustrations can be turned into God moments if we let them. That may not keep us from being frustrated, but it will help us move through the situation to new growth.

Ann †

Sunday Seminar Begins Study of the Liturgy

The adult Sunday Seminar is finishing up with its study called “Renovate,” which is about renovating the spiritual self. On October 27, seminarian Chip Russell will begin a five-week study of the liturgy. Please plan to 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
Interim Family Programs Director: Jonathan Muehlke
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Seminarian: Chip Russell
Child Care Provider: Kaitlyn Osteguín
Sexton: Julio Sorto

Vestry

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

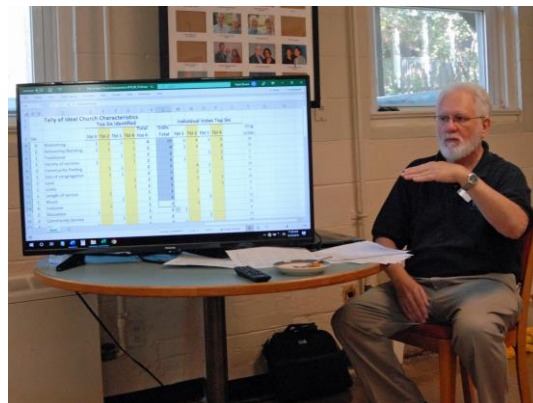
Parish Leaders

Peter Olivere, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Diane Henderson
Peter Olivere
Sandy Winger

Where Are We and Where Are We Going?
Talking About Church at the Congregational Event

Thank you to everyone who participated in the congregational event on September 15. There was lively discussion, and the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) gained some useful information. In the coming weeks, the congregation will be seeing some new things resulting from those discussions and the SPC will zero in on St. John's purpose and mission. If you have an idea you want to share, please talk to Rev. Ann or any of the SPC members: Mike Birmingham, Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, Dave Dunlap, Pete Olivere, Lisa Pope, or Sandy Winger.



Participants at the September 15 congregational event shared in both small groups and a collective session.

October 19 Is Bingo Night

On October 19, St. John's monthly Game Night will feature bingo with Cristo Rey. Invite your friends and neighbors and come join the fun from 7 to 9 p.m. in the undercroft. The cost is \$5 for two cards, a dessert, and a raffle ticket. See you there!



Wanted: A New Coordinator for the Intercessory Prayer Group

St. John's has an active online intercessory prayer group that Anne and Paul Stenger have coordinated for many years. Members of the group pray daily for people on the list and add names as requested. Anne and Paul are now retiring after many years of faithful service, and a new volunteer is needed to coordinate the list. This involves updating the list every four to six months and distributing it to the members of the group. Please give some thought to this wonderful ministry. If you are interested, please talk to Rev. Ann.



Words on Hymns: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

Our processional hymn on October 6 will be *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. The words are by Thomas O. Chisholm, and the music was composed by William M. Runyan. Born in a log cabin, Thomas Obediah Chisholm (1866–1960) was a native of the small Kentucky town of Franklin. Although he lacked formal education, he became a teacher at age 16 and the associate editor of his hometown weekly newspaper, the *Franklin Advocate*, at age 21. He had a difficult early adult life. His health was so fragile that there were periods of time when he was confined to bed, unable to work. Between bouts of illness he would have to push himself to put in extra hours at various jobs to make ends meet.

In 1893 Chisholm became a Christian through the ministry of Henry Clay Morrison, the founder of Asbury College and Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky. Morrison persuaded Chisholm to move to Louisville, where he became editor of the *Pentecostal Herald*. Though he was ordained a Methodist minister in 1903, he served only a single, brief appointment at Scottsville, Kentucky, due to his continued ill health. Chisholm relocated his family to Winona Lake, Indiana, to recover, and then to Vineland, New Jersey, in 1916, where he sold insurance. He retired in 1953 and spent his remaining years in a Methodist retirement community in Ocean Grove, New Jersey.

By the time of his retirement, he had written more than 1,200 poems, 800 of which were published. They often appeared in religious periodicals such as the *Sunday School Times*, *Moody Monthly*, and *Alliance Weekly*. Many of these were set to music.

Hymnologist Kenneth Osbeck provides the background for *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. While away from home on a mission trip, Chisholm often wrote to one of his good friends, William Runyan, a relatively unknown

musician with the Moody Bible Institute and one of the editors of Hope Publishing Company in Chicago. Several poems were exchanged in these letters. Runyan found one of the poems so moving that he decided to compose a musical score to accompany the lyrics. Runyan wrote of the hymn: “This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way, and the subsequent history of its use indicates that God answered my prayer. It was written in Baldwin, Kansas, in 1923, and was first published in my private song pamphlets.”

A phrase in Lamentations 3:22–23 provides a basis for the refrain: “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

For several years, the hymn got very little recognition, until it was discovered by a Moody Bible Institute professor who loved it so much and requested it be sung so often at chapel services that the song became the unofficial theme song of the college.

It was not until 1945 when George Beverly Shea (1909–2013), the famous Canadian-born singer of the Billy Graham evangelistic crusades, began to sing *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* at the crusades that the hymn was heard around the world. He introduced this hymn to those attending the crusades in Great Britain in 1954. It immediately became a favorite.

The hymn appeared in many evangelical hymnals and song collections, but was not chosen for an official Methodist hymnal until the 1989 *United Methodist Hymnal*, even though the author was a Methodist. It was a very popular hymn of the former Evangelical United Brethren Church and had been included in their hymnals. In 2019, the song entered the public domain in the United States. According

to Carlton Young, *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* was second only to *In the Garden* as the most requested hymn for inclusion in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. A survey conducted in 2000 by Dean McIntyre, Director of Music Resources, Discipleship Ministries, revealed that *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* remains one of the favorite hymns among United Methodists.

Chisholm explained toward the end of his life, “My income has not been large at any

time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unflinching faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness.”

Carol Dunlap

Goodbye to the Caveys

Beth, Brian, Michael, and Tina Cavey have moved on from St. John’s. We will miss them very much, but wish them well in their new ventures, including a farm in Warrenton.

The Cavey family has contributed so much to St. John’s. Beth started the Family Programs Ministry and brought children into the church. She taught Vacation Bible School, using her own creativity to produce the program. And she will remain our Education for Ministry (EfM) mentor. Brian served on the vestry and was instrumental in fixing many things around St. John’s. He lent a helping hand wherever it was needed. Tina and Michael brought energy to us. They were both dedicated acolytes. All of us benefited from Tina’s broad variety of interests and enjoyed Michael’s passion for baseball. The two of them—and sometimes Brian—helped make our Christmas pageant special. Thank you Beth, Brian, Tina, and Michael. We love you and will miss you.



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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 November issue is October 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:

➤ The St. John's Book Club will meet **Tuesday, November 5**, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *Number One Chinese Restaurant* by Lillian Li. Set in Rockville, Maryland, this debut novel tells the story of the lives and loves of those working in everyone's favorite Chinese restaurant, the Beijing Duck House. Looking ahead, the book club will discuss Agatha Christie's mystery classic *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* on Tuesday, December 3, at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome!

Thank You to:

- Everyone who participated in the congregational event on September 15. The Strategic Planning Committee is very grateful for your input.
- Pete Olivere and Bryan Harbin for setting up the sound system for the outdoor service on September 29.
- Judith Marcinko, who fought the breezes and played an instrument she wasn't familiar with to make the outdoor service special.
- Carrie Harbin, Faye Pritchard, and anyone else who helped set up the altar for the outdoor service.
- Sandy Winger and the OAR workers for their great assistance in preparing for and cleaning up after the outdoor service.
- Jonathan Muehlke for continuing to serve as St. John's Family Programs Director.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in October:

Erin Tallent Baynham, Jacob Beavin, Bryan Harbin, Carrie Harbin, John Hart, Monica Lozano, Raymond McDonald, Taylor Robinson, the Rev. Peter Swarr, and Liz White.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in October:

Joy and Bobby Candelieri; Andy and Cathi Del Gallo; Eileen Flynn and Paul Harless; John Hart and Angie Rollet; Heather and Tony Kollath; Dave and Lynn Robinson; Barbara Wien and Robert Herman.