



# 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 2019



## St. John's Worship in the Beauty of the Outdoors

St. John's took to the great outdoors on Sunday, September 29, holding the 10 a.m. service and the following fellowship hour outside on the lawn. An enthusiastic congregation enjoyed the beauty of both the service and the surroundings. Thank you to all who participated and to those whose efforts made the service possible!

## From the Rector: You Are Invited

Jesus sat down to eat with Pharisees. He invited sinners and tax collectors to the table. He fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish.

Just because Jesus no longer walks the earth does not mean he no longer issues meal invitations. We are all invited to dinner and we are invited to bring all that we are. We may not be Pharisees or social outcasts or peasants in the countryside, but we too are special to Jesus. He wants an intimate relationship with us just as he did with the folks of his time. And that's why he wants us to come with all that we are. Jesus wants to take our healthy parts and help them grow and develop. He wants to heal our broken parts. He wants us to be whole and to flourish.

Jesus invites us to bring our joys. What makes your life worth living? Do you have a job that excites you and that you are glad to go to every day for more than just the paycheck? Then you are blessed. Someone once said that if we love about 70 percent of our job, that is a good fit. How about you? How about an avocation? Gardening or knitting or sports or music? Jesus has called us to these pastimes and wants us to engage in them often. How about volunteer work? I really like bagging food at AFAC. It is important to me to be able to help. And many of us love to be out in God's creation, to enjoy things like butterfly bushes and changing leaves and rushing water. Those are all joys that Jesus has given us and wants us to bring back to him for further blessing and growth.

Jesus invites us to bring our relationships because they are a huge part of who we are. Our families, our friends, and our colleagues. We live and grow together with our spouses. They become part of us as we do of them. If relationships are healthy, we are drawn to our families like magnets. Our parents and siblings

know parts of us that no one else does. We can be who we are with them. When we engage with our children, we remember the challenges of raising them and know the joy of seeing them as adults, making their own way in the world. Our friends bless us with love and understanding and acceptance. Our colleagues collaborate and challenge, making us better people.

Jesus invites us to bring our hopes. We all have hopes, hopes for our own development, hopes for our children, hopes for the future. They are what keep us moving forward into the future. They are gifts of God to help us journey closer to the source of our being.

Jesus doesn't just want to hear what is going well. Jesus wants our brokenness. We are all broken in some way and we need to be made whole.

Jesus wants us to bring our pain. Where do we hurt? Is there a relationship that is not working that you would like to reconcile, but you don't know how? Is your body in pain and you need help to manage it? Did you lose a hoped-for promotion? Have you failed at something that was important to you and still hurt about it? Or do you feel guilty about something you have done and just can't seem to forgive yourself? Jesus is waiting for you to bring your pain to him so he can help you cope and heal. Is your pain for others—the poor, the oppressed, the outcast? Jesus wants to take that pain and turn it into kingdom action.

One of the big things Jesus wants us to bring to dinner is our fears and insecurities. Many of us have trouble admitting some of those, even to ourselves. We are afraid to mention them out loud for fear of them overwhelming us. But the Bible often says, "Do not be afraid." The economy is scary. We fear losing our jobs or losing what we have saved for retirement. We have had health

concerns or health scares and don't want to go to the doctor for fear of what they'll say. We have situations in our lives over which we have no control. Fears are something Jesus can help us with. He can help us trust in God to take care of us, to direct our hearts, to calm our fears.

One other thing Jesus wants us to come to dinner with is our doubts. We all have them and we do not need to apologize to God for them. God has given us the capacity for doubt and wants us to use it well—to ponder what we believe and how we will act in God's world. Jesus is not looking for certainty. Few people have that about God and what we see as God's actions in the world. Maybe we don't think

we're good enough and that God will help everyone else except us. Maybe we don't understand how a loving God could let evil things happen. Maybe we haven't been able to notice the everyday miracles in our lives because of some burden we carry. Maybe we don't know if God will take care of us if we give up control. Jesus knows about all our doubt and wants to give us the gift of faith.

Jesus wants to eat with us. He wants to be intimate, to be part of our lives in a way no human being can be. He wants to enhance our joys and heal our broken parts. All he needs is for us to come to the table and be open to his love.

Ann †

### **Sunday Seminar Studies the Holy Eucharist**

Seminarian Chip Russell began a five-part class on various aspects of the Holy Eucharist on October 27. All are invited to come and learn about this blessed gift left by Jesus. On December 1, the Sunday Seminar will begin an Advent study. Please join the group as they prepare for Christmas in their hearts and lives. The Sunday Seminar meets 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

## Bingo!



St. John's and Cristo Rey came together for a night of Bingo fun on Saturday, October 19.

## Animal Blessings Honor Beloved Pets

St. John's held animal blessings in two locations on Sunday, October 13. First, Pete Oliver and Rev. Ann went to the Shirlington Dog Park at 1:30 p.m., where there were owners waiting with their animals. Rev. Ann blessed more than 10 dogs and Pete tried to take pictures, although some dogs were camera shy and it took a bit of work to get them to look at the photographer. Rev. Ann also blessed dogs and cats and three really cool guinea pigs at 5 p.m. at St. John's. People generally wanted good health and long life for their animals. There were also a few cases where the animals had advanced cancer, including one in which the owner was planning to put the animal to sleep in the near future. Rev. Ann prayed especially that these animals might receive healing, whether in this world or the next, and that their owners may be comforted and remember with love the good relationships they shared with their pets.



St. John's blessed animals at the Shirlington Dog Park and the church on Sunday, October 13.

## Words on Hymns: Giving Thanks

Two favorite hymns frequently sung around Thanksgiving Day are *Now Thank We All Our God* and *We Gather Together to Ask the Lord's Blessing*. *Now Thank We All Our God* was translated from the German *Nun danket alle Gott*, written circa 1636 by Protestant minister Martin Rinkart. The melody is attributed to Johann Crüger, who wrote it circa 1647.

Martin Rinkart was a Lutheran minister who came to Eilenburg, Saxony, at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War. The walled city of Eilenburg became the refuge for political and military fugitives, but the result was overcrowding and deadly pestilence and famine. Armies overran it three times. The Rinkart home was a refuge for the victims, even though Rinkart was often hard-pressed to provide for his own family. During the height of a severe plague in 1637, Rinkart was the only surviving pastor in Eilenburg, conducting as many as 50 funerals in a day. He performed more than 4,000 funerals that year, including that of his wife.

Rinkart was a prolific hymn writer. In Rinkart's *Jesu Hertz-Buchlein* (Leipzig, Germany, 1636), the hymn appears under the title *Tisch-Gebetlein*, or a short prayer before meals. The exact date of *Nun danket alle Gott* is debated, but it is known that it was widely sung by the time the Peace of Westphalia (a series of treaties largely ending the Thirty Years' War) was signed in 1648. Johann Crüger published it in the 1647 edition of his *Praxis pietatis melica*.

The story goes that after the Battle of Leuthen in 1757 (which resulted in a defeat by Prussia of a much larger Austrian army), an unknown Prussian soldier standing near Frederick the Great began singing the hymn spontaneously, and the hymn was then taken up by the entire assembled Prussian army. This narrative is, however, questioned by historians and musicologists, who identify the story as a later invention of Prussian propaganda.

Because of this story the melody is known in German, and sometimes in English, as the Leuthen Chorale.

*Now Thank We All Our God* is used in J.S. Bach's cantatas such as Numbers 79 and 192 (tenor part lost), harmonized for four voices in chorales Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (BWV or Bach Works Catalogue) 252 and 386. It was set as a chorale prelude in BWV 657. The now standard harmonization was devised by Felix Mendelssohn in 1840 when he adopted the hymn, with its original German lyrics, as the chorale to his *Lobgesang* or *Hymn of Praise* (also known as his Symphony Number 2). The chorale has also been used by Max Reger, Sigfrid Karg-Elert, and John Rutter.

At the time *We Gather Together* was written, the Dutch were engaged in a war of national liberation against the Catholic King Philip II of Spain. The patriotic song "Wilt heden nu treden" ("We gather together") resonated because under the Spanish king, Dutch Protestants were forbidden to gather for worship. This background sheds light on the meaning of the lyrics. The hymn first appeared in print in a 1626 collection of Dutch folk and patriotic songs, *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-Clanck* by Adriaen Valerius. It is customarily performed to a tune known as "Kremser," from Eduard Kremser's 1877 score arrangement and lyric translation into Latin and German. The modern English text was written by Theodore Baker in 1894.

According to the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, *We Gather Together's* first appearance in an American hymnal was in 1903. It had retained popularity among the Dutch, and when the Dutch Reformed Church in North America decided in 1937 to abandon the policy they had brought with them to the New World in the 17th century of singing only psalms and added hymns to the church service, *We Gather*

*Together* was chosen as the first hymn in the first hymnal.

The hymn steadily gained popularity, especially in services of Thanksgiving on such occasions as town and college centennial celebrations. The popularity increased during

World War II, when “the wicked oppressing” was understood to include Nazi Germany and imperial Japan.

Carol Dunlap

### **Commitment Campaign 2020: Wonder in All**

St. John’s will conclude its annual Commitment Campaign on Sunday, November 10, when you are asked to return your pledge card that was received in the mail last month. The theme of this year’s campaign is “Wonder in All.” What does St. John’s mean to you? What is your role in supporting the St. John’s family and the wonders God creates through it in our lives, our community, and the world? We are a small family, but together we can do great things as we grow in faith and love and share that love with those around us. How we each use our talents and treasure to answer God’s call will help determine the path and future of our parish family. Your efforts and your support through your pledge and gifts make a vital difference in how we carry out the ministries of St. John’s. Please pray about your response to this year’s Commitment Campaign and about how you can help St. John’s be all that God desires it to be.



#### **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 22. 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:

- Bring your favorite board or card game and come have some fun at Game Night on **Saturday, November 16**, from 7 to 9 p.m.
- The St. John's Book Club will meet **Tuesday, December 3**, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss Agatha Christie's mystery classic *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. All are welcome!

### Thank You to:

- Carol Dunlap, Lisa Pope, Faye Pritchard, and Lynn Robinson for bringing desserts for Bingo Night and to all those who stayed to clean up.
- Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, Carrie Harbin, Pete and Barbara Olivere, Lisa Pope, Lynn Robinson, Anne and Paul Stenger, Eileen Tallent, and anyone else who brought items to the Build-Your-Own-Sub event.
- Paul and Anne Stenger, who have spent many faithful years coordinating the intercessory prayer ministry.
- Barbara Olivere for taking on the intercessory prayer ministry.
- John Restall, who has agreed to serve as the Finance Committee chair for this year and to Jeff Aitken, Debbie Carter, and Diane Henderson for agreeing to serve on the committee.
- Mike Birmingham for serving as Commitment Campaign chair.
- Pete Olivere for supervising the tree planting outside the church.
- Lin Novak for her ongoing work in the church garden.
- Bryan Harbin for obtaining a fire-resistant file cabinet for St. John's records and a new office chair for Virginia Pearson.
- Pete Olivere and Bill Pritchard, who were a great help during the animal blessings.

### 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:

Ginger and Marshall Adair; Jeff and Michelle Aitken; Beth and Brian Cavey; Kendrah and Robert McDonald.