



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

February 2020



St. John's will once again offer Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro station on Ash Wednesday, February 26, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and 5 to 6 p.m. Ash Wednesday services will be held at the church at noon and 7:30 p.m. Prepare your heart and mind for Lent and come worship with your St. John's community. Before we enter into the season of Lent, please also plan to enjoy food and fellowship on Shrove Tuesday, February 25, at the Pancake Supper from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$4 for children ages 6 to 12, and free for children under age 6. All are welcome.

From the Rector: Light in the Darkness

Epiphany is the season in which we celebrate God's light being manifest in the world through Jesus. God's light shines on us, surrounding and penetrating us completely—a beacon in the darkness that helps us become the people we are called to be. God isn't trying to transform us into something different; God is trying to make us more "us."

As we go through our lives, various kinds of lights shine in our darkness to enliven us. One example of illumination is the laser beam. Laser beams can bring us knowledge. A laser pointer used in a presentation in a dark room can increase the focus on the PowerPoint slides so we can take in the new information the speaker is trying to present.

Knowledge is an important route of transformation for us. When we learn new things, we broaden our perspectives. We generate new ideas and solve difficult problems. The knowledge we gain when light shines on important information helps our brains process new thoughts and new expressions of old things. The light of knowledge helps us communicate with others in ways they can understand so that the world can be changed.

Lasers also illumine and change our bodies. I have a long scar running down my knee, the result of two surgeries. By the time I had my third knee surgery, doctors were doing arthroscopic work, using a laser to highlight the broken area and put it back together. Our bodies are routes of transformation for us. We are incarnate beings. We are not souls trying to get out of our bodies; we are bodies and souls together. Jesus came to transform our souls, of course, but he also came to transform our bodies—to heal them and love them and show us how important they are to doing his work. What does your body need right now? Exercise? Rest? Healing? Play? Our bodies do

so much for us and laser light reminds us of their importance to our functioning at peak levels.

When the lights go out in the house and I am cooking, I use a flashlight so I can feed myself dinner. I have a gas stove, so I can cook when the lights are out, but I'm not good at turning on the burners with a match. So a can opener in one hand and a flashlight in the other, I make efforts to quench the hunger I feel. What hungers do you feel? What is bubbling up inside you that a metaphorical flashlight can illuminate? Is there something you want to do, somewhere you want to serve? Do you want to experience something, travel somewhere, or try things in a new way? Or is what you need now comfort and security? Is the need for safety bubbling up inside you? The hungers in our gut point us to transformational opportunities.

I am an avid reader, and I have two lights in my family room that help me read. Using a lamp to illuminate the pages of a book and the pages of our minds can help us grow in wisdom. Richard Rohr says wisdom is not knowing more; it is knowing with more of yourself. There are great sources of wisdom out there that can transform our thinking, from the Bible to philosophers to self-help books. Wisdom is heart knowledge. It is what we know deep, deep down in us. It is what we understand about life and where we are going.

Reading can also be a source of fun. I have a new calendar this year that has a cartoon from the *New Yorker* on each page. I read *New Yorker* cartoons when I was a kid, because Dad got the magazine and I didn't want to read the closely written articles. Lamps can illuminate books and television shows that are fun, and we all need fun. Playing and enjoying ourselves brings transformation. It gives us joy in life and gratitude for the good

things God has given us.

When I come home in the evenings, it is often dark outside. I haven't remembered to turn on the porch light because it isn't dark when I leave. So I do a lot of fumbling around for my keys. Unfortunately the key to the church looks just like the key to my door and so I am often wrong and end up dropping the keys on the porch. Eventually I find one that works and go into my house, one of the centers of my life. When you think about porch lights and keys, think about the metaphorical keys to your heart—relationships. Relationships are the most important thing in our lives and we need to tend them with love to experience the wonderful transformation God wants us to have. Who are the people that are the keys to your heart? How does your "porch light" shine on them and on you? Do you respect yourself or do you criticize because you should be better? You are good enough for God. What about others? What does the porch light show

you about those keys to your heart? Are your relationships moving smoothly or does the key to unlock them need a little oil? Are there ones that don't quite work right now and need some retooling? What about your relationship with God? What does the porch light show? Does God's key open the door to prayer, meditation, Scripture reading, and church attendance or confusion, uncertainty, and doubt? Or is it both? How can you best nurture your relationship with God? The light will show you.

God's love sends God's light to us in Jesus so that we can be transformed. Knowledge, incarnation, hunger and thirst, wisdom, fun, and relationships are all ways we can grow in our faith and trust in God. This Epiphany, look for God's light in your life and let it transform you more and more into God's faithful servant.

Ann †

Sunday Seminar Studies *The Universal Christ*

During most of February, the adult Sunday Seminar will continue with Richard Rohr's *The Universal Christ*. Participants have talked about how the universal Christ is present in both Jesus and all of creation. This reality means that everything is created blessed and good and that no one is excluded from God's love. The group is now discussing what this reality means for living lives of discipleship.

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Judith Marcinko
Family Programs Director: Jonathan Muehlke
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Child Care Provider: Kaitlyn Osteguín
Sexton: Julio Sorto

Parish Leaders

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

Vestry

Jeff Aitken	Richard Henry
Bryan Harbin	Peter Olivere
Diane Henderson	Sandy Winger

Words on Hymns: *I Come with Joy to Meet My Lord*

Our opening hymn for February 16 was written as a communion hymn, but it also works well as a processional. *I Come with Joy to Meet My Lord* was written by Brian A. Wren in Hockley, Essex, England, in July 1968 and revised in 1970. The text was first published in the Canadian Anglican-United *Hymn Book* (1971); he revised it again in 1982 and 1995. Wren wrote this text to summarize a series of sermons on the meaning of the Lord's Supper, specifically as a post-sermon hymn to help illustrate the presence of Christ in the sacrament. He states that he wanted to express this as simply as possible, in a way that would take the worshipper (probably without recognizing it) from the usual individualistic approach to communion ("I come") to an understanding of its essential corporateness ("we'll go"). Wren has carefully worked out the progression from "I" to "we." This text contains themes of remembrance (stanza 1), of sharing the bread and wine in communion with the saints (stanzas 2 and 3) and with Christ in his presence (stanza 4), and of Christian service (stanza 5), but the prevailing tone is one of joy and praise.

Wren is a major British figure in the revival of contemporary hymn writing. Ordained in 1965, he served as pastor of the Congregational Church (now United Reformed) in Hockley and Hawkwell, Essex, from 1965 to 1970. He worked for the British Council of Churches and several other organizations involved in fighting poverty and promoting peace and justice. This work resulted in his writing of *Education for Justice* (1977) and *Patriotism and Peace* (1983).

With a ministry throughout the English-speaking world, Wren now resides in the United States, where he is active as a freelance lecturer, preacher, and full-time hymn writer. His hymns appear in hymnals of all Christian

traditions and have been influential in raising the awareness of theology in hymns. A major part of Wren's work has involved inclusive language as well. In 1978, he began to look more closely at "he-man language" and began using language inclusive of women and subordinate groups in his hymns. He has since sought to challenge the church to adopt this inclusive mindset. He writes that the vocation of a poet in the church is not only "to write poems of faith which people will pick up and sing," but also to "speak truth by stepping beyond the church's limits of comfort and convention." He has written *What Language Shall I Borrow?* (1989), a discussion guide to inclusive language in Christian worship. In 2007, Wren retired from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, and was named professor emeritus.

The hymn tune *Land of Rest* is an American folk tune with roots in the ballads of northern England and Scotland. It was known throughout the Appalachians; a shape-note version of the tune was published in *The Sacred Harp* (1844) and titled *New Prospect* as the setting for *O Land of Rest! for Thee I Sigh*. The tune was published again with that same text in J.R. Graves's *Little Seraph* (1873). The name *Land of Rest* is taken from the tune's association with that text.

The tune was known to Annabel M. Buchanan (1888–1983), whose grandmother sang it to her as a child. She harmonized the tune and published it in her *Folk Hymns of America* (1938), noting similarities between this tune and that of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. The hymn should be sung as an energetic waltz, remembering the opening stanza "I come with joy."

Carol Dunlap

A Short Word on a Hymn

The hymn tune *Ton-y-Botel* appears twice in our hymnal, for *Singing Songs of Expectation* and *Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness*, which is our processional hymn for February 9. The tune is also known as *Ebenezer*, which means “Stone of Help” in the Bible. It is a famous Welsh hymn tune composed by Thomas John Williams (1869–1944) and was extracted from the second movement of his anthem *Golau Yn Y Glyn (Light in the Valley)*. The tune is named after Ebenezer Chapel in Rhos near Pontardawe, South Wales, which Williams attended while composing the tune.

Ton-y-Botel means “Tune in a Bottle.” The myth that the tune was discovered in a bottle on a Llyn Peninsula beach in North Wales was published in the *Daily Mail* in 1902. It has affectionately been known as *Ton-y-Botel* ever since and is even referred to as “Ebenezer, Ton-y-Botel” on Williams’ gravestone.

Carol Dunlap

Join the Wednesday Bible Study

Come for Bible study and fellowship mid-week. The Wednesday Bible study meets at 3 p.m. and is open to all, including friends, neighbors, and members of the community. The group is studying *Loving Justice*. Please see Rev. Ann if you would like to join.



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 March issue is February 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 friends and family and come enjoy Game Night on **Saturday, February 15**, from 7 to 9 p.m.
- Join St. John's for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on **Tuesday, February 25**, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$4 for children ages 6 to 12, and free for children under age 6.
- The St. John's Book Club will meet **Tuesday, March 3**, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *When the Emperor Was Divine* by Julie Otsuka. This powerful first novel tells the story of a Japanese-American family sent to an internment camp during World War II. All are welcome!

Thank You to:

- Dave Dunlap for chairing Seminarian Chip Russell's lay support team and members Marshall Adair, Mike Birmingham, Patricia Broida, Lin Novak, and Barbara Olivere.
- Mike Birmingham for chairing the Strategic Planning Committee. He is stepping aside for other obligations. We appreciate his thoughtful ideas for moving St. John's forward into the ministry God has called us to.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in February:

Michelle Aitken, Dennis Albrecht, Carey Blount, Lisa Broida, Nella Candelieri, Robert Carter, Tina Cavey, Lynn Christopher, Peyton Del Gallo, The Rev. Amanda Eiman, Henry Held, Carole Hunt, Heather Kollath, Jeff Petrich, John Restall, Anne Stenger, Eileen Tallent, and Colin White.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in February:

Lynn Christopher and Bill Schenck; Bryan and Carrie Harbin; Kaipo and Keith McCartney.

