



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

May 2020

The Virtual Church: Continue to Worship with St. John's

While we are physically apart, the St. John's community continues to worship and share in fellowship together each Sunday at 10 a.m. via Zoom. The Zoom link and instructions along with the bulletin for the service are sent by email each week to the St. John's mailing list. If you only want to participate by phone, instructions for dialing in are also included. See you (or hear you) next Sunday!



From the Rector: Soul Food

Since we have been sheltering in place, I have talked with people about how much fulfillment they get out of working in their gardens. Planting and watering and fertilizing and weeding—well, maybe not weeding—help people connect with the earth, the place from which we all came.

When you think about it, we are like plants. We are growing things that produce leaves and flowers and fruit for God, our neighbors, and ourselves. Every minute, every hour, every day, we have an opportunity to become. And to become all we can be, just like plants, we need fertilizer.

Of course the kind of fertilizer we need is different. We don't need pine bark or mulch or manure. In addition to feeding our bodies, we need soul food to help us flourish. And just as the plant can't fertilize itself, neither can we. We need God's help to care for us, so that we produce the juiciest fruit, the most fragrant blossoms, the most well-shaped leaves.

One of the components of our soul food is our gifts. God gives each of us an abundance of gifts. One part of our growth is to discover our gifts and then use them to serve the world in Christ's name. Discovering happens every time we try something and like it or try something and don't like it. I really like singing and I am good at it. But I am really bad at technology stuff. Beyond the basics, I don't understand it. I've tried to be on social media and use computer dating services, but they just aren't my thing. I heard an ad about becoming a computer professional with a four-month online course even if you had never touched a computer before. No matter how hard I tried, I would never make a success of that. It is important to know where your passions are and where they are not and find fulfilling ways to be of service that play to your strengths. It is also important to note that you

may discover and develop gifts throughout your life that may take you in new directions.

Good soul food is in part composed of weaknesses. Brother Curtis Almquist of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist says that we have to have "enough weakness to remind us that we must keep following [Jesus] or we will otherwise get lost." We are not wound up like a toy soldier by God, set down, and told to go forth and grow by ourselves. God loves us and desires to walk with us as we grow into the people God means us to be. Can you imagine a plant watering or fertilizing itself? What plants do is take in the nourishment they get, and then they grow. If we aren't willing to need anything from God, we will never grow to our full potential. Trying to "do it all ourselves" never produces the best results. Our weaknesses are places that God enters to grow God's relationship with us. As Jesus said, he is the vine and we are the branches.

We also need someone to uphold us so we don't fall. Tomatoes need stakes to help them grow tall and strong and not bend over and droop on the ground. We need to be held up too, when things are too big for us. We need God to help us carry our burdens when we feel overwhelmed. We may have broken relationships, financial difficulties, or psychic wounds, but we don't have to handle these alone. This pandemic may feel bigger than we are, but it is not bigger than God is. God continues to uphold and sustain us as we deal with it.

Another part of our soul food is mindfulness. A plant cannot grow tomorrow's growth today. It cannot flower before the buds develop. And neither can we. Sometimes we are so busy worrying about what will happen tomorrow that we forget to focus on what is going on today. Paying attention to what is happening now is key to being able to go

where we are headed tomorrow. That doesn't mean we don't dream or make plans to get somewhere, but it does mean anxiety about the future doesn't change anything; it only causes problems. A good way to practice mindfulness is to be grateful for all we have been given in the moment. Gratitude lists are always a good way to stay centered.

God gives us soul food to help us grow. If we use it well, we will be able to follow Jesus

and love God and our neighbors. We will be able to hear the Holy Spirit whispering in our ears, calling us to new life and new growth. If you can, take a little more time to reflect on where you are and where God might be calling you to grow. If you do, you will find yourself to be a tall, strong, beautiful plant that produces good fruit.

Ann †

Sunday Seminar Focuses on Episcopal Church Basics

The adult Sunday Seminar began a series of classes on Zoom on April 26. The classes are covering the basics of Episcopal Church worship, theology, and organization. Seminar participants will look at Baptism and Confirmation; the church year; the three-legged stool of Scripture, tradition, and reason on which our theology is based; church organization; and other topics. Each class will be self-contained so participants can come to all of them or just selected ones. The Zoom link will be the same as the one sent out for the worship service on Sunday. Just click the link or dial in a few minutes before 9 a.m. so that the class can start on time. For the week that a class on the *Book of Common Prayer* is scheduled, just let Rev. Ann know ahead of time and she will send you the relevant pages if you do not have a copy at home. An electronic version is also available at <https://episcopalchurch.org/book-common-prayer>. Come join the virtual discussion on Sunday mornings! This series of classes will run through May 31.

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

Vestry

Sandy Winger, Senior Warden
Bryan Harbin, Junior Warden
Jeff Aitken

Parish Leaders

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

Diane Henderson
Richard Henry
Peter Olivere

Words on Hymns: *See the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph*

My favorite Ascension hymn is *See the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph*, our recessional hymn on May 24. It has been described as a “robust” hymn. Its lyrics are full of one vivid picture after another. It is not complex musically as the form is AABA (sing phrase one; repeat; sing a different phrase; repeat the first one), also known as the 32-bar or ballad form. This makes it easy to sing while focusing on the images that are summoned up.

The lyrics were written by Christopher Wordsworth (1807–1885), who was born in Lambeth, England, where his father was the rector. In 1826 he matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge University, where his career was an extraordinarily brilliant one, culminating in an unprecedented number of college and university prizes. He was engaged as classical lecturer at Trinity for some time. In 1836 he was chosen to be the Public Orator for Cambridge and was also elected Headmaster of Harrow School.

In 1844 Wordsworth was appointed by Sir Robert Peel* to a Canonry at Westminster and from 1848–1849 he was the Hulsean lecturer at Cambridge. In 1850 he became vicar of Stanford-in-the-Vale and neighboring Goosey, in Berkshire, and for the next 19 years he served as an exemplary parish priest in this secluded spot, with the exception of his four-month residence each year at Westminster. In 1869 he was appointed Bishop of Lincoln, a post he held for more than 15 years, resigning it a few months before his death on March 20, 1885. As bearing upon his poetic character, it may be noted that he was the nephew of the Poet Laureate William Wordsworth, whom he frequently visited up to the time of the poet's death in 1850 and with whom he kept up a regular and lengthy correspondence.

Christopher Wordsworth was a voluminous writer. His many works include *The Holy Year*, which contains hymns not only for every

season of the Church's year but also for every phase of that season as indicated in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Wordsworth, like the Wesleys, looked upon hymns as a valuable means of stamping permanently upon the memory the great doctrines of the Christian Church. He held it to be “the first duty of a hymn-writer to teach sound doctrine, and thus to save souls.” The natural result of having to produce a hymn is that his hymns are of very unequal quality; whether his subject inspired him with poetic thoughts or not, he was bound to deal with it. Ten of Wordsworth's hymns are in *The Hymnal 1982*, only three of which we sing.

The hymn tune, *In Babilon*, is a traditional Dutch melody that appeared in *Oude en Nieuwe Hollantse Boerenlities en Contradansen (Old and New Dutch Peasant Songs and Country Dances)*, which was published in about 1710. Ralph Vaughan Williams discovered this tune as arranged by Julius Rontgen (1855–1932) and included it in *The English Hymnal* (1906), from which it gained widespread use. In our hymnal this tune is also used for the text *Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus*.

An important Dutch pianist, composer, conductor, scholar, and editor, Rontgen studied music in Leipzig with well-known German teachers. In 1877 he moved to Amsterdam, where he first taught at the Amsterdam Conservatory. In 1886 he became conductor of the Society for the Advancement of Musical Art. He returned to the Conservatory as director in 1918, and then retired in 1924 to devote himself to composition. He was a friend of leading composers of his day, including Liszt, Brahms, and Grieg, and wrote a biography of Grieg. Rontgen's compositions include symphonies, chamber works, operas, and film scores.

*In the “bet you didn’t know” department, Peel was twice Prime Minister of England. In 1829 he successfully advanced the Metropolitan Police Act through Parliament, which set up the first disciplined police force for the Greater London area. As a result of

Peel’s efforts, the London police force became known as “Bobby’s boys,” and later simply as “bobbies,” as they are still called today.

Carol Dunlap



While St. John’s annual Spring Tea has been postponed this year, put on a hat, turn on some relaxing music, and lift a cup at home on Saturday, May 9. We hope to continue the tradition in the fall!

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 June issue is May 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:

➤ The St. John's Book Club is reading *Jamaica Inn* by Daphne DuMaurier for its **June 2** discussion. Set in Cornwall, this novel by the author of *Rebecca* is another riveting, classic tale of romantic suspense. The meeting will take place by the Frank Todd Garden at the corner of South Kensington Street and 4th Street South at 7:30 p.m. In case of rain, the meeting will take place on June 3. Remember to bring something to sit on. All are welcome!

Thank You to:

➤ Lin Novak for her work in St. John's gardens and putting up the beautiful white Easter bows on the front of the church in April.

➤ Pete Olivere for setting up and operating St. John's Zoom services and for his extra work as treasurer in these difficult times.

➤ All those who have donated food for AFAC.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in May:

Patricia Bleicher, Debbie Carter, Andy Del Gallo, Jane Edwards, Rob Hardman, Kim Houghton, Alice Kniskern, Abigail Kollath, Romana Martin, Maegan McDonald, Robert McDonald, Bill Schenck, Owen Tallent, and Barbara Wien.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in May:

Peggy and Carey Blount; Leslie Mead and Jeff Petrich; Christopher and Laura Van Wyk.

