



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

From the Rector: Thanks to God...Thanks from God

At this time of year, our thoughts turn naturally to thanking God for our many blessings. We may not think of it first, but it is important to thank God for ourselves, for the gift of life God has given us and for our existence on this earth. We thank God for the gifts we have received and for the willingness and the ability to use them as God directs to bless ourselves and others. Then we might move on to our families or others near and dear to us.

October 15's entry in *Forward Day by Day* reminds us that in addition to being the Creator God who makes the foundations of the mountains shake (Psalm 18), God is also a personal God with a human face, one who loves us through other people. We have families (either biological or created) who love and care for us and for whom we can love and care. We have spouses who help us become all that we can be. We have children to love and grow and pray into adulthood as God grows us. We have friends we can laugh with and confide in. Then there are our communities—our neighborhoods, our churches, our other affiliations that give us a sense of belonging that we treasure. We have colleagues and others in our outer circles of relationships who, wittingly or unwittingly, hand us pearls of wisdom that we can use to live our lives more fully.

We also have the earth and all its treasures that God made to delight in and be good stewards of.

In addition to people who help make our lives worth living, we are also thankful for fulfilling work. We may have a terrific job, a cause we believe in, time and space to garden or watch birds or ski or read trashy novels. Whether it be vocation, avocation or hobby, if it helps us to thrive we are thankful. We give God thanks for the gift of time as well as relationships.

In addition to the gifts of love in our relationships and time to do the things we love, we thank God for the gift of faith. Faith gives us a spiritual connection, a belief in a power greater than ourselves. We came into the world with that gift and hopefully have been nurtured in it by our families and then taken over growing our own faith lives, by trusting God and developing habits of prayer and meditation to stay in communication with the God of our understanding. As Christians, we give thanks for a God who loved us so much that God came to us in human form, as Jesus, the Messiah. Through his perfect obedience to God that lasted even to his tortured death on a cross, God brought us back to Godself when we were lost in sin and death. God raised us to a new life based on grace and opened the pathway of eternal life.

St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington • The Rev. Ann Barker, Rector • November 2009
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We also give God thanks for the gift of hope. Brother Curtis Almquist, one of our speakers at the recent clergy retreat, spoke of the gift of hope, defining it as a memory you project into the future. Hope that gives us the resilience to face the future comes out of our past and makes it possible for us to thrive in life. It is expectant desire. Hope is an anchor, he said, that we can drop into deep water and stabilize ourselves when times are tough. Our ship may be tossed around on stormy seas, but with the anchor of hope we can always look toward God's future.

We are often urged to think about our own blessings and our gratitude toward God for them, but seldom are we urged to think about God as being grateful to us and for us—not just as a mass of people, but personally and individually. God delights in us, and we are the apples of God's eye. God loves us, believes in us and delights in us. God chooses us and calls us to minister in this world.

We are used to speaking of God's unconditional love, but the retreat leaders urged us to think of God's conditional love. Conditional love in this sense does not mean we have to do certain things or God will not love us, but that God loves each of us and each of the conditions we find ourselves in. This God of ours loves us not in spite of who we are but because of who we are, however we find ourselves at any given time. There are no "shoulds" where God is concerned. God does not ever say we should be anything but who we are at this very moment, in all our strengths and in all our weaknesses.

Not only is God grateful for us, God is grateful to us. When we let ourselves be God's hand's and feet in the world, God is grateful that we have helped one of God's children. When we care for God's creatures, God is grateful for our stewardship. When we are tender with the earth, God is grateful that we are mindful of God's Creation and committed to helping it thrive. God is grateful to us for doing God's work in the world as we have been called to do—when we live into our particular vocation and ministry. When we use our gifts to meet the world's needs, God is grateful to us. When we spread God's message of love and life, God is grateful to us. It may sound strange, but God can say thank you too: "Thank you for being my disciple, for following my son Jesus. You are helping the world that I love so much to heal."

This November—and all year long—give thanks to God for all you have received, but also listen for God's "thank you" to you for all you have done for God using your particular gifts and bearing your particular weaknesses. Never forget how much God delights in you and wants to be in relationship with you. And may you return God's delight and desire for relationship joyfully, in your body, mind and spirit.

Ann†

Fill The Baskets With Food for AFAC

Do you listen to WAMU radio? If so, you may have heard a news story on September 28 featuring the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), describing how economic conditions have impacted the service they provide.

According to the story, AFAC is now serving about 1,200 families a week. Last year at this time the number was about 800 per week, and a year before that about 600 families a week. AFAC's Executive Director Christine Lucas says that even if the economy improves, it is not likely to make a difference for families relying on food assistance this holiday season.

Each year AFAC gives away about 2 million pounds of food. Some of that comes from the people at St. John's. At the back of the nave are baskets for us to leave donations of canned and dry goods for AFAC. Be generous this holiday season. There are people in our community who need our help.

Jesus as a Role Model

This year the children are studying the human Jesus as a role model for being a steward of creation. To begin the project, Del Hunt handed out forms for everyone to fill out about where in the Bible we found Jesus doing things that serve others and the creation. He received 15 responses and will work with the children on selecting a behavior or action the class might want to model and work on doing something similar, looking at questions such as: what fits you based on your gifts; what outcome do we want to realize; how can we do what we intend to do to see what worked and how well we modeled and how can we involve the rest of the congregation. Stay tuned for further updates.

Stewardship: Vestry Sets Goals for 2010

The vestry has established some basic goals for the coming year in conjunction with this year's stewardship campaign. The goals were established after talking to parishioners to get their views on what St. John's should be doing to carry out its mission. These goals provide direction for the coming year and highlight some of the mission-related activities that will be supported by your pledges. The goals were included in the bulletins on October 18, and are included here as a reminder of where St. John's is going in the coming year.

Goals for 2010 In Furtherance of St. John's Mission Statement

Goal # 1: Plan and conduct outreach activities to the surrounding communities.

Plan of Action

- Prepare our "own" postcard for mailing to the targeted Zip codes in the St. John's area showing photos of our congregation participating in events like Shrine Mont, preparation of bagged meals, book club discussions, blessing of the animals, showing our diversity, etc.
- Provide topical speakers for evening meetings—invite the community to attend
- Two spaghetti suppers
- Show movies and sell refreshments either monthly or quarterly
- Sponsor an ice cream social (Morning Guild is talking about this)
- Glencarlyn Day events
- Increase advertising budget to keep our name in front of local residents
- Plan an activity that we could schedule on a Saturday morning and invite the Glencarlyn and neighboring communities to come and help (e.g., pack care packages for troops in Afghanistan)
- Have a church member represent St. John's on the Glencarlyn Civic Association

Goal # 2: Carry out our stewardship responsibilities to maintain the physical structure and grounds of the church as a welcoming and attractive place.

Plan of Action

- Parishioners participate in spring and fall clean-ups
- Provide better maintenance of building and grounds—prepare a list of parishioners who would be willing to make minor repairs
- Prepare a list of routine projects with a timeline that indicates best time to work on these projects—this would include a yard plan. Make it available to all to see
- Brian Cavey is preparing a manual to house information about our physical plant
- Support the committee that is working on re-landscaping the front slope

LOGOS

The LOGOS is published nine times a year in February, March, April, May, July, September, October, November, and December near the beginning of the month.

Dave Dunlap, LOGOS Editor • Jane Edwards, LOGOS Editor and Page Layout

Email Dave at dave_dunlap@yahoo.com (preferred) or leave info in newsletter box in the office.

The next deadline is Thursday, November 12 at 10:00 am.

Bible Study Wraps Up the Letter of James

by Dave Dunlap

For five weeks in August and September the epistle readings in the Sunday lectionary were drawn from the Letter of James. For some in the congregation these readings were very familiar, because they had been discussing the Letter of James in a weekly Bible study group. For an hour each week for nine weeks the group read and reflected on James's teachings, agreeing sometimes, disagreeing others, and frequently trying to understand what the writer was trying to get at.

The "James" of this letter is traditionally identified as James the brother of Jesus, who became the leader of the church in Jerusalem and who was martyred before the outbreak of the Jewish rebellion of 66—70 C.E., at the conclusion of which the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. If James of Jerusalem was the author, the letter would have been written prior to 70 C.E. Unlike many of Paul's letters, the letter of James was not addressed to a specific congregation, but is addressed to "The Twelve Tribes in Dispersion."

Reading and studying James's letter provoked lively discussion. James urged his readers not to doubt or to be "double-minded." James was not in doubt of his beliefs or in his adjurations to his readers. The study group had no disagreement about James seeing things as being either black or white. But the discussion produced insights that helped everyone better understand this short but meaningful piece of scripture.

If you are interested in joining our next Bible study project, now is the time to let Ann Barker know. We have not yet decided on our next study or when it will start, so you can help determine that. Our meeting time is flexible—we met mostly on Monday afternoons this time, but many of the group have schedules flexible enough to accommodate another time if necessary.

Adult Ed Welcomes Mitzi Budde

On November 8, the adult forum will again welcome Virginia Seminary's head librarian, Mitzi Budde, who will review some recently published books with theological topics. We will also have classes that will look at the differences in the synoptic gospels, led by Bill Schenck and Celtic spirituality, led by Ann Barker. All are welcome to come at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

United Thank Offering Fall Ingathering November 8

On November 8 we will give thanks for our many blessings by putting coins in a little blue box or writing a check for the United Thank Offering.

November seems a particularly appropriate month for our fall ingathering for UTO since it is the month we celebrate our Thanksgiving holiday. We are able to give thanks to God for our blessings by offering gifts to others. We do not offer gifts expecting to be paid back. What draws us close together is the mystery of the gift of gratitude: from us to God, from God to us for sharing out resources, from those who receive our gifts and from their gratitude to us for our generosity.

Remember the Church in Your Will

As Christians, we are stewards of the unique gifts God has given us. We can conclude our trusteeship faithfully and say "thank you" by providing for the disposal of our assets after we die. Giving to the church is one lasting way to provide an example of our Christian values for the benefit of future generations.

Episcopalians who wish to continue their Christian stewardship after death have provided for ministry in their wills, through simple bequests which benefit congregations, social service agencies, seminaries, colleges, camps and other Episcopal Church-related institutions.

There are many ways you can use your will to advance ministries you care about. For example, you can

- Leave a percentage of your estate for ministry
- Leave a specific amount for ministry
- Leave the remainder of your estate to ministry after making other bequests
- Leave specific property (your IRA, which would otherwise be taxable, or appreciated property such as stocks or real estate) for ministry
- Create a trust that provides life income to a survivor and designates a ministry as the final beneficiary.

Parish News

Congratulations

To Rachel Reed and Matt Baggette on their marriage
September 19

Thank you

To Dave Dunlap for serving as this year's stewardship
chair

To Kay Wells and Dave Dunlap for coordinating the
stewardship letter mailing

To all who helped with the October bagged lunches

To everyone who brought yarn and sewing supplies
for San José

To Pamela-Corey Archer, Peter Wehmann, Faye
Pritchard and Bill Pritchard for organizing a wonder-
ful Shrine Mont retreat

To Grace Cangialosi, for her work as leader for the
parish retreat

November Birthdays

Nov-1 Dave Dunlap
Nov-2 Keith McCartney
Nov-3 Betty Geris
Nov-4 Roger Ludwig
Nov-11 Robert L. "Larry" Rawls III
Nov-13 Douglas Le Sage
Nov-13 Dave Robinson
Nov-14 Beth Fowler
Nov-15 Bronwen Berliner
Nov-15 Jean Harrison
Nov-16 Laura Van Wyk
Nov-19 Alva Rice
Nov-24 Lisa Buchanan
Nov-25 Jud Buchanan
Nov-27 Gage Buchanan

November Anniversaries

Nov-4 Roger & Diane Henderson
Nov-6 Jeff & Michelle Aitken
Nov-10 Brian & Beth Cavey
Nov-24 Del & Carole Hunt

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Remember to set your clocks back one hour on Sun-
day, November 1.

Website

The website for St. John's, Arlington is:
<http://stjohnsarlington.thediocese.net>

Misplaced your LOGOS? Can't remember the time
an event begins? Visit the website for the latest copy
of the newsletter, times and places of events and
activities.

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LOGOS by e-mail, which saves postage and paper.
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ginia know. Call 703-671-6834 or send an email to
stjohnssecretary@verizon.net.

St. John's Mission Statement

To discover and share the transforming love of
Christ

St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's is dedicated to making disciples for Jesus
through

- attracting and welcoming newcomers;
- sharing faith-deepening worship, education,
outreach, and pastoral care; and
- together carrying God's vision of the kingdom
into the world around us.

Gospel Lessons for November

November 1, All Saints' Day—John 11:32-44

Lazarus, Mary's brother, has died. Martha has told Jesus that he would not have died had Jesus been present, but that the Father will grant whatever Jesus asks. Jesus has said to her: "Your brother will rise again" (v. 23), which she takes to refer to the general resurrection Jews expected at the end of time. Jesus has answered: "I am the resurrection and the life" (v. 25); even though a believer dies physically, he or she will live on as a person. She has added: "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world" (v. 27).

Now Mary repeats her earlier assertion (v. 32). Jesus is stirred with indignation, probably at the sorrow death brings. He weeps because he is touched by the pain of those he loves and shares that pain in some real way. Martha tries to restrain Jesus from viewing the decomposing corpse of his friend (v. 39). Jesus says to her: did I not tell you that if you believed you would see God's power to end death? God, Father and Son, bring Lazarus back to physical life. Jesus verbalizes his thanks to the Father as he tells the unbelieving "crowd" (v. 42) that he is sent by the Father. On Jesus' command, Lazarus emerges, still wrapped in burial cloths.

November 8, Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost—Mark 12:38-44

A scribe has asked Jesus: which is the greatest precept in the law? His agreement that to love God and to love one's neighbor are the most important has led Jesus to tell him that he is almost ready for the kingdom of God.

Now, as Jesus teaches in the synagogue, he warns of certain scribes (professional interpreters of the Law) who "walk around" ostentatiously, seek honor in public places ("marketplaces") and seek prestige "in ... synagogues" (v. 39) and "at banquets". ("Long robes", v. 38, may be prayer shawls, normally worn only when praying. The "best seats", v. 39, in the synagogue were near the Ark—where the scrolls were kept—and faced the congregation; the "places of honor" were couches at the host's table.)

Certain scribes, as legal trustees of a widow's estate, charged exorbitantly for their services. The fee was

usually a part of the estate, but some took the "widows' houses" (v. 40). Some kept up an appearance of piety. They will be judged harshly in the greatest court of all on Judgment Day. Jesus' disciples are *not* to be like them.

On the other hand, a "poor widow" (v. 42) is an example of good discipleship. Jesus is "opposite the treasury" (v. 41), possibly in the outer court of the Temple, where people placed their offerings in chests. The "poor widow"—widows were often poor—makes a real sacrifice in giving two leptas, the lowest value coin in circulation; she "has put in more than all those" (v. 43) rich people who only give what they do not need.

November 15, Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost—Mark 13:1-8

Jesus has indicated to his disciples that the poor widow who gave all that she has is a good example of discipleship. We are nearing the end of his instructions to them.

In vv. 1-2, Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple, as the prophets Micah and Jeremiah had done earlier. (His words were later used against him.) Did he mean it literally or figuratively? We don't know. (Both the Temple and the religious system were destroyed in 70 AD.) Then he and his first four disciples visit the Mount of Olives—a place mentioned in Zechariah 14:4 as being connected with events at the end of the era. They ask him: when will the Temple ("this", v. 4) be destroyed? How will we know that the end of the era is near? Jesus gives them three indicators:

- false claimants to being God's agent of renewal will appear, claiming "I am he!" (v. 6);
- international political conflicts (v. 8a) will occur;
- as will natural disasters.

There will be other signs too (vv. 14-25). The figure of a woman in labor ("birth pangs", v. 8) is also used in Jeremiah, Hosea and Micah.

November 22, Christ the King—John 18:33-37

This is part of John's account of Jesus' trial before Pilate. Pilate has met with those Jews seeking his death outside his "headquarters", the praetorium. He has asked: what charge, valid in Roman law, do you have to bring against him? (v. 28). V. 29 shows

that they have none to propose. Pilate refuses to get involved by telling them to try him under Jewish law. They then make it obvious that they seek Jesus' death.

Now Pilate goes inside the praetorium and asks Jesus: are you the leader of a revolutionary movement? In return, Jesus asks him: Is this question your idea, based on what you have heard, or did others put you up to it? Pilate shows his scorn for Jews; the religious authorities seek your death, but what grounds are there for killing you? In v. 36, Jesus begins to explain the nature of his kingship. Were he a rebel leader, his followers "would be fighting to keep me from being handed over" to the religious authorities, but he is no threat to Pilate's authority. Pilate picks up on Jesus words "my kingdom". Jesus is king of "truth" (v. 37); his subjects are those who belong to the truth. He was "born" and "came into the world" to establish the kingdom of God, the ultimate truth.

November 29, First Sunday of Advent– Luke 21:25-36

Jesus has foretold the destruction of the Temple (v. 6). Some have asked him when this will occur and what will indicate that it is about to happen (v. 7). Given that "all the people were spellbound by what they heard" (19:48) and that the religious authorities "kept looking for a way to kill him" (19:47), the destruction must have spiritual meaning. Jesus tells of events commonly expected at the end of the era, and adds some which are specifically Christian. First, Christians will be persecuted by religious and civil authorities (v. 12). Then there will be "wars and insurrections" (v. 9), but "the end will not follow immediately" (as people expected). Disastrous natural phenomena, cause for great distress, will occur (v. 11), and when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies (v. 20), the city will soon fall: either physically or spiritually. Again the end will be delayed: the killing and deportation of citizens will continue "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (v. 24), i.e. until non-Jews have had the opportunity to come to Christ.

Now Jesus foretells unnatural events ("signs ...", v. 25) and the resulting confusion among nations and people, not knowing what will happen next. But the "Son of Man" (v. 27), the ideal human, Christ, will come from heaven ("in a cloud", a symbol of divine presence, as at the Transfiguration) with power to control events. Then "redemption" (v. 28), God's acts

of freeing his chosen people, will be near. Just as the leafing of trees shows that "summer is ... near" (v. 30), so the occurrence of all these events will show that "the kingdom of God is near" (v. 31): this time will be evident to the faithful. The signs will be as striking as is seen in fig trees: in winter, they look dead but in spring they sprout. In spite of the delay, the era will end before all those alive now have died (v. 32). Jesus' "words" (v. 33) are even more eternal than creation ("heaven and earth"). Finally, he advises vigilance: do not be so "weighed down" (v. 34) with day-to-day earthy matters that you are unprepared for the final call ("that day"). It will be for all those who survive all disasters (v. 35). Pray that God may give you the strength to resist all evils, so that you may "stand before" (v. 36) Christ, be deemed worthy by him.

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St. John's Calendar

November

- Sun 1 Daylight Savings Time Ends
All Saints' Day
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 3 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 4 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 5 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 8 Twenty Third Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 10 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 11 Veterans' Day (office closed)
Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 12 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m.
- Sun 15 Twenty Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 18 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 19 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 21 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 22 Christ the King Sunday
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 25 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 26 Thanksgiving Day (office closed)
- Sun 29 First Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.

December

- Tue 1 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed 2 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 3 Morning Guild, 10 a.m.
Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 6 Second Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Tue 8 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Wed 9 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 10 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sun 13 Third Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 16 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 17 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat 19 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m.
- Sun 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m.
Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m.
Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.
- Wed 23 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Thu 24 Christmas Eve
Holy Eucharist for all ages with children's sermon, 5 p.m.
Christmas music and caroling in church, 10:40 p.m.
Festival Holy Eucharist, 11 p.m.
- Fri 25 Christmas Day
Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m.
- Sun 27 First Sunday After Christmas
Lessons and Carols, 10 a.m.
- Wed 30 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m.

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Next deadline is Thursday, November 12 at 10:00 a.m.

Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly

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Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Carol Dunlap
Secretary: Virginia Pearson
Sexton: Justiniano Garay

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John Restall, Assistant Treasurer
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