



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

April 2013

Lenten Supper Speaker Looks at History of Racism in Virginia

The Reverend Benjamin Campbell, who grew up in Arlington and went on to become an Episcopal priest identified with issues of social justice and ecumenism in Richmond, came home to the county the evening of March 12 to speak at St. John's Lenten supper.

His topic: Virginia's history of racism and economic discrimination, starting in colonial days, and its still-present effects in today's society. It is a subject he has researched thoroughly for his recent book, *Richmond's Unhealed History*.

About 70 people from Episcopal churches throughout Arlington attended the supper and lecture. From time to time you could hear one of them comment "I never knew that" as the Rev. Campbell related less-well-known historical happenings that have played a role in shaping today's outlook on race and economic class in Virginia, and particularly in Richmond. It is an outlook that is based in economics, he said, starting with the colonials who made their livings and their fortunes first by taking Native American land, then by relying on the labor of white indentured servants (who were, for all intents and purposes, treated like slaves), and finally by relying on the labor of African slaves.

He did not spare the churches in his speech. He pointed out that in the late 1730s and early

1740s both white and black Virginians – free, indentured, and slave – participated together in the outdoor revivals of the evangelical Great Awakening and envisioned a more just society. But by the 1800s the evangelicals, like the Anglicans before them, had "decided that any discussion of the rights and wrongs of slavery belonged in civil, as opposed to religious, discourse" (*Richmond's Unhealed History*, p.81). Religion became reserved for the "more spiritual."

From 1800 to 1861, between 300,000 and 500,000 slaves from Virginia were sold to plantations located in the slave states further south and in the Caribbean. Richmond then had the second largest slave market in the United States, outdone only by New Orleans. The market was, ironically, encircled by the city's main churches – white churches.

"This strangest fact about [this] downriver slave trade, perhaps, is that it was virtually unknown in Virginia or Richmond history until the last decade of the twentieth century," the Rev. Campbell wrote in his book. "...The impact of this buried history is difficult to estimate....An interstate highway and a parking lot cover the sites, which are buried under fifteen to forty-five feet of fill and rubble. Their hidden secrets represent effectively the psyches of many who

inhabit the land.”

The Reverend Benjamin Campbell is not the first in his family to be associated with social justice. His father was a lawyer involved with civil rights issues. His mother was head of the Arlington County School Board at the time the board decided to keep county school doors open rather than to close them to avoid integration.

After leaving Arlington, he studied political science and political economy at Williams College in Massachusetts. He studied theology at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. He received his Master's in Divinity from the Virginia Theological Seminary and he was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1966. He ministered at three Episcopal churches and served the Diocese of Virginia, first as its communications director and then as program director. In Richmond he led

two non-profit organizations, became pastoral director for the ecumenical Richmond Hill community, co-founded an association that matches faith communities with Richmond's inner city elementary schools, and became involved in other Richmond Public Schools programs. He is a member of the Richmond Slave Trail Commission.

His speech at St. John's was the next-to-last in a series of five Lenten suppers and lectures organized by the Episcopal churches of Arlington. The lectures have been focused on different issues of race, ethnicity and inclusion and how Christians might address them.

The Region 3 Lenten series concludes with a two-part session called “Meet Me In Galilee” on April 12 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. and Saturday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church.

From the Rector: New Growth

After months of faithfully putting three ice cubes two days a week in the orchid on my desk, it has finally decided to bloom. I am pleased and excited by this new life in my office and hope that the plant will produce more blossoms.

Easter is the season of new life, new hope and new growth. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has given us the supreme gift of eternal life with God. We have hope for the future because we have been reconciled with God in Christ. New life and new hope lead to new growth. I have already begun to have three areas of new growth in my life. I read the newspaper most days. I have more time to practice voice, and I have a new friend to have lunch with. These may seem like small things, but the newspaper is God's way of keeping me more connected with the world. Practicing voice keeps me connected with my gifts, and having lunch with a friend helps me increase my web of relationships.

Maybe there are buds of new life in you as well. Perhaps you want to begin a new hobby or take up one you haven't worked on for years.

The other day I saw my guitar that has been in the closet for years. Would I have time for that, I wondered? Perhaps a relationship with a child or a spouse is about to reach a new level of understanding and love and you are beginning to explore what that means in your life. Maybe there is a volunteer opportunity you are being led to get involved in. We will have one of those to offer at St. John's soon. Maybe you are seeking to know yourself better and to spend more time alone. Or it could be a deeper relationship with God you are exploring.

Then there is possibility of exploring new gifts or new versions of existing gifts, says Brad Agry in a CREDO blog post. “The light of unexplored or untested potential that even you may not clearly see is...intriguing. You may not have used the exact skills previously, but feel in your gut that you would be good at something”. If you have this feeling, it is time to take a try for new possibilities that you may only grasp faintly.

Whatever the new growth that seeks to spring forth in us, it comes from desire, and desire comes from God. Brother Curtis Almquist of the

Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) says “God is using this potent, sometimes gnawing gift of desire...to lead us, like with bread crumbs, to a door which we might not have otherwise chosen or even recognized in this life. Inside that door is home.”

For new growth to happen, says Brad Agry. “We need to have a little chaos – a little shaking up of perhaps what may have become a comfortable position where we are not learning anything new or growing. The status quo no doubt can be cozy but boring.”

For some of us it is hard to feel the new life pulsating within us because something stands in our way. It may be depression, a negative self-image or a sense of isolation. Brother David Vyrhof (SSJE), says that “we may be afraid to be totally and unconditionally loved by God.” What would it mean, he wonders, for us to see ourselves and to live as beloved children of God, and what images of ourselves might we have to let go of to embrace this identity.

Finally for new growth to be fulfilling, we have to be as Jesus is and have our lives revolve around God’s purposes for us, says Vyrhof. We have to be willing to be led by God to God’s purposes for us, for they will give us the most happiness.

New growth is fun and scary all at once. We may just be willing to put a toe in the water of a new opportunity and see how warm the water is. Then we might get in deeper. Or we may be part of the polar bear club, jumping into cold water and swimming our way around fast, relishing the all-or-nothing feeling of that activity. But whether we approach growth cautiously or rush after it impulsively, remember that growth comes from God. We are all being stretched so we can be all God intends us to be. Look for the buds on your tree. Nurture them and see what pops up. That’s how a meaningful life is made.

Ann †

Highlights of the March 2013 Vestry Meeting

John Wilson presented several ideas that he believes will improve financial accounting for St. John’s: naming designated funds for their purposes (rather than for the contributors), possibly pooling designated funds given for essentially the same purpose, and counting designated funds in drawing up the budget so that the designated funds will be used in a timely manner and so as to reduce any deficit. Bill Thomson will be looking into if and how pooling can be done, and the vestry will consider John’s suggestions again at another vestry meeting, most likely in April.

The vestry informally decided to have a brief “Financial Notes” item placed quarterly in LOGOS. It was suggested that the item show income for the quarter, expenditures for the quarter, total budgeted for the quarter, and year-to-date figures. The treasurer would be responsible for placing the information in the LOGOS.

The following progress was reported on St. John’s 2013 goals:

- *Family Programs*: Beth Cavey reported in writing that Family Programs now has a good core of people supporting the program, that she will continue to offer more opportunities for parish participation, that she keeps participants in Family Programs updated in a weekly email, that a neighborhood family is now sending their daughter to our Sunday programs, and that Vacation Bible School will begin July 15.
- *Outreach*: Faye Pritchard reported that an initial additional outreach project will be chosen by mid-April, based on what new projects the parishioners say they are willing to support. She also said she is looking into the possibility of inviting Glencarlyn neighbors to participate with us on outreach projects.
- *Worship*: Bill Schenck reported that he will be researching ideas for worship at the Virginia Theological Seminary and that he will be meeting with our rector after Easter on worship approaches and music.

- *Communications:* Pete Olivere reported that he, Ann Barker, Virginia Pearson, and Faye Pritchard have worked together on devising a calendar chart that will make it easier to ensure that those involved in publicity are kept informed of what messages need to go out via which modes of communication. He also reported that he will be organizing a meeting of those involved in parish communications in April to discuss communications strategies and tactics.

- *Parish Growth:* No report at this time.

An Outreach Message from the Senior Warden

We pray each Sunday, in St. John’s collect, that God will help us “grow and accomplish all you have for us to do.” We will now be seeking to do just that by extending the outreach of our congregation.

Admittedly, we are small and it may seem as daunting to us to extend our outreach as feeding the 5,000 seemed to the disciples. I am confident, however, that we have the necessary five loaves and two fishes and that God will bless our efforts as long as we are focused on doing God’s will and following God’s guidance.

This April you are being asked to choose which possibilities for outreach you want to pursue—all of them drawn from the suggestions you have offered in the survey, in writing, and in conversation. You have given us outreach opportunities you believe we can do. **Now prayerfully consider which ones we as a congregation—and you as an individual—are being called to take up.**

Here, then, are some possibilities:

- Active, continuing involvement at a homeless shelter (such as serving/cooking meals on-site, serving food from a truck, bagging/stocking food items on a large scale, or other help requested by the shelter) on a monthly or bimonthly basis
- Occasional day-of-service project: Providing “care packages” to a social services organization to meet the needs of the homeless and/or those with little income for things like toiletries, school

St. John’s Goals for 2013

Family Programs

Enhance family programs to support our children and youth and to draw in new families.

Outreach

Provide focus for and expand outreach activity.

Worship

Further enliven worship to uplift our spiritual lives.

Parish Growth

Attract new members and reach out to inactive, prior, and homebound members.

Communications

Improve parish communications with better strategies to inform prospective and current members about St. John’s and its activities.

supplies, etc.

- Occasional day-of-service project: Working with a homeless advocacy or other outside social services group to provide job interview and/or work clothes to needy people seeking work
- Participation in a Habitat for Humanity project
- Participation in a Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April) project
- Participation in another rehydration project
- Participation in an occasional AFAC project, such as sorting and bagging produce at the AFAC warehouse
- Tutoring or reading at area schools, preferably weekly or biweekly

I am looking forward to talking with you and gathering your thoughts as we discern what we are being called to accomplish--and then working with you as we act on it.

Faye Pritchard

St. John's Mission Statement

We welcome everyone including believers, seekers and doubters to share God's love and acceptance in a community of worship and service.

St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's is dedicated to nurturing disciples for Jesus by:

- Offering faith-deepening worship, education, outreach and pastoral care;
- Attracting and welcoming newcomers; and
- Sharing God's love with our community and the world around us.

Words on Hymns

This Little Light of Mine, which we will sing for the recessional on April 14, is a rousing children's gospel song written about 1920 by Harry Dixon Loes (1895-1965), a composer and teacher who wrote and co-wrote several other gospel hymns. It has since entered the folk tradition, first collected by John Lomax in 1939. It is sometimes thought of as a Negro spiritual, but it is not in any collections of jubilee or plantation songs from the nineteenth century. The phrase "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine" may be taken from one of several New Testament quotations about light, but the most likely seems to be from Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

The song has had an extensive career as a popular song. To list only a few of the many releases, it was first secularized by Ray Charles in 1956, and subsequently by the Everly Brothers (remember them?) as *This Little Girl of Mine*. It became a Civil Rights anthem in the 1950s and '60s. The Kingston Trio included it in their 1962 album *College Concert*. The Seekers recorded it on their second UK album in 1964. Bruce Springsteen released it on his album *Live in Dublin* in 2006. The Disney Channel included a remixed version in its 2012 movie *Let It Shine*.

So sing out and let it shine on April 14.

Parish News

Adult Formation

This spring, the adult formation class will be focusing on women in the New Testament. We also hope to have a Muslim scholar from Virginia Seminary speak to the class.

Thank you

- To Bill Pritchard and Roger Ludwig for helping with "Ashes to Go"
- To Pete Olivere for helping make the sign for "Ashes to Go"
- To Bill Pritchard for taking pictures of "Ashes to Go"
- To Lenore Schmidt, Leslie Mead, Paul Petrich, John Petrich and Del Hunt for cleaning up the backyard
- To Faye Pritchard and all the volunteers who helped set up, clean up, or cook for the Lenten dinner: Bill Pritchard, Barbara Olivere, Jeff Wallace, Sandy Winger, Patricia Broida, Debbie Carter, Leslie Mead, Anne and Paul Stenger, Monica Lozano, Dave and Carol Dunlap, Linda Simmons, Lynn Robinson, Eileen Tallent, Bill Schenck and Lynn Christopher. Our apologies in advance if we missed anyone, since there were helpers who did not sign up but nonetheless brought soup or bread and helped make this event a success.

LOGOS

The LOGOS is published monthly except August, near the beginning of the month.

Dave Dunlap, LOGOS Editor

Articles for LOGOS may be Emailed to dave_dunlap@yahoo.com (preferred) or left at the church office.

Deadline for the May issue April 25.

Coming in April

April 2 – Book Club meets at 7:30 p.m.

This month's selection is *Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey; The Lost Legacy of Highclere Castle* by the Countess of Carnarvon. Read quickly and be sure to come and discuss this book about the inspiration for the hit PBS series.

April 4 – Morning Guild meets at 10 a.m.

April 8 – Vestry meeting, 7 p.m.

April 13 – Spaghetti Supper, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Come and enjoy a hearty meal and great conversation. You will have a choice of half a dozen sauces to top off the pasta, ranging from vegetarian to spicy meat sauce. To complement the main course there will be a salads plus bread and a variety of desserts. Bargain basement cost is \$5.00, \$3.00 for children ages three to six, and free for children under three.

April 20 – Men's Fellowship, 8:30 a.m.

Come and enjoy good company and light morning refreshments!