



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

January 2014

From the Rector: A New Balance

I have been noticing lately that my life is not balanced the way I would like it to be. There is too much busyness and not enough rest. I am falling down on "being" time and overproducing – I am a real doer at heart. There are some new things I would like to try that I can't find time for, and my posture exercises are almost non-existent. I would like to try to change this in the New Year. I don't want to call changing my life balance a New Year's resolution, but a continuation of my ongoing attempt to have a more contented, peaceful, fulfilled life.

After the hustle and bustle of Christmas, you may find yourself back in your old schedule, but more uncomfortable with it than you have been before. We say we like new things and a few of us are really spontaneous people, but the truth is we do not like to get out of a routine that is familiar, even if it is a rut. I would like to suggest some things that we all might try to bring more balance into our lives.

First of all, there is our work-play balance. Work consumes a lot of our lives. There is no question about that and we certainly need the income to live. But maybe we do not have to work so hard for so long; maybe we are overworking and need some more play in our day. I notice that when I get home, I have trouble sitting down with a book and reading. There is always some office work or some bookkeeping work or some other kind of chore that needs doing. I seldom read the paper, except for the funnies and the crossword puzzle, and I have watched a movie alone probably once in the past year. I am happy to report that more often now, I have been able to sit down for about 25 minutes and read a mystery novel. Your commute could be a problem too. What about considering the 495 express lanes? They are always running commercials about how you'll have more time if you use them.

Our exercise-rest balance is an important part of our lives too. I try to get some aerobic exercise in 5-7 days a week and work out at the gym twice a week. I recently added balancing on one foot for a certain amount of time each day because I read that would help my balance as I got older. And yet there are still posture exercises I don't get to. As we age, we just need to do more things to keep our bodies functioning well. Yet rest is also important to the functioning of our bodies. I get between six and seven hours of sleep at night and yet I cannot take a nap, because I get too anxious that I should be up and doing something. I want to work on that in 2014.

Being and doing also need to have well-balanced scales. As you can see, I am a doer. I have trouble being. It is hard for me to sit and be alone with my feelings, to meditate, to stop and smell the roses, to rejoice in God's creation. But as we are often reminded God loves us for who we are, not just what we

do. It is hard to know who you are if you do not stop and look inside yourselves for information about that very thing. It may have changed since the last time you checked. Meditating is a way of stilling our minds and focusing on being. It draws us closer to ourselves and to God. Try some of that in 2014.

Balance between caring for yourselves and caring for others. When we have a busy schedule taking care of children or parents, it is often difficult to find time to take care of our own needs, but very necessary or we cannot be present for them either. We will be stressed to the breaking point if we do not spend some time in self care.

This year, try to have enough being time to figure out what your soul craves, what yours and God's deepest desire for you is, and try to work it into your schedule. Take away what you really do not need to be doing or can do in less time consuming ways. I hope you and I will find it a very rewarding process.

Ann †

December 2013 Vestry Highlights

The vestry revised the draft budget submitted by the Finance Committee. The budget will be presented to the annual meeting for its approval.

The vestry discussed and approved objectives and areas of focus for 2014. The objectives will be presented at the annual meeting.

The rector reported that we are still searching for a sexton to take on both outside and inside duties.

The date for the annual meeting was set for January 26, 2014.

Christmas Carol Sing

A number of people gathered at four o'clock on December 15 to enjoy singing Christmas carols in Advent. Led by Lynn Robinson, who added to the interest with a brief history of the carol being sung, the group, accompanied by piano, sang a dozen carols that Lynn had programmed, followed by another half dozen requests. Everyone had a good time, and we look forward to repeating the event next year.

Words on Hymns

This month I'm writing about a hymn – *Good King Wenceslas* – that isn't even in our hymnal and that we will not be singing during the Christmas season. It is, however, a favorite and the words are evocative. I chose this hymn because I always wondered just who Good King Wenceslas was and why he merited a carol being written about him.

The words to the carol were written by John Mason Neale and published in 1853. The music originated in Finland 300 years earlier. This Christmas carol is unusual as there is no reference in the lyrics to the nativity.

The song tells a story of Good King Wenceslas braving harsh winter weather to give alms to a poor peasant on the Feast of Stephen. During the

journey, his page is about to give up the struggle against the cold weather, but is enabled to continue by following the king's footprints, step for step, through the deep snow. The legend is based on the life of the historical Saint Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia or Svatý Václav in Czech (907–935).

Good King Wenceslas was the duke of Bohemia in the 10th century. Having been brought up with a strong Christian faith by his grandmother St. Ludmila, he was a man who believed in putting his faith into action. His own mother, Drahomira, was allied with an anti-Christian group that murdered Wenceslas's grandmother, allowing Drahomira to become regent in Bohemia in 920 AD when Wenceslas's own father died. Drahomira was deposed due to

her tyrannical rule, and Wenceslas became duke at the age of 18. Many of the Bohemian nobles were against Wenceslas's attempts to spread Christianity, and resented his allegiance to the king of Germany, Henry I. Wenceslas was murdered



King Wenceslas monument in Prague

on September 28, 929 by his younger brother Boleslav, who joined the nobles plotting to kill the duke. After inviting Wenceslas to a religious festival, Boleslav, assisted by other assassins, attacked him along the way. Wenceslas had been particularly caring toward children, doing what he could to help orphans.

His saint's day is September 28th. He is the Patron Saint of the Czech Republic. St. Stephen's feast day is celebrated on December

26th, which is why this song is sung as a Christmas carol.

Wenceslas was considered a martyr and a saint immediately after his death, when a cult of Wenceslas grew up in Bohemia and in England. Within a few decades of Wenceslas's death, four biographies of him were in circulation. These books that made him seem better than he was (much like George Washington's cherry tree), had a powerful influence on the High Middle Ages conceptualization of the *rex justus*, or "righteous king" – that is, a monarch whose power stems mainly from his great piety, as well as from his princely vigor.

Although Wenceslas was, during his lifetime, only a duke, Holy Roman Emperor Otto I posthumously "conferred on [Wenceslas] the royal dignity and title". Several centuries later the legend was claimed as fact by Pope Pius II, who himself also walked ten miles barefoot in the ice and snow as an act of pious thanksgiving.

Carol Dunlap

Good King Wenceslas

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even.
Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel.
When a poor man came in sight
Gath'ring winter fuel.

"Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence
By Saint Agnes' fountain."

"Bring me flesh and bring me wine
Bring me pine logs hither.
Thou and I will see him dine
When we bear him thither."

Page and monarch forth they went
Forth they went together.
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

"Sire, the night is darker now
And the wind blows stronger.
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps, my good page,
Tread thou in them boldly.
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

In his master's steps he trod
Where the snow lay dinted.
Heat was in the very sod
Which the Saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

Parish News

We thank those whose devotion and work were so visible at the Christmas season:

- The Family Programs ministry, who organized a wonderful Christmas pageant.
- Leslie Mead who transported Angel Tree gifts to the Salvation Army
- Lynn Robinson and Carol Dunlap who organized our Christmas carol sing
- Our guest musicians at Christmas: Amy Dunlap and Karen Dunlap Sonnett
- Lynn Christopher for leading our annual Festival of Lessons and Carols

As we end the year, we also would like to thank all who have given of their time and energy to St. John's during 2013, especially

- Senior Warden Faye Pritchard, Junior Warden Lenore Schmidt, and the other vestry members: Carrie Harbin, Pete Olivere, Bill Schenck, Paul Stenger, and Linda Trochim
- Our Minister of Music, Lynn Robinson, and choir members Anne Stenger and Marshall Adair
- Our faithful organist, Carol Dunlap
- Pat Bleicher for yet another year leading the Education for Ministry Program at St. John's
- Debbie Carter for leading the Stewardship Campaign
- Our Treasurer Bill Thomson, Assistant Treasurer John Restall, Finance Committee Chair John Wilson, Altar Guild Chair Eileen Tallent, the members of the Altar Guild, and our Minister of Family Programs, Beth Cavey
- Linda Trochim, who filled in as Finance Committee Chair during John Wilson's illness
- Parish Administrator Virginia Pearson
- Kay Wells for helping with office work
- Roger Ludwig for blessing us with his piano selections
- Parish photographers – Pete Olivere, Bill Pritchard, and Matt Hubbard
- Those who serve during worship – acolytes, lay readers, chalice bearers, ushers, tellers, and those who organize and provide for post-worship fellowship
- Those volunteers who help Beth and work with our teens and younger children
- The volunteers who organize parish dinners and social events
- The members of the Morning Guild for their work coordinating the Angel Tree
- Sextons Karina Aviles and Guadalupe Garay
- LOGOS editor Dave Dunlap

Rest in Peace

- Philip Burr, neighbor of Anne and Paul Stenger, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on November 23
- Nelson Mandela, who entered the Life of the Resurrection on December 5

January Birthdays

Keelyn Del Gallo, Don Hess, Tony Kollath, Mary Mackin, Paul Stenger, Cynthia Todd

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.

Adult Education for January

In January the adult forum will be studying *Saving Salvation: The Amazing Evolution of Grace*, a book by Stephen Smith. We will talk about salvation as seen in the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament and how views of salvation have changed over the years. Please join us on Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Annual Meeting Is Coming January 26

St. John's will hold its annual meeting on January 26, following the 10 a.m. service. All are invited to attend. Main items on the agenda include a report on the 2014 budget, 2014 objectives adopted by the vestry following its December meeting, and election of new vestry members to replace those whose terms are expiring.

Pictures from Another Successful Thanksgiving Potluck



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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.

Material for the February issue should be submitted no later than January 24.