



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

September 2014

From the Rector: Thin Places

I love the beach. I can walk on the beach for hours, especially if I have a companion. I like to look for shells and hear the waves beat against the shore. When I am in all that vastness of nature, I feel very small, but not insignificant. I feel very valued in God's eyes that I should be able to have these wonderful experiences. For me, the beach is a "thin place." A thin place is part of Celtic spirituality. Thin places are spots, usually in nature, where God is said to be particularly close at hand. We are drawn to thin places from time to time whenever we are spiritually hungry and thirsty to feel God's love for us. In *The Upper Room*, William Willis tells of looking at the stars at night and how important it is to look up beyond our cares and concerns to see that we are in the hands of God the creator who is not far away, but here with us, sharing our lives.

Though the Celts thought of nature as the place where thin places occurred, there are other places in our lives where we can seek and find God. The first place, oddly enough, might be in ourselves. If we can accept ourselves as God's creation, deserving of love through the grace of God; if we can accept God's deliverance from shame and guilt, we can grow to love ourselves as God loves us. Brother Curtis Almquist of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), says that "the hand we've been dealt in life has real limitations", but it is

important to say "yes" to our own lives "without apology or embarrassment." Self-acceptance brings us closer to God.

Another thin place we can find in ourselves has to do with our vocation. If we are doing something we really love, we can find God in our work. If we feel fulfilled, we have experience of thin places in our daily lives. I have a friend who meditates every morning before office hours, so he can bring his work to God and hope to experience God's love throughout the day.

One thin place that is part of our Christian faith is the presence of God in others. Bishop Desmond Tutu talks about the exchange of the peace as a time we should bow to one another, acknowledging Christ's presence in each of us. Brother David Vryhof (SSJE) says that to experience God in the other, we must have two stances in relation to the other – "a willingness to learn from others and an unwillingness to judge them."

Thin places can be found even when we are experiencing the challenges life has for all of us. Even if our life is a mess, we need always take time to smell the flowers. In a literal way, their beauty and their scent remind us that God is near. In *The Upper Room*, Charles Beemer compares the struggles in life to riding a bicycle into a headwind. On the other hand, when you ride behind another, you can use 30% less effort. The front rider

literally pulls you along. That is what God does for us when we are challenged and stressed to the max. God takes a turn riding in the front of us to help us rest and notice God's presence in our struggle.

The good times give us more thin places to feel close to God. Our gratitude for all our blessings is an important way to feel God's love.

Of course, Scripture is another thin place when we take time to read and digest it for its meaning for us. The words of the Scripture, though written by humans, are God-inspired, and there is much to be gained from spending time with God's word. There is always something there to catch your mind and heart and bring you together with God and God's will for you.

The final thin place I want to talk about is the Eucharist. There is no doubt that we meet God in the Body and Blood of Christ and we are transformed more and more into the people God would have us be.

Look for the "thin places" in your life that bring you closer to God. Celtic spirituality is the topic of our Shrine Mont retreat this year (see related information on page 4) and we will get a chance through crafts and worship, rest and recreation, to find the thin places where God is waiting for us.

Ann †

An Instructed Eucharist – Part II

The Holy Eucharist consists of two parts. The first, called **The Word of God**, focuses on listening to God through the Scriptures.

We begin with a hymn of praise, opening our lives to the One who made and loves us. Now we continue with an ancient greeting, "Blessed be God...", and a prayer called the Collect for Purity, which asks God, before whom all hearts are open, to cleanse us and lead us into God's love in this time. We then sing the ancient canticle called the Gloria.

In Advent and Lent we do not use the Gloria. In Advent we use other songs of praise related to the Advent theme. In Lent we use the Kyrie or "Lord Have Mercy" or the Trisagion, which is

"Holy God, Holy and which asks God, before whom all hearts are open, to cleanse and lead us into God's love in this time. We then sing the ancient canticle called the Gloria, Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us."

Though they are typically used in penitential seasons, it is better to think of them as simply "less joyous" than the Gloria. "Lord have mercy" sounds like a plea for forgiveness, but was originally a shout of praise for the emperor. The Trisagion was originally a hymn of praise in the Orthodox Church. Then we pray the Collect of the Day, a prayer that collects, or gathers together, our thoughts for this day in the church year.

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.

LOGOS

The LOGOS is published monthly except August, at 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 September issue should be submitted no later than September 23.

Parish News

We welcome our new sexton, Juan Figueroa!

We offer congratulations

- To Virginia Pearson on the birth of her granddaughter Genevieve Cherie
- To Lynn Robinson on her retirement from Arlington County Public Schools
- To Keith McCartney on his retirement from the US Air Force. Thank you, Keith, for your service.

We thank all who have contributed their time and energy to the mission of St. John's, especially:

- Our VBS team, led by Beth Cavey, along with her helpers, including Lenore Schmidt, Vladi Wien, Nora Wien, Paul Petrich, Jen and Gerald Robertson, Heidi Heim, Barbara Olivere, Patricia Broida, Bill Schenck, Eileen Tallent, Lynn Robinson, Pete Olivere and Brian Cavey.
- All those who taught children's chapel in the summer: Barbara Olivere, Barbara Wien, Bill Thomson, Del Hunt and Lenore Schmidt.
- Pete Olivere for laminating many of our signs and doing a wonderful job of clearing out the parlor and steam cleaning the rug for the bishop's visit.
- The stalwart gardeners who helped keep our flower gardens weed-free.
- Bill Pritchard who edged the yard in preparation for the bishop's visit
- John Restall and Paul Stenger and any others who provided boxes for the Bailey's Crossroads Shelter bagged lunches and the organizers of the bagged lunches preparation in July (Bill and Faye Pritchard) and August (Bill Pritchard and Barbara Olivere) along with their helpers!
- All who contributed to making the reception for Bishop Shannon such a success.
- All who brought (and are still bringing) supplies in for Carlin Springs Elementary and Campbell Elementary.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in September:

Ginger Adair, Jeff Aitken, Griffin Baynham, Stephanie Beavin, William Gibb, The Rev. Sue Hardman, Connor McCartney, Clara Naw Sweet, Lane Turner, Jeffrey Wallace and Kay Wells

We also celebrate with those who have anniversaries in September:

Erin and Gerard Baynham, Matthew and Cristina Tallent

Same Sex Blessings

The Episcopal Church has authorized a liturgy for the blessing of same sex unions, and Bishop Johnston has approved its use in this diocese. We need to take some action to decide if we are going to be open to doing this liturgy or not. (Note: this is not the same as same sex marriage; it is a religious service only). If you have any strong feelings one way or the other, please see Ann.

Pledge Statements

We will be sending out pledge statements to everyone in mid-September so you can check to see if your records match ours. If you find a discrepancy, please notify pledge clerk John Restall – restall@joimail.com or 703-578-1942

Card Ministry

It is time to sign up for the card ministry. Please Slots go from November 2014 through October 2015. Please consider signing up for a month or two.

Shrine Mont Weekend, October 3 – 5

The theme for our weekend retreat October 3 through 5 is Celtic spirituality. Jo Ann Staebler, a certified retreat leader who specializes in Celtic retreats, will lead a Saturday morning session on Celtic spirituality. It will include an opportunity for making Celtic crafts and gathering materials for a Celtic altar. The short worship services Friday evening and Saturday morning and the Sunday Eucharist will be based on ancient Celtic services.

Of course, there will be plenty of time for both solitude and fellowship as well as reflection, including board games and hiking in the woods, an ice cream social, quiet reading and private prayer, walking the labyrinth, a campfire, square dance, our own sing-a-long, and free time all Saturday

afternoon. Come join us in as much or as little as you need to do to refresh your spirit.

The cost of the weekend will be \$160 double occupancy and \$180 single occupancy for adults and young people 13 years and over, \$105 for children 8 through 12, and \$50 for children 4 through 7. Children younger than 4 years attend free of charge. Scholarships are available for anyone from St. John's who cannot meet the cost. No parishioner who wants to go on retreat will be turned away because of financial constraints. Application forms are available in the pews.

For more information, please contact Faye Pritchard (pritchardpix@aol.com or 703-931-2168).

Second Quarter 2014 Financial Report

The revenue and expenses for the second quarter appear below.

The receipts for the quarter exceeded the disbursements to create a budget surplus of \$991.00 for the quarter.

Operating Budget	YTD	Budget
Operating Income	\$84,479.64	\$154,848.00
Total Operating Expenditures	\$80,899.53	\$165,071.00
Income less Expenditures	\$3,580.11	(\$10,223.00)

Funds Designated for Specific Uses

Designated Funds In	\$6,663.35
Designated Funds Out	\$3,804.25

For details see posting on the bulletin board outside the nursery or contact Bill Thomson

Words on Hymns

Morning Has Broken, our gradual hymn for September 14, is a popular and well-known Christian hymn first published in 1931. It has words by English author Eleanor Farjeon and is set to a traditional Scottish Gaelic tune known as Bunessan (it shares this tune with the 19th-century Christmas Carol *Child in the Manger*). It is often sung in children's services. English pop musician and folk singer Cat Stevens (known as Yusuf Islam since 1978) included a version on his 1971 album *Teaser and the Firecat*. The song became identified with Stevens when it reached number six on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 and number one on the U.S. easy listening chart in 1972.

The hymn originally appeared in the second edition of *Songs of Praise*. The editor, Percy Dearmer, explained that as there was need for a hymn to give thanks for each day, Eleanor Farjeon had been asked to make a poem to fit the lovely Scottish tune. A slight variation on the original hymn, also written by Eleanor Farjeon, can be found in the form of a poem contributed to the anthology *Children's Bells*, under Farjeon's new title, *A Morning Song (For the First Day of Spring)*, published by Oxford University Press in 1957.

Writing credit for *Morning Has Broken* has occasionally been erroneously attributed to Cat Stevens. The familiar piano arrangement on Stevens' recording was performed by Rick Wakeman, a classically trained keyboardist best known for his tenure in the English progressive rock band Yes.

The song has been recorded by numerous other artists, including Judy Collins, Floyd Cramer, Neil Diamond, Art Garfunkel, and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. More recently *Morning Has Broken* was used in a television advertisement for London's Great Ormond Street Hospital. With a nod to comic songwriter Tom Lehrer, I will be playing this hymn on our 88-string guitar.

The Anglican Church, especially in large England cathedrals beginning in the 19th century, was known for elaborate and colorful processions, particularly on major feast days. Some of our

favorite hymns were composed with processional in mind. Our recessional for September 14, *Lift High the Cross*, is one of the great processional hymns in this tradition.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
the hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.

The original version with 11 stanzas plus refrain was written for a festival service in 1887 by George William Kitchen (1883-1894), Dean of Winchester Cathedral, under the auspices of an important mission organization, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. (Eleven stanzas should be sufficient to get a procession of any length to the front of any cathedral. Our hymnal provides only four stanzas.) Kitchen's original was altered by Anglican priest Michael Robert Newbolt (1874-1956) for the *Supplement to Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1916). Through this publication the hymn has gained prominence around the English-speaking world.

Lift High the Cross incorporates an important feature of processional: the crucifer (cross-bearer) leads the stately procession down the long nave, lifting the cross high.

The original first stanza read as follows:

Come, brethren, follow where our Captain trod,
Our King victorious, Christ the Son of God.

The hymn did not find voice in the United States until it was published in *Hymns for the Living Church* (1974). Since that time, *Lift High the Cross* has become a staple of many hymnals. Various hymnals have revised the hymn's text, rendering the language more inclusive and less militaristic. However, in addition to its use for processional, the hymn also expresses the understanding of the Church Militant (*Ecclesia Militans*), "those Christians on earth who are engaged in a continuous war against evil and the enemies of Christ," and the Church Triumphant (*Ecclesia Triumphans*), "those Christians in heaven

who have triumphed over evil and the enemies of Christ.” Within this theological framework, one can appreciate the context of the hymn and what some would call its excessive militaristic language. United Methodist Hymnal editor Carlton Young

notes, “Our hymnal’s version provides the opportunity to express the spirit of *Onward Christian Soldiers* without singing militaristic metaphors.”

Carol Dunlap

Bishop Shannon Johnston celebrated the Eucharist during his Episcopal visit to St. John’s on July 20th, then took part in a question and answer session during the hospitality hour.



St. John’s Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Carol Dunlap
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Sexton: Juan Figueroa

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Lenore Schmidt, Chair, Finance Committee
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild
Beth Cavey, Minister of Family Programs

Vestry

Bill Schenck , Senior Warden
Sandy Winger, Junior Warden
Jeff Aitken
Pete Olivere

Paul Stenger
Bill Thomson
Linda Trochim