

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

November 2016

Walk in Love: St. John's Commitment Campaign 2016

On October 9, St. John's kicked off its annual giving campaign, celebrating the theme "Walk in Love." Taken from Ephesians 5:2, these words may be so familiar to us that we no longer think about them: "Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God." They remind us, however, that everything we are belongs to God—our time, our talent, and our treasure. We invest our time and talent in the ministries of St. John's, while offering our treasure to support these important commitments. When we walk in love, we connect ourselves to God, to one another, to our community, and to the world.

Led by co-chairs Bill Schenck and Lynn Christopher, the campaign began with a build-your-own-sub event during the fellowship hour. Over the past weeks, mailings to the congregation have reflected on the impact that generous giving has had within St. John's and the community. The church annually provides 300 lunches to the Bailey's Crossroads homeless shelter, for example, and donates more than 450 pounds of food to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), while also bagging enough food to provide more than

2,000 servings for needy families. Our Christian education program helps both children and adults grow in their faith. We also engage the neighborhood community through a range of activities each year, including the blessing of the animals in the fall, a spring tea, and a spaghetti supper.

During Sunday services, parishioners have shared how St. John's has affected their lives, as well as "ministry moments" highlighting all that the church does. From the inspirational music offered by the choir to the solace of the monthly healing prayer service to the community support provided to AFAC, St. John's touches many lives.

On November 6, we will celebrate Commitment Sunday, when we offer our pledges for 2017 as an act of worship. Please prayerfully consider how you can increase your commitment to the mission and ministry of St. John's.



A Fall Retreat to Shrine Mont

This year's annual Shrine Mont retreat was enjoyed by the nine attendees. The mild weather was much appreciated over last year's freezing cold. This allowed us to spend Saturday morning in outdoor contemplation taking in the sounds, sights, and smells of the woods. Saturday night many of us gathered around a campfire singalong and then embarked on a moonlight walk. We were

joined at the Sunday morning service at the outdoor shrine by Grace and Holy Trinity church. Thanks to Faye Pritchard for her hard work in organizing and leading the retreat sessions and thanks also to Galen Henderson for her musical contributions. We hope you will join us next year!

Debbie Carter



Members of the St. John's community retreated to Shrine Mont in October for a weekend of renewal.

From Hazardous Saints to Half Truths: Adult Sunday Seminar Explores the Possibilities

In November, the adult Sunday Seminar has several possibilities to choose from. These include *Hazardous Saints*, featuring St. Francis, Thomas Cranmer, Sojourner Truth, Dorothy Day, and Oscar Romero. Seminar participants may also explore *Half Truths*, a study by Adam Hamilton that discusses phrases people assume the Bible says, but it really doesn't, and the resulting theological implications. One Sunday the group will discuss Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's installation sermon. Join the seminar at 9 a.m. in the parlor!

From the Rector: Free Passes

Brother Mark Brown of the Society of St. John the Evangelist says he can imagine Jesus pondering the human condition and saying, “It’s just too hard for them—they’ll never get it right. I’d better give them all a free pass.” And he did, by dying on the cross to show God’s immense love for us.

Getting free passes is great. I love getting free movie passes, and I look carefully for coupons to Ruby Tuesday, which come pretty often. There are the get-out-of-jail free cards in Monopoly. Sometimes a friend pays for my lunch. I can turn to one of my advisers any time during the week and not have to pay her more than I do for our Friday visit. I am always so grateful for the gift.

Giving free passes can be gratifying too. Give the drivers on the road a free pass. I get angry when cars don’t move when the light turns green. Deep down I know it takes time for the volume of cars to start making their way up the street, but when I am in a hurry, I am not happy. I am not happy when people move slowly on the street, but maybe they are looking for something.

Give the people on Metro a free pass. Sure, there is a lot of pushing and shoving, but most people are just trying to deal with the hassle of getting to work with Metro’s crazy schedule. Let them pass you to get out and don’t get frustrated if you have to push a little harder to get off at your stop.

Give the boss a free pass. Maybe he or she is grumpy because his or her boss is grumpy. Maybe he or she had a bad night worrying about a project and didn’t sleep well. Maybe he or she had a fight with their spouse. There are all kinds of reasons that people can be grumpy that have nothing to do with you. Now I’m not saying you shouldn’t say what needs to be said about the project you are doing and how you are doing it, but unless the boss

is really off base, give him or her a free pass and see how it feels. You don’t need to get angry; it will ruin your day.

Give your friends a free pass. Maybe this time when you get together, they have a problem that they want you to listen to and you don’t get as much talking in as you would like. Maybe your friend is late or is talking on his or her cell phone while she or he is supposed to be spending time with you. If their behavior is a habit, it is important to speak up and say how you feel about this disrespectful treatment. But if it’s a one-time thing, why not try giving them a free pass. It feels good, and you may enhance the friendship.

Give your kids a break. We all make mistakes, and children are learning a lot by goofing up. Sometimes greater lessons are learned by doing the wrong thing than by doing the right thing. And many things do not have to be categorized as right or wrong. If a child brings home a low grade once and grades are normally not a problem, it isn’t necessary to criticize. It may be the best thing to sympathize, because the child doesn’t like the fact that he or she has brought home a low grade.

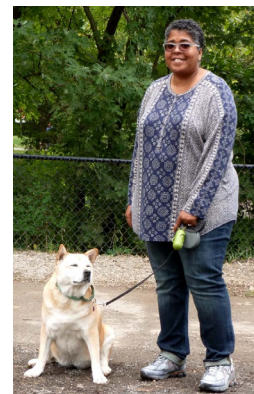
Above all, give yourself a break. You are a human being. You have gifts and you have limitations just as we all do. If you run up against a limitation, accept it and ask for the help you need. Don’t spend fruitless time trying to make up for your flaws. That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try to improve, but you shouldn’t beat yourself up that you aren’t perfect. There is no perfect where human beings are concerned.

Last, but by no means least, consider giving God a free pass. Sometimes things don’t go the way we want them to. Sometimes God is leading us by another road, but sometimes it is just the broken state of the world or

someone else's free will that has gotten in the way. God wants the best for us and is always working for that, and it is important that we understand that and are grateful for all God does on our behalf.

Free passes are wonderful things. They keep us peaceful, compassionate, and grateful. They help us become the disciples God wants us to be.

Ann †



St. John's animal blessing was held October 2 at both the church and the Shirlington Dog Park.

St. John's Monthly Financial Statement

September income:	\$6,636
Pledge + Plate:	\$6,636
Year-to-date income:	\$99,440
September expense:	\$11,778
Year-to-date expense:	\$116,266

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

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

Vestry

Bill Thomson, Senior Warden
 Sandy Winger, Junior Warden
 Jeff Aitken
 Teresa Birmingham

Parish Leaders

Bill Thomson, Treasurer
 John Restall, Pledge Clerk
 Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Del Hunt
 Lisa Pope
 John Restall



Embracing Ministry with God's Gifts

Four St. John's acolytes attended the National Acolyte Festival on October 8 at the Washington National Cathedral. The Right Reverend Gene Robinson presided over the service and gave a sermon, noting "All I ever needed to know about being a good person, a good Christian, I learned as an acolyte." It was a beautiful day.

*Dear God, Giver of Every Good Gift,
You make us pieces of the whole,
Help us discern and accept our role and when
to use it,
So that our combined song makes beautiful
music. Amen.*

Bishop Robinson's sermon and this collect from an Education for Ministry (EfM) Theological Reflection help us remember that we are in community together. An acolyte conducts his or her ministry of helping at the altar, not the centerpiece of the service and probably making mistakes, but always fully committed and essential. Adults are instructed to do the same—to understand our talents and use them to the benefit of the community.

One of the goals of EfM is explicit in the title: educating adults to prepare them for ministry. Ministry has connotations that may be

off-putting to some, daunting to others, and downright frightening to many. EfM isn't in the business of preparing participants for seminary (though many do continue on that path), nor is it in the business of creating erudite graduate scholars (though many enjoy the scholarship part of the program). Ministry in the context of EfM is about each of us discovering our own personal gifts and deciding how to use them in the world around us.

EfM's materials provide a foundation with the purpose of improving our comfort level as we build a new direction. EfM's structure is designed as a lay person's discernment process: to discover our gifts, reflect on how to use these gifts, and embrace what we have learned to move forward.

What we learn from our acolytes is that full commitment to our role in the world as God intended is crucial. Whether we are leading, teaching, participating, embracing, or witnessing, every one of our contributions is necessary to realize the Kingdom of God. When we embody our God-given gifts and allow ourselves to be pieces in God's whole picture, our combined song is beautiful and worth being part of.

Beth Cavey

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

- Pledge Sunday is **November 6**. Bring your pledge to church if you haven't already turned it in, and we will bless them all.
- The Thanksgiving Potluck will be held Sunday, **November 20**, at 11:15 a.m. Look for the sign-up sheets and plan to bring your favorite dish!
- The St. John's Book Club will meet on **December 6** at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *The Ship of Brides* by Jojo Moyes. All are welcome!

Rest in Peace:

- Lynn Christopher's sister Mary, who died in October.

Thank you to:

- Peter Olivere and Bill Pritchard for helping out with the animal blessing on October 2.
- Charlotte Bovender, Del Hunt, John Restall, Bill Thomson, Sandy Winger, and the Offender Aid and Restoration workers who helped with the parish clean-up on October 15.
- Everyone who has donated school supplies and clothing to help the neighborhood schools.
- Charlotte Bovender, Del and Carole Hunt, Lisa Pope, Bill and Faye Pritchard, Lynn Robinson, Bill Thomson, Kay Wells, Sandy Winger, and Sarah for their help with the build-your-own-sub event that kicked off St. John's Commitment Campaign on October 2.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in November:

Bronwen Berliner; Gage Buchanan; Jud Buchanan; Dave Dunlap; Beth Fowler; Jean Harrison; Douglas Le Sage; Roger Ludwig; Keith McCartney; Robert L. "Larry" Rawls, III; Dave Robinson; and Laura Van Wyk.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in November:

Jeff and Michelle Aitken; Beth and Brian Cavey; Del and Carole Hunt.

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; 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.

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LOGOS is published monthly except for August, at the beginning of the month.

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 December issue is November 17.