



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 2020

Prepare for Holy Week at Home

St. John's continues to explore ways we can worship together on the phone or virtually during this time we are apart, but in the meantime you are also invited to read our most loved liturgies of the entire year and live into them as you can. The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) has some liturgy for Palm Sunday (p. 270), Maundy Thursday (p. 274), and Good Friday (p. 276). Both of them include a collect for the day and list the lessons to be read. If you don't have a BCP at home, it is available at <https://episcopalchurch.org/book-common-prayer>. The lessons are listed below. Try to read those for each day and be in prayer as we walk the way of the cross with Jesus. We need these times so we can celebrate with great joy our Lord's resurrection. If you have other ways of observing these holy days, please email or call Rev. Ann and she will pass the information along. Rev. Ann will be posting sermons on the St. John's website (stjohnsarlingtonva.org) and sending them by email and U.S. mail beginning March 29 and continuing until we are back together (currently we are out through May 8).

Lessons for Holy Week:

Palm Sunday

Blessing of the Palms, Matthew 21:1-11; Old Testament, Isaiah 45:21-25 or Isaiah 52:13-53; Psalm 22:1-21 (or 1-11); Epistle, Philippians 2:5-11; Gospel, Matthew 26:36-27:54 (you can include verses 55-66 and you can begin at Matthew 27:1).

Maundy Thursday

Old Testament, Exodus 12:1-14a; Psalm 78:14-20, 23-25; Epistle, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (27-32); Gospel, John 13:1-15 or Luke 22:14-30.

Good Friday

Old Testament, Isaiah 52:13-53:12 or Genesis 22:1-18 or Wisdom 2:1, 12-24 (Wisdom is part of the Apocrypha and is located between the Old Testament and New Testament in the Bible); Psalm 22:1-11 (12-21) or 40:1-14 or 69:1-23; Epistle, Hebrews 10:1-25; Gospel, John 18:1-19, 37 or 19:1-37.

Easter Day

First Lesson, Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Epistle, Colossians 3:1-4; Gospel, John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10.

From the Rector: Stretch

Brother Curtis Almquist of the Society of St. John the Evangelist says, “Whenever I am faced with the prospect of comprehending something beyond my experience, I pray for the strength to reach out in faith. I need to be stretched spiritually beyond what I have known before.” We are certainly in a time when we are faced with something beyond our experience, something that is turning our world upside down, something that is out of our control for the most part. Times like these are indeed times in which we need to respond in new ways. Here are some ways that we can stretch in this season of pandemic.

Stretch for communication. We have all been told about the practices of social distancing. Some of us are in facilities that are on lockdown. Some of us are not able to go out because of compromised immune systems. And of course, we are not in church. We won’t even be there for Easter, and that is a hardship on all of us.

But in this time of isolation, it is particularly important that we maintain social contact. Have a drink with a friend virtually (Skype, Zoom, etc.) or call someone on your cell phone and share your day. Stay in touch with friends, family, and parishioners. We are all going through this together and we need to stay connected. Last Sunday, a parishioner called to pass the Peace with me. It was an amazing lift to my day. We may try to set up a contact list so that we can call someone (at least one person) and someone can call us to create a moment of community. We are still the church, even though we are apart, and we are called to be there for one another and for those who are most vulnerable. If you are able to help by supporting a community organization that helps people, consider that as a Lenten discipline.

Stretch for patience. Oh my goodness, life stuck in one place can be tedious. My brother is working from home, and he is going stir crazy being at home all day, except for the rare trip to the store. (He is also aware of how very fortunate he is to have a job that allows him to telecommute and to even have a job at all.) Brother Almquist says, “Living patiently is very difficult to do. But living life patiently is not as difficult as not living life patiently.” It is tough to be patient. We want this epidemic to stop. We want it to be over. We want to take a drive or go to a museum or visit the cherry blossoms (I have heard traffic to see them is still pretty heavy).

Be patient with others. Many of us are being hit in ways we can’t begin to imagine. Tempers can be short; kindness a little frayed. Give everyone a break during this time, even people who can do nothing but talk about how terrible it is and how bad it is going to get to anyone who will listen. You don’t need to stand there and listen to them, but you can turn them off gently. (On that note, if you are feeling particularly nervous and uncertain, turn off the news. Limit your newspaper reading to the comics pages and brief headline spotting. If there is something you should know, it will reach you in some way.) And be patient with yourself. Feeling out of control like this puts us all at risk for uncharacteristic behavior. We may not be able to focus as well as we once could. We may wander the house incessantly looking for something to take our minds off the virus (or to get some exercise). We may feel like our glass is at least half empty most of the time when we are usually glass half-full people. It’s okay. As we learn to cope that may change.

Stretch for newness of life. We are living in a new world. Things are not like they were

before. Of course we wish the virus were not here, but while it is we can come to grips with where we are and start working on living a new kind of life. Look for the good in the circumstances you are in. Maybe you have more time to relax. Maybe like me you can focus on doing one thing at once. I have taken to actually sitting down to talk on the phone (at least sometimes) and not doing anything else during that time. Maybe there is that book you have been putting off or that project you just haven't gotten around to. Maybe something needs cleaning or sorting. Instead of harping on what you can't do, start looking at what you can do. What does your new life look like?

And of course, stretch for the presence of God. God is present with us in this time of fear and uncertainty as well, still saying as God does so often, "Do not be afraid." Brother Almquist suggests that we could see life as an endless stream of invitations to cooperate with whatever God is up to and to

abandon ourselves into God's hands and God's time. That's hard, but they are good words for now. I see God's presence in the flowers at my house—the daffodils and the camellias and the forsythias. Someone paid for my groceries yesterday out of the blue. I now have equipment at home that I can use to exercise while the gym is closed. God is in all our hearts. If we are quiet, we can feel God's love in our lives and be grateful for all God is doing through people to end this global crisis.

This is a time that we need help. We need God's Spirit to be active in us, to strengthen us, to comfort us and to let us know not to be afraid. We need to pray for help to live gracefully, with ourselves and one another. Remember, we are God's people and Jesus's disciples, even when we are practicing social distancing. Reach for grace every day and we will get through this together.

Ann †

St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Ann B. Barker
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Judith Marcinko
Family Programs Director: Jonathan Muehlke
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Child Care Provider: Kaitlyn Osteguín
Sexton: Julio Sorto

Vestry

Sandy Winger, Senior Warden
Bryan Harbin, Junior Warden
Jeff Aitken

Parish Leaders

Peter Olivere, Treasurer
John Restall, Pledge Clerk
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Diane Henderson
Richard Henry
Peter Olivere

Prayers During a Pandemic

Prayers written by the Rev. Dr. Barney Hawkins

A Prayer for a Person Suffering with COVID-19 (to be used over the phone or on Zoom/FaceTime): God of healing, God of hope, our souls are hungry for health and happiness. You are the Maker and Keeper of billions of galaxies of stars and planets seething in their violence. You are the delicate fashioner of the hummingbird's wings and the infant's lungs. You are the architect and creator of our fragile bodies. We know you are the caring Abba of us all. Be with _____, and drive far from her all sickness and all anxiety in body, mind, spirit, and relationships. Deliver her from her suffering and may goodness and mercy follow her all the days of her life. We pray in the name of the Great Physician, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Amen. (Written after reading Reynolds Price's *Letter to a Man in the Fire*.)

A Prayer for a Person in a 14-Day Self-Quarantine: Suffering God, your Beloved Son endured temptations and the wilderness for forty days after his Baptism. New life gave him suffering. The Light was dark and the Word without a voice. From the solitary Jesus we learn that the broken bread is our only food. For once and always, O Lord, be present to those in self-quarantine. Give them ears to hear you say: "I am here." Give them the grace to breathe in the perfect love that casts out fear. Give them food for their bodies and hope for their beings. This is our prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ. In the healing name of Jesus, we make our petitions. Amen and so be it. (Infused with the poetry of Malcolm Guite.)

A Prayer for a Person Unable to Take the Eucharist: My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen. (Written by St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696–1787, and discovered by Rev. Dr. Hawkins.)

A Prayer for an Online Service of Parishioners, When Regular Services Have Been Canceled: Almighty God of the Cross and Loving God of Community, we are not in a church building today but Church is never canceled. We are not wise, and not very often kind. But we are the Body of Christ in your suffering world. We know that our vocation is to be the Light of this Christ whose Body we are. Give us courage to be the Church and to keep our minds on what matters—which is to keep loving the world which you have called good. Buildings crumble; the Church Year passes; but your Church endures from generation to generation. Make this for us a Feast Day of your Protection, your Plenty, your Purpose, your Plan, and your Peace. All this we ask, as we pray in silence, with all the Saints and with each other. Amen. (Echoing the poetry of Mary Oliver.)

A Prayer for Our Nation and the World in the Light of This Pandemic: Ever-creating God, be with us as the pall of this COVID-19 pandemic falls upon this “fragile earth,” which is our “island home.” We hold in our hearts and prayers all who are suffering in our nation from “sea to shining sea.” We pray for the whole world. Our common anxiety is making us one, undivided human family. We pray for world leaders as they chart these unknown waters. Strengthen them to walk into the Light of a new, healing day for the whole planet. Help us to cross our broken lands and be for each other bridges back to heaven. Lift the cares to which we cling. Descend, O God, on us all to be our Guest. Show us how to find in everything blessing and rest. May this be our prayer while we do not know how to pray and until the last light lingers in the west. Amen, in the name of our creating, redeeming, and sustaining God. (With indebtedness to Malcolm Guite and Flannery O’Connor, two of my companions on the way.)

Prayers Written by the Rev. Dr. Kate Sonderegger

Prayer in Time of Isolation: Almighty God: Our times are in your hand. We call upon you in this hour of our need, when we are lonely and must stand apart. Be our strength, O Sovereign Lord, our calm in the midst of raging seas, our refuge, and our dwelling place. Sanctify to us this time drawn away from others, even as your Son, O Father, drew away to a lonely place for prayer. Deepen our need of you, O Lord, that every breath may be a whisper of the Spirit’s prompting, a renewed searching of the deep things of God. Stir up in us the great act of intercession, that we may spend our time apart in prayer for the world you created and sustain. Bless us in our turning toward you, and make us a blessing to those who stand in need of you, the whole fragile earth. All this we ask in the name of the great Physician, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer in Time of Pandemic: This hour we turn to you, O Lord, in full knowledge of our frailty, our vulnerability, and our great need as your mortal creatures. We cry to you, as one human family, unsure of the path ahead, unequal to the unseen forces around us, frightened by the sickness and death that seem all too real to us now. Stir up your strength and visit us, O Lord; be our shield and rock and hiding place! Guide our leaders, our scientists, our nurses, and doctors. Give them wisdom and fill their hearts with courage and determination. Make even this hour, O Lord, a season of blessing for us, that in fear we find you mighty to save, and in illness or death, we find the cross to be none other than the way of life. All this we ask in the name of the One who bore all our infirmities, even Jesus Christ our Risen and Victorious Lord. Amen.



What is helping you cope during this uncertain time? A book, a prayer, your garden, puzzles, games, a TV show? How are you spending your time at home? Send your thoughts to logos@stjohnsarlingtonva.org.

Words on Hymns: *Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain*

A joyous hymn for the Easter season is *Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain of Triumphant Gladness!* It is another of the ancient hymns, come down to us over the centuries. It is a Greek resurrection hymn written by John of Damascus (c. 675–749) in the 8th century. The translation by John Mason Neale (1818–1866) first appeared in *Christian Remembrance* (April 1859) in an article on “Greek Hymnody” and then in *Hymns of the Eastern Church* (1862) in four stanzas.

The text is the first ode from the Canon for St. Thomas’s Sunday, the Sunday after Easter or Low Sunday, and is based on the canticle “The Song of Moses” from Exodus 15. A clear connection can be seen in the hymn from Exodus 14 and 15 through the vivid language used. The main theological theme of this hymn is deliverance. Stanza one discusses the joy the Israelites had after being delivered from Pharaoh across the Red Sea. This stanza provides an obvious link to Moses and his song. The next three stanzas transfer the focus to Jesus. They discuss Jesus’s resurrection and the deliverance brought to humankind from their sins through this action. The hymn serves as praise to God for continuing to deliver God’s people throughout history.

John of Damascus was born at the end of the 7th century and lived well into the 8th century. He had an unusual childhood for someone who would be remembered for writing Christian hymns. John’s father was a Christian who served as the chief financial adviser to the Caliph Abd-el-Melik, the man who built the magnificent Jerusalem mosque, the Dome of the Rock. John grew up in a wealthy household and, when his father died, assumed his father’s role as advisor to the Caliph. Around 730 A.D., he gave away everything he had and retired to the monastery of St. Sabas, where he was ordained a priest. During this time John wrote works containing

a justification for orthodox faith, including his *Foundation of Knowledge*.

John was among the greatest and most important of the Greek hymn writers. He wrote many canons, a new form of hymnody during his time, for important festivals. Canons, usually sung during the monastic office of Lauds and based primarily on nine canticles, are usually divided into nine odes. An ode is composed of short dramatic strophes in which the climax occurs in the last line. Each strophe has the same number of lines and syllables.

Organized Greek hymnody began, at the earliest, in the 7th century. From 700–900 many canons were written that contained long odes, usually in reference to the Resurrection or at least linked with Easter. The publication of Neale’s *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, a collection of Greek canons from the 5th to the 11th centuries in English poetic form, contributed to a renewed interest in early Christian and Byzantine hymnody.

Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain is one of two hymns written by John of Damascus that are still found in many hymnbooks today (the other is *The Day of Resurrection*, p. 210). We have both of these hymns available today because of the work of Neale, who translated them into English in the 19th century, a thousand years after John wrote them. When translated into English, these poems tended to be awkward for singing. Neale’s translations are in metrical patterns that are more accessible for English singers while remaining true to the original ideas of the Greek.

If you thought the music for this text was particularly well done, you’re right—it was composed by Arthur Sullivan, of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas fame. Sullivan composed four Easter hymns during his life: *Alleluia, Alleluia, Hearts and Voices Heavenward Raise* (p. 191); *Welcome, Happy Morning* (p. 179); *Christ Is Risen! Christ Is Risen!* (which is not

in our hymnal); and *Come, Ye Faithful* (p. 199). Gosh, we could have an all-Sullivan-hymn day!

For some, Sullivan's hymn tunes represent the epitome of Victorian sentimentality, and it must be admitted that several of them provide ammunition for those who would argue that

Sullivan turned to hymn tune writing not from any deep religious conviction but simply as a way of making money. But the best of them are memorable, well suited to congregational singing, and show a real sensitivity to the words. *Come, Ye Faithful* is one of the best.

Carol Dunlap



St. John's once again distributed Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro station on Ash Wednesday, February 26.

LOGOS

LOGOS is published monthly at the beginning of the month, except for a combined July/August issue.

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 May issue is April 21. Article ideas for future issues are also welcome.

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 in Christ; 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.

Parish News

Thank You to:

- Pete Olivere for the hours he spent cleaning up spilled toner in the parish office.
- Sandy Winger for coordinating OAR workers for the church garden.
- Lin Novak for managing the care of the St. John's gardens and grounds.
- Bryan Harbin for various junior warden duties.
- Del Hunt for updating instructions for the church ushers.
- Pete Olivere for updating the map of the building for the St. John's safety plan and adding the location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits.
- Lisa Pope for updating St. John's safety plan.
- Jeff Aitken for serving as vestry register.
- Del Hunt and Bryan Harbin for cleaning up brush in the church parking lot.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in April:

Gerard Baynham, Maggie Buchanan, Carol Dunlap, Diane Henderson, Evelyn Hubbard, Madeline Hubbard, Matthew Hubbard, Jim Hull, Cooper Mackin, Caitlin O'Connor, John Petrich, Bob Tallent, Jackson Tallent, Sharon Tallent, Linda Trochim, Abezash VanWyk, Valerie Wilson, and Sandy Winger.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in April:

Jud and Lisa Buchanan; Nancy and William Gibb; Bill and Faye Pritchard; Chip and Carissa Russell; Angie and Bill Turner; Colin and Kim White.

