



PRIEST IN CHARGE: REV. DIANE WONG

PARISH OFFICE: 781-648-4819

ST.JOHNS\_ARLINGTON@VERIZON.NET

[HTTP://WWW.SAINTJOHNS-ARLINGTON.ORG](http://www.saintjohns-arlinton.org)

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## ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Newsletter – September & October 2018

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### A Message from the Priest in Charge, Rev. Diane C. Wong

“Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in their life in Christ?” Whenever a baptism takes place in a parish, the congregation is asked this question, and everyone answers, “We will”. St. John’s has been blessed with numerous occasions to be asked this question when infants and children were baptized here. And yes, we, as a parish, will do the very best we can to support our children in their life in Christ, not as a way to attract more young families to join our church, but because that’s our promise to them.

In the days of the Israelites and Jesus, faith was passed on to the younger generations through oral history. Nowadays, the primary way to support our children in their life in Christ is through Sunday School / Church School and at home. This means our Church School needs to be the best vessel it can be through which our children will deepen their faith, notice the Spirit of God that is in them, appreciate the traditions of the Episcopal Church, and experience their parish as a community that cares for them and views them as important. Our Church School will support our children, and their parents, in their faith development at home as well.

I’d like to offer my gratitude to Mary Jo Larson who for the past two years coordinated our Church School, and to the parents and grandparents for offering their time and energy to nurture the spiritual life of our children here. This past winter, Mary Jo, the parents and I decided to try to hire a part-time Coordinator of Church School in order to serve our children even better. I am very thankful that with all your support the financial situation of our parish is such that we could take this step.

In early August, we finalized the hiring process; and I am very excited to introduce Andrew Heintz as St. John’s Coordinator of Church School. As a member of the United Church of Christ, Andrew is also familiar with the Episcopal Church. Andrew graduated from Episcopal Divinity School in 2017 with a Master of Divinity. He is currently working towards a Master of Sacred Theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, with an expected graduation date of 2019. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies and English from College at Southeastern, NC in 2011.

In addition to his academic studies, Andrew also received the Godly Play Core Training. Last year at St. Paul and the Redeemer Episcopal Church in Chicago, he was the Sunday School teacher for the 3rd and 4th grade class, using the Godly Play curriculum.

One of Andrew's gifts is music. One of his ministries while studying at EDS was serving as church music leader, leading singing either with or without accompaniment. His gift of singing and music was very much a part of his time at Chicago Theological Seminary, and I am sure it will be the same here at St. John's Church School.

We are very blessed that Andrew will be sharing his gifts with us and be part of our communal life here. May we receive his gifts with joy and thanksgiving, and likewise share ours with him. Welcome Andrew!

Blessings  
Diane+

## **Greetings from Andrew Heintz**

Hi! My name is Andrew, and I live in Boston. I'm originally from North Carolina, and I went to school at the Episcopal Divinity School right down the road in Cambridge. I'm currently working on a Master of Sacred Theology focusing on theology and worship. I love to sing and play piano. When I'm not studying or making music, I enjoy hiking in the woods, cooking, and square dancing. I'm excited to be working with the kids here at St. John's this year, and I can't wait to see what we can create together! Here are some upcoming church school events – save the dates!

Sunday, Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> – Blessing of the Backpacks (with cake!)

Sunday, Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> – Blessing of the Animals; Completion of School Supply Drive

Saturday, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> – Church School Picnic

Sunday, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> – Children's Sunday

## **St. John's Thumbnail Financial Report**

**By St. John's Finance Committee**

June pledge receipts were \$6,996, \$2032 under budget; however, total contributions through June 30 YTD were \$42,273.13, which is \$1,230.87 under budget. This deficit was due to January contributions being under budget (Feb-June were on budget). Expenses in June were slightly over budget, mainly due to May heating costs. Year-to-date expenses through June were \$1,408.67 under budget.

\$72,325.31 was restored to the Irwin Fund from the Stock Donation Fund in June, leaving a cash balance in the Stock Donation fund of \$10,000.

The balance in the Capital Campaign Fund was unchanged at \$302,486. The Vestry is exploring insured Certificate of Deposit/Money Market interest rates available to organizations.

# **Vestry Confirms Parish Discernment Committee Recommendation**

At the June Vestry meeting, the Vestry voted unanimously to accept the Parish Discernment Committee's recommendation to call Rev. Diane Wong as our next rector. The next step was to send our discernment documents and the result of the vestry vote to our Priest-in-Charge consultant. The diocese has sent someone to examine our finances and building. Many, many thanks for the work of the Discernment Committee : Christopher Butler, Christine Carney, John Gibson, Dorothy Mallam (co-chair), Stephen Mascoll (diocesan priest-in-charge consultant), Amy Meadows, David Wilcox (chair), and Rev. Diane Wong.

## **Pondering THE CHILDREN** By Jacquelyn Clermont

At a small stone chapel tucked away in a convent off a suburban street, a place I passed many times but never noticed, we gathered for a Saturday religious retreat.

The beginning of the program was to cut a flower from a bouquet, put it in a bowl of water, "introduce yourself, and tell us where you are."

I did not want to go first, because I was in a bad place. Morning news of the immigrant families being ripped apart at the border, of children in cages, was a moral call to arms, but I could not find my unit. I felt powerless, yet every few seconds my inner Marine kicked my butt.

"Do something," it says.

"But I can't find my unit," I complain. No unit, no strategy, no direction, no tactics.

So what do I do? I go to a religious retreat. Shouldn't I be at Shattucks Hardware buying wire cutters. ? Shouldn't I be packing the car for a long trip to Texas?

Back at the chapel, nearly everyone before me at the Saturday retreat, it ends up, was in the same bad place, with the children at the border.

One of the participants could not find a sitter, and so she brought her six-year-old son. He was off in a corner piecing together a metal toy that rattled our "silent moments." When it came his turn, he wanted nothing to do with the flower. His grandmother mumbled his name. There was a silence. But then, just as everyone turned away, he offered: "Children are the future."

Many people spoke about the children that rainy Saturday, but the six-year-old's words from the corner of the chapel are what I remember. They were a comfort, and my heart recognized their truth and their wisdom

The children, the innocents, separated from their families in Texas are today small and powerless, but they have something their captors don't. They have time.



Some may return to their native countries. But some will not. Some will become U.S. citizens. Of those, some will overcome great adversity to prosper. They will start businesses, families, and communities. They will not be so small and powerless.

They will remember. They are victims of a great wrong, an injustice, a violence. In some, the hurt will turn to hate and maybe violence. In others, it will stir a desire to create a more just society. Could one or two of these children become a senator, a representative, a president?

Some will bear witness to the wrong in literature or art. Some will write the history, and it will not be pretty. It will be an incident, like the internment of the Japanese during World War II, that will bring all Americans, even those not yet born, to shame.

Immigrants are being victimized at the border and elsewhere because they believe in America to such an extent they have left everything they know to be part of it. They are like my grandparents, who crossed the northern border with poverty, prejudice, and injustice fast at their heels. Immigrants believe America's promise of freedom, respect, and decency. They believe in us.

The Marine is still kicking. And I ask God every day to point the way. Help me find my unit. Please.

# **NEAT Community Dinners**

**By Laura Manion**

Neighbors Eating All Together (NEAT) now has a working website: [www.neatarlington.org](http://www.neatarlington.org). More contents will be added in the future. We are currently working on a mission statement and an excel list of tasks, and will update regularly to advertise each dinner event.

So far, we have used our Outreach budget funds to help pay for our dinners. We have also had several dinners where our volunteers have donated the funds in full and have not been reimbursed. As you all know, we have also secured a \$450 grant from the Diocese. However, we do realize that more money is needed, so we have set up the following fundraising ideas:

1. We have secured a booth for Town Day (Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>) and will serve free Richie's Slush to help get our mission to the public. We will also have a donation jar, coloring for the kids, and literature about our efforts and goals.
2. Further, we are hoping to collaborate with John Gibson's group, Stanley and the Undercovers, and the St. John's Coffeehouse to hold a fundraiser in January with all proceeds going to NEAT. This is still unconfirmed.
3. We will be branding our NEAT name and come up with a logo which we will put onto t-shirts, aprons, stickers, napkins etc. to hopefully sell, and at least advertise. No logo has been decided yet, but we'll keep you posted.

At our meetings, we are an energetic group, very committed and focused on moving our efforts forward.

I am so sincerely grateful for the outstanding support we've received from St. John's as well as PACC. We are a great committed group of people whose motto is Community Nourishing Community. Myself, Christine Carney or Cate Barr are available to answer questions.

# **Summer Meditation**

**By Frank Foster**

Summer is one of my favorite seasons. Gardening and other outdoor activities occur in this season more extensively than any other. This particular summer I improved part of my yard. A tree which was overgrown was removed, along with one aged shrub and a limb that was damaged by the last of the nor'easter storms was cut.

The beautiful thing is that that part of the yard looks brand-new: a new beginning. I like new beginnings not waiting for a particular season but just happening. As we transition to fall, we should hold happy memories of summer but be eager for new activities and learning.

# St. John's Garden Comes to Fruition!

By Jan Ford

After three years of mud and weeds following the collapse of the arcade, the St. John's Garden has come to fruition. What started as a wish and a maybe has grown into a welcoming face to passersby and parishioners alike. It would never have been possible without the contribution of time and energy by many parishioners and friends of the parish on planting day and later when mulching. I would especially like to thank Don Rosato, who provided a truck for delivering the plants, worked on tilling the soil, and planted and mulched. I would also like to acknowledge the work of our gardeners, Kermit Argon, Jacqueline Barnhard, Cate Barr, Vern Brown, Sue Culhane, Jan Ford, Frank Foster, Anna Ho, Sarah Phillips, and Don and Nancie Richardson and that of our mulchers, Vern Brown, Bill and Jan Ford, and Frank Foster and Don Rosato. In addition to our garden, Vern and I completed the weeding and mulching of the front of the church. We look forward to adding benches and a walkway in the coming months. Several parishioners have made donations to help fund the garden and we would welcome additional donations as we look forward to adding benches and a walkway with memorial stones.



**Above: The Garden Crew Hard at Work**

**Below: The Beautiful Results of the Garden Crew's Labor!**



## **Altar Guild Gathering**

**By Jan Ford**

Have you ever wondered how the Altar Guild works, what it takes to prepare the Sanctuary for services, or what the Sacristy looks like? And most importantly, have you ever wondered if you might consider serving on the Altar Guild? We are a group of women and men who work together and support each other in beautifying the altar area, to show our love and gratitude for God. Please join us at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, for a light breakfast and a chance to learn more about the important role we have in the parish.

## **English Conversation Groups Continue at St. John's**

**By Vicki Ford**

St. John's continues to offer space for English conversation groups to adult immigrants and refugees through English at Large. These groups are facilitated by Vicki Ford and other Arlingtonians. Our most recent learners, from Central and South America, Europe, and Asia, represent a broad range of language groups and professions. We work on developing conversation skills, including American speech patterns and accents. St. John's also recently hosted a workshop for facilitators from Arlington and surrounding towns where we shared ideas on what works. The Fall conversation group runs from Sept. 13-Dec. 13, with no class during Thanksgiving week. For more information, contact Vicki Ford at [vpford@gmail.com](mailto:vpford@gmail.com) or 781-266-6989.

## **Thoughts on Community**

**By Jan Ford**

As I wrote about our garden and the altar guild, I began to think about how grateful I am for the larger community of St. John's and the smaller ones that have allowed me to grow in my commitment to my faith but also to get to know wonderful people. Kind and generous mentors guided me when I joined altar guild and members who had musical backgrounds took someone who loved to sing but had no skills and welcomed me into the choir. Being a warden and serving on the vestry allowed me to represent our members as we made the decisions that impacted the future of St. John's. There are so many opportunities to serve God and make a connection, from coffee hour to NEAT dinners to ushering and many more. Some require more time, some less. Some are long term and some are for a single event. But all provide a ministry to our parish or larger community and a chance to get to know each other. Where do you see yourself serving?



## Upcoming Events & Ministry Opportunities

### **Working for Dignity and Respect for Transgender People - Canvassing for Ballot Question on Transgender Rights**

Join fellow activists and Freedom MA in canvassing residents about Question 3 on the upcoming November ballot. On Saturday September 8<sup>th</sup>, from 11 am to 4 pm, St. John's will serve as the base for canvassing. Training starts at 11:30 am. The ballot question is as follows:

Since 2016, Massachusetts law has prohibited discrimination against transgender people in public places such as stores, restaurants, medical offices, parks, and restrooms.

Opponents have placed a question on the November 2018 ballot to put this civil rights law to popular vote. **A YES vote keeps the law in place. A NO vote repeals the law.**

St. John's parishioners are invited to get involved and to come help with educating more local voters about this ballot question. RSVP to [Athena@alum.mit.edu](mailto:Athena@alum.mit.edu) or sign up with [FreedomMA.org](http://FreedomMA.org).

### **Coffeehouse Concert September 8<sup>th</sup>**

The Coffeehouse Concert program continues with an exciting Fall lineup. On Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm we welcome contemporary folk artist Tracy Grammer, who will be featuring songs from her new album, "Low Tide." Tracy is widely renowned for her springwater -clear alto, perfectly intoned violin and guitar playing, as well as for her storytelling, often described as "incantations." The opening act will be local fan favorites Lori Diamond and Fred Abatelli. They playfully refer to their style as "a gentle but passionate exploration of Folk, Soul, Blues, Jazz and Pop." Tickets to the coffeehouse concerts are \$15 in advance (\$12 for seniors, students, and veterans) and \$18 (\$15) at the door. All proceeds after paying the musicians are donated to the Arlington Food Pantry and to the Housing Corporation of Arlington, which supports affordable housing throughout Arlington. For more information and to purchase advance tickets, see the St. John's website:

**<http://www.saintjohns-arlington.org>**



## October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Celebrating Diversity at St. John's

**Quilt Show** - The Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth (SISJBTC), an African American Quilting Guild, will exhibit their new quilts, with the theme of Ordinary Saints, people deemed by the guild members as role models or who made a difference in their communities. The exhibit celebrates All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

Place - St. John's Parish Hall  
Date - Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>  
Time - 10 – 4  
Admission : Free

In addition to apple and pumpkin pies and cider, soul cakes and sweet potato tarts will be served. If you are able to help serve, greet, or provide pies and cider, please let Christine Carney know, or call the church office at 781-648-4819, or sign up on the sign-up sheet at the church.

**Coffeehouse Concert** - The October Coffeehouse Concert will begin at an earlier time than usual - 5 p.m. It will feature **Reylin Myrthil**, a Berklee composer and viola player, as the opening act; and the main act will be the **Afro Diamonds Dance Troupe** from Uganda, an award-winning group of young dancers.

Originally from Florida, Reylin is a senior at Mt. Holyoke College, majoring in music. This summer, she played at Tanglewood. She was also the curator of the quilt show by SISJBTC at Mt. Holyoke College, and a member of the Association of the Pan African Unity (APAU).

The goal of the Afro Diamonds is to bring cultural awareness to the audience. They love to connect with different people through the energy and passion they give while they dance, and to spread love through the positiveness of their dances.

For more info, please see the St. John's web site: <http://www.saintjohns-arlington.org>.  
To purchase concert tickets in advance go to <http://afrodiamonds.bpt.me>

The Sisters will also be joining us on Sunday, 10/14 for worship.

Please mark your calendars and come celebrate.

### Arlington Food Pantry



We encourage people to continue to drop off food for the Arlington Food Pantry. We collect and donate food throughout the year – donation baskets are at the rear of the Sanctuary. Andrew Nyamekye will collect and deliver your contributions every 4-6 weeks. Additionally, the Food Pantry is always in need of volunteers. Visit the food pantry's website at <http://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/health-human-services/food-pantry> or see the posters on the downstairs bulletin board for more information.



## School Supply Drive for the Thompson School



St. John's is once again holding a school supply drive for the Thompson School. The main thing that students need is headsets, because they use iPads in the classroom. The model shown (made by Cyberacoustics) costs 18.79 – St. John's can probably get them for less if we buy in bulk through our Staples business account. We ask that you sign up to purchase one or more headsets for the school; or donate whatever amount you can. Please write checks to St. John's Episcopal Church, and indicate "headset" in the memo line. In addition, they welcome donations of pens, pencils, sticky notes, and expo markers. This drive has been a very successful effort in the past few years, and has been greatly appreciated by the Thompson School. Let's keep the momentum going. Thank you.

## Quilting with Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth

On the third Saturday of each month, Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth will be quilting here in the Parish Hall. Anyone is welcome to come and quilt with them.

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## Milestones

### Birthdays:

**June** – Cate Barr, Charlotte Pierce, Andrea Nyamekye, Charles Nyamekye, Carol Hoover, Bob Goode, Dorothy Mallam

**July** – Adam Pachter, Lucy Pachter, Vicki Ford, Don Richardson

**August** – Aidan Wilcox, Eugene Downing, Jay Dornin

**September** – David Wilcox, Amy Meadows, Jan Ford, Meaghan Sullivan, Jane Commons, Miriam Davison, Dan Gillis, Madeline Butler

### Wedding Anniversaries:

**June** – Peggy Jo & Don Webb

**August** – Vicki & Larry Ford, Janet & Bill Ford, Vern & Wendy Brown, Sue & Peter Culhane

**September** – David Wilcox & Charlotte Pierce, Tom & Stacy Davison

## **Graduations:**

Rin Barr – Attending Mass. College of Art

Bridget Carney – Attending University of South Carolina

Lillian Wilcox – Attending University of the South (Sewanee)

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## **Worship**



### **Regular Worship Schedule Resumes on Sept. 9th**

**Holy Eucharist I at 8 a.m. & Holy Eucharist II at 10 a.m.**

**Nursery Care & Church School are available Sundays  
during the 10 a.m. service.**

**Choir rehearsal is Sunday at 9 a.m. – Come lend your voice to the choir!**

**Gluten-Free Hosts:** We offer Gluten-Free Hosts for communion. If you would like to receive gluten-free hosts, please let Rev. Diane know ahead of time or during the Peace.

**Altar Flowers:** We invite people to use Altar Flowers to remember, celebrate, or give thanks for special occasions or people. If you are interested in contributing to the flower fund, please contact Miriam Davison at 781-643-1679. You can contribute for any Sunday. As of this newsletter, September 30<sup>th</sup> is open, so please consider contributing for flowers that day, to give thanks for our children or our pets that give us so much joy. You can contribute for just one Sunday, or have your special occasion or remembrance be repeated annually. Please let Miriam know. Thank you for supporting the flower ministry at St. John's.

**St. John's Episcopal Church  
74 Pleasant Street  
Arlington, MA 02476**

**Rev. Diane Wong's office hours - Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. John's.  
Please feel free to arrange with Rev. Diane for other times to meet.**

**Her cell phone number is 617-417-8102.**

**Her email is: [dianeckwong@gmail.com](mailto:dianeckwong@gmail.com)**



**Church Office is open M, W, Th 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Please call to see if the office is open at other times.**

**Church Office Phone: 781-648-4819 Email: [st.johns\\_arlington@verizon.net](mailto:st.johns_arlington@verizon.net)**

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