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## ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Newsletter – Summer 2019

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### **A Message from the Reverend Diane C. Wong, Rector**

One morning after Jesus' resurrection, he appeared to Peter and the disciples by the seashore and prepared breakfast for them. When they had eaten, Jesus asked Peter 3 times if Peter loved him. "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Then Jesus asked Peter to "feed my sheep", "tend my sheep." (John 21:15-17) This is one of my favorite passages. Parishes spend much time trying to answer the same question, and discern the best way to feed and tend God's sheep. So do we. At our Vestry retreats and many Vestry meetings, we try to find the best way for St. John's to feed and tend God's sheep.

Three years ago when we were presented with the opportunity to provide a temporary home for the Arlington Food Pantry (now Arlington EATS Market) when they renovate their site on Broadway, the Vestry and I said yes right away. It didn't cross our minds that it wouldn't work out; and we were not concerned if there would be added expenses for the church. We saw this ministry to "tend" God's sheep as God's grace falling in our laps, to give us an opportunity to serve the Arlington community in a different and greater capacity. We didn't even have to survey our town to see what the needs were and come up with a ministry; we didn't have to sell our ideas with heavy publicity to get people to come. The ministry came to us. This is indeed Amazing GRACE.

We don't and can't stop here. There are different ways to tend and feed God's sheep. When the woman who had a problem with her bleeding finally reached out to touch Jesus' cloak, Jesus tended to her and fed her by affirming her faith - Your faith has made you well. (Matthew 9:20-22) At the well in Samaria, Jesus tended to the gentile woman and fed her by having a deep conversation with her. (John 4:12-26) For the next 18-24 months, every week, there will be volunteers coming to St. John's to get the pantry ready for food distributions on Wednesday mornings and evenings. There will be Arlington residents coming to shop for their food. We have this opportunity to get to know the volunteers and residents of Arlington even more, right here in our Parish, to find out their joys and challenges, their dreams and their needs; to listen; to be there for them, to affirm who they are, and maybe to volunteer. After two years when Arlington EATS Market moves to their new home, we will know much better how to continue to tend God's sheep, and support those living in our town in meaningful ways.

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:37-38)

Blessings, Diane+

## Arlington EATS Market Opening Day

By Andrew Gronosky

On Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, volunteers from Arlington EATS transformed Saint John's Parish Hall into a grocery store. The Arlington EATS Market has spent the last six weeks assembling shelving and moving in refrigerators and cartons of canned and packaged food. On Wednesday, the preparation paid off with a smooth operation distributing free groceries to dozens of our neighbors who experience food insecurity.

This journey started almost four years ago, when Arlington EATS contacted St. John's and asked us to help them if and when they received a grant to renovate their facility. That grant was approved at the end of February with little advance notice. In three short months, the Market has designed the layout of their whole operation, negotiated scheduling with other groups who use the Parish Hall, purchased and assembled shelving, tables, and other furniture, and moved their inventory of dry and canned goods into Saint John's.

Arlington EATS Market provides an experience much like a grocery store. The people who receive food are called shoppers. What's great about the Market is that it works hard to acknowledge the dignity of the shoppers. For many people, it's a humbling experience to receive food at a food pantry, and newcomers are especially likely to be apprehensive. The Market's volunteers greet the shoppers like the neighbors they are: the room was abuzz with pleasant conversation as shoppers lined up and filed through the shelves, picking out the items they wanted from the shelves. It's like an extra friendly grocery store, where the staff (the volunteers) know many of the shoppers by name. The Market offers not only canned and dry goods, but frozen meat and fresh vegetables, bread, and pastries provided by Arlington FoodLink.

Several of the shoppers remarked that the Parish Hall is a pleasant space: bright and roomy, compared to the rather cramped confines of previous venues. Yet all the carts, movable shelves, and tables stow away when the Market is not operating, so there is enough floor space for the monthly NEAT dinners and for large groups like the Arlington Garden Club.

On the next page are some photos of what the Market looks like when the shelves are stocked and it's open for business. The people in the photos are Arlington EATS volunteers: Arlington EATS does not allow photos of shoppers, out of respect for their privacy.

Arlington EATS Market distributes food to Arlington residents on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. If you would like to know more about the Market, whether you wish to donate, volunteer, or if you know someone in Arlington who could use help putting food on the table, please visit [www.arlingtoneats.org](http://www.arlingtoneats.org).



**Shelves Full of Food Offered by Arlington EATS Market**



**AEM Volunteers Setting Up in the Parish Hall**

## Jeanne, Ahead of Her Time. And Ours.

By Jacquie Clermont

A couple weeks ago, I asked Diane to recognize the feast day of St. Joan, or Jeanne in French, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, which this year marks the 588<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death by burning in Rouen, France. She was only 19.

Instead Diane asked me to speak about Jeanne after her sermon on June 9<sup>th</sup>. My hesitation in taking this on was that I couldn't possibly do justice to my favorite saint. And I can't. But I did my best on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and now I am doing my best in writing this in yet one more attempt to describe a truly wonderful human being.

Jeanne was ahead of her time in the 15<sup>th</sup> century; she would be ahead of her time of today. What woman has turned the tide of a century-long war, convinced heads of state that God sent her, an illiterate peasant, to save a nation, led a major charge against a formidable enemy, and won. She started the charge that would drive the English out of France, creating a sense of national pride not from the top of society down, but from the bottom up.

French artist Georges Rouault did a painting of Jeanne, "Notre Jeanne," on horseback, head forward toward her destination. Lower than her head and behind it is a halo or maybe a sun. For me the placement of this sphere is significant. She is not heading toward the light; neither is the light behind her head as it is in the depiction of most saints. Rather it seems to be the energy behind her. It is her mission, her faith, and nothing else matters.

Jeanne is in so many ways the woman, the Christian, I want to be —true to her own conscience, courageous in pursuing what is right as she sees it, undaunted by powerful people and their fawning followers. She stood by her truth, and I believe it was God's truth, despite ridicule, bullying, and even sexual abuse. They called her an ingenue, a witch, a heretic, and an indecent woman in pants.

A year and a day before her execution, she was captured and sold to the English, possibly through the betrayal of a traitor to the French cause. She was held in an English prison, where she was tormented. At one point she jumped out of a tower in an attempt to escape.

Six months after her capture, the English, in the person of one French bishop, Pierre Cauchon — whose name means pig in French — gathered some 66 churchmen, scholars, and scribes loyal to their cause for a five-month trial.

With her execution a foregone conclusion, I wondered out loud why the English spent so much time, effort, and ink — it was all recorded — on a 19 year-old-peasant girl. "They were really scared," my husband said.

Still, they were obviously concerned about appearances. One scholar, the man who translated the extensive transcript of her trial into English, said never was there such an effort to make injustice look like justice.

And it was injustice. She had no counsel herself. The learned judges, many hailing from the University of Paris, asked her repeatedly whether her voices, those of three saints sent by God, gave her advice about how to respond to their questions. They did, she said. "They told me to answer boldly."

The judges accused her of “presumptuously and rashly” boasting of being able to predict the future and of “discovering things secret or hidden, and this attribute of God she attributes to herself, a simple and unlearned creature.”

“It is for God to make revelation to whom He pleases,” she responded.

Does she accept the judgment of the church, they pressed again and again. She said: “I submit to the judgment of God.”

George Bernard Shaw, who wrote a play about her, described her as the first Protestant. (Martin Luther was born 52 years after her death.)

Several who witnessed her execution wrote about it. She had the energy to declare her innocence publicly and at length before being tied to the stake. Petrified, she asked a priest to hold a cross in front of her as the flames consumed her. It is commonly assumed she died of smoke inhalation, and I hope that is the case.

Twenty five years after her death, she was rehabilitated. Four hundred and seventy eight years later the Church beatified her. And a full 489 years later, in 1920, she was canonized.

According to one legend, her heart wouldn't burn, and they threw it and her ashes into the Seine. Now, when I look at the Seine as its winds through France and through Paris, I think of her, exactly where she would want to be.



**“Notre Jeanne” by Rouault**

## Church School Year-End Reflection

By Andrew Heintz

It has been a wonderful year in Church School. All of us have learned so much as we have explored our faith in community. I love hearing what the kids have to say about the stories. Each child has something important to say. Sometimes they don't speak up. That's okay. Sometimes two kids have different answers to the same question. That's okay too. We are all learning together as we share ourselves and these sacred stories.

In the Fall, we learned about lots of circles, like the Circle of the Church Year and the Circle of the Holy Eucharist. We wondered about what our favorite part might be. For a lot of the kids, their favorite part of Holy Eucharist was Coffee Hour. This was a surprise to me! I hadn't even included this part! But the kids have found that this is an important part of their own liturgy. For them, the table filled with God's bounty downstairs is a necessary continuation of the table upstairs. It reminds me that our service always continues, even after we walk out the door. We must always continue to share what God has given us. Each ending is a new opportunity to begin.

In Winter and early Spring, we learned the stories of the Hebrew people in the Bible, learning of Creation, Abram and Sarai, and the Exodus. Abram and Sarai did a lot of traveling. They traveled from Ur to Haran to Shechem to Bethel to Hebron to make their home. Some of the kids wondered if we could leave some of the traveling out and still have all the story we need. That's a great thought; maybe we could. We also wondered about whether we see ourselves in the story. I see myself as having traveled a long way too, and I've spent time at many different places along the way. Each is important, and I know I wouldn't want to leave any piece out. I wonder if Abram and Sarai (now Abraham and Sarah) would have left out a piece of their journey if they could. Maybe they would have, or maybe they would have kept it all. I wonder... And then after Easter, we heard parables of seeds planted in the ground. We heard the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of the Sower. In the Parable of the Sower, some of the seeds fell on rocky ground and some on thorny ground. Some fell by the road where birds ate those seeds, and some fell on good soil. Some of the seeds grew and some didn't. I wonder where we might see ourselves in this story. I wonder, are we in the good soil? Will we continue to grow?

My experience of being at St. John's is one where there is so much fertile soil. There are so many opportunities to grow together as a community. It is a community full of riches. St. John's is a community which has made a long journey, to be sure. This year, I've heard the stories of how the church worked together to come through the challenges of previous years. Even with the collapse of the arcade wall, the church banded together to face this challenge. The people of St. John's continue to come together in worship and service. You continue to share God's bounty. You are doing the work of God through thick and thin. I see good soil for these seeds to sprout, take root, and blossom. The sense of community is rich, and I am excited to see where St. John's goes in the coming years.

In this season of Pentecost, I think of Acts 1-2 where the disciples were waiting for the Holy Spirit. They were all gathered together in one room. Jesus had lived, died, and risen again. He had spent time with them, and then he ascended into heaven. They were gathered in the Upper Room waiting for the promise of God to come true. They may have been having coffee hour. And that was the moment when the Holy Spirit came. That was the moment when God overcame the differences in nationality and language and joined them together. That was the moment the Church was born. And from that moment, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and

to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” They devoted themselves to worship and fellowship.

So continue to nurture your community. Make time for each other. Speak with someone you haven’t seen lately. Remember that the table extends past the dismissal. We practice our faith in service, to be sure. We also practice our faith in fellowship. If there is one thing we can learn from our children this year, it is the importance of fellowship in the Christian life. That is where we share our journeys with each other. That is where we find fertile soil. And that might just be the moment when the Holy Spirit comes.

In peace,  
Andrew

## **Summer Worship Schedule**

Beginning on Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be one Holy Eucharist II service at 9 a.m., followed by Coffee Hour in the Memorial Room.

### **Worship**

If you are interested in reading, greeting, or being a Lay Eucharistic Minister, please speak with Rev. Diane.

**Choir Rehearsal:** Choir rehearsal starts at 8:15 a.m. on Sundays during the summer. All are welcome to join.

**Gluten-Free Hosts:** We also 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.

**Eucharistic Wine and Juice:** Eucharistic grape juice is now available during Communion in addition to the Eucharistic wine.

**Altar Flowers:** We invite you to use Altar Flowers to give thanks for, remember, or celebrate special occasions or people. If you are interested in contributing to the flower fund, please contact Miriam Davison at 781-643-1679. We invite you to contribute for any Sunday in 2019. You can contribute for 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.

### **Our Welcoming Ministry**

We are very excited that 8-9 parishioners have already joined this new ministry. It will officially begin in July. Those who participate will notice new people who attend St. John’s and make a point of introducing themselves. Welcomers will invite new people to coffee hour to meet more Parishioners. If you are interested, please let Dorothy Mallam or Rev. Diane know. Thank you all for helping make St. John’s even more welcoming.

### **Summer Coffee Hour Sign-Up**

If you are able to host a summer coffee hour, please sign up on the sign-up sheet next to the door of the Memorial Room. Our summer coffee hours are held in the Memorial Room after the 9 a.m. service. This is an important ministry of the church, particularly now with our developing welcoming ministry; and we greatly appreciate your contributions.

## **New Podcast Launched**

A new podcast, “The Way of Love: with Bishop Michael Curry,” launched on Pentecost, June 9<sup>th</sup>. The weekly conversations, featuring Curry and podcast hosts Kyle Oliver and Sandy Milien, will explore living life with a commitment to God’s unconditional, unselfish, sacrificial and redemptive love. Each week in the first season, Curry will introduce one of the seven “Way of Love” practices for a Jesus-centered life: turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, rest. New episodes air on Tuesdays through July 30. “The Way of Love: with Bishop Michael Curry” will be available on all podcast apps; visit the Way of Love podcast webpage to subscribe to the podcast through Apple iTunes, Google Play or Spotify or sign up for notifications of new season.

## **School Supply Drive for the Thompson School**

St. John’s is once again holding a school supply drive for the Thompson School. They have need of the following items: Elmer’s glue, tape, Dry Erase Spray and Dry Erase Markers, pencil cases, sticky notes, AA & AAA batteries. They also welcome donations of gift cards to Walgreens or CVS. The school supply 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.

## **St. John’s Website is Up and Running**

St. John’s website is fully functional now and we have postings of events as well as information about who we are and the vision we have for a community in Christ here in Arlington. If you have not had a chance to visit the website, please do. The address is:

**[www.saintjohns-arlington.org](http://www.saintjohns-arlington.org)**

The members of the Website Committee are: Jerry Clabaugh, Andrew Gronosky, Vesna Gronosky, and David Wilcox. If there are events that you would like to have posted on the website, please contact the web team. Thank you.

## **Congratulations AHS Graduates!**

Congratulations to the St. John’s teens who recently graduated from Arlington High School (in alphabetical order): Henry Barr, Ian Commons, Savannah Curro, Grace Manion, and Isabel Manion. You all have bright futures ahead of you!

## **Milestones**

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

**June anniversaries:** Peggy Jo & Don Webb; Don & Nancie Richardson

**July birthdays:** Adam Pachter, Lucy Pachter, Vicki Ford, Don Richardson

**August birthdays:** Aidan Wilcox, Eugene Downing

**August anniversaries:** Vicki & Larry Ford



## **Finance Committee Update 6/17/19**

May finances continue toward a balance between income and expenses for the year. YTD collections exceeded expenses by \$1,677.57 through the end of May. This was caused primarily by expenses for heat being \$2,095.28 under budget for the year. For the month of May, receipts from pledging were under budget by \$948.00, other receipts were under budget by \$3,120.00 and expenses were under budget by \$3,182.44. The Finance Committee does not anticipate that the Vestry will have to borrow funds to pay summer expenses.

## **The Season After Pentecost**

By Frank Foster

The long season after Pentecost could be considered the end of the Church Year. I wonder if now is the time to re-think it as an extended growing season: A season to grow closer to God through the unique recreational opportunities afforded by summer and autumn. At St. John's this summer, the Arlington Eats Market will be in full swing distributing food donations at two times each Wednesday, with other days busy restocking their shelves.

Relaxing time at the beaches or on a summer hike in the mountains offer each of us a pleasant new perspective and show us God's creation in nature up-close.

We do well to enjoy summer activities with family and friends, for rest and recreation are important for our physical and mental health. I hope each of us has a safe and relaxing summer. But we can also use this time to pray, meditate, read scripture, and serve God in new ways to enable our witness to God and God's love to increase.

## **Arlington EATS Market Donations**

Please remember to bring in donations of canned and dry food for Arlington EATS Market (the new name for the Arlington Food Pantry). Unopened personal care items, such as shampoo or toothpaste, are also appreciated. Items can be left on the table at the back of the church. For more info on Arlington EATS Market or to volunteer, see: [www.arlingtoneats.org](http://www.arlingtoneats.org).

**St. John's Episcopal Church  
74 Pleasant Street  
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**Rev. Diane Wong's office hours: Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 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).**

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