



ST. JOHN'S NORWOOD  
Chevy Chase-Bethesda

# SAINT JOHN'S AT THE CROSSROADS

Volume 30 Number 13

December 14, 2014

[www.stjohnsnorwood.org](http://www.stjohnsnorwood.org)

## Staffing for St. John's Future

With Sarah+ off to run her own parish and our much-beloved parish administrator, Brian Briggs, no longer at St. John's due to illness, the St. John's leadership felt it the ideal time to reevaluate the church's staffing needs. You may have noticed that we're growing quickly! And with the Vision Team on the cusp of unveiling the draft Vision Statement, we are preparing to take hold of our future like no time before.

The Rector, Wardens, Vestry, and Personnel Committee wrestled long and hard with how we might shape our staff, not just as a response to our needs now, but to anticipate those of the future. We've consulted with the Diocese, including Bishop Mariann, and have come up with what we believe is the best staffing solution for the needs of our church, one that will give us flexibility to grow while not increasing the current budget for personnel.

Over the next two months, we will be announcing the hire of three new employees:

1) *Parish Administrator* – This person will be responsible for the management and administration of the church's facilities and office operations and communication including interfacing with the Oneness Family School, and will provide leadership in a team environment that will enable clergy, staff, and lay members to minister effectively.

2) *Assistant Rector (Part Time)* – An ordained priest to assist with all sacramental duties, as well as preaching, liturgy design, Christian Education, and Pastoral Care.

3) *Program and Community-Life Coordinator (Part Time)* – This person will be responsible for managing the programmatic aspect of our church community, nurturing and supporting both existing and new lay leadership and ministries, and working to deepen connections among the members of our church family.

continued on page 2

## Church School Thrives

### as the Christmas Pageant Approaches

Our church school teachers attracted 178 children and teens to classes on Sunday, December 7, our high point since we began in the fall. I phrase it this way because I think these dynamic people are the key to attendance. They are discussing the important questions, at every age from three to seventeen.

What traits are attracting their students? Warmth is one. The students know that the teachers appreciate them and care for them. Originality is another: the teachers dream up the most fascinating lessons and projects. Last Sunday the 6th and 7th grade mural stretched all the way across the Hines Hall floor, over to the J2A door, behind which the 10th and 11th graders were in groups deciding which of their imaginary characters should survive an apocalypse, and on what defensible basis.

Down the hall the third graders were deep in glitter, creating a gift for their parents. In the youth room, the 8th and 9th graders divided into families with financial constraints to set up budgets, an exercise they gave their best energy to. I could multiply this observation times the twelve classes, leading me to another trait that children sense: dedication. The teachers devote themselves to their classes, and the children and teens respond by returning.

Certain ongoing programs support attendance. One is the pilgrimage. Our older teenagers are preparing for Youth Sunday and for their confirmation, and they're also readying themselves for an intense week in June of inward development while traveling outward. The nineteen of them, our J2A class, attend en masse despite the well-known demands on a teenager's time.

The other current program providing the thrills of anticipation is the preparation for our annual nativity

continued on page 2

## Building Community at the Crossroads of Faith and Life

Our members represent a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, family configurations, sexual orientations, abilities, and religious traditions. Indeed, chances are that there's someone like you at St. John's. We are single, married, partnered, divorced, widowed, remarried, gay and lesbian, with and without children, empty nesters, old and young, and differently-abled; you name it - we are here.

**Adult Open Forum**  
**Update on Development of Property Next Door**  
**and Bethesda Downtown Plan**  
**December 14, 10:10 am**

The newly chartered Development for Community Committee (DCC) looks forward to updating the Parish on developments with respect to the property next door and the finalization of Montgomery County's new Bethesda Downtown Plan. County planning staff will issue their first recommendations December 8, with a public hearing planned for December 11. There will be important opportunities for St. John's to weigh in on issues that will impact in the church as the Plan is finalized in the coming weeks and months. Please come and share your views and learn how you can help!

Anne Derse

Church School (cont'd)

pageant. We have so much to be proud of here: we have a field of 18 cherubs, 14 manger animals, and 19 shepherds -- that is, the pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade students -- who provide the crucial environment for Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. The second graders narrate and enact the story.

All of the children sing and wear costumes to help them convey to the audience the pathos and glory of that night. Many people from our surrounding community come to St. John's on Christmas Eve to see the pageant at the 5 pm service.

We are also presenting the pageant at 10 am on Sunday, December 21, followed by a reception in the parish hall. The pageant on December 21 replaces the adult forum and the church school. (The 68 children in the pageant will have their single rehearsal at 10 am on Saturday, December 20, in the Nave.)

We hope you will add a viewing of the pageant to your experience of Christmas! We're glad that most everyone now in church school, up through our seniors, has passed through this affecting enactment of the nativity, which lies at the heart of our faith.

Nancy Derr, church school director

Staffing (cont'd)

Respecting our current parish budget limitations, our hope is to eventually grow the latter two positions from part-time into full-time as our congregation grows and our pledges increase.

We are looking forward to this new season in our life and ministry together as a church family, and pray God's blessing upon us all as we take this next bold step into our future.

Faithfully,

Sari Ateek+, *Rector*  
John Ross, *Senior Warden*

**Third Sunday Supper – December 21**  
**Parish Life Open House**

Please join us for the annual Parish Life Open House on Sunday, December 21. As in years past, this is a potluck dinner and we're asking you to contribute a side dish or dessert that will accompany the main dish provided by Parish Life. Bring your singing voice as a caroling sing-a-long is sure to break out! Doors open at 5:45 and we hope to see everyone there! Questions? Email: [parishlife@stjohnsnorwood.org](mailto:parishlife@stjohnsnorwood.org)

**JAZZ VESPERS!**

**Sunday, Dec. 14, 5 p.m.**  
**Christ Church, Rockville**

**To benefit Samaritan Ministry**

Great Jazz, led by Rev. John McDuffie on tenor sax, for a great cause: The work we do together to empower folks to live sustainable and satisfying lives! Contact Liz Everhart at [lizeverhart9@gmail.com](mailto:lizeverhart9@gmail.com) for any questions.

**Crossroads over the Holidays**

The final issue of Crossroads for 2014 will be dated December 21, 2014.

The first issue of 2015 will be dated January 11, 2015.

### Passages

*"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."*

1 Cor. 12:26

We mourn with

Christine Curto

on the death of her mother, Marthe Allen

We celebrate with

Alan & Michelle Snyder on the December 8  
birth of of William Philip Snyder

Winnie Smoot on the births of  
Penelope Ann Holladay (born August 1) and  
Leigh Benton Sterchi (born December 7)  
(great-grandchildren numbers 3 and 4)

*Please contact the Office if you have a celebration,  
thanksgiving, sorrow, or other news to share.*

If you or someone you know would appreciate any form of  
pastoral care, please call Penny Winder [[301-938-1193](tel:301-938-1193)  
or [winderph@verizon.net](mailto:winderph@verizon.net)] or Anne Derse [[301-401-5717](tel:301-401-5717)  
and [derseae@hotmail.com](mailto:derseae@hotmail.com)] or the church office.

### Music Notes

*The Book of Common Prayer* calls for the participation of the People of God in liturgy in a variety of ways. One of those ways is to join with the clergy and choirs in singing service music, i.e., musical settings of Prayer Book texts. The church permits a great deal of variety in the use of music at the Eucharist, so we take full advantage of this flexibility and change our music with each liturgical season. During Advent, we will be singing Schubert's *Deutsche Messe* setting.

The *Deutsche Messe* is an example of the arrangements of vernacular religious texts, intended for performance by choir and congregation, which were popular in certain areas of Austria and southern Germany in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Schubert's Mass used texts of Johann Philipp Neumann, a friend and professor at the Vienna Polytechnic Institute. In our version, composer Richard Proulx has taken Schubert's music and arranged it to fit with the words in our Prayer Book, creating easily sung service music that illustrates the text in both its melodic and harmonic structure.

Anne Timpane

### Living With Mortality Men's Book Club January Selection

The Men's Book Club will meet on January 14, 2015, to discuss two works that confront the difficult topic of our own mortality. The first is Leo Tolstoy's classic, "The Death of Ivan Ilyich." Written shortly after Tolstoy's profound religious conversion, it studies the professionally successful but personally barren life of Ilyich as he confronts a painful death and ultimately, the realization about life that obliterates its fearful hold on him. The second is a modern work by a surgeon, Atul Gawande, titled, "Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End." Together they will allow us the opportunity to discuss the role that fear of death, whether implicit or explicit, plays in our lives, to search for a path constructively to integrate that reality into the actions and goals that shape our lives, and the options we and our loved ones have to bring peace at the end. We meet on the 14<sup>th</sup> at Joe Winder's house beginning at 7:30.

Earle O'Donnell

### Outreach Sunday December 14 to Support Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area

Proclaiming God's grace, Lutheran Social Services (LSS) compassionately works to create a society where the most vulnerable among us find wholeness, justice and self-sufficiency. For example, it serves unaccompanied refugee minors -- children who made their journey to the United States without parents or other guardians. Another child-centered focus of LSS is placing children who have been temporarily removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect with loving, patient foster parents. LSS also recognizes that hundreds of people that give selflessly of themselves to care for an aging or ill loved one need support. Sometimes the added responsibilities can put the caregiver's physical, emotional and spiritual health under extreme stress. Caregiver Support partners with faith communities to help ensure a caregiver's wellness so that our united mission of helping neighbors in need continues. On December 14 all loose plate offerings will be given to LSS. Checks should be written to St. John's, with "Outreach – Lutheran Social Services" written in the memo line.

Langdon Healy

