



The Eagle

The monthly newsletter of **ST. JOHN'S LAFAYETTE**

September 2015

Christianity: the BIG Questions

by Bradley Pace

Last winter, we began a series of classes called “the BIG Questions” that focus on some of the main areas of the Christian life. The sequence of classes—Christianity, the Bible, Anglicanism, and Discipleship—are meant to explore some of the larger questions of the faith. In some ways, the classes serve as an introduction to the Christian faith or to the Episcopal Church, and in other ways the classes go much, much deeper. In all, the idea is to take intentional time to explore the complexity of our faith.

On Wednesday nights this September and October, I will lead a class on the big questions, the big story of Christianity. What is Christianity? A philosophy, a moral system? Is it good news, and if so, why? What’s important about Jesus’ life, his death, and his resurrection? And what is the Christian hope? These are the questions we will work through.



Class Schedule and Outline

- 9/9 – What is Christianity? The offensive, foolish news that changes everything.
- 9/23 – When God comes back: the life and teaching of Jesus.
- 9/30 – By his blood he reconciled us, by his wounds we are healed: why Jesus died.
- 10/7 – The Resurrection of Jesus and the new creation.
- 10/14 – The end is near! Eschatology and hope.

There’s dinner and childcare during each session for those who need it. Besides that, we’re learning some really important stuff about the Christian story.

The next series of classes, beginning in late October, will focus on the Bible. What do we do with this crazy, complex book, AND how do we read it as sacred Scripture?

If you have any questions, please contact me at 765.742.4079 or bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org.

Announcements

Godly Play and Youth Group — *Godly Play* (Christian formation for children aged 3 through 5th grade) resumes on Sunday, September 13 at 9:15 a.m.

Youth Group (youth in grades 6-12) also resumes on Sunday, September 13, from 6-8 p.m. in the Commons. Questions? Contact Hilary at hilary@stjohns-laf.org.

St. John’s Commons Renovation — St. John’s Commons has been under renovation this summer. You may have noticed the new chairs, new ceiling tiles, new paint, new carpet, and new furniture. Please thank Sally Byrn, Linda Cooper, and Ray Polstra for their work getting this project accomplished.

If you are missing something from St. John’s Commons, let the office know and we will make sure to get it to you. Call the office at 765.742.4079 or email at stjohns@stjohns-laf.org.

From the Rector

by Bradley Pace

In case you missed it, a few Sundays ago during the 9 a.m. service and the church picnic service, I offered blessings for all students, teachers, and school staff. I said:

As a new school year starts, every student, child, or adult, and every teacher or member of a school staff, gets a chance for a fresh start. In school, we get to use the gifts God has given us: curiosity and kindness; math, reading, science, art, and music; athletics and friendship.

Students, this is the work that God gives you: look for and love God in all the people and in all the tasks of your school work.

Teachers and school staff, this is the work that God gives you: look for and love God in all the students and in all the tasks of your school work.

I blessed the students, teachers, and school staff with these words:

Dear God, bless these students gathered here and of each school, who begin a new year of study. May they greet each school day with open ears and open hearts, finding you in classrooms and lunchrooms, homework and gym class, new faces and old friends. Keep them healthy and safe as they learn and grow.

Bless the teachers of these students and all teachers everywhere. Bless the school staff gathered here and at all schools. May God give each of them skill and strength, humor and grace, as they guide and assist and support their students.

I also blessed the backpacks that some of you brought asking God to “Use these symbols of their work to remind each of us that you are with us in all the work we do and all the places we go.”

To those of you who are students, teachers, or school staff and were not there, I share this blessing with you as well. I hope that this is a wonderful year for you—a year of great learning, growth, and development. Best wishes on a great year.

For everyone else, I want to remind you that you have an opportunity to learn, grow, and develop in your *spiritual* formation. St. John’s offers formation opportunities for young children on Sunday morning in our Godly Play classes. Godly Play

teaches children the stories of our faith while creating an environment in which they can reflect and wonder about the faith. Youth Group and Confirmation classes for Middle School and High School Youth give those older kids a great opportunity to worship, learn in community, and serve. There are several formation opportunities for adults at St. John’s such as Tuesday Bible Study, Days, the monthly book group, season Quiet Days, Big Questions classes, and more. We share a group for EfM—or Education for Ministry—which meets at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Crawfordsville each week. Other meetings take place on Sundays and at different times throughout the year.

You can find more information about classes and events in *The Eagle*, online at www.stjohns-laf.org, or by calling the church office at 765.742.4079. Make sure that you make the most of these opportunities to learn, grow, and develop in your spiritual life. And may the prayer that ended the blessing for the students, teachers, and staff include us all:

Give them open minds and discerning hearts that they may see in your world and in one another the signs of your love and care. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Blessing of the Animals

by Hilary Cooke

Calling all animals and animal lovers!!

This year we are delighted that the feast of St. Francis actually falls on a Sunday. We will once again be giving thanks to our creator for the love of our animal friends with a liturgy for the Blessing of Animals. We will meet at 5 p.m. on Sunday, October 4 in the garden (weather permitting). The rain location is TBD.

Please bring your pets (all are welcome!) and if you are able, a donation for the Almost Home Humane Society (financial or in-kind).

If you have any questions, please contact Hilary at hilary@stjohns-laf.org.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

by Linda Jeffries

The ladies who knit and crochet to make prayer shawls have discovered that they have quite a few shawls finished and ready to distribute to anyone who would like one. Who should have a shawl? How about:

Anyone who needs comfort.
Anyone who is sad.
Anyone who is happy.
Anyone who wants to share God's love.
Anyone who just wants to know that they are important and loved, not only by his or her fellow parishioners or friends, but also by our loving God.

In other words—anyone! The reason is not important to us—it's between you and God—but the shawls are here to remind you (or someone you care about) that you, and they, are loved and thought of.

If you would like a shawl either for yourself or someone you know and love, please ask one of the ladies named below. The shawls work best when enfolding someone—remaining in bins stored away doesn't help their ministry. They need to be around someone who needs to be loved and comforted. And, you are encouraged to give a shawl to a friend who needs it but is NOT a member of St. John's. God's love is not restricted to our building.

Just ask Caryl Matthews, Barb Hess, Sharon Evander, Dorothy Jones, Marilyn Howland Ross, Linda Jeffries, Ginny Hull, Helen Slagel, or Jo Roberts if you want a shawl. Any of the ladies will be willing to help you select a shawl that has been created with love and blessed by God.

Book Group for September

by Mary Campbell

For many years now, the Book Group at St. John's has joined in the One Great Read (OGR) program of the Greater Lafayette community. We read the OGR selection for our September meeting, and our meeting is listed in the OGR events.

The 2015 One Great Read is *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick, published in 2000. The sinking of the whaleship *Essex* after being attacked by a whale in November 1820 was a well-known event throughout the 19th century. (It was the inspiration for Melville's *Moby Dick*.) Philbrick has thoroughly researched the event and brought it to our attention in the 21st century.

The mission statement our Reading Group adopted a few years ago is based on the premise that whatever book we read will “address what it means to be human in our world” and that by reading a variety of books “we will grow in our affirmation of the basic dignity of all humanity.” This book, I think, offers some real challenges to those statements. At least that has been my reaction. It will be fascinating to share our insights and reactions to *In the Heart of the Sea*.

Join us on Wednesday, September 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the Commons. Alison Moss, a member of St. John's and Head Reference Librarian at the Tippecanoe County Public Library, will lead our discussion. She is Co-Chair of the One Great Read Committee and can answer questions about the OGR program.

Bible Study Group

by Randy Brist

The Adult Bible Study Group will resume meeting on Tuesday, September 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the Commons. We will continue with the LifeGuide Bible study series booklet *Isaiah: Trusting God in Troubled Times* (available from Amazon.com for about \$8, but you don't need the booklet to attend!). Meetings will continue through this “semester” on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. The Bible Study group is low-key, and we take turns leading the discussion. We don't use a specific version of the Bible. Everyone brings their own, and we enjoy comparing and contrasting the different versions. The group likes to focus on ways the Bible is relevant in our lives today. For more information, please contact Randy Brist at rjbrist@mac.com or 474-2835. We look forward to seeing you at Tuesday Bible Study!

Episcopal Women's Ministries (EWM)

by Charlene Watson

By the time you read this newsletter, it is hoped that you have set aside the weekend of September 25-27, 2015 to attend the exciting EWM Fall Retreat at Waycross Conference Center. The Rev. Jean Denton will be the retreat leader speaking on the topic “Growing Wise.” We hope many from St. John's plan to attend. Look for notices in the Sunday bulletins regarding carpools to Waycross. Questions? Please contact Amy Paget (742-4239 or pagets@gmail.com) or Charlene Watson (474-9101 or cel.watson@comcast.net). Thank you.

VBS Recap by Bradley Pace



Thanks to everyone who helped with this year's "Holy Moly! Vacation Bible School!" Twenty-eight children and youth attended the event. We had a wonderful, Spirit-filled week. Thanks to the parents for making sure their kids were there, to all those who helped make dinner and clean up, to Katie Elder, Hilary Cooke, Michael Bennett, Gayle Ennis, Greg Buzzard, Tim Smith, Jennifer Chandler, the Men's Pancake Group, Helen Slagel, and Jane Thompson for all the help and support.



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LAFAYETTE

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
Sunday, October 4th at 5 P.M.
600 Ferry Street, Lafayette

North American Godly Play Conference

by Hilary Cooke

At the beginning of August, I traveled to Sewanee, Tennessee with Katie Elder to participate in the North American Godly Play Conference. The format of the conference was a combination of workshops and keynote speakers (including Jerome Berryman, the creator of Godly Play!).

I attended a variety of workshops covering a range of topics related to Godly Play and its implementation in the congregation and beyond. I left feeling excited to expand our current use of the Godly Play materials and with concrete ideas for how to use Godly Play in settings outside the “classroom.”



Kim McPherson (formally of our diocese and now at the Cathedral in Denver) presented her use of the Baptism story in baptismal preparation with parents and godparents.

Katie and I attended Andrew Sheldon’s workshop about Godly Play congregations. His church incorporates Godly Play stories into worship in a variety of ways—sometimes “telling” the story to the entire congregation, but also simply using some of the language when introducing parts of the service. He uses the language of Godly Play in his sermons and also in Christian formation offerings with people of all ages. One idea that was particularly interesting to me was the way he uses Godly Play with children during the Annual Meeting. He “wonders” with the children about their hopes and dreams for the congregation and then shares those with the wider congregation.

A workshop entitled “The Family’s Pathway to Children’s Spirituality” highlighted the important role that parents play in the spiritual development of their children. We discussed challenges that parents face in sharing their faith with their children and ways to use Godly Play to help deepen the spiritual intimacy in the family.

I attended a workshop presented by a chaplain in a pediatric psychiatric ward that focused on ways to use Godly Play in that setting. I was struck by the way the stories he shared with his patients opened a door for them to express their existential anxieties during the response time. While the stories may not be “curing” these children, it helps them find a language to express these deeply rooted anxieties.

I also attended a workshop on using Godly Play for Vacation Bible School and one for coordinators about organizing the classrooms and structuring the “lectionary” of Godly Play stories.

I found the conference to be very helpful not only for the information presented, but for the opportunity to connect with other Godly Play storytellers (in our diocese and beyond). Thank you to St. John’s for the financial support to make this possible!

Oh, and the Parish Picnic . . . by Bradley Pace



Thanks to everyone
who made this year's
Parish Picnic at Happy
Hollow Park a great
success!



Despite heavy rain for the
second straight year, we had
a great time.



Thanks to Lloyd Brewer and
Katie Elder for their help
getting things organized.

October Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submissions to the issue of *The Eagle* will be Monday, September 14. Please e-mail submissions to eagle@stjohns-laf.org.

**FINANCE REPORT
OPERATING BUDGET INCOME AND EXPENSES*
MONTH ENDING May 2015**

A. INCOME

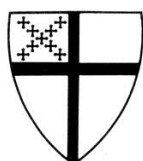
	Current Month	Total 2015	Annual Budget	% of Budget
1 Pledge Income	\$ 18,795.00	\$ 156,235.00	\$ 366,789.00	42.6%
2 Operating Income	\$ 3,730.31	\$ 24,368.86	\$ 39,973.00	61.0%
3 Non-Operating Income	\$ 2,343.33	\$ 16,302.35	\$ 37,000.00	44.1%
4 Transfer Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 51,000.00	0.0%
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 24,868.64	\$ 196,906.21	\$ 494,762.00	39.8%

B. EXPENSES

1 Outreach	\$7,441.32	\$45,988.25	\$ 66,072.00	69.6%
2 Program	\$962.23	\$11,195.24	\$ 23,950.00	46.7%
3 Administration	\$0.00	\$545.51	\$ 3,900.00	14.0%
4 Personnel	\$17,378.03	\$117,945.57	\$ 225,306.94	52.3%
5 Office	\$2,093.59	\$10,387.42	\$ 26,520.00	39.2%
6 Property	\$6,111.05	\$43,710.92	\$ 80,555.36	54.3%
7 Miscellaneous (Non-Budget)	\$0.00	\$ 50.00	\$ -	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 33,986.22	\$ 229,822.91	\$ 426,304.30	53.9%
Net Income (loss)	\$ (9,117.58)	\$ (32,916.70)	\$ 68,457.70	

Notes

* This is a summary report of the operating income and expenses for the indicated reporting periods. Detailed description of these items are available for review from members of the Finance Committee.



St. John's Episcopal Church

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Associate Rector

The Rev. Dr. Hilary Cooke

Sunday Associate

The Very Rev. Robert L'Homme

Parish Administrator

Teresa Lohrman

Director of Music

Michael Bennett

St. John's/Lum Food Pantry

Steve Starks, Director

Gayle Ennis, Co-Director

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