

St. Stephen's News

St. Stephen's Church, Timonium, Maryland
A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

Vol. XXI, Number 35

Edited by Anne Hawkins

September 7th, 2010

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Remember! Service is at 10.30 AM on Picnic Sunday, September 12!

THE Parish's Fall Picnic will take place in the churchyard on September 12th -- the Sunday the Choir of Men & Boys returns from the summer vacation.

To make it easier for all parishioners to attend, the Rector has agreed to combine the 9.15 AM and 11.15 AM services. This means there will be the usual 8.00 AM Eucharist, followed by a Choral Eucharist at 10.30 AM.

The service will be over in time for you to dig into the hamburgers, hot dogs and the traditional picnic fare -- all provided free of charge by the Parish Life Committee.

As usual we are asking folks whose family names begin with letters A to M to bring a salad or some such, and folks whose names begin with letters N to Z to bring a dessert. See you at the picnic! STEPHANIE VERHAGE

FROM THE RECTOR

Figuring the angles on Michael and his angels

THE FEAST of St. Michael & All Angels takes place on the 29th of this month. Not long ago it was commonly regarded as one of the most important feasts in the Church Calendar. Today, however, it is rapidly becoming a non-event as increasing numbers of people consign angels to the same sort of category as fairies at the bottom of the garden.

Ask them why they are skeptical and those actually acquainted with the Good Book will probably point to the Prophet Ezekiel – one of the Bible's foremost experts on the subject. .

Here's Ezekiel description of Cherubim: "They had the likeness of a man. Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze.

"They had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides . . . As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man, each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle . . ."

So the description goes on, none of it getting any more comforting. These are creatures that could appeal only to the likes of Calvin; not the theologian and reformer; but the little boy who adores horror stories in the cartoon series "Calvin and Hobbes."

And just in case you think Ezekiel was prone to bad dreams as a consequence of eating too much blue cheese at supper, it might be worth reading Isaiah's views on the subject. Here's his description of the type of angels called Seraphim (6:1-2):

"I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the

Come sing
your heart out
at St. Stephen's Church
Labour Day Hymnfest
at 6.00 PM Sunday, September 5th
Reception to follow

train of his robe filled the temple. Above it stood six seraphim: each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew."

When one reads the eyewitness accounts, it's rather difficult to understand how artists developed the idea that angels look either like hermaphrodites or pudgy infants. It also becomes rather easier to understand the description of the trial of St. Stephen.

When the first martyr spoke in his own defense, we are told that those who saw him "saw his face as the face of an angel." The speech that St. Stephen delivered is remarkably tough and uncompromising.

His devastating defense of the faith in Acts 6 & 7 shredded his accusers, intellectually and theologically. Its power drove them into a fury of hatred so intense they took the law into their own hands, dragging him outside and stoning him to death.

Believe me, if Stephen's face resembled that of an angel, it was the sort of angel Ezekiel and Isaiah described rather one of the sort depicted by Renaissance artists on the walls of churches.

Now let us consider the passage from the Book of Revelations appointed to read in place of the Epistle on the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels. It describes the war that took place in heaven, between St. Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels, during the time that Christ lay in the tomb.

Are we to take this passage literally or as allegory or is it simply completely irrelevant in this day and age?

The fact of the matter is that nothing in The Bible is irrelevant. If it appears to be so, we simply misunderstand it. Indeed, if we have trouble believing that something that The Bible – quite clearly and unequivocally – says is so, then it is rather more likely that fault lies with us than with the Scriptures. Thus, it makes sense to try to discover the root cause of our disbelief.

And in this context, it's not entirely by accident that the lesson from the Revelation appointed for the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels is coupled with a Gospel reading taken from the 18th chapter of the Gospel According to St. Matthew.

It reminds us of Jesus' warning: "Assuredly, I say unto you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The qualities that our Lord is seeking from us when he tells us to emulate little children are not pouting and petulance, but humility, tractability and readiness to learn. And in this regard, our problems in believing in angels seem to be entirely of our own making.

If we accept the fact that God created the heaven and the earth "and all that therein is" we should have no trouble whatsoever in accepting the fact that he is also perfectly capable of creating angels. It surely can't be intrinsically any more difficult to create an angel than to create a man. Actually, there's a good case for thinking that, for some one as infinitely powerful as God, it would be absolute child's play.

We should never confuse the things human beings cannot do with the things that God can do. Not only are such acts of creation completely within God's capabilities, they are exactly the sort of thing one might reasonably expect God to get up to.

When Jesus tells us to "Render unto Caesar those things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's" he isn't just talking about money. He is also telling us we shouldn't make the mistake of confusing our own puny abilities with the limitless abilities and capabilities of our maker. **GPH**

Howard Burnham
returns as
Sherlock Holmes' biographer
Dr. Watson
in
The Game's Afoot
Weds. September 15th at 7:00 PM

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

being Sunday, September 12th, 2010

8.00 AM & 10.30 AM rpt 10.30AM
HOLY COMMUNION

The Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18
The Gospel: St. Matthew 6:24-34

FOR YOUR MORNING OFFICE

The Psalter: Psalm 49
The First Lesson: Deuteronomy 7:6-13
The Second Lesson: St. Luke 12:13-21

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

An invitation for Sept. 15

WHY NOT join us for fellowship, conversation and a splendid meal at 12 noon at The Reef on Padonia Road (near York Road) on Wednesday, September 15th? To reserve your place, call Ann Bonnell at 410-560-1130.

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Dr. Watson pays us a visit on Weds., September 15

ACTOR Howard Burnham returns to St. Stephen's at 7.00 PM on Wednesday, September 15th. to present "The Game's Afoot" -- from the memoirs of John Watson, MD. Suggested donation for admission: \$10 for adults; \$5 for children. A reception follows..

Sherlock Holmes fans will immediately recognize Dr. Watson as the acclaimed biographer of the legendary consulting detective. He is the latest subject of Mr. Burnham's uncannily accurate portrayals of characters, real and imaginary, from our past.

In "The Game's Afoot," Mr. Burnham presents Dr. Watson, on a Magic Lantern Lecture Tour of the United States, recalling the life and exploits of his celebrated friend who he believes to have

been killed in an encounter with master criminal Professor Moriarty at the Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland.

✠ PARISH PRAYER LIST ✠

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the office at 410 560 6776.

RECOVERY: Helen, Alma, Sara, Ravi, Elizabeth, Brian, Tracey, Linda, Robert, Nancy, Sharp, Edithann, Doris, Jay, Robert, Nancy, Perry, Amelia, Shirley, Adrian, Kimberly, Dean, Barb, Tanya, Jane, Brook, Val, Helen, Joseph, Joshua, Rachel, Carl, Cal, Catherine, Sam, Ruth, Kristi, Paul, Sue, James, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Jack, Grace, Bob, Fran, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erlene, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, Katherine, William, Betty, Cal, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tracy, Tom, Leiliah, Jennifer, Miriam, Karen, Steve, George, Eliza, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Marian, Edith Anne, Steven, Jeanne, Tammy; Ellen, Jim, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Robert, Christine, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, George, Bryan, Jason, Jane, Joan, Frances, Ernie, Pat, Lynn, Michael, Ray, Leslie, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Robert, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D'Metrius, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Alma, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, John, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Elizabeth, Gloria, Lee Emily, Elsie, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Linda, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, John, Geradine, Thomas, Jeanne, Sister Catherine-Grace, Maxine, Ann Sharon, Dennis, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Rebecca, Dorothy, Joanne, ✠Albion, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Carol and Debbie.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: June, Anna, Jean, Garrett, Ned, & Stephen, Rachel, Robert & Renee, Lydia; Richard, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Georgetta, Carolyn, Suzanne, Tony, Erik, Doris, Drake, The Norris family; Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, David, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Tom, Susan, Debbie, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, Jo Anne, Mary, Gregory, Isabel, Bobby, Dorothy, Darren, Scott, Rebecca, William, Charles, Joyce, Asfa, Eleanor, Kathy, Linda, James, Barry, Ann, Evelyn, Jeanette, Elizabeth, Virginia, Mildred, Chris, Micki, Stephen, Carol, Sandra, Elsie, John, Mary, Michael and David

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: LTC. R. J. Lytle, PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, U.S. Army, Alex Bursi, US. Navy; Capt. Charles Bursi & LTC Harry Hughes, U.S. Air Force.

✠ St. Stephen's Traditional Episcopal Church ✠

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Rectory (410) 665-1278
Web Address: <http://www.ststephens-md.org>

RECTOR: The Venerable Guy P. Hawtin
ASSOCIATE RECTORS:

The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley and The Rev. Robert Menas

ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric
DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)
WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am -- Holy Communion
9.15am -- Holy Communion (Nursery & Church School)
11.15am -- Morning Prayer (Nursery)
(1st. Sun. of the month: Holy Communion at 11.15am)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday: 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Friday: Noon: Healing Eucharist
Saturday: 5.00PM Family Eucharist.

COLLECTS FOR SUNDAY, TRINITY XIV & THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope and charity; and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *AMEN.*

Book Common Prayer, Pages 209

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost didst prepare the body and soul of the Virgin-Mother Mary to be a dwelling place for thy Son: Keep us, we beseech thee, pure and undefiled that we may be an holy temple wherein he may always abide, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *AMEN.*

Return Service Requested

St. Stephen's Traditional
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11856 Mays Chapel Road
Timonium, MD 21093

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