

# St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church  
Timonium, Maryland

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Edited by Anne Hawkins

August 21st, 2012

## FROM THE RECTOR

### Time for a hypocritical tribute to virtue . . . ?

THE MOST profound social change that has taken place over the past half century or so has been the abandonment of moral absolutes in favor of "situation ethics" – ethics that change according to the situation in which they are being applied.

In the early 1960s, for instance, John Profumo, the British defense minister, resigned his office in disgrace -- not for sharing a mistress with a Soviet military attaché, but for lying to Parliament about it.

Profumo spent the next 40 years cleaning lavatories in a settlement house in the London slums to atone for that lie. His contemporaries did not consider his display of remorse as excessive. They thought it the proper response for his betrayal not just of his political colleagues, but the entire British people.

Scarcely 30 years later an American president lied to the American people about a sexual escapade even more squalid than Profumo's. On this occasion, however, the opinion makers in the mainstream media and his party colleagues declared his lie to be quite understandable – a mere peccadillo of no great importance.

No act of self-abasement or atonement followed and, while he was impeached by the House of Representatives, he was exonerated in the Senate. Unabashed, he went on to complete his presidential term and is today hailed in many quarters as one of the nation's elder statesmen.

The new shamelessness should, I suppose, have taken nobody by surprise. By the mid-1980s it had become quite clear that where "situation ethics" pertain it means there are no ethics in effect at all.

I learned from personal experience when, in the mid-80s, I was asked to teach a new course in "journalistic ethics" at the journalism school of a well-known New York college.

A hoary old joke with antecedents stretching back to the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century asserted that the three primary qualifications for a career in journalism were "shorthand, typing, and a sort of low animal cunning."

With this in mind, I assumed the dean was gently pulling my leg when he asked me to take on the ethics class. But he was very much in earnest. "Why," I asked, "should a journalist's ethics be any different from any other person's ethics?"

"This new breed of youngsters just don't seem to understand that there are certain ethical boundaries that apply when working as a journalist," he replied.

Truth to tell, I learned far more from the course than my students. They were, in the main reasonably well-educated youngsters from comfortable suburban homes. But it soon became painfully clear that few of them believed there were any such things as moral absolutes.

Even in those days, an appeal to Judeo-Christian values was viewed, academically speaking, as a mortal sin. Thus the ethics of journalism were swiftly reduced to "if you do so and so, you'll get fired."

Most media corporations are commercial enterprises that depend on making a profit, or, at the least, not making unsustainable losses. To do so, they need to keep their readers, listeners and viewers, if not happy, at least not wholly dissatisfied.

Once upon a time, journalists subscribed to the idea that mainstream news organizations had an ethical obligation to maintain "a wall of separation" between the news pages and the editorial sections. It also made commercial sense because people tend to object to being propagandized even in causes with which they agree. But for my students, "freedom of the press" no longer meant a shared corporate responsibility but rather a license for individual indulgence. Editorializing in the news pages became the rule, not the exception.

Now, almost 30 years hence, the consequences of their unwillingness to face the ethical facts of commercial life are readily apparent in the catastrophic loss of readers experienced by so many of our newspapers, and a scarcely less catastrophic loss of viewers by the three big television networks.

But journalists and aspiring journalists by no means have a monopoly on the absence of ethics. The decline and fall of American ethics is apparent in all walks of life from the academic through the political to the commercial.

The baleful effects of our ethical decline and fall could be seen in the financial

shenanigans that brought about the current recession. A deficiency of ethics marked the activities of the bankers who granted the mortgages to people who they knew were incapable of repaying them; the "bundlers" who sold them as investments; and the politicians whose reckless policies enabled them to do so.

It was similarly apparent when the preferential shareholders and bondholders were sacrificed on the altar of political expediency in the General Motors and Chrysler bailouts. And the short term gain for the working man has come at the expense of a huge disincentive for private investment in U.S. car makers.

This is not to heap blame on one particular political party. There is plenty of it to be shared. Nobody has ever accused the political class of being overly attached to ethics. Indeed, Mark Twain claimed Congress was America's only natural criminal class.

Yet in earlier ages, the morally bankrupt at least genuflected to ethics -- if only because a failure to do so invited shunning by "decent society." As Oscar Wilde put it: "Hypocrisy is the tribute vice pays to virtue."

Hypocrisy might be despicable, but it is preferable to shamelessness. And measured against the chicanery that brought about the current recession, and the ethical bankruptcy evident in the presidential campaign, a hypocritical tribute to virtue would make a refreshing change. It would offer some hope that that society might actually be reevaluating its priorities. **GPH**✘

## St. Stephen's Flowers

This year we tried using a "Flower Diary" instead of the traditional "Flower Chart" for those who would like to dedicate Sunday's altar flowers. But the experiment has been an abject failure! Folks seem unable to find the miserable thing.

From now on "A Flower Chart" will stand in the reception area, together with a book to record your dedications. Your \$40 donations should be left in the box by the chart or the church office.

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR  
THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

Being Sunday, August 26th, 2012

**8.00 AM & 9.00 AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

The Epistle: II Corinthians 3:4-9  
The Gospel: St. Mark 7:31-37

**11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER**

The Psalter: Psalm 32  
The First Lesson: Isaiah 29:18-24  
The Second Lesson: St. Mark 7:31-37

**THE FLOWER COMMITTEE**

**Come, bloom with us**

THE FLOWER COMMITTEE is looking for new recruits to help beautify the church for the Sunday services and to join us in planning the floral decorations for the great Holy Days of Christmas and Easter. No experience is necessary. All you need is "a good eye" and we will teach you the rest. Men are welcome. This is an "equal opportunity" committee. To join, call Anne Hawkins at the Parish Office. Tel: 410-560-6776.

**FROM THE PARISH CHEFS**

**Silly Summer Suppers**

THE MOMENT you have all been awaiting has arrived. Each Thursday the chefs of St. Stephen's are serving the 2012 series of "Silly Summer Suppers."

Actually, it's hard to think of a less appropriate name than "Silly Summer Suppers" for these remarkable gastronomic events. The only thing silly about these suppers is the price -- entrée, dessert and salad for just \$10. Soda costs a buck and wine at \$3 per glass and \$5 for two.

It's a time for the whole family to socialize over a relaxing meal that you don't have to cook. Afterwards you can visit with friends and even enjoy a light hearted game of Bingo.

**✠ 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 prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the parish office at 410 560 6776.

**RECOVERY:** Michael, Rosina, Timothy, Donna, Diane, John, Robert, David, Richard, Bill, Charlotte, Leo, Riley, Mary-Ann, Linda Lou, Cynthia, Nancy, Judith, Deborah, Dorothy, Dr. Devadadson, Thelma, Mary, Adele, Linda, Jan, Liz, Bob, Wyatt, Jim, Reta, Sara, Tammy Sophie, Paula, Blair, Melvin, Heather, Laurie, Lynn, Katherine, Hindra, Ravi, Elizabeth, Brian, Tracey, Edithann, Jay, Perry, Amelia, Shirley, Adrian, Kimberly, Dean, Barb, Tanya, Jane, Brook, Joseph, Joshua, Rachel, Carl, Cal, Catherine, Sam, Ruth, Kristi, Paul, Sue, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Jack, Grace, Fran, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erline, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, William, Betty, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tom, Lelilah, Jennifer, Miriam, Karen, George, Eliza, Ray, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Steven, Jeanne, Tammy, Ellen, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Christine, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, Bryan, Jason, Joan, Frances, Pat, Michael, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D'Metrius, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Gloria, Lee, Emily, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Linda, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, John, Geradine, Thomas, Jeanne, Maxine, Ann, Sharon, Dennis, Mac, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Joanne, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Doris, Carol, and Suzie.

**LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Aaron, Hope, Tom, Jennifer, Brendan, Rosa, June, Anna, Jean, Garrett, Ned, Stephen, Rachel, Robert & Renee, Lydia; Richard, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Carolyn, Suzanne, Tony, Erik, Drake, Bobby, Kay & Emma, Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Susan, 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, Carol, Sandra, John, Mary, Michael and David

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE:** LTC R.J. Lytle, PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, USA; Lt. Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt. Alex Bursi, Charles Watts, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt. Nicholas Clouse, USN. Lt. Col. Harry Hughes, Lt. Nicholas Clouse USN, Major Benjamin Hawkins, British Army.

**✠ St Stephen's Anglican Church ✠**

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093  
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Rectory (410) 665-1278  
Web Address: [ststeve.com](http://ststeve.com)

RECTOR: The Venerable Guy P. Hawtin

VICAR: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley

ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric

DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

**SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.00 am: Said Eucharist

9.00 am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11.15 am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Choral Eucharist)

6.00 pm: Choral Evensong (1st Sunday only)

**WEEKDAY SERVICES**

Wednesday, 6.00 pm: Evening Prayer

Friday Noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5.00 pm: Family Eucharist.

**COLLECTS FOR TRINITY XI AND  
ST BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE**

O GOD, who declarest thy almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity; Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of thy grace, that we, running the way of thy commandments, may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who didst give to thine Apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach thy Word; Grant, we beseech thee, unto thy Church, to love that Word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

*Book of Common Prayer, Pages 204 & 249*

Return Service Requested

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