

St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXIII, Number 37

Edited by Anne Hawkins

September 25th, 2012

FROM THE RECTOR

Coach & horses thru' the First Amendment

"I JUST don't understand what all the fuss is about," a lady told me recently. "This contraception thing doesn't affect Roman Catholic Churches. It only affects workers at their institutions, like schools, hospitals, colleges and universities. And the employees aren't obliged to accept free contraceptives if they object to them.

"Actually," she went on, "I think it's a good idea. Contraception has been around for a very long time. It's a fact of life. It's about time the Pope moved out of the Dark Ages and into the 21st Century."

"It might surprise you," I replied, "But the truth is that contraception isn't really the issue. Sure the Obamacare order overthrows two thousand years of Catholic doctrine, but the problem is that it drives a coach and horses through the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion.

"This order doesn't just deprive Roman Catholics of their right to practice their faith without interference from the state, it affects all Christian churches. Indeed, it doesn't only affect Christians but every other faith as well. Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists -- you name 'em -- this order tramples on the rights of all of us.

"The issue," I continued, "isn't: contraception and abortion, for or against. The fact of the matter is that the order declares, in effect, that the government has the authority to determine what is a religious activity and what is not.

"It means the Federal Government has, at a stroke, ruled that Church institutions, many of which have served the wider American community for generations, are not protected by the First Amendment.

"In other words Washington is claiming that a vast majority of traditional faith-based charities and missions are not really religious activities at all, and thus they are subject to untrammelled federal regulation without regard for fundamental tenets of the faith of their sponsors.

"Put another way the government is declaring that legitimate religious activity is confined solely to the sanctuary and the parish hall. And doubtless sanctuaries and parish halls will be subject to government regulation if they host activities sponsored by non-church organizations that the feds deem insufficiently religious -- community meetings, blood drives, 12-step programs and the like.

"If the courts fail to overturn this arbitrary and unconstitutional edict, faith-based activities such as missionary work, soup kitchens, services to the homeless and adoption agencies will be liable for all manner of intrusive government supervision.

"You might disagree with the Roman Church's position on contraception and abortion -- services their church institutions are obliged to provide under the Obamacare order -- but how do you think Jews and Moslems might feel if, for example, circumcision was outlawed on health and child abuse grounds?

"Don't imagine it couldn't happen. A German court, of all places, recently ruled circumcision to be illegal on grounds that it constituted child abuse. If the order is allowed to stand, it is entirely within the realms of possibility that it could happen here. Child abuse is taken just as seriously here as in Germany.

"Then there is the question of religion in the home. It has

been banned from schools and is increasingly being restricted in public places. Military chaplains are increasingly inhibited from fully expressing their faith -- not just in ugly and intolerant places in the Islamic world, but here in America.

"These restrictions and increased government intrusion and regulation are justified by claims that many people are offended by the various religions. But that is precisely why our Founding Fathers thought the First Amendment to be necessary -- to protect practitioners of unpopular expressions of faith from public bigotry and government interference.

"Washington's contempt for religion is increasingly on public display and, worrisomely, to a growing extent, American Christians find themselves being forced to choose between their political loyalties and their faith.

"Indeed, the antipathy towards Christians and Christianity on display in the nation's capital is loudly echoed at the local level -- even to the extent that Christians have been thrown in jail for holding Bible studies in their homes.

"Hostility on the part of local politicians and neighborhood activists to all things Christian was apparent even 20 years ago when we were in the midst of building our church. Back then it was cloaked in the rhetoric of environmental requirements and sound town planning. Federal regulations from which churches are specifically exempted were also invoked.

"Today, however, the antipathy is much more out in the open.

For example, not so long ago the board of Mays Chapel North Condominium denied us permission to put up a banner announcing our British Garden Party and Fete on their "pagoda" on Padonia Road.

"The sign was quite tasteful and certainly not particularly large. It would, moreover, only have been on display for a couple of days.

"Twenty -- nay, even 10 -- years ago, the request would have been a no-brainer for the condos' management. Permission to advertise an event would have been unhesitatingly given to any local church. Instead, we were told:

"Your church isn't part of our community." This, needless to say, was not the attitude of Mays Chapel condo managers 10 years ago when they sought to use our parish hall for residents' meetings.

"Nor is the antipathy merely a local phenomenon. Baltimore County government imposes draconian restrictions on church catering. Bake sales, for example, have been forbidden and even tiny church kitchens have been made subject to much the same draconian regulations as commercial kitchens in restaurants, banqueting halls and hospitals.

"The regulations are interpreted in such an inflexible manner that we have even been forbidden to serve hot dogs unless we cook them in a commercial hot dog cooker. This is simply an ordinary saucepan except it is rectangular rather than round and cost \$100 plus.

"Christians who complain of facing discrimination because of their faith are routinely accused of over-sensitivity or even paranoia. The Obamacare edict, however, demonstrates that the complaints are not without foundation. But even if we are a tad oversensitive, an old Israeli proverb aptly applies to our circumstances: "Just because you're paranoiac, it doesn't follow that somebody's **NOT** trying to kill you." **GPH**

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Our "Secondhand Rose" sale

SOME FOLKS (our rector, for example) seem quite incapable of throwing things out. The rector not only still owns the suit he was married in, but the sports jacket and slacks he wore on his honeymoon. In fact, his closets would fill a fashion museum

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The Parish Life Committee invites you all to

St. Stephen's Fall Picnic

at Ellen Reather's elegant country seat

13201 Dulaney Valley Road

Glen Arm MD 21057

1.00 PM on Sunday, October 14th

Join us for an open air feast of hot dogs, hamburgers, snorkers, salads, assorted desserts & so much more.

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Being Sunday, September 23rd, 2012

**8.00 AM & 9.15 AM
HOLY COMMUNION**

The Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-6
The Gospel: St. Luke 14:1-11

11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER

The Psalter: Psalm 33
The First Lesson: *Ecclesiasticus* 10:7-18
The Second Lesson: St. Luke 14:1-11

with garments stretching back through the "Swinging London" era of the 1960s to the schoolboy styles of the 1950s.

We are betting that he is not the only one in the parish with closets and wardrobes crammed to overflowing with gently used clothing -- some vintage; some nearly new -- that desperately needs a new home.

Thus we decided that nothing could be more timely than a "Secondhand Rose Sale." We are looking for gently used clothing, clean and in good condition, from periods ranging from medieval to modern times. We would also be grateful for shoes, accessories, jewelry and purses in good condition. Curtains and drapes would also be welcome.

The sales is for the benefit of a Sunday School playground. The sale dates are: Friday, October 19th, from Noon to 8.00 PM; and Saturday, October 20th, from 10.00 AM to 2.00 PM. We would also appreciate volunteers to help run the sale.

For more information, contact Martha Miller's e-mail at cieiowe@comcast.net or call the parish office: 410-560-6776.

✠ PARISH PRAYER LIST ✠

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice & Dr. Bob's Place. 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: Paul, Andy, Frannie, Hellen, 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, Erlene, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, William, Betty, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tom, Leliliah, 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, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Joanne, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Doris, Carol, and Suzie.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: JoAnn, Larry, 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.

REPOSE OF THE SOUL: Robert Roby.

THOSE WHO MOURN: Mrs Beth Roby & family.

✠ 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

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

9.15 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 XVI AND ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

O LORD, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN*

O EVERLASTING God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order; Mercifully grant that, as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven, so, by thy appointment, they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

Book of Common Prayer, Pages 212 & 251

Return Service Requested

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

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