

Join us for Silly Summer Suppers - Thursdays at 5:30 pm

St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Timonium, Maryland

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Edited by Don Ruthig

June 18th, 2013

FROM THE RECTOR

Shopping around for the best deal on sin

NOT EVEN America's churches are immune from the effects of today's consumer culture. Shopping is by no means confined to the mall and the Internet. "Church shopping" is also a popular pastime.

People today, it seems, approach the business of finding a church in much the same way that they would go about buying a car or a house, or even the weekend's groceries: They shop around for the best deal . . .

Aesthetic considerations rank high on some folks' shopping lists. There are those who seek a certain flamboyance – colorful vestments, smells and bells, armies of acolytes. Others, by contrast, are into stark austerity. For them, the Geneva gown and unadorned Holy Table reign supreme.

That's cool, as my children used to say. Tastes differ.

But it is worth remembering that it is God we are trying to please in our acts of worship. Thus, it is his taste that counts – not our own.

Shopping for liturgical satisfaction is one thing. Shopping for convenience of belief, however, is quite another. Even so it is what large numbers of people are doing.

It might be reasonable enough if the "belief shoppers" were actually seeking enlightenment – a clearer understanding of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith. A few probably are engaged in such a quest.

But experience shows that many of them are doing nothing of the sort. Many, in fact, are hunting around for the best deal on sin.

Clergy can usually recognize them by their first question: "Do you think adultery/sexism/lying to a federal grand jury/eating tofu/membership in PETA/cruelty to animals/gun ownership, etc/etc is a sin?"

It is important to note that these people don't actually want to know what the Scriptures have to say on the matter. They aren't seeking enlightenment. They have made up their minds already.

What they're looking for is a parson who will agree with whatever they deem to be "sinful" or "non-sinful." Come up with the wrong answer, that's the last you'll see of them. They are off once again on the eternal quest for an obliging pastor who thinks the way they do.

This consumer-oriented approach to the faith offers rich fields of endeavor for clergymen with none too many scruples. Sadly, however, honest parsons have a much tougher time.

The problem is that defining sin isn't the clergy's job at all. Nor, for that matter, is it the job of the Church.

It is God who defines sin – and he did that many thousands of years ago. You'll find his ideas on the subject in a handy little consumers' guide called The Bible.

The truth is that it doesn't matter a hang what I, or any other human being, thinks about sin. The only opinion we need to worry about is God's.

If God approves of something, there's no need to ponder any further. But if he says that something is sinful, believe me, there is nothing that I, or anybody else can say – or do – to change the situation.

Calendar of Events

Weekly Activities at St Stephens

Tuesdays, 7.00 AM: Bible Study at the Nautilus Diner

Wednesdays, 5.00 PM: Bible Study in the vestibule

Thursdays, 10.00 AM: Knitting Circle meets in the Parish Hall

Thursdays, 7.00 PM: Bridge Group meets in the Parish Hall

Fridays, 10.30 AM: Bible Study in the vestibule

Special Events

Thursday, June 20th: First "Silly Summer Supper" of the season at 5.30 pm in the Parish Hall

Wednesday, June 26th: Vestry meets at 7.00 PM in the vestibule

Thursday, July 4th: Fourth of July Silly Summer Barbecue

Sunday, September 8th: Parish Picnic at the home of Ellen Reather

The Church, you see, hasn't got the job of identifying sin. Its business is the forgiveness of sins – and that's a horse of an entirely different color.

GPH✘

News from the Diocese

The Diocese of the Eastern US (DEUS) has begun publication of a Diocesan newsletter, "DEUS Among Us." To learn more about what's going on around the Diocese pick up a copy in the literature rack outside the church office, or check it out on our website in our newsletter archive.

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

It's time for some summer silliness

Can there be a better way to kick off summer than enjoying one of St Stephen's legendary Silly Summer Suppers? We'll be launching this year's dinners on the eve of the summer solstice, Thursday, June 20th, at 5.30 PM.

Our chefs are combing their cookbooks for tasty menus for your enjoyment. And what a deal it is; entree, salad, delicious bread, and dessert for a mere \$10 per person. And it all comes with a side of St Stephen's fellowship.

As usual we will have beer, wine, and sodas for a nominal charge, and the lemonade is still complementary.

As has become tradition, stay after dinner for a lively game of Bingo led by our colorful caller, Bill Hawkins. And, since it's a Thursday night, you can cap the evening off with a friendly game of bridge with the bridge group.

All this, and still only \$10. There's no better deal in town.

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

June 23rd 2013

8.00 AM & 9.15 AM HOLY COMMUNION

The Epistle: Romans 8:18-23

The Gospel: St. Luke 6:36-42

11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER

The Psalter: Psalm 91

The First Lesson: Lamentations 3:22-33

The Second Lesson: St. Matthew 10:24-39

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

Join us June 19th

THIS month the Ladies Who Lunch will be meeting at 12 noon at Tark's Grill, 2360 W. Joppa Road, Lutherville, on Wednesday, June 19th. Why not join us for a convivial get-together over a delicious meal? Good food and good fellowship -- what more could you want? To reserve your place call Joyce Perlberg at 410-252-2680.

✠ **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: Brice, Reta, Kathleen, David, Ellen, Mimi, Val, Stacy, Dino, Michael, Finton, Morris, Charles, Dawn, Betty Jean, Elliot, Sharon, Paul, Andy, Michael, Rosina Donna, Diane, John, David, Richard, Bill, Charlotte, Leo, Riley, Mary-Ann, Linda Lou, Cynthia,

Nancy, Judith, Deborah, Dorothy, Thelma, Mary, Linda, Jan, Liz, Bob, Wyatt, Jim, Sara, Tammy Sophie, Paula, Blair, 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, Lelillah, Jennifer, Miriam, Karen, George, Eliza, Ray, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Steven, 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, JoAnne, John, Geradine, Thomas, Jeanne, Maxine, Ann, Sharon, Dennis, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Joanne, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Doris, Fran, Carol, Jimmy, Felicia, Susan, Anita, Christina, Dawn and Suzie.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Hope, JoAnn, Larry, Aaron, Hope, Tom, Rosa, June, Anna, Jean, Garrett, Dean, Ned, Stephen, Rachel, Lydia; Richard, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Carolyn, Suzanne, Tony, Erik, Bobby, Kay & Emma, Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Susan, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, 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, Drake, Emily, and David

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, USA; Lt. Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt. Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN. Lt. Col. Harry Hughes

✠ **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

PREBENDARY: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley

VICAR: The Rev. Michael Kerouac

ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric

DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Happy Riley
(410- 252-8674)

WEDDING CO-ORDINATORS: Happy Riley (410-252-8674)
Martha Miller (410-321-9038)

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 THE Third Sunday after
Trinity and Saint Alban**

O LORD, we beseech thee mercifully to hear us; and grant that we, to whom thou hast given an hearty desire to pray, may, by thy mighty aid, be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Book of Common Prayer, Page 192

ALMIGHTY God, by whose grace and power thy holy martyr Alban triumphed over suffering and was faithful even unto death: Grant to us, who now remember him with thanksgiving, to be so faithful in our witness to thee in this world, that we may receive with him the crown of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, on God, for ever and ever.

AMEN

Return Service Requested

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