

St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXIV, Number 39

Edited by Don Ruthig

October 8th, 2013

FROM THE RECTOR

Move your lips and help save the culture

A FAMOUS English man of letters, reduced by the expense of his vices to writing for a popular tabloid, used to refer disparagingly to his readers as "people who move their lips when they read."

The implication, of course, was that folks who sound out the words they are reading are somehow less intelligent than those who don't, and are thus unable to appreciate truly great prose.

Actually, this doesn't necessarily follow. Indeed, in the not too distant past, in fact, everybody who could read moved their lips as they did so. And they didn't merely move their lips, they actually read right out loud -- even when they were all alone and the only ones to hear what was being read.

This wasn't simply a habit of the folks Karl Marx dubbed the "*lumpen proletariat*." Everybody did it, and not just real oldies like The Venerable Bede and Geoffrey Chaucer -- or even middling oldies like Thomas Cranmer, Sir Thomas Moore, Ben Johnson and William Shakespeare.

The fact of the matter is that the practice went on into the 19th and early 20th Century. Herman Melville, William Wordsworth, Emily Dickinson and Charles Dickens and even modernists like Rudyard Kipling -- all of them moved their lips as they read.

Such observations might sound a trifle eccentric. After all here in America, we are plain-spoken people. But the truth of the matter is that being plain spoken doesn't necessarily mean that one speaks plainly. Quite the contrary, in fact.

Our television sets provide object lessons in this on a daily basis. Next time you watch a TV interview count the "ums" and "ahs", "likes" and "sort ofs" the interviewee utters. Then try to recall how much of the message they were trying to get across was actually expressed in their own words and how much of it you deduced or extrapolated. It is a rather depressing exercise for it graphically illustrates how inarticulate we, as a nation, have become.

The fact that President Obama is generally considered to be one of the nation's most eloquent public speakers is another example of our declining articulacy. It is not that he is a bad speaker, far from it. He is certainly among the best we have. But neither he nor any of his contemporaries are able to approach the economical elegance, say, of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

William Shakespeare had barely a Sixth Grade education. He wrote not for the gentry and intellectuals, but for the scum of the earth -- the seething, swearing mob who would as cheerfully watch a bear baited in Southwark or a traitor hung, drawn and quartered at Tower Hill.

The frightening thing about this is that, back then, the scum of the earth understood every word Shakespeare wrote, yet today he confounds and flummoxes most of the English majors at our great universities.

And this isn't because the words have changed in meaning since Shakespeare's day, Ninety eight percent of them have precisely the same meaning as they had in the 16th Century. Today's English majors fail to understand Will Shakespeare because they lack the vocabulary to do so.

This state of affairs cannot be explained by a lack of investment in education, to one parent families, to something in the water, or to anything else that will cost vast sums of money to put right.

It has come to pass because we no longer move our lips when we read; because we no longer read out loud. And this, in turn, has come about because reading aloud is no longer a pleasure -- a primary source of recreation.

It was entirely to be expected, of course -- a natural by-product not of the radio and television age, but of the industrial revolution. From a business perspective, it simply isn't efficient to read aloud.

It would take far too much time to read the operating instructions for a computer aloud. Reading invoices and bank statements out loud would be utterly ludicrous. Reading aloud was dying even in its Victorian heyday. Radio gave it a new, albeit tenuous, lease on life, before television arrived to bump it off completely.

Calendar of Events

Weekly Activities at St Stephens

Tuesdays, 7.00 AM: Bible Study at the Nautilus Diner
Thursdays, 10.00 AM: Knitting Circle meets in Quimby Hall
Wednesdays, 6.30 PM: Bridge Group meets in Quimby Hall
Fridays, 10.30 AM: Bible Study in the Cadwalader Room

Special Events

Tuesday, October 8th, 7.00 PM. Parish Life Meeting, Quimby Hall
Saturday, October 12th, 3.00 PM. The Order of Confirmation.
Sunday, October 13th, 5.00 PM. Harvest Dinner in Quimby Hall
Wednesday, October 16th, 12.00 Noon. Ladies Who Lunch, Location to be announced.
Wednesday, October 16th, 7.00 PM. Vestry meets in the Cadwalader Room.
Saturday, December 7th, 9.00 AM. Cookie Walk, Quimby Hall

Necessity being the mother of invention, there are in the communications industry folks who would make a virtue of our linguistic decline -- contending that the computer is rendering the spoken word obsolete; that a picture is worth a thousand words. If that were so, we wouldn't have invented writing. If pictures were really worth a thousand words we would still be scrawling on the walls of caves. The average American's deteriorating command of the English language has been culturally devastating. For all intents and purposes, poetry is a dead art form, the preserve of a tiny, ever-decreasing coterie of *cognoscenti*.

Great 19th century writers like Melville, Dickens, Austen and the Brontes survive courtesy of Public Television. Even Hollywood's offerings have suffered. Just compare the scripts of "The Man Who Came to Dinner" with any modern comedy and The "I Love Lucy" Show with today's sit coms.

But if the price of linguistic decline has been high in the realms of education and entertainment, the cost in the spiritual sphere has been absolutely devastating: We are, in many respects, losing our ability to communicate with God.

It isn't that we no longer use old fashioned words like "thee" and "thou" and "wouldest" and "saith" (as in "thus saith the Lord) -- though such words have their uses in that they constantly remind us of the "otherness" of God.

The real problem is that our increasing disregard for the language we speak makes it difficult for us marshal our thoughts about Him and the sort of relationship we ought to have with Him.

Our modern prayers all too frequently reflect this. At best, they are unmemorable -- hardly the sort of thing that sustains soldiers in battle. At worst, they are little better than shopping lists. Yet back in the days when people moved their lips as they read, it was by no means unusual for ordinary people to compose prayers to God.

The key to regaining our lost eloquence is to practice reading aloud. And one of the few remaining places where you can move your lips as you read is a traditional Anglican Church. Indeed, as an added bonus to helping to save the culture, you'll be worshipping God. **GPH***

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Join us for a Harvest Dinner

ST. STEPHEN'S will be celebrating Harvest Sunday and the visit of Bishop John Vaughan on October 13th with a special Harvest Dinner in Quimby Hall at 5.00 pm. You are all invited to join us. Admission is free, but there will be a basket for a goodwill offering.

In the spirit of Harvest Sunday the sanctuary will be decorated for the morning worship services to reflect God's bounty to us.

If you would like to join in the decoration of the sanctuary join us on Saturday, October 12th at 9.00 AM. Donations of harvest fruits,

Harvest Dinner - Sunday, October 13th at 5.00 PM. Join Us!

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

October 13th, 2013

8.00 AM & 9.15 AM COMMUNION

For the Epistle: Ephesians 5:15-21

The Gospel: St. Matthew 22:1-14

11.15 AM SUNG MATTINS

The Psalter: Psalm 107:1-9, 33-43

The First Lesson: Jeremiah 2:1-9, 13

The Second Lesson: St. Matthew 22:1-14

vegetables and gourds are requested and they may be dropped off at the church on Friday, or brought with you on Saturday morning.

FROM THE EDITOR

Help us with our prayer list

Our prayer list, sadly, has gotten horribly out of date. We suspect that many of the people on the list have, through God's grace, recovered and are no longer in need of our special prayers.

We'll be "resetting" the list at the beginning of November to reflect those who we know would like our continued prayer for their recovery, light, strength or guidance.

We certainly don't want to take anyone off the list who still wants our prayerful support, so we ask that you will please convey to us your ongoing prayer requests by filling in the prayer requests found on the church pews, sending an email to Newsletter@ststeve.com, or by calling our Director of Pastoral Care, Happy Riley, in 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: Fr. Guy*, Joshua, Aida, Cherry, Susan, Kathleen, David, Ellen, Mimi, Val, Stacy, Dino, Michael, Finton, Morris, Charles, Dawn, Betty Jean, Elliot, Sharon, Paul, Andy, Michael, Rosina, Diane, John, David, Richard, Bill, Leo, Riley, Mary-Ann, Linda Lou, Cynthia, Nancy, Judith, Deborah, Dorothy, Thelma, Mary, Linda, Jan, Liz, Bob, Wyatt, Jim, Tammy Sophie, Paula, Blair, Heather, Laurie, Lynn, Katherine, Hindra, Ravi, Elizabeth, Brian, Tracey, Edithann, Jay, Perry, Amelia, Shirley, Adrian, Kimberly, 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, John, Randy, James, Sarah, 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, Thomas, Jeanne, Maxine, Ann, Sharon, Dennis, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Joanne, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Doris, Fran, Carol, Jimmy, Felicia, Susan, Christina, Dawn, Shirley, Daniel and Suzie.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Connie, JoAnn, Larry, Aaron, Hope, Bob, Paige, 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, Daniel, David, Steve, and Ruth.

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, Ian Cadwalader serving in Afghanistan.

✠ St Stephen's Anglican Church ✠

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Web Address: ststeve.com

RECTOR: The Rev. Canon Guy P. Hawtin
PREBENDARY: The Rev. Canon Rhae E. Kelley
VICAR: The Venerable 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.

COLLECT FOR THE Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity and William Tyndale

O GOD, foreasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Chris our Lord.

AMEN

Book of Common Prayer, Page 215

Almighty God, who didst plant in the heart of thy servant William Tyndale a consuming passion to bring the Scriptures to people in their native tongue, and didst endow him with the gift of powerful and graceful expression and with strength to persevere against all obstacles: Reveal to us, we pray thee, thy saving Word, as we read and study the Scriptures, and hear them calling us to repentance and life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

AMEN

Return Service Requested

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