

St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXV, Number 23

Edited by Don Ruthig

June 17th, 2014

FROM THE RECTOR

The high price of PC

IN YET ANOTHER effort to eliminate Christian opinion from public discourse, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union recently asserted that the freedom of religion is merely "an American value" – and, moreover, a value in conflict with the newly discovered "right not to be offended."

It is, in fact, nothing of the kind. The freedom of religion is one of the most important cornerstones of our constitutional rights.

As such, it is enshrined in the First Amendment, alongside, and inseparable from, those other fundamental God-given rights – the freedom of expression and the freedom of association.

Indeed, asserting our freedom of religion to be a mere "value" might persuasively be described as a bald-faced effort by the ACLU to subvert the constitution of the United States.

What's more, as the ACLU cannot fail to understand, infringing Christians' freedom to express their views in the public square also sets a precedent for the subversion of other God-given rights. The blatant hypocrisy of the ACLU's position is evident in its support of pornographers. Granted pornographic sites are allegedly the most popular on the Internet, but there is still a substantial minority of people who are offended by it. Yet there is no sign of the ACLU fighting for their rights not to be offended.

The reason for this is that the only speech that needs the protection of the First Amendment is offensive speech – whether the offensiveness be political, sexual or religious.

Political correctness of the type championed by the ACLU is already infringing freedom of expression in other spheres – even our super hero comics. An artist, writing in *The Wall Street Journal* recently revealed that illustrators thought to hold conservative opinions are finding it hard to get work.

Actually, there is nothing new about this. The assault on the funny pages was well under way more than a decade ago. General Halftrack of the Beetle Bailey cartoon and the Near Sighted Mr. McGoo nearly fell victim to the forces of political correctness.

It was claimed Halftrack's geriatric libidinousness was insulting to women, while McGoo's myopic misperceptions were alleged to ridicule the short-sighted.

On the basis of such logic, folks with pronounced over bites should by rights be fighting to ban Bugs Bunny, while folks of less than average stature should be protesting Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Like the ACLU in the matter of religion, the PC fanatics who campaigned against Halftrack and Mr. McGoo were guilty of humbug and hypocrisy.

Halftrack, in fact, satirizes elderly men who lust after young ladies, and McGoo parodies not short-sightedness, but our all-too-human refusal to accept things as they really are.

If anyone has a right to be offended by them it is lustful seniors and wishful thinkers.

The bizarre notions of the humorless puritans who seek to impose political correctness on the rest of us would be quite funny if they didn't have such serious consequences.

Many of Russia's most serious current problems, for example, are the legacy of more than 70 years of political correctness.

In order to uphold false but politically correct Marxist theory, Soviet history was so extensively and systematically falsified history, it is still difficult to sift fact from fiction. Even photographic records have been altered.

Nobody knows, for instance, how many died in the gulag. The official number used to be 20 million. But today the figure is thought to be 40 million and possibly even 60 million. Thanks to political correctness we shall never know for sure the true death toll.

Researching the history of the Soviet economy is similarly difficult. The falsifications extend from the secret returns made by government ministries to the production returns filed by factory foremen.

Even crime statistics were falsified in order to maintain the fiction that there was no serious crime in the Soviet paradise.

Calendar of Events

Weekly Activities at St Stephen's

- Mondays, 6.30 PM:** Bridge Club meets in Quimby Hall
Tuesdays, 7.00 AM: Breakfast Fellowship at the Nautilus Diner
Thursdays, 10.00 AM: Knitting Circle meets in Quimby Hall
Fridays, 10.30 AM: Bible Study in the Cadwalader Room

Special Events

- Wednesday, June 18th, 12.00 Noon:** The Ladies Who Lunch at the Valley Inn.
Wednesday, June 18th: Silly Summer Suppers begin in Quimby Hall
Wednesday, June 18th, 7.00 PM: Vestry meets in the Cadwalader Room
Monday, June 23rd - Friday, June 27th, 9.00 AM - 12.00 Noon: Vacation Bible School

Today, the mobsters and mafiosi who flourished in the Soviet era are still destabilizing Russia economically and socially. Even more worrisome, their arms-trafficking threatens the stability of the entire world.

Thanks to our current obsession with political correctness, a similarly dangerous – albeit slightly more subtle – falsification of the past is under way in the U.S.

In the name of political correctness, the pivotal role played by Christianity in forging the ethos of the United States and in framing its constitution and system of government is being suppressed.

Instead, our children are taught that the nation was founded by skeptics so concerned about the subversive nature of Christianity they tried to shelter government from its influence.

Proponents of political correctness claim they are trying, among other things, to make non-Western immigrants and non-Christians feel comfortable. But they ignore a crucial fact: Non-Christians immigrants flock here to experience the freedoms our devoutly Christian founding fathers bequeathed us.

Far from making them feel comfortable, lies told in the name of political correctness threaten to rob them of the very freedoms they cherish. **GPH**✘

There's a down side to prophetic parsons

ONE OF THE most useful gifts for a parson to be given would be that of prophecy. It seems a great pity – at least on the surface of things – that God has been so generous in this regard to racing tipsters and the like, and so sparing with it as far as his clergy is concerned.

After all, if we had the gift of prophecy, we would know when people fell ill and when they had urgent spiritual problems that needed attention. We would know when they felt upset about something we'd done – or left undone – and needed to chat with us about it.

It would also enable us to forecast our own personal problems – you know the sort of thing: broken down cars, illnesses, the blues, letters of admonition from superiors – so that we could deal with them before they arose and distracted us from our duties.

On mature reflection, however, I am sure God is quite right to withhold the gift of prophecy from the vast majority of the parochial clergy. There is a very big downside to it, you see.

Just imagine the scandal that would ensue if word got around that if, after services, one asked the rector nicely, he'd give you the winner of the Belmont Stakes. Think of the appalling temptation to use such a gift for fund raising!

Our inability to prophesy, of course, is why we don't know when you are ill or have spiritual problems until you tell us.

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

June 22nd, 2014

8.00 AM & 9.15 AM HOLY COMMUNION

The Epistle: I St. John 4:7-21

The Gospel: St. Luke 16:19-31

11.00 AM SUNG MORNING PRAYER

The Psalter: 75

The First Lesson: Jeremiah 23:23-32

The Second Lesson: St. Luke 16:19-31

It is why we don't know you are upset with us until you lift the phone or drop by the office. And, of course, it is why we sometimes get distracted with our own cares and worries.

Granted, it's a nuisance not to have a prophetic parson, but, believe me, you really wouldn't like it if you had one. **GPH**

FROM DIANE NOVICKI

Noah's Ark Vacation Bible School

ST. STEPHEN'S will be having Vacation Bible School beginning on Monday, June 23rd and continuing through Friday, June 27th, from 9.00 AM - 12.00 Noon.

There will be a modest \$20 fee to cover snacks, crafts and supplies. For additional siblings the fee is \$15 each.

Please call the church office, 410-560-6776, with your name and address so that we may send registration forms to you. The

forms, along with the fee, are to be brought with you on the first day of VBS.

Confirmation Classes to begin

In anticipation of the upcoming visit of Bishop John Vaughan in September, confirmation classes will begin shortly. For further information or to sign up for these classes please call Brock Johnson at 410-825-8007.

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

Plan to join us on June 18th

THIS month the Ladies Who Lunch will be meeting at 12.00 Noon at newly reopened Valley Inn, on Wednesday, June 18th. 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: Fr Mike, Fr Tim, Carolyn, Hilarie, Vivian, Jack, John, Rodney, Hamilton, Donald, Annie, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Fran, Tracey, Linda Lou, Edie, Adele, Baby Charlie, Angie, Oona, Cary, Janna, Martina, Leela, Bobby Sally, Isabelle, Julie, Ray, Courtney, Mary, Phyllis, Liz, Joe, Indra, Ally, Marjorie, Steve, Judy.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Ann, Lydia, Remi, Melba, Donna, Josh, Kim, Shane, Susan, Paula, Hannah.

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

✠ St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Web Address: **ststeve.com**

RECTOR: The Rev. Canon Guy P. Hawtin

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)

COLLECT FOR TRINITY SUNDAY AND SAINT BARNABAS

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity; We beseech thee that thou wouldest keep us stedfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end.

AMEN

O LORD God Almighty, who didst endue thy holy Apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost; Leave us not, we beseech thee, destitute of thy manifold gifts, nor yet of grace to use them alway to thy honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Book of Common Prayer Pages 186 and 240

Return Service Requested

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