

St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXV, Number 36

September 16th, 2014

FROM THE RECTOR

In the beginning, or how we came to Baltimore

TRUTH to tell, we arrived at St. Stephen's quite by accident. Indeed, we first visited the parish in 1988 when I served as a "supply priest," on a spur of the moment request from Bishop Albion Knight, then its Episcopal overseer.

Bishop Knight was the executive director of the now defunct Church Information Center, based in Towson. We had been in telephone contact on Center business for a couple of years, and had vaguely agreed to meet if ever I visited the Baltimore-Washington area.

It seemed unlikely to happen as I was serving as interim rector of a parish in Mystic, Connecticut, a long and nail-biting haul on I-95 from Baltimore. But, eventually, I had a free weekend and arranged to drop by the Information Center on the Saturday morning.

I had no sooner walked into his office than the bishop said: "Naturally, you'll want to go to church on Sunday. Why don't you take services at this little parish we have here in Baltimore? It's called St. Stephen's Traditional Episcopal Church, and it shares a rented building on Walker Avenue with a Korean congregation."

One doesn't lightly say "no" to bishops. Thus on Sunday morning my family and I found ourselves in an unprepossessing former Baptist Church, teeth chattering thanks to the total failure of its ancient central heating system.

The parish's founders were a hardy lot. Not surprising really, since a fair number of them had survived Omaha Beach on June 6th, 1944. Wrapped in coats and scarves, they sang the hymns lustily, their steaming breath rising like incense in the freezing air.

The church might have been frozen, but the welcome was warm. So naturally enough, we returned to visit the parish on the three or four occasions we needed to visit Washington – not only conducting services, but also visiting the sick.

It was, I guess, a year or so after that first visit I found myself at church conference in Florida in the company of Bill Downey, then St. Stephen's senior warden, and his wife Harriet. Ever hospitable, they invited me to their hotel room for cocktails.

Bill poured the three of us a healthy measure of *Early Times* bourbon, his favorite "sipping whiskey," and directly got down to business.

"Father," he said, "Would you by any chance consider a call to be rector of St. Stephen's?"

There is a rather vulgar expression the British use to describe the absolute and ultimate degree of shock: "gob-smacked." My apologies for employing it, but it precisely conveys my utter amazement at the effrontery of the offer.

Here was a small parish with no church building of its own, worshipping in what might charitably be described as an ecclesiastical slum, presumably pressed for money, proposing to take on the expense of a priest with a young family.

"Bill," I said, "I very fond of all of you. You are a wonderful bunch of people. But I can't believe you can afford to support a full-time priest."

"I think we can," said Bill, "Promise me you at least think about it."

I gave him my word that I would pray about it, but left him in no doubt I thought it would impose too great a financial on a small and struggling congregation.

So pray I did – hard and constantly. And the curious thing is that I formed a distinct impression that God was telling me I should accept a call from the folks at St. Stephen's.

I found this very hard to believe, not least because a few weeks earlier I had received a call from a large downtown congregation

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, September 17th, 12.00 Noon: The Ladies Who Lunch at Fazzini's.

Wednesday, September 17th, 7.00 PM: Vestry meets in the Cadwalader Room.

Saturday, September 20th, 3.00 PM: Service of Rededication

Saturday, September 20th, 5.00 PM: Parish Picnic

Sunday, September 21st, 10.00 AM: Combined 9.15 AM and 11.00 AM Services (8.00 AM service unchanged). Service of Confirmation

Sunday, September 21st, 3.00 PM: Service of Ordination with reception to follow

in a major mid-western city – a congregation with a large and beautiful church and a healthy bank balance.

"Lord, you can't be serious about me to going to Baltimore, can you?" I asked. But, increasingly, the conviction grew that God was pointing me in the direction of St. Stephen's. Yet still I dragged my feet. It simply didn't make financial sense.

The Lord, of course, doesn't take "no" for an answer. And in the midst of the negotiations with the mid-western vestry we hit an impasse: The Vestry was adamantly opposed to providing health insurance for us.

They were determined that Charlotte – then a stay-at-home mother – should get a job that provided health coverage for the family. There was no economic reason for their intransigence. The parish could well have afforded to provide it. The vestry, however, simply didn't want to do so.

It seemed to me that if the parish didn't care about their clergy – whose salaries certainly do not enrich them beyond their dreams of avarice – sufficiently to provide them with something as basic as health insurance, they obviously didn't care about whether we came or went.

At the very time I was mulling over this revelation, Bill Downey called.

"Why don't you come down and meet our vestry here in Baltimore?" he asked, "They want to talk to you about joining us."

Bill was one of those people who it is impossible to say no to -- kindly, gentlemanly and unfeigningly affable. Thus we found ourselves in our ancient Cadillac heading south.

When met at Tom Cadwalader's elegant house in Roland Park, where his wife Phyllis, the most gracious of hostesses, served us tea. The vestrymen – they were as I recall all males – laid out their plans. They seemed quite improbable to me, but they were certainly an enthusiastic bunch.

Later in our hotel room, I asked Charlotte what she thought of it all.

"They certainly seem to want us," she said, cautiously.

"I know," I replied, "But I can't figure out how 40 or 50 people can afford it."

"So you are going to turn them down," Charlotte asked.

"It would be the sensible thing to do," I replied, "But God seems to be telling us to go to Baltimore."

"Thank heavens for that," said Charlotte, tartly. "That settles it then."

And the rest, as they say, is history. **GPH**✘

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

September 21st, 2014

8.00 AM HOLY COMMUNION

The Epistle: Galatians 5:16-24

The Gospel: St. Luke 17:11-19

10.00 AM SERVICE OF CONFIRMATION

The Epistle: Galatians 5:16-24

The Gospel: St. Luke 17:11-19

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

**Plan to join us on
September 17th**

THIS month the Ladies Who Lunch will be meeting at 12.00 Noon at Fazzini's Taverna, 9811 York Road, Cockeysville, on Wednesday, September 17th. Why not join us for a convivial get-together over a delicious meal? Good food and good fellowship -- what more could you want? As Joyce Perlberg will be away, please call Rosa Halbert at 410-825-1592 to make your reservation.

Come to the Annual Picnic

THE Annual Parish Picnic will be held on Saturday, September 20th, at 5.00 PM following the Service of Rededication. Please plan to join us at 3.00 PM for this special service and stay afterwards for fellowship and food on the church lawn.

The Parish Life Committee will provide the hamburgers, hotdogs, beer, and soda. Families with last names from A through M should bring a salad or side dish, families with last names from N through Z should bring a dessert.

✠ 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, 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, David, Wendy, John, Joy, Walt, Tina, Irma, Nina.

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

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

FOR REPOSE OF THE SOUL: Susan

✠ St Stephen's Anglican Church ✠

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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*)

11.00 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 THIRTEENTH
SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY and the
EMBER DAYS**

ALMIGHTY and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

O ALMIGHTY God, who hast committed to the hands of men the ministry of reconciliation; We humbly beseech thee, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, to put it into the hearts of many to offer themselves for this ministry; that thereby mankind may be drawn to thy blessed kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Book of Common Prayer Pages 207 and 260

Return Service Requested

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