

Saint Stephen's News

SAINT STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XXV, Number 46

Now in our Twentieth Anniversary Year!

25 November 2014

FROM THE RECTOR

Let's all sing: 'Sit down, O persons of God'

Tragedy, they say, usually repeats itself as farce—an observation that might well be made about the political correctness that permeates our mainline churches.

After all, the vision of well-fed, pompous prelates doing the sort of things required by cutting edge liturgists—liturgical dance immediately springs to mind—is really quite shriekingly funny.

And it is by no means solely the liturgy that is affected. Church music has also fallen foul of the language police.

Hymns, for instance, are no longer called hymns in our more fashionable churches. These days they are known as 'Songs of Praise'. A friend of mine was once naïve enough to ask why.

'Hymn is a sexist word,' he was told.

'But,' protested my friend, 'the word hymn is derived from the Greek for song. It has nothing to do with the battle of the sexes.'

'That doesn't matter. It sounds sexist,' was the reply.

If that strikes you as weird, think of the great old hymns that have been thrown out or bowdlerised for no less bizarre reasons.

'Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!' is out because it discriminates against paraplegics. 'O for a thousand tongues to sing' is out because it discriminates against folks who can't speak.

'Onward Christian soldiers' is out because it is militaristic. 'Soldiers of Christ, arise' is out on grounds of both militarism and discrimination against the 'differently abled'.

The indignities inflicted on time-hallowed hymns are by no means restricted to outright proscription.

We have for many years celebrated Holy Communion in a retirement community where the Presbyterian Church USA hymnal is in use, and it's our usual practice to ask the worshipers what hymns they would like to sing.

'Do you want them in Portuguese, Korean or Spanish?' some wit invariably asks.

The hymnal, I should emphasise, is not a 'multilingual' book, it intended for English-speaking congregations and the foreign language hymns are transcribed phonetically.

It is difficult to grasp the purpose of inviting parishioners to massacre hymns in unknown tongues when they are perfectly familiar with the words in English. It is, I suppose, a genuflection to the modern fad of 'multiculturalism'.

Yet even in the English versions of familiar favourites cannot be trusted. The language, for instance, is frequently expurgated to eliminate masculine nouns and pronouns. How about 'Faith of our parents' or 'Sit down, O persons of God'?

My mother-in-law was far from old fashioned and had little time for pointless sentimental humbug about the 'good old days'. Many of those old days weren't so very good, she pointed out.

That stipulated, she often told us how much she appreciated using the 1940 Hymnal when she visited us here in Baltimore. She enjoyed the old hymnal because it contains much of the great church music she had known and loved all her life, but had been abandoned by her own parish.

No less important, she enjoyed it because of the profundity of the words set to that music. Much it is not merely poetry of a very high order, but is also sublime in its theological expression.

Her own church had adopted a book of praise songs of a type that has become increasingly fashionable—and not just with younger congregations. She found the words and the sentiments they express very much less than inspiring.

The 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. 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: Carolyn, Hilarie, Vivian, Jack, John, Rodney, Donald, Annie, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Fran, Tracey, Linda Lou, Edie, Adele, Baby Charlie, 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, Nina, James, Nancy.

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

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

A retired Methodist organist was less polite. 'We call those songs Seven Eleven music,' she sniffed. 'They consist of the same seven words repeated eleven times.'

Back in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when it was still possible to giggle smugly about such philistinism, a friend and I worked spasmodically on a parody that we dubbed 'The Monosyllabic Liturgy.'

It was, I guess, quite sophomoric, but it was fun while it lasted.

We experimented with new responses to the Salutation 'The Lord be with you' and replaced 'And also with you' with 'Likewise, I'm sure.'

We also toyed with new salutations such as 'Get with it', the response to which was 'Right on!'

As this fell out of linguistic fashion, we had to replace it with 'Stay cool, dudes', the response to which was 'Awesome.' (That's the trouble with these faddish hymns and liturgies. They get dated so quickly.)

We got our comeuppance, however, when my friend was visited by an acquaintance from seminary, at the time a fast rising star in one of the mainline churches.

His visitor casually picked up 'The Monosyllabic Liturgy' my friend had carelessly left lying around in his study. After flipping through the pages, he remarked: 'You know this very interesting. We really ought to try it. Could you let me have a copy?'

My friend muttered something about it not being finished yet and, after his visitor had departed, telephoned me in a state of panic.

'We're going to have to get rid of it,' he told me, 'I'm going to burn it. We're just going to have to accept the fact that some things are utterly beyond parody.' GPH✂

Cookie Walk at a Glance

Now!

- Now accepting donations for gift and children's tables
- Bidding is now open for the Knitters' Silent Auction
- Volunteer sign-up sheets are posted — *Please sign up!*

Saturday, 29 November—Wednesday, 3 December

- Bring cut greens for wreaths and centrepieces

Sunday, 30 November—Friday, 5 December

- Drop off cookies

Tuesday, 2 December (10 AM & 5 PM)

and Wednesday, 3 December (10 AM)

- Volunteers needed to make wreaths and centrepieces

Thursday, 4 December—Friday, 5 December

- Volunteers needed to set up and decorate

SATURDAY, 6 DECEMBER (8 AM–3 PM): *All hands on deck!*

- Volunteers needed for serving and cleanup

Sunday, 7 December

- Silent auction bidding ends following 11 AM service

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

30 November 2014

8.00 & 9.15 AM EUCHARISTS

The Epistle. Romans 13:8–14

The Gospel. St Matthew 21:1–13

11.00 AM MATTINS

The Psalter. Psalm 46

The First Lesson. Isaiah 28:14–22

The Second Lesson. St Matthew 21:1–13

THE COLLECTS *for* THE SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT & SAINT CECELIA

STIR up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer, p. 225

O BLESSED Spirit of God, by whose aid and grace thy servants skilled in music and holy song have beautified the worship of thine house: Unite us, we pray thee, in the concert of thy praises with the heavenly choirs, that rest not day and night from thy perfect service; to whom with the Father and the Son, the one eternal God, be dominion and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Knitters' Silent Auction open for bids

The knitters have been at it again! Now in its fourth year, the knitters' Silent Auction is open for bids with another phenomenal array of knitted items to be auctioned off in conjunction with the Cookie Walk.

Their impressive display is located in the hallway outside Quimby Hall. Come and check it out. You won't find affordable hand-knitted items of this quality anywhere — and just in time for holiday giving.

To bid simply put your name, phone number, and bid on the sheet accompanying each item. Check back often to see if you've been outbid on something you really, really, really want! Bidding ends after the 11AM service on Sunday, 7 December.

Bid early and bid often!

Saint Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093

Office: 410 560 6776 · Rectory: 410 665 1278

Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Ven. Canon Guy P. Hawtin, *Rector*

The Ven. Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki, *Associate Rectors*

The Rev. Mr M. Wiley Hawks, *Deacon* · Adric, *Magister Chori*

Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 AM: Said Eucharist

9.15 AM: Choral Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11 AM: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6 PM: Choral Evensong (as announced: evensong.ststeve.com)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6 PM: Evening Prayer

Friday 12 NOON: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5 PM: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Mondays, 6.30 PM: Bridge Club

Tuesdays, 7 PM: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursdays, 10 AM: Knitting Circle

Fridays, 10.30 AM: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Thursday, 27 November, 10 AM: Thanksgiving Day Service

Saturday, 6 December, 9 AM: The Cookie Walk

Wednesday, 17 December, 12 NOON

The Ladies Who Lunch — Christmas Lunch at Bluestone
'Significant Others' are invited!

Thursday, 18 December, 2 PM: Afternoon Tea

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Timonium, MD 21093

11856 Mays Chapel Road

Saint Stephen's Anglican Church

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