

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XXVI, Number 20

A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

26 May 2015

FROM THE RECTOR

Loose lips sink the English language

French intellectuals have long been plagued by fears that foreign (for which read American) influences are radically and irrevocably reshaping the French language and culture.

Judging by growing French predilections for spending *'le weekend par le mer'* where they munch on *'les hotdogs et les hamburgers'*, their fears are far from baseless.

Frankly, I doubt that escargots, cassoulet de Toulouse and tripes a la mode will ever be muscled off the menu by the Big Mac. A leisurely meal prepared by a good French cook is one of the world's great pleasures.

But when it comes to fast food, America is unsurpassed. And like or not, it is fact of life the world over that our 21st century work habits means that fast food has become a staple of our existence.

America's dominance of this culinary form was explained to me some 30 years ago . . . and by a fastidious Parisian friend no less.

'Do you know the difference between American fast food and fast food everywhere else in the world?' he asked rhetorically.

'American fast food tastes good,' he went on to declare.

Language works the same way as food. Many American expressions – 'weekend', rock & roll', 'okay', and 'cool', for example – hit the nail on the head in a uniquely succinct way, which explains why they have been so readily incorporated into other languages. It's a natural enrichment process. Languages have always grown this way.

Indeed, with 'small' languages, such as those of Scandinavia, communication on a wide variety of subjects would be difficult were it not for the use of large number words borrowed from other languages, especially German, French and English.

Even in the case of languages like English that have positively enormous vocabularies words are frequently borrowed from other tongues – sometimes with decidedly humorous results.

Here in America, for example, the German superlative *ausgezeichnet* meaning 'excellent' (literally 'written out') has been transmogrified into the expression 'outtasight' probably by GIs stationed in Germany after World War II. Mistranslation it might be, but it perfectly reflects the meaning of *ausgezeichnet*.

By contrast, it is utterly irritating about to find so many people these days labouring under the misapprehension that two perfectly good English words 'herb' and 'homage' have been borrowed from the French. At least I assume they do so because so many folk pronounce them with a dropped aspirate – 'erb and 'omaaarge. Yuck!

'Herb' and 'homage' have been part of the English language since it came into being in the Middle Ages. 'Herb' is pronounced the way it is spelled. 'Homage' more or less rhymes with 'cabbage'.

Sure, the two words originally arrived in England with the Normans, but we don't pronounce other words derived from the Normans – 'pork' and 'beef' for instance – with a French accent, so why do so with 'herb' and 'homage'? It's pure affectation. Drop it!

That said, there's no reason to get 'uptight' [a truly wonderful American expression rapidly spreading to other tongues] about the incorporation of foreign words into our language. However another kind of invasion does, to my mind, give cause for concern.

It is the way in which our daily speech is being increasingly infected by print and broadcast media jargon. The appalling misuse of the word 'major' is a prime example.

The abuse of this unfortunate word has been introduced to our daily vocabulary by headline writers desperate to find a word with a smaller letter count than 'serious' and with greater *gravitas* than 'big'. All literate people should eschew it.

The reason for this unhappy development is, I suspect, that the news media are for many our primary contact with the written and spoken word. Not surprisingly, we unconsciously adopt their speech and literary patterns.

As a consequence, utilitarianism in speech and writing has come to be regarded as a virtue. Adjectives and adverbs are brutally excised on grounds of redundancy, figures of speech are condemned as clichés, and subtleties of language are dismissed as circumlocutions.

This helps explain the tedium of so many movies and television shows, the dismal state of poetry as art form, the excruciating dullness of pot-boiler novels, the abysmal level of debate in our legislative chambers and the banality of most modern liturgy.

This is not to say that well-written plays, books, movies, poetry and liturgy have disappeared altogether. They haven't. But they are certainly far more rare than in times past. And audiences for them are shrinking.

May be it's time we concentrated a fraction of the energy we devote to narrowing our beams to broadening to our spiritual and cultural horizons. For if trends continue, we'll eventually be reduced to communicating in grunts and wheezes! **GPH**

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, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: John ✕, Hilarie, Jack, Donald, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Edie, Cary, Judy, Julie, Phyllis, Steve, Wendy, Matthew, Adele, Starr, Helen, Emily, Kathleen, Marty, Don, Linda, Elizabeth, Mary Lou, Cathy, William, Dan, Lindsey, Shelby, Olan, Rob, Dick, Melissa, Ned, Paula, Sandra, Diane

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Susan, Scott, Charles, Vinnie, Doug, Rusty, Ian, Lydia

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

ON THE KALENDAR

St Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury

Augustine was the prior of a monastery in Rome when, in 595, Pope Gregory the Great sent him to Britain to Christianise one of the local kings. King Æthelberht of Kent was the target, probably because his Christian bride, Princess Bertha, daughter of Charibert I, King of Paris, was expected to encourage his conversion. Augustine was successful, founding a monastery outside the city walls of Canterbury (Æthelberht's main town), and establishing his episcopal see.

Augustine, whose feast day is 26 May, is generally considered the father of the English Church. But it should be noted that this is the *English* Church: Augustine was sent to convert the *Anglo-Saxons*. The Celts, the indigenous people who had been overrun by the Angles and the Saxons in the 5th century, had a well-established church, with their own traditions (such as a different calculation of the date of Easter, and being monastery-centred, rather than bishopric-centred). Augustine failed to bring the Celtic Church into line with Roman traditions, but he was generally successful in converting the local Anglo-Saxons. For example, he celebrated a mass baptism on Christmas Day in 597, at which thousands were baptized. (Sounds vaguely evangelical, doesn't it?). **PT**

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

Join the Ladies Who Lunch

Each month on the Third Wednesday, the Ladies Who Lunch meet at a select restaurant in the Cockeysville/Timonium/Towson area. Why not join us for a convivial get-together over a delicious meal? Good food and good fellowship – what more could you want? Please ring Joyce Perlberg on **410 252 2680** for more information.

FROM THE CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School: Savannah Safari

St Stephen's will be offering Vacation Bible School once again this summer for children ages 4 through 10. Vacation Bible School will take place from Monday, 22 June to Friday, 27 June from 9am–noon. This year's theme is 'Savannah Safari – Where Kids Discover How Love H.E.L.P.S. Others'. It is themed around life in an African village and is based on the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

There will be a modest \$20 fee to cover snacks, crafts and supplies. To process your child's registration, please telephone the church office on **410 560 6776** and speak to Happy Riley.

SAINT STEPHEN'S CHOIR ACADEMY



A fun and rewarding experience promoting artistic and intellectual development in a highly select team of boys

BENEFITS

- Gain a formal classical music education from an accomplished Peabody Conservatory graduate
- Develop discipline, social skills, and self-confidence
- Earn credentials which score high on high school & university applications, leading to scholarships
- Regularly perform alongside professional musicians

TUITION

- Full-scholarships and half-scholarships are available
- Choristers are paid stipends to foster a professional commitment to rehearsals and performances

Talented boys of all faiths are encouraged to apply.
To schedule an interview, please contact the Admissions Director, Mrs Cheryl Nickol: admissions@choiracademy.org • 410-329-6399

ChoirAcademy.org

St 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 am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)
Thursdays, 10 am: Knitting Circle
Fridays, 10.30 am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Sunday, 7 June, 6 pm:
Choral Evensong
Wednesday, 15 June, 12 noon:
The Ladies Who Lunch
Thursday, 16 June, 2 pm:
Afternoon Tea

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church
11856 Mays Chapel Road
Timonium, MD 21093

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TIMONIUM MD
PERMIT NO. 181