

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

7 July 2015

FROM THE RECTOR

The changeable climate of climate change

A young woman buttonholed me at the market last week with a request to join her group to lobby the federal government to take more drastic action to combat climate change. She was a bit vague on how she believed the climate was changing, but she seemed to think global warming was the most likely probability.

I declined to sign up, not because I disbelieve in climate change. It has happened too often in the past for that. But what disturbed me was that it appeared that her group hadn't really bothered to consider the subject in any depth.

They had only investigated the possible downsides to climate change – the 'cons' of the issue, so to speak – and on this basis they had concluded that the sky is falling.

Yet there are 'pros' worth pondering – positive aspects to global warming that that they (and virtually everybody else advocating drastic measures to combat global warming) clearly haven't considered.

Not least, a modest increase in global temperatures – and a modest increase is what the most responsible global warming advocates are predicting – would make considerably more land suitable for farming, and would extend the growing seasons for much of the land already under cultivation.

In other words, global warming has the potential substantially to increase the world's food supply.

One can reasonably postulate the above on the basis of historical precedence. We are currently living in what might be – repeat might be – the tail end of the 'Mini Ice Age' that began in the late Middle Ages.

At that time global temperatures dropped sharply and the glaciers advanced greatly, rendering large areas of the earth virtually uninhabitable. Staple crops that been mainstays for a large proportion of the world's population failed, and it was a time of famine and widespread starvation.

For example, before the Mini Ice Age, the vast island called Greenland aptly reflected the name bestowed upon it by the Viking explorer Erik Thorvaldsson (better known by his nickname Erik the Red) in the latter quarter of the 10th Century.

Erik brought his and children from Norway to make their home on Greenland, and soon other Norsemen and the families arrived to settle the land. And, from around the year 1000 until the early 1400s, there flourished a vibrant Nordic civilisation – not just farms, hamlets, and rustic villages, but towns complete with churches, cathedrals and monasteries.

The Mini Ice Age brought this civilisation to an abrupt end. First, sharply falling temperatures made it impossible to grow the staples the population relied on – even the hardy grain, rye. Then rapidly advancing glaciers swallowed up villages, towns and farmland. Those members of the population who could not flee either starved to death or were slain by invading Eskimos.

Wide swathes of northern Europe, Asia and North America became uncultivable. The profundity of the change can be gauged from the name Leif Eriksson, Erik the Red's son, gave to what we now know as North America.

The Nordic Sagas indicate that Eriksson made landfall somewhere in northern Maine. They also record that he was so struck by the high sugar content of grapes he found there, he dubbed the new land he had discovered 'Wineland the Good'.

That Eriksson reported making 'good wine' from grapes grown in Maine is telling, but it should not entirely come as a shock. When the Romans arrived in Britain, wine grapes, for example, could be grown as far north as Scotland.

Moreover, until the coming of the Mini Ice Age, a number of English monasteries were noted for their wine making. True, wine is again being made in southern England, but with some difficulty and not in very large quantities.

Then there is the centuries-long search for the so-called 'North West Passage' – a sea route along the fringes of the Arctic which would permit merchant ships to trade with the Orient without the

necessity of rounding Cape Horn. Had the passage been discovered it would have cut thousands of miles and many months off a voyage to China.

Between the beginning of the 16th Century and the beginning of the 20th, the search for the North West Passage cost the lives of many an intrepid sea captain and his crew, but the elusive sea route was never discovered – leading many to claim it was simply a myth.

But the reason the explorers risked their lives and the lives of their men to find it was that, thanks to the Sagas, it was widely known once to have existed. The reason that it could not be found is that the Mini Ice Age had closed it down.

A question is thus worth asking: Why should current climatic conditions be considered 'normal'? Would not a modest degree of global warming simply return us to the 'normal' that pertained before the Mini Ice Age?

But, if the beneficial effects of a modest degree of global warming are to be cautiously welcomed, what if the climatic opposite is in the offing? What if we are standing on the threshold of a new Ice Age, mini or macro?

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: Hilarie, Jack, Donald, Evelyn, Cal, Finton, Edie, Cary, Judy, Julie, Phyllis, Steve, Wendy, Matthew, Adele, Starr, Helen, Emily, Marty, Don, Linda, Elizabeth, Cathy, William, Dan, Lindsey, Shelby, Rob, Dick, Melissa, Ned, Paula, Sandra, Diane, Hobie, Nathan, Francine, Susan, Joanne, Holly

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

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

Reportedly, the world has undergone no significant warming for almost two decades. This might well be considered worrisome because the Mini Ice Age was preceded by a period of warming similar to the one that has given birth to the current 'climate change' scare.

If that is true, the last thing we need to be doing is taking the sort of action currently being proposed at the international, intergovernmental conferences on climate change.

If I appear less than convinced by the party line on climate change, it is because I have been through more climate apocalypses than I care to remember.

First, the Nazis were plotting to change the course of the Gulf Stream and turn England and much of Canada into an iceberg. When the Nazis bit the dust, it was the Russians.

Then nuclear tests were claimed to be poisoning our milk with Strontium 90. When that threat evaporated, the tests were predicted to cause nuclear winter. This was followed by a global warming scare, as I recall, but then Mount St. Helens blew its top and we were back to nuclear winter once again.

In view of this less than stellar track record for climate change forecasting, forgive me if I am somewhat skeptical about the 'expert' predictions on this one.

It seems to me that too little thought and too much speculation prompted by folks with an agenda are deeply colouring the current 'climate change' debate. Surely it's high time that we dropped the epithets and scaremongering and got down to an honest conversation on the subject. **GPH***

FROM THE PARISH CHEFS

Silly Summer Suppers are in full swing

Each Wednesday at 6.30pm through September 9th the chefs of St Stephen's are serving the 2015 series of *Silly Summer Suppers*.

It's hard to think of a less appropriate name than 'Silly Summer Suppers' for these remarkable gastronomic events. The food is absolutely scrumptious – and there is plenty of it. Actually, the only thing silly about these suppers is the price – entrée, dessert and salad for just \$10. Soda costs a buck, and wine is \$3 per glass or \$5 for two.

And, by the way, if you are handy in the kitchen (or even if you are not) you are welcome to join our team of volunteer chefs. In fact, if you decide to do so, you'll be welcomed with open arms. When you come to think about it, cooking your way to heaven isn't such a bad idea.

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

The Ladies will Lunch on 15 July

This month the Ladies Who Lunch will meet at Bar Louie on Wednesday, 15 July at noon. Bar Louie is located at 118 Shawan Road in Hunt Valley. (Visit barlouie.com to view a menu.) 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** to make your reservation; she will need a final count by the 13th.

FROM PASTORAL CARE

Red Cross Blood Drive

The Red Cross is in desperate need of blood donations at this time of year, and your generous contribution of an arm- or legful could help save a life. The parish's next Red Cross blood drive will take place at St Stephen's on Tuesday, 21 July from 2.00–7.30pm. To schedule your exsanguination, please contact Happy Riley on **410 560 6776**.

FROM THE MUSIC OFFICE

Now hiring choirboys – apply today!

Saint Stephen's Choir Academy, the voice-training programme which provides the choristers for our parish choir, is looking for new recruits. If you know a family member, neighbour, or random kid on the street who enjoys singing, wishes to receive a *free* classical music education, and who might be interested in earning a stipend in the process, please contact the Admissions Director, Mrs Cheryl Nickol, on **410 329 6399** or at admissions@choiracademy.org

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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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

Wednesday, 15 July, 12 noon:
The Ladies Who Lunch meet at Bar Louie
Thursday, 16 July, 2 pm:
Afternoon Tea
Tuesday, 21 July, 2.00–7.30 pm:
Red Cross Blood Drive

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church
11856 Mays Chapel Road
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