

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XXVI, Number 33

A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

25 August 2015

FROM THE RECTOR

Remember to pray for your life – even if you are busy

People who have gotten out of the habit of saying their prayers frequently feel self-conscious and embarrassed about taking it up again. But it's vitally important to make the effort – and by no means solely for the sake of your spiritual health.

Scientific studies show that prayer is good for your physical health as well. Patients who are on prayer lists and are regularly prayed for tend to do very much better than those who are not.

Funnily, enough, it makes no difference whether or not the people doing the praying know the people they are praying for. The recovery rates improve all the same. In other words, don't assume that just because you don't happen to know the person for whom you are praying, God doesn't either.

The moral to the story is that even if you don't know some people named on our parish prayer list, don't omit them from your prayers. God knows them all, and your entreaties on their behalf will most certainly help.

Meanwhile, don't forget to pray for yourself. Even if you are so pressured you don't know what time of day it is. One of my favourite prayers was written by a man in just those circumstances. It was penned by a 17th Century English general as he was about to go into battle:

'O Lord, thou knowest how busy I shall be this day. If I forget thee, do not, thou, forget me. *AMEN.*'

Sundials: practical uses for lofty places

Our English forebears were practical people and their church buildings traditionally served secular ends as well as spiritual needs. Lofty spires, for example, have served to direct people heavenwards. The solid, foursquare towers that support the spires, however, were built with a rather more secular purpose in mind.

They served as places of shelter in times of war. When enemies came to rob and pillage, congregations simply made for the church and barricaded themselves in the tower. Similarly, church bells were used both as a call to worship in times of peace and a means of summoning help in times of war and civil emergencies.

In times of peace and tranquility, church towers continued to serve practical purposes. The time and the weather, for example, are age-old human preoccupations. Long before the advent of television and radio, both townspeople and country folk felt a need to keep a close eye on both, and, in the days before weathermen and wristwatches were invented, they usually looked towards the church towers for answers.

Church towers have been decorated with wind vanes and timepieces since the Dark Ages. In the 11th century churches were required by papal edict to display images of roosters on their towers or roof peaks. The purpose of this was to remind the people that St. Peter denied Christ thrice before the cock crowed twice.

The idea quickly spread to England, where it was adopted with enthusiasm, not for love of the papacy but because they discovered that a rooster fashioned out of wood or iron made an excellent wind vane.

This is why the English call a wind vane a 'weathercock' and their understandable obsession with the weather explains why England's ancient parish churches are decorated with a rooster wind vane rather than a cross.

Similarly, church towers were usually decorated with sundials. Often they were very elaborate affairs, embellished not only with gilded scrollwork, but also with proverbs and religious texts.

They were a favourite memorial gift among the local gentry. After all, people were constantly needed to know the time and, as a consequence, the name of the donor was constantly brought to mind.

The clergy favoured them because they provided the flocks with a perpetual sermon on the shortness of life and the need to repent before it was too late.

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, Paula, Sandra, Diane, Hobie, Nathan, Francine, Susan, Holly, Hayley, John, Nancy

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

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

Neither weathercocks nor sundials fared well in the Parliamentary Rebellion of the 17th century. The puritan soldiers used the weathercocks as targets for musket practice and all-too-frequently smashed elaborately decorated sundials for the same reason they smashed stained glass – claiming they fostered idolatry.

Many of the sundials that survived this ugly and barbarous period of English history were destroyed by the arrival of the church clock.

In the Middle Ages, only wealthy cathedrals and abbeys could afford clocks, but from the 17th century onwards, parish clocks increasingly displaced the sun dial.

The phenomenon added considerably to the sexton's chores because, unlike sundials, the clocks needed to be wound regularly

Even so, a number of fine sundials still occupy places of honour on church buildings. There is a breathtaking example at Hampton Court Palace and notable ones at Oxford, Cambridge and, of course, St Stephen's Church, Timonium. **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.

If you are handy in the kitchen (or even if you are not) you are welcome to join our team of volunteer chefs.

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

FROM THE TREASURER

Summer time and the Treasurer is uneasy

Summer time and the living is uneasy for the poor Treasurer. That's because folks go on vacation and forget that the church needs to keep its doors open when they are away.

Please, please remember the poor soul who is wrestling with the diminished summer cash flow. He would really appreciate it if you were able to keep up with your pledge before you go on vacation rather than when you get back. Before he took this job there were only a few silver threads among the gold. Thanks to years of struggling with the summer cash flow, like the fleece of Mary's little lamb his hair is white as snow. **WILLIAM HAWKINS**



St Stephen's Anglican Church

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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. M. Wiley Hawks, *Priest · 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)
Wednesdays, 6.30 pm: Silly Summer Suppers
Thursdays, 10 am: Knitting Circle
Fridays, 10.30 am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Sunday, 6 September, 6 pm
Parish Hymn Raffle
Wednesday, 16 September, 12 noon
The Ladies Who Lunch meet
Thursday, 17 September, 2 pm
Afternoon Tea
Saturday, 19 September, 6 pm
Parish Picnic and Auction

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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11856 Mays Chapel Road
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