

# St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH • TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XXVII, Number 9

*A parish in the classical Anglican tradition*

15 March 2016

## FROM THE RECTOR

### Let's all sing: 'Stay put, 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 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.

The indignities inflicted on time-hallowed hymns are by no means restricted to outright proscription. Language is frequently bowdlerised to eliminate masculine nouns and pronouns. How about 'Faith of our parents' or 'Stay put, O persons of God'?

Sometimes the effort to eliminate masculine pronouns produces liturgy that is not just clunky but downright comical. As a consequence, congregations end up talking to God as if he were a complete halfwit – as in 'O God, you take away the sins of the world'? I don't mean to sound patronising, but surely God doesn't really need to be reminded of that.

My late 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 said, 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, 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 sublime in its theological expression.

## 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, Cal, Phyllis, Edie, Bill, Terry, Helen, Jim, Adele, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Tom, Rosemary, Robert, David, Jan, Susie, Beth, Sophia, Bobby, Lee

**FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Stephen, Melba, Scott, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Ned, Cindy

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE:** Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; Lt Cdr Emma Hawkins, RN

Her own church had adopted one of the books of praise songs that have become increasingly fashionable – and not just with younger congregations. She found the words and the sentiments they express very much less than inspiring.

A retired church 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 rapidly fell out of linguistic fashion, we had to replace it with 'Stay cool, dudes', the response to which was 'Awesome.'

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

His visitor casually picked up 'The Monosyllabic Liturgy' my friend had 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**☒

## Easter Flowers

Here is the selection of beautiful spring flowers to decorate the church for Easter. Please make your choice and return this form with your check to the church office no later than **Wednesday, 23 March**. Flowers may be taken home after the 11am service on Easter Day.

(# of plants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Daffodils** (6" pot) @ \$10

\_\_\_\_\_ **Field Azaleas** @ \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hyacinths** (6" pot) @ \$10

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hydrangeas** (four plus blooms) @ \$20

\_\_\_\_\_ **Lilies** (small elite 6", 4-6 blooms) @ \$10

\_\_\_\_\_ **Tulips** (6" pot) @ \$10

**Your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is made...

(circle one): In Honour of · In Memory of · In Thanksgiving for

**Dedicatee:** \_\_\_\_\_

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

## The Ladies will lunch on the 16th

The Ladies Who Lunch will convene at the **Padonia Ale House** on Wednesday, 16 March at noon. The Ale House is located at the far end of the Padonia Shopping Centre at 61 East Padonia Rd in Timonium. Why not join them 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 14th.

THE LENTEN STUDY

## Lenten Study concludes on the 16th

This year’s Lenten Study has explored the relationship between the ancient English Church and English-speaking peoples.

The final instalment begins after Evening Prayer on Wednesday, 16 March, at 6.45pm. You needn’t have attended the previous sessions in order to drop in for the conclusion of the story.

As usual we will be offering you both food for both body and soul – not least a choice of hearty soups, beverages and the best bread in Baltimore. If you think that you’ll need more than that, just bring a sandwich.

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## St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

[www.ststeve.com](http://www.ststeve.com)

The Ven. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*

The Ven. Michael Kerouac, *Vicar* · The Rev. Michael Belt,

The Rev. John Novicki, The Rev. Robert Ludwig, *Associate Rectors*

The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, *Pastoral Care Chaplain*

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](http://evensong.ststeve.com)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6 pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5 pm: Family Eucharist

## Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

**Monday, 6.30 pm:** Bridge Club

**Tuesday, 7 am:** Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

**Thursday, 10 am:** Knitting Circle

**Friday, 10.30 am:** Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

**Wednesday, 16 March, 12 noon**

The Ladies Who Lunch meet at Padonia Ale House

**Wednesday, 16 March, 6.45 pm**

Lenten Study concludes

**Sunday, 20 March – Sunday, 27 March**

Holy Week and Easter

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church  
11856 Mays Chapel Road  
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