

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

12 April 2016

FROM THE RECTOR

It's time for out-of-touch Hollywood to heal itself

It's rather odd, when you come to think about it, that people will often complain about parsons who preach the word of God for more than 10 minutes at a stretch when they will cheerfully let Hollywood's self-styled solons preach to them for hours on end.

True, Hollywood's leading ladies are infinitely cuter than the average parson, but the fact of the matter is that God's ideas make a good deal more sense than the average sermon preached at the movies or on primetime TV.

The trouble with Hollywood is that many folks who work there seem to have major problems telling the difference between the real world and the world of make-believe.

After all, it is one of the few places on earth where terrorists aren't motivated by Islamic fundamentalism, but, rather, some imagined branch of Christianity, and where capitalism – the very system that enables them to express freely their looney notions – is unremittingly evil.

To illustrate how of out of touch with reality the members of Hollywood's elite are one need look not further than the notion they have long been propagating that it is a reasonable and responsible 'life style option' for women – young and not so young – to have babies out of wedlock.

To be sure, there are many single mothers (and fathers, for that matter) who are successfully raising children without a spouse. But, at the same time, there are many others who are making a terrible hash of it

Yet, even the very successful ones will usually agree that single parenting is not the best option.

In the real world, babies dirty their diapers, have colic, experience teething trouble, develop diaper rash, howl all night, reject their bottles, refuse to burp and contract all manner of frightening illnesses.

In the world of make-believe, of course, they do all these things, too. But in the world of make-believe, the baby and parent are following a script. Things turn out happily – or unhappily – in exactly the manner the scriptwriters dictate.

The real world, however, is by no means so tidy. In the real world, there is nobody to write the screenplay. People are obliged to speak their own lines. And if they're tempted to follow Hollywood's script, they are likely to end up in awful trouble – because the real world doesn't play by Hollywood's rules.

When things go wrong in the real world, they tend to stay wrong because there is no scriptwriter to tie up the loose ends and give the story a happy ending.

Wishing on a star works only in Tinsel Town. The real world works according to an older and entirely different maxim: 'If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.' In the real world, there is only one person who can play God – and that's God, himself. The devil may try to make you think otherwise, but he's lying.

This, perhaps, lies at the heart of the problem. Hollywood has treated producers, directors, scriptwriters and actors as gods for so long they have lost sight of the real one. If Hollywood truly wants to get back in touch with the real world, it needs to get back in touch with God.

As things stand, there is something decidedly bizarre about Hollywood and its media groupies presuming to advise folks who live in the real world how to live their lives.

A glance behind the tinsel curtain shows the reality of the lives of many denizens of Hollywood bears little resemblance to the screenplays they serve up on TV and in our movie houses.

Hollywood has been trying to follow its own script for best part of 70 years and the toll in wrecked and broken lives is quite incalculable. It's high time we said: 'Physician, heal thyself. **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: Hilarie, 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, Pam

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

Enough of the 'Great Unwashed'

Most 'Bible movies' are, with a few notable exceptions, sorry evangelists for the Christian faith. Those loosely based on the New Testament generally portray a fey, willowy, Anglo-Saxon Jesus wafting limpidly around an arid landscape, occasionally uttering 'sound bites' randomly culled from the Gospels.

The only redeeming aspect of this type of Bible movie is that they are sometimes good for a laugh. My favourite example of the genre is *The Robe* which features a muscle-bound Victor Mature rolling around in the sand of Hollywood's take on a Roman gladiatorial arena, wrestling a stuffed lion, fresh from the taxidermist's workshop.

Apparently, the movie's director originally planned to film Mature wrestling a real, live lion. 'There's no danger, Victor,' he reportedly assured the anxious star, 'His teeth and claws have been pulled.'

'Who wants to be gunned to death?' growled Mature.

Movies based on the Old Testament are usually even less true to the text, albeit rather more muscular than the New Testament variety. Sadly, what promised to be the most hilarious of all the Bible epics never got off the ground. Its working title was *Jesus Christ and the Twelve Thousand Apostles*.

The project was abandoned when the producer (the redoubtable Sam Goldwyn, I believe) was gently informed that there were only twelve Apostles. It seems he considered a mere twelve Apostles just a tad too modest for a big screen epic.

However, the recently released *Risen* is a movie that fails to fit this traditional mould. It is the story of a Roman army officer who has been ordered to search for Jesus' body, presumed stolen from the tomb by his disciples. It is well shot, well acted and entirely believable.

It is probably ungracious to cavil, but I do wish movie-makers would stop portraying Jesus and the Apostles as horny-handed sons of toil. Most of them were decidedly middle class.

Jesus' family worked in wood, one of the most expensive commodities in the Holy Land at the time. And, there's evidence to suggest they were building contractors at Sepphoris, one of the wealthiest cities of the Decapolis.

Jesus was so elegantly dressed, the soldiers who crucified him cast lots for his coat, rather than tear it in half. Peter, James and John were partners in a fishing fleet and Matthew was a tax farmer, which meant he was very rich, indeed almost certainly a millionaire.

They well educated, fluent in at least three languages, possibly four (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and (probably) Latin). Being Jews, they bathed regularly. Enough of the 'Great Unwashed' already! **GPH**✘

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School 2016

St Stephen's Vacation Bible School, for children ages 4–10, will take place once again this summer during the week of 20–24 June from 9am–Noon. The cost is \$20, and there are scholarships available upon request. This year's theme is *Creation Days*. We will explore the seven days of Creation in the Book of Genesis. Please phone the church office on 410 560 6776 and speak to Happy Riley to begin your child's registration. We hope you will bless us with your children, and please have them bring a friend!

FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

The Ladies will lunch on the 20th

The Ladies Who Lunch will convene at the **Outback Steakhouse** on Wednesday, 20 April at noon. The Outback is located 134 Shawan Road, in the southeast corner of the Hunt Valley Towne Centre. 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 18th.

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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, 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

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

Tuesday, 12 April, 7 pm
Parish Life Committee meeting
Wednesday, 20 April, 12 noon
The Ladies Who Lunch meet at Outback Steakhouse
Saturday, 7 May, 11 am–4 pm
St Stephen's British Garden Party & Fête

There will be no Afternoon Teas offered in April or May

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church
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