

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

17 May 2016

FROM THE RECTOR

Charity will help tame our 'Age of Ugliness'

Popular historians often append labels to past eras: The 18th Century, for example, is variously known as the Age of Reason and the Age of Revolution, while the early 19th Century was approvingly dubbed the Age of Elegance.

On such precedents, one might reasonably call the early 21st Century 'the Age of Ugliness' – and by no means solely because of the ugly tenor of the current presidential election campaign. The coarse and abusive rhetoric on display is simply a symptom of a far more virulent disease.

Why should our language be restrained when restraints have been abandoned in countless other spheres of our existence?

Many people, for example, habitually venture out in public in the sort of clothing their ancestors would have reserved for the bedroom, the beach, the bath or the debtors' prison.

Manners are equally deplorable, both at table and in the way in which people treat each other. Good manners, however, are not simply an option – an affectation of more leisurely eras. Our ancestors regarded good manners as an essential. In fact, they rightly regarded them as the lubricant that enabled society to function without friction.

Today's unmannerliness has not been without consequences. An absence of manners is responsible for a wide range of social ills – from the violence that stalks our city streets to the general absence of civil discourse both in public and private life.

- ◆ Is schoolyard violence entirely astounding when many children do not know how to apologise gracefully for inadvertently giving offence?
- ◆ Is the divorce rate really so astonishing in an age when the traditional small courtesies between the sexes are dismissed as 'demeaning' or even 'harassment'?
- ◆ Is corruption both in public and commercial life so surprising in an age of rampant narcissism and self-absorption – an age where so many people regard their fellow men either as competitors to be beaten or rubes to be exploited?

It is difficult to perceive the benefits that have accrued from our rejection of our ancestors' standards of behaviour.

Some might argue society is more 'open', but that's quite untrue. Far from being more open, society is becoming increasingly closed.

The devastating decline in manners, for instance, makes it difficult to mingle people of different political, religious or social persuasions without the affair degenerating into some sort of Jihad.

By contrast, our grand parents and parents rubbed shoulders comfortably with a much broader social spectrum – and their lives were infinitely the richer because of it.

They were able to do so because they instinctively understood something we have forgotten: It is that some subjects are quite inappropriate for dinner table discussion – and politics, religion and sexual proclivities top the list of taboos.

To enjoy somebody's company, it is not necessary to flip the

same voting lever, sit in the same pew, or share the same tastes. Indeed, socialisation solely with those with whom one sees eye-to-eye on all things makes for intolerable boredom.

When Charlotte and I were young – admittedly more years ago than either of us would care to remember – it was unthinkable to throw a 'monochrome' dinner party – a gathering at which everyone shared the same religious, political and social opinions. Folks would simply have found it too darned tedious.

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, Charlotte, Sophia, Nancy, Ellen, Mary, Janet, Bea

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

Instead, we cheerfully mixed atheists and agnostics alongside Buddhists, Hindus and Christians and paired protestants and catholics, and all in a great mélange with conservatives, socialists, communists and anarcho-syndicalists. And what a marvellously enjoyable, not to say stimulating, time we had.

But in order to get to know others well enough to enjoy their company, it is important to avoid immediate sources of dissension.

This doesn't mean that discussion of politics, religion and even sexual mores were utterly forbidden, but it did mean that conversationalists had to treat each other with kindness and respect.

Good manners, you see, require us to accept that folks who disagree with us are neither necessarily knaves or idiots.

Good manners do not require us to tolerate truly evil ideas and genuinely bad behaviour, but they do require a sense of discretion and the exercise of that most Christian of virtues: Charity.

'Charity begins at home,' you might say? And how right you are! If we were to take a more charitable view of the shortcomings of those around us, maybe they would be encouraged to be more charitable towards other people.

And who knows where that might lead? The idea may even catch on with our politicians. **GPH✘**

FROM THE PARISH TEA PARTY

Afternoon Teas resume on 9 June

Saint Stephen's Afternoon Teas will resume on Thursday, 9 June at 2pm.

We left April and May off the 2016 calendar as Holy Week and the Garden Party are busy times for the church. The Afternoon Teas are served on the second

Thursday of the month. There is no fixed price for our teas, however free-will donations

are accepted. We are only able to comfortably serve 40 guests, so we ask that you please make a reservation using the sign up sheet in the main reception area, leaving your name and a contact number. If you later find yourself unable to attend, please contact the Parish Office immediately so we can offer your place to the next person on the standby list.



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 MUSIC OFFICE

Now hiring choirboys – apply today!

Saint Stephen's Choir Academy, the voice-training programme which provides the boy choristers for our parish choir, is looking for new recruits. If you know a any boys between the ages who enjoys singing, wishes to receive a *free* classical music education, and who might be interested in getting paid 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

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

Sunday, 5 June, 6 pm

Choral Evensong

Thursday, 9 June, 2 pm

Afternoon Tea

Monday–Friday, 20–24 June, 9 am–Noon

Vacation Bible School

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Timonium, MD 21093

11856 Mays Chapel Road

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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