

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

24 May 2016

FROM THE RECTOR

How about this for a cure for the presidential blues?

This year's presidential election has evoked emotions ranging from elation to outrage, from depression to desperation. The problem is not just that politicians are generally held in low esteem, but that outsiders are also viewed by many with equal contempt.

And, perhaps not coincidentally, the hierarchies and clergy of America's mainline churches are regarded with a degree of disdain similar to that of the body-politic.

Sometime ago, however, an old friend, who was once member of a highly respectable newspaper's editorial board, came up with a way of solving the problems of church and state. Perhaps its time has come...

The problem, he argues, is not that politicians and prelates are perceived as being out of touch and uninspiring – a complaint traditionally levelled at them. Today they are seen having no saving graces whatsoever.

Rather than being merely out of touch, they are considered to be either hidebound, maladjusted and reactionary or wild-eyed, unprincipled, malevolent and radical. There seem to be no in-betweens.

According to my friend, the problem lies not so much with the personalities of today's politicians and prelates, but the process by which we appoint them.

Elections, he claims, are passé. Elections, he says, started down the road to obsolescence when Henry Ford declared: 'History is bunk'.

Now that history (in the historical sense of the word) is no longer taught in our schools, it makes little sense to continue using a selection system devised in the 18th Century and no longer understood, he says.

What is needed, he says, is a system more in tune with our modern way of doing things – a system that more closely matches candidates' talents and aptitudes with the level of competition they face.

To all intents and purposes, he says, politicians and prelates, whether they realise it or not, are essentially playing in leagues.

The problem is that our election system is so hit and miss that major league talent all too often ends up in the minors, while minor league talent is stretched far beyond its abilities in the majors.

The answer, he contends, is to take a lead from professional sports. Professional sports managers don't employ democratic methods to put together winning teams. Fans don't get to elect the players. Sports organisations trade for their star athletes.

Let's look back at history to see how the proposed system might work:

Say, for instance, George Washington had been born in 18th Century Switzerland. There really wouldn't have been any way for him to exercise his talents – the Swiss not being into revolutions and all that.

If, however, the proposed system had been instituted, the Swiss would have been able to trade George Washington with our Founding Fathers for somebody whose talents lay more in their sphere of interest – finance and economics, for instance.

They would surely have jumped at the chance of signing a financial wizard like Alexander Hamilton.

The drawback, of course, is that the British might well also have been in the bidding. Adam Smith and a draft pick to be named later would certainly have tempted shrewd Swiss bankers.

The Brits' offer might have been so tempting, in fact, our Founding Fathers might have been obliged to sweeten the deal by throwing in Ben Franklin, with Tom Paine as presidential speech writer.

How would the system work today? Well, it seems fair to say that François Hollande, the French President, and Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, would definitely be headed for the minor leagues unless their batting averages improved substantially.

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 REPOSE OF SOUL: Cal, Brett, Lois

FOR RECOVERY: Hilarie, Phyllis, Edie, Jim, Adele, Linda, Judy, Neal, Sheila, Nelson, Aida, Nathan, Hobie, Eunice, Raymond, Rosemary, Todd, Sophia, Bobby, Pam, Charlotte, Nancy, Ellen, Mary, Janet, Bea, Kelley, Mike

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

Doubtless, the prospect of being traded off to places like Iceland, Chad, Mongolia or, God forbid, Libya would be a powerful incentive for them to do better.

The system, my friend contends, would work equally well for America's mainline churches.

Denominations with declining memberships and flagging finances, for example, could swap up to half their hierarchies for, say, Pope Francis, Joel Osteen or the Dhali Lama – and lop huge amounts off their payrolls in the process.

Hordes of the more hapless parochial clergy, for example, might usefully be traded to farm teams in such remote places as Wake Island or Midway in exchange for a promising fundamentalist third round draft pick, fresh out of seminary, to be named later.

But, while the proposed system has promise, it is not without its downside. Some mainline churches might instead opt to trade dead wood for up-and-coming witches and warlocks or even some of the Moslem world's more violent ayatollahs.

Come to think of it, judging by experience, that's exactly what they would be likely to do! Back to the drawing board!

GPH✠

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

May Parish Life meeting recap

- Garden Party gross receipts as of 10 May were \$5,856.55. A final report will be presented at the next meeting. The Tea Room served 125 patrons, the largest number ever for a Garden Party. Many feedback comments were recorded and will be saved for next year's planning.
- Our next fellowship breakfast will be a proper English Breakfast, and will also include pancakes. This will be held in the fall between the 9.15 and 11am services.
- Silly Summer Suppers will resume on Wednesday, 22 June. The first supper will be a cookout. There will be 12 suppers, the last being held on 7 September. Suppers begin after the 6pm Evening Prayer service.
- Church grounds, a function of the vestry, was discussed at Parish Life, as the maintenance of the grounds currently resides with our church volunteers. More extensive beautification of the church grounds would be a long-range project and creative funding options would need to be explored.
- At Jacob's Well, one of our church outreach missions, received about \$200 in church donated items last week. Current major needs include old TVs, a vacuum cleaner, a rug shampooer, and hand tools.

Complete meeting notes are available in the Cadwalader room. All are welcome to attend the next meeting on Tuesday, 14 June from 7–8pm.

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

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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, 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
Tuesday, 14 June, 7–8 pm
Parish Life Meeting
Monday–Friday, 20–24 June, 9 am–Noon
Vacation Bible School

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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