

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

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FROM THE RECTOR

Sometimes a hook is a cloud with a silver lining

My next door neighbors some 50 years ago, the Travers family, were remarkably hospitable folks. However, they imposed one inflexible rule on their visitors: Nobody, on pain of sudden death, was permitted to ask Auntie Violet how she was or how she was feeling.

As far as Auntie Vi was concerned, the only acceptable salutations were "Good morning," "Good afternoon" or "Good evening." Any deviation from the prescribed formula would bring down upon the offender the collective wrath of this otherwise kind and convivial group of people.

The reason for the rule was, given the slightest opportunity, Auntie Violet would launch into a litany of grumbles, grouses and complaints that would occupy best part of an afternoon.

You would learn her medical history from childhood to advanced old age. That completed, you would be treated to a catalogue of the wrongs inflicted upon her by friends, foes, family and tradesmen of every type. From there, she would progress to a critique of political affairs – local, national and international.

I never discovered the subject to which she would segue after that. I only broke the inflexible rule once, and by the time she got to politics, Mike Travers, my particular friend, took pity on me and came up with a plausible excuse to pry me from her clutches.

Actually, there was only one really safe way to deal with Auntie Vi, and that was to flee the moment you saw her coming. And this was a pity, because if you managed get past the endless flood of complaint, you discovered she was an intelligent, well-educated world traveller, who had lived an extraordinarily interesting life.

The trouble with Auntie Vi was she had developed a habit of whining. It wasn't that she was dissatisfied with life – quite to the contrary. She had simply gotten into the habit of complaining. Indeed, I'm not sure she even realized that she was doing it.

In my family, whining was one of those things "one just didn't do." Indeed, folks who were foolish enough to whine in my mother's presence got very short shrift.

Mother belonged to what she called "The Pull Yourself Together School of Psychiatry" and she considered self-pity to be both crippling and contagious.

Maybe she was right. Perhaps it is just the crustiness that accompanies encroaching years, but there seems to be an awful lot more whining going on today than at the time when my mother's School of Psychiatry was in session.

Compare Auntie Vi's attitude to life with that of another person I knew of as a young man. Mr. Carter was just an ordinary chap – an agricultural worker, who was the foreman of a "hedging and ditching" crew.

Rural England, in the south at least, is a land of hedgerows and ditches – many of them thousands of years old. Hedges traditionally play a vital role in agriculture. They keep the cattle in and predators out. They act as windbreaks, halt soil erosion and prevent drifting snow from blocking roads.

Maintaining them is a highly skilled art – and a dying one, evidenced by the sad state of the hedges one sees on drive through East Anglia today. But I digress . . .

Mr. Carter was one of the best "hedgers and ditchers" in

our neck of the country. A cheerful soul with rich bass voice and a ready laugh, he was a keen churchman and often served as a lay reader.

Half a century ago farm machinery was a lot more primitive than it is today. Many machines – threshers and the like – were driven by leather or webbing belts, powered by steam traction engines.

They were exceedingly dangerous to operate. One moment of inattention could cost you a finger, an arm or even a leg. A moment of inattention, or may be sheer bad luck, had cost Mr. Carter his left hand. In its place, he wore a gleaming steel hook.

Mr. Carter's hook was an object of enormous fascination to the boys of the village. He used it with extraordinary dexterity. He could hold things down with it, tie knots with it, weave cane with it and, at church parties and the like, spear all manner of edibles with it – apples, sandwiches and chicken drumsticks.

To the boys of the village, he was the coolest thing on two legs – so cool that we would often fashion ourselves hooks out

Holy Week Schedule

9 April through 16 April

Palm Sunday

8 am: Said Eucharist

9.15 am: Choral Eucharist

11 am: Choral Eucharist

Holy Monday

6 pm: Said Eucharist

Holy Tuesday

6 pm: Said Eucharist

Spy Wednesday

6 pm: Said Eucharist

Maundy Thursday

7pm: Choral Eucharist & Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday

12 noon: The Seven Last Words from the Cross

3.30 pm: Children's Way of the Cross

6 pm: Communion of the Presanctified

Holy Saturday

7pm: The Great Vigil of Easter

Easter Day

8 am: Said Eucharist

9.15 am: Choral Eucharist

followed by Easter Egg Hunt (for children 9 and under)

11 am: Choral Eucharist

of odd pieces of wire and play at being Mr. Carter.

Sometimes, when we ran into him at lunchtime with his hedging and ditching crew, he would invite us to join him for bite and show all the amazing things he could do with his hook.

One day when I was cadging some of his bread and cheese, I asked him if it hurt when the belt had sliced through his wrist.

"Oh yes, young Guy!" he replied, "It hurt something fierce! I had to go to hospital. I was off work for a whole afternoon."

He paused, and added: "But every cloud has its silver lining."

"What that, Mr. Carter?" I asked.

"You know. if I hadn't lost my hand, I wouldn't have this hook," he replied.

His explanation made perfect sense to me at the time, and, funnily enough, I confess it makes perfect sense to me now. You see, I can't help thinking that if we all shared Mr. Carter's philosophy of life the world would be a very much happier and more positive place than it is today. GPH✘

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: Timothy, Peter, June, Hilarie, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Jim, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Tom, Robert✘, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Courtney, Marie, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian, Michell, Aida & Mai

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Cindy, Jacob, Casey & Beth

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; Lt Cdr Emma Hawkins, RN; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Office: 410 560 6776 · **Rectory:** 410 665 1278
Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*
 The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*
 The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki and
 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

8am: Said Eucharist
 9.15am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)
 (3rd Sunday Choral Eucharist)
 11am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)
 6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –
evensong.ststeve.com

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer
 Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist
 Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club
Tuesday, 7am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)
Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle
Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Lenten Study

Wednesday March 29th & April 5th 6.30 pm

Parish Youth Play Group

Saturday April 1st, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm

Choral Evensong

Sunday April 2nd 6.00 pm

Ladies Who Lunch

(Venue to be announced)

Wednesday April 19th 12.00 pm - 2.00 pm

Easter Flowers For St Stephen's Altar

Here is a selection of beautiful spring flowers to decorate the church for Easter. Please make your choice and return this form to the church office with your check by Wednesday April 12th. Flowers may be taken home after the 11.0 am service

Your Name: _____

Lilies Small elite 6" 4-6 blooms @ \$10 (# of plants.....) Field Azalea @ \$15 (# of plants.....)

Hydrangeas Four plus blooms @ \$20 (# of plants.....) Hiacynths @ \$10 (6" pot) (# of plants.....)

Tulips @ \$10 (6" pot) (# of plants.....)

Total # of plants _____ Total amount enclosed _____

My gift is IN HONOR, IN MEMORY OF, IN THANKSGIVING FOR (please circle)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church
 11856 Mays Chapel Road
 Timonium, MD 21093

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