

# St Stephen's News

## St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXVIII, Number 37A parish in the classical Anglican tradition September 26th, 2017

FROM THE RECTOR

### A case of Animal rights versus Animal Crackers

Our recent Harvest Festival was a sorely needed affair: Americans are increasingly losing touch with "the land" – a synonym for agriculture and the source of their "daily bread." Indeed, few of us these days seem to appreciate the role God's grace plays in putting food on our tables. In fact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration seems to receive credit for much that is actually due to the workings of the Almighty.

Few people today, for instance, understand the role the humble honey bee plays in food production? Yet one out of every three bites of food we eat is a result of pollinators like honey bees. Indeed, crops like blueberries and cherries are 90 per cent dependent on pollination.

Honey bees are so important that farmers pay industrial bee keepers to park tractor trailers packed with hives in their fields to provide pollination for their crops.

Canola farmers have one of the most productive partnerships with honey bees. The canola plant provides an ideal food source for honey bees – its nectar is great for honey production, and its flowers have large quantities of pollen for honey bees to eat and spread.

Sad to relate, however, the honey bee population is gravely threatened by the Varroa mite, a parasitic arachnid about 1.8 millimetres long. The mite is responsible for countless deaths of honey bees around the world.

This explains why scientists are working frantically to counter the threat the Varroa mite poses to our honey bee population, and, thus, to agricultural production both in the U.S. and throughout the world. Among their number is parishioner Jody Johnson, a leading expert in the field.

(If you would like to know more about her work and the dangers posed by our declining honey bee population, you can often meet her on Sunday at the 8.00 am service.)

Another thing: many people to day seem to have trouble distinguishing fantasy from reality when it comes to animals – something I was able to do at the age of five.

As a small boy *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, for example, was one of my favorite books, and rabbit pie was one of my favorite dishes. Thus I was able to do something many adults today are quite incapable of doing – recognizing that animals are not simply "less-abled" human beings.

This struck me while listening to an earnest young student discuss animal behavior. It rapidly became clear that the learning propounded in his textbooks was utter twaddle – authored by folks who had no more first hand knowledge of animal behavior than the student.

A genuine understanding of animal behavior might seem a less than important item on the school curriculum compared, say, with English literature, foreign languages, social studies and sex-ed. But actually a lack of a first hand acquaintanceship with animals and, indeed, the land, itself, is gravely skewing social – and political – attitudes, especially in the realms of biology and the environment.

It is not merely a case of people not knowing where their food comes from or how it is produced – though this is truly a serious matter. Judging by the odd shapes of the

chunks of meat on display in supermarkets these days, even butchers are ignorant of the anatomy of the animals they are paid to dismember.

Our ignorance of things agricultural creates serious confusion in many areas of plant and animal husbandry – not least the realm of genetic engineering, a science that has made a tremendous contribution to feeding the world's hungry.

Genetic engineering is by no means a new phenomenon. We have been engaged in genetic engineering for millennia, creating higher yielding cereals and improving breeds of domestic animals.

One of the oldest examples of genetic engineering in animal husbandry on record is found in the 30th Chapter of the Book of Genesis – an account of Jacob's efforts to improve to quality of his herds of cattle and goats.

The difference between genetic engineering in Jacob's day and our own is that while methodologies are essentially the same, modern science enables us to speed up the process enormously.

It is important to bear this in mind when weighing arguments

### 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:** Peter, Charlotte, Rodney, June, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Robert✘, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Cour Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian, Tom, Michell, Aida, Mai, Al, Kathy, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, Isobel & Judy

**REPOSE OF THE SOUL:** Pamela Langham

**FOR THOSE WHO MORN:** The Langham Family

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

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

about genetically engineered food – for many of the objections fall into the realms of ignorance and "vain superstition."

Furthermore, many animal rights groups appear to be laboring under a similar ignorance of animal behavior and husbandry. Indeed, farmers and others in the field of animal husbandry find the contention that animals have "rights" similar to human rights entirely perverse.

Of course, it is wrong to harm or maltreat animals in our care, but it is equally wrong to anthropomorphize them by endowing them with near human qualities.

While evolution certainly represents scientific orthodoxy, leading evolutionists no longer subscribe to Darwin's "stairway" theory. Darwin theorized that there are many "steps" between us and the great apes and chimpanzees, but the distance between us and them is one of degree and not kind. Modern theory, by contrast, asserts that people differ in kind and in degree from animals. Evolution is really about diversity

and differences rather than progress up a stairway. For instance, they believe only people can take the perspective of others. Only humans have minds that can reinterpret observable events, attribute reasons and causality, and see the world as others see it.

Actually, folks who worked on farms could have told them that centuries, nay, millennia ago. "Dumb animals" are by no means dumb, but nor are they intellectuals.

How on earth did we develop our strange modern fads and fancies? Part of the explanation might be that in 1938, agricultural workers accounted for about 25 percent of the U.S. labor force, while a majority of people lived in small rural communities.

Today less than two percent of American workers work on the land, while most people live in cities or suburban communities.

As our direct acquaintanceship with farm animals and their counterparts in the wild has declined, so our impressions about them have been increasingly been formed by fantasy stories, cartoons, Disney movies and the like.

Deer have morphed into Bambi, bears into Yogi, and chimpanzees into Bozo, the animal world's lovable, cuddly clown.

This is an utterly false impression. Animals do not have our reasoning powers – or anything like them. Treating animals in the field or in the wild as pets is fraught with danger. Nature, as the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson pointed out, is "red in tooth

and claw."

Actually, the most vicious creature I ever met was the cutest little Jersey bull you ever set your eyes on. The runner up was Oliver, my daughter Elizabeth's ever-so-appealing Basset Hound. GPH\*

FROM THE KNITTING CIRCLE

## Join us for a genuine ball

Relax in friendly and interesting company and acquire, or simply improve, a useful skill that not only calms the fevered brow, but immeasurably adds to your popularity with your friends and neighbors. Bring a ball of wool, a pair of knitting needles and join us in the parish library on Thursday at 10.00 AM. You can't knit? We'll teach you. Join us for fun, fellowship and one of the most relaxing pastimes. You'll have a ball.

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

## Lawn mowing opportunity

St. Stephen's brand spanking new Model 140 John Deere tractor/mower needs some friends to help it keep the lawn pretty. The current operator now needs 2 or 3 helpers so that each team member need only mow once a month. (more often is OK if desired). Mowing takes about 1 1/2 hours. Call Dick Huffman for details or chat at 9:15 coffee hour. Cell: 443-764-6554 or email [huffdad1@verizon.net](mailto:huffdad1@verizon.net)

## 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 Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*

The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*

The Rev. Michael Belt and The Rev. John Novicki

*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)

11am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –

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

## The Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, September 20th. Pappas Restaurant, 550 Cranbrook Road, Cockeysville. To reserve: Call Sara Douglas 410-560-9026

## Afternoon Tea

Thursday September 21st, 2.00 pm

## Parish Life

Tuesday October 10th 7.00 pm

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