

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXVIII, Number 46 *A parish in the classical Anglican tradition* November 28th, 2017

A BRAZEN APPEAL FROM THE EAGLE

Last word on the Cookie Walk: Please get baking

Ready, set, BAKE! A successful Cookie Walk rests on having mountains of cookies, so get baking and bring those cookies in. Cookies will be accepted all week, right up until the day of Cookie Walk. A drop off bin will be outside front door.

The "Big Day" is almost here. In fact, it's this coming Saturday, December 2nd from 9:00 a.m. until Noon. We hope you'll come, buy some cookies, gifts and greens, and help us kick off the Christmas season with your friends and neighbors. Visit with Santa, buy some authentic British edibles, and stock up on hand-crafted jellies and jams.

Finally, we hope you've signed up to help us either before or during the Cookie Walk. Our work days are every day this week. Check the schedule on the Cookie Walk table or look at last week's newsletter for details. We're not expecting you to work from dawn to dusk; we'll appreciate whatever time you can give us! Thanks awfully! ISAAC EAGLE

FROM THE KNITTING CIRCLE

Bid on our Silent Auction

The knitters have been at it again. There is a splendid selection of hand-knitted items lining the walls of the hallway outside Quimby Hall - and spilling into the vestibule. With so many beautifully crafted items there must be something for that special someone on your Christmas list, or as a special treat for yourself.

It's easy to bid: just put your name, contact number, and bid on the clipboard accompanying each item. But beware, you'll have to pay attention or someone may sneak in and outbid you. This year, however, there is a "buy it now" option which will seal the deal. Bidding will close after the 11.00 a.m. service on Sunday, December 3rd, and winners will be notified by phone of their successful bid.

Once again, proceeds from the Silent Auction will be donated to Christ Child Society of Baltimore and Heifer International. Bid early and bid often!

FROM THE RECTOR

Blaming all our social ills on sex strains credulity

It is tempting to join in the chorus of denunciations prompted by the avalanche of sexual harassment allegations embarrassing Washington's political elite. Denouncing sins committed by others is such glorious fun that we all-too-often overlook the dangers inherent in doing so.

As our Lord pointed out in the Sermon on the Mount, the trouble with drawing public attention to other

people's shortcomings is that we overlook our own sins, which are frequently even more glaring.

It is, moreover, a trap into which Christians frequently fall when denouncing the increasing moral degeneracy that afflicts so many areas of early 21st century Western society. Many American Christians, for example, seem to assume that much of today's social and cultural theorizing is nothing more profound than rationalized sexual misbehavior.

There is indeed a persuasive case for saying that many of our most influential thinkers – folks like Karl Marx, anthropologist Margaret Mead, psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, the painter Pablo Picasso, sex researcher Alfred Kinsey and theologian Paul Tillich – were not invariably engaged in a dispassionate search for the truth.

It is not unreasonable to conclude from their writings and actions that they were also animated by a need to excuse and justify immoral, often perverse, sexual

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, Dorothy, 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, Isobel & Judy

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

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.

longings.

However, it strains credulity to blame all of our current immorality on efforts to justify sexual misbehavior. The deep decline in morality in public life, for example, can by no means entirely be ascribed to perverse sexual proclivities.

Many of the most amoral modern luminaries are paragons of marital fidelity. By casting sex as the villain, we ignore the powerful influence of the six other deadly sins – pride, avarice, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth – and, thus, fall into the same trap as Freud and Jung.

Corporate chieftains who pillage their investors, for instance, might well have cast off the wives of their youth for youthful trophy wives. But sex was not necessarily a primary motive for the exchange.

The younger women probably rank in their husbands' esteem alongside fat stock portfolios, country estates, private aircraft and fleets of limousines. In other words,

they should probably be classified as possessions rather than sex objects.

Dr. Henry Kissinger once observed: "Power is the most powerful aphrodisiac." Well it might be. But the politicians who pursue it rarely do so merely in order to gratify their sexual appetites. They pursue power in order to exercise it over their fellow human beings.

In analyzing the ills of society, Christians sometimes display a disturbing tendency to blame other brands of Christianity for causing the ills afflicting society. An egregious example forms the fundamental thesis advanced by E. Michael Jones in a book entitled *Degenerate Moderns*. This tome was published in the 1990s, but still frequently cited today. Jones claims the roots of degenerate modernity to the Reformation.

Specifically, Jones lays the blame on Martin Luther, the Benedictine Monk who is somewhat inaccurately claimed to have sparked the Reformation by nailing Ninety Five Thesis, condemning Rome's practice of selling indulgences, to the door of All Saints Church in Wittenberg, Germany, in exactly five centuries ago this year.

Jones accuses Luther of fomenting rebellion against the Roman Church in order to obtain an opportunity for sexual high jinks with former nuns – an outrageous claim which serves to undermine some otherwise quite acute social criticism.

Anyone with a passing knowledge of the Reformation

knows that its origins can be traced back at least to the 14th century in Europe and to the early 13th Century in the case of England. (The independence of the Church of England from Rome is asserted in both the first and the final clauses of the Magna Carta.)

Luther, moreover, was merely one reformer among many and by no means the most theologically influential. This honor surely falls to John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli, neither of whom, despite the normal human flaws, can reasonably be accused of sexual obsession.

Perhaps the readiness of Jones – and, to be fair, many protestant commentators – to identify sex as the root degeneracy is explained by the common misconception that original sin is sex-related.

Folks familiar with the third chapter of Genesis should be well aware that Adam and Eve were married long before they defied God and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Original sin lies in our constant efforts to supplant God as the ruler of creation – confusing our ability to use creation creatively with God's unique capacity to create. The problem with putting a heavier emphasis on lust than the other six deadly sins is that it can lay us open to accusations of being pharisaical and uncharitable. It is also a symptom of an ingrained reluctance to admit to the sin of pride – a sin that our era proclaims as a virtue. GPH*

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

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

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Cookie Walk

Saturday, December 2nd, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Parish Life

Tuesday, December 12th, 7.00 pm

Vestry Meeting

Wednesday December 13th, 7.00 pm

The Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, December 20th, 12.00 pm

Bluestone Resturant

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