

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXIX, Number 14 *A parish in the classical Anglican tradition* April 17th, 2018

FROM THE RECTOR

A politician who conquered the “administrative state”

Few things are calculated to create a greater sense of foreboding than the prospect of a visit to the Motor Vehicle Administration. But, surprisingly perhaps, a visit to the MVA is nowhere near as unpleasant as an encounter with officials of West Germany's Ministry of Post and Telecommunications in the mid-1970s.

The mail carriers and sorters were as fine a body of people as one could wish to meet. The same could not be said of the Post Office clerks and the bureaucrats in local and regional administrative offices – far from it.

Postal clerks routinely elevated the verbal abuse of a helpless public to an art form while the administrative officials' talent for obfuscation, obstructionism and intransigence plumbed hitherto unexplored depths on a daily basis.

Charlotte and I experienced this in all its horror when in 1975 we moved from downtown Frankfurt am Main to a village the Taunus Mountains.

Frankfurt is prone to frequent thermal inversions – a weather condition in which heavily polluted air is lingers over the city for days. As a consequence life becomes decidedly uncomfortable.

People grow increasingly irritable – prompting, among other things, an uptick in road rage incidents. Hospitals tend to discourage elective surgery during the inversions because recovery rates show a measurable decline. In the mountains, by contrast, the air is fresh and invigorating.

We contracted to lease a house that was under construction and not due for completion until six months later. Immediately we applied for phones to be installed – figuring half a year's notice should be more than sufficient for the habitually sclerotic telephone service.

When we moved in, lo and behold, the handsets were neatly installed (by the builder, it turned out) but they were not connected to the phone lines that ran along the street, directly in front house.

Next day I called the *Fernmeldeamt, Taunus Gebiet*, (the local telephone office) to ask when we could expect a phone to be installed. “Not for at least 18 months I was told.”

“But,” I protested, “I am a foreign correspondent and there's a general election on. I have to have a telephone. I can't work without it.”

“So what,” came the reply.
“But I gave you six months notice,” I wailed.
“If you don't shut up, it will take even longer,” I was told.

Furious, I called the Federal Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and chewed the ear off a long-suffering public affairs official, who transferred me to the personal assistant of the Minister, Kurt Gscheidle, a tough minded former union boss..

He listened patiently to my tale of woe. “I'll take it up with the minister and get back to you in half an hour or so,” he told me. I'd been fobbed off that way before, but much to my amazement he was back on the phone in less than 20 minutes.

“The minister has called the lady who manages the Taunus office,” he said, “You'll have your phone tomorrow or the day after.”

Four days later, the phone had still not arrived, so I called the lady myself and asked when I could expect the phone to be installed. “We told you it would take 18 months,” she replied, “Nothing's changed.”

“But Herr Minister Gscheidle called you personally,” I protested.
“Herr Minister Gscheidle can kiss my backside. I've got tenure,” she replied. [*Herr Minister Gscheidle kannst mich mal am arsch lecken. Ich bin beamtet.*]

I was utterly astonished. I'd never before heard a civil servant talk to a member of the press about a government minister with such obvious contempt. Minutes later I was on the phone to the minister's personal assistant.

Ten minutes after that I received a call from Minister Gscheidle, himself. “She's got tenure, eh, Herr Hawtin?” he said, adding

cryptically, “Watch the news wires in about half an hour. I think you be amused.” Sure enough half an hour later a news flash from the ministry came over the *Deutsche Presse Agentur* ticker.

“In view of complaints from the public about the rudeness of our officials,” it read, “The minister is enforcing the clause in the union contract that requires employees who are rude to the public to undergo a six week ‘charm course’ at their own expense and on their own time.”

Workmen arrived to install my telephone the very next day. The effect in Frankfurt's main Post office was no less profound: A few days later when Charlotte went to the main Post Office to mail a parcel to family in the United States, she found the usual lines of customers, waiting in trepidation for the inevitable barrage of invective from the clerks at the counter.

Charlotte fell in behind a frail old lady who was lugging an oddly shaped and obviously ill-wrapped parcel. When the woman reached the window, she tentatively shoved the package towards clerk, steeling herself for an anticipated torrent of abuse.

“How can we help you, dear lady?” said the man kindly, “Why don't you let me wrap that parcel a bit better for you?”

At this, the old lady collapsed. Clerks and customers helped her to a chair, brought her a glass of water and fanned her until she recovered.

“For a moment I thought she was going to die,” said Charlotte afterwards, “The kindness was almost too much of a shock for her heart.” 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: Peter, Charlotte, Bryan, 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, Pamela, Isobel, Judy, Elizabeth, Wade, Michael✂, Priscilla, & Sifa

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

FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL: Stephen

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN: Gail Ehrhardt & Family

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.

Church & Missions Sundays

The word “parochial” is used as a metaphor in the secular world for a very good reason. Parishes tend to be inward looking, mindful of the needs of their parishioners and the communities in which they are located. The Church's mission to the wider world tends to take a back seat.

However the national Church and its missions at home and abroad still need funding. The good news is that there are funds available to take care their needs. The bad news is the money is still in your wallets.

More good news: St Stephen's vestry has a plan that will take care of the problem as painlessly as possible. The four Sundays After Easter are designated as “Church and Missions Sundays.”

We are asking you each Sunday prayerfully to set aside – in

addition to your usual pledge – an extra \$10 or so for the national Church and its missions. Envelopes will be provided with you orders of service.

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Mark your calendars for our British Garden Party

Please set aside Saturday, May 5th, on your calendar and join us at St Stephen's annual ethnic festival: our British Garden Party and Fete. The Parish Life Committee has been planning for months to lay on anabsolutely spiffing show.

We'll have a bagpiper and Maypole dancers. Races and frolics for the kids. Lot's to eat – from high tea to hot dogs. A load of jumble. Games of chance. And, of course, King Henry VIII will be joining us along with his entourage. But beware, the King's goaler will looking for miscreants to put in the stocks. *(Editor's note: Gaoler is the English English for jailer. What's more, it is pronounced the American way – “jailer.” Go figure!)* Our traditional British pub, The Barley Mow will be serving fine wines and ice cold, frothy beverages. There will be pub food aplenty, and much, much more.

We hope you will get involved by joining us on Sunday, April 8th, and by lending your talents to making this the best Garden Party yet. If you can't make it to the meeting you can still help! Let us count the ways

Americans call it White Elephant, the Brits call it Jumble. But

whatever name you use, please rummage the corners of your closets for bric-a-brac, collectibles, books, DVDs,CDs and oddities for our Jumble sale. We interested in everything except TVs or electronics. Tables are set up in the Parish Hall for your donations.

There will also be a St Stephen's craft table. There are lots of talented people at St Stephen's creating all kinds of wonderful crafts. Here's a chance to show off yours by offering some of your handmade items for sale.

We'll need cakes for the cake table. We'll be selling whole cakes, half cakes, and quarter cakes for families both large and small. Cakes should be delivered to the church on Fri. May 5th.

Help us with our advertising. Information sheets for Garden Party Program ads are in the back of the church. Help us by selling ads to the local merchants and businesses you frequent.

How about becoming a patron of the Garden Party? Your name will be listed in the Garden Party program acknowledging your generosity. There are several levels to choose from:

- Imperial Crown - \$100; ■□House of Windsor - \$75
- House of York - \$50 ■□House of Lancaster - \$30

Shortly we will have Garden Party posters to take to your grocery store, library, or any place else that has a bulletin board. We'll let you know as soon as they're available.

Finally, we need volunteers to work the day before and the day of the Garden Party. Sign-up sheets will be posted shortly in the Cadwalader Room. We hope you'll contribute your time to help us set up and run this great event. You'll be rewarded with lots of laughter and fellowship.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Office: 410 560 6776 · Rectory: 443-425-2420
Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*
The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*
The Rev. Michael Belt andThe 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

The Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, April 18th, 7.00 pm

The Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, April 18th 12.00 pm

Barrett's Grill, Hunt Valley

Reservations: Call Sara Douglas 410-560-9026

The British Garden Party

Saturday, May 5th, 11.00 AM - 4.00 PM

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TIMONIUM MD
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11856 Mays Chapel Road
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