

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXIX, Number 20

A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

May 29th, 2018

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Time to sign up for the Vacation Bible School

St Stephen's Vacation Bible School will run on the afternoons of Monday, June 25th to Friday, June 29th from 1.00 PM to 4.00 PM. It is open to children from four to 11. The theme for this year's event will be "Jesus is our superhero." We are asking for a nominal \$20 contribution per child to help defray costs.

FROM THE RECTOR

You can't blame all social ills on sexual misbehavior

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 short-comings 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 Western society in the opening years of the Twenty First Century.

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, economist John Maynard Keynes, 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 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 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 of this is to be found in E. Michael Jones' book *Degenerate Moderns*, published in the 1990s, but still frequently cited today. Jones' book traces the roots of degenerate modernity to the Reformation.

Specifically, Jones accuses Martin 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.

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: Priscilla, Michael✕, 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 & Sifa

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

REPOSE OF THE SOUL: Walter, and Martin, *priest*.

THOSE WHO MOURN: The Reynolds & Kerouac families

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.

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 – that Adam and Eve were awakened to the shameful delights of sex as a consequence of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

That is pure humbug. Folks familiar with the third chapter of Genesis should be well aware that Adam and Eve were married – and presumably enjoying aspects of marital relations – long before they defied God and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Genesis makes it crystal clear that original sin lies in our constant efforts to supplant God as the ruler of creation – confusing our human 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. Even more important it can blind us to the sin of pride – the sin that our era incessantly proclaims as a virtue. GPH✘

Hollywood distorts history

It is remarkable how Hollywood subtly reshapes and remolds our perception of history. Take, for example, *Inherit the Wind*, the

movies about about the famous Scopes "Monkey Trial."

The movie portrays Scopes as a high school science teacher arrested for illegally teaching Darwin's theory and the townsfolk in the small Tennessee community in which the trial took place as bigots, ready to do violence to Scopes and his defense attorney.

Scopes was never arrested: He volunteered to go on trial after the American Civil Liberties Union advertised for someone willing to challenge the law.

Far from being threatened, he and his attorney – as well as the whole prosecution team – were feted by the townsfolk, who hoped the trial would put their community "on the map."

Nor was Scopes fired from his school teaching post after his conviction. In fact, he quit his job to take up the offer of a graduate school scholarship in geology at the University of Chicago – rich pickings for a small town math teacher and athletic coach who couldn't be called to the witness stand because he wasn't able to remember whether he had taught evolution or not.

Inherit the Wind actually tells us far more about the mindset of its authors and producers than the truth of the Scopes trial. And it explains why so many people, young and old, have such a distorted grasp of our nation's history. GPH✘

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, 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)
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, June 20th, 7.00 pm

The Ladies Who Lunch
Wednesday, June 20th 12.00 pm
For information: Call Sara Douglas
at 410-560-9026

The Vacation Bible School
June 25th to June 29th, 1.00 PM - 4.00 PM

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TIMONIUM MD
PERMIT # 181

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