

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XIX, Number 31 *A parish in the classical Anglican tradition* August 14th 2018

FROM THE PARISH CHEFS

Summer's Silly Suppers

Each Wednesday the chefs of St. Stephen's will be serving the "Silly Summer Suppers." It's hard to think of a less appropriate name than "Silly Summer Suppers" for these remarkable gastronomic events. The food is absolutely scrumptious. The only thing silly about these suppers is the price -- entrée, dessert and salad for just \$10. Soda costs a buck and wine at \$3 per glass and \$5 for two.

FROM THE RECTOR

Doing things God's way saves a lot of bother

St. Augustine of Hippo – whose feast takes place on Tuesday, August 28th is one of the Churches greatest theologians. But the saint, who lived in some 1,600 years ago, was by no means always noted for piety. As a young man, he was inordinately fond of ladies and, strive though he might to do otherwise, was a slave to his hormones well into early middle age.

In his autobiography he tells how he spent hours on his knees begging for God to help him conquer his desires, without any notable success. It wasn't until much later that he realized he'd actually been praying: "Dear God, please make me chaste . . . but not just yet."

The following day we commemorate a saint of a very different complexion. It's the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. John isn't really a New Testament figure at all. He is the last in the line of Old Testament prophets.

And it is, I guess, an instructive example of human frailty that John, the greatest of all the saints of the old dispensation, died in a state of acute puzzlement.

He didn't think that God actually intended for things to end with his head being served up on a charger at the behest of a trollop. Even as the executioner's sword fell, he was looking forward to a decidedly more glorious future.

John is a much-misunderstood character, largely because he was co-opted as pin-up boy of the holy hermits of the early monastic movement. They eked out an austere desert existence in Egypt. And, because John also shared their taste for desert life, I guess they assumed they had a great deal in common with each other. In fact, they were quite mistaken . . .

When we picture John, we see him as the caricature served up to us on TV and at the movies: A strange gibbering creature, skimpily clad in a mangy, fur leotard. Nothing could be further from the truth.

He was not the Apostolic Age's answer to poor, mad Ben Gunn from Treasure Island, but, rather, a First Century AD Green Beret. If John were to come today, he would be wearing a "high and tight" haircut, crisply starched cammies, and well-polished jump boots. He wore heavy, tightly woven camel's hair cloth – the sort of stuff Bedouin use to make tents. It was the First Century AD equivalent of Kevlar. The best quality camel's hair cloth could easily turn the blade of a sword. His leather girdle was First Century web gear.

John lived on locusts and wild honey, but it is wrong to imagine him enthusiastically crunching up bugs. Locusts are the fruit of the carob tree. Carob pods are dark brown in color and look like mummified pole beans. They taste a bit like mildly sweet chocolate. Light in weight and high in protein, they were MREs (meals ready to eat), first century-style.

His military credentials explain why Jewish soldiers came out to ask him how to reconcile serving the Roman authorities with

their religious obligations. "Be content with your pay," he told them, "Don't abuse you authority, Don't shake people down for money and don't push them around."

John didn't see himself as a priest or monk, but rather as Chairman of the Messiah's Joint Chiefs of Staff. And he certainly didn't expect to die and martyr's death.

Doubtless, he went to his grave still worrying how his cousin, Jesus of Nazareth – a man most of his contemporaries would have thought singularly ill-equipped to be the Messianic military genius – would be able to drive the Romans and Herodians into the sea without him.

No military leader could have misunderstood his mission more profoundly than John. And, at his death, the Baptist undoubtedly thought himself a failure. Yet it is a measure of God's profound Grace – and possibly his vast sense of humor – that, while John failed to live up to his own expectations, he fulfilled God's plan to the letter.

His instructions were: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Jesus' disciples,

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: Selwyn, Priscilla,, 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, Theresa, Lisa, Larry, Jail & Scott

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

IN MEMORIAM:

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN:

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.

most notably the leading Apostles, came from the ranks of John's disciples and his preaching which prepared the ground for the missionaries who carried the Gospel to all the ends of the earth within 30 years of Christ's Ascension.

A conclusion to be drawn from this is that when God calls you to be something, or do something, he will carry you through, no matter what. Often his objectives are hard to divine. But this shouldn't surprise us. He told Isaiah: "My ways are not your ways, and my thoughts are not your thoughts."

Be that as it may, I have spent years – decades in fact – trying to micro-manage God, and all I've got to show for the effort is the realization that, no matter how much I might arm wrestle him, we invariably end up doing things his way.

It's about time we all learned that it saves an awful lot of fuss and bother if we do things his way to start with. GPH✘

Beware words that twist the truth

One of most despicable Soviet practices was the use of fraud and deceit to achieve their ends. Lenin instituted this policy at the outset when he dubbed his tiny group of supporters "Bolsheviks" (from *bolshoi*, meaning great) and his very much more numerous opponents "Mensheviks," (implying they were the minority faction.)

The technique was continually employed to demonize opponents and deny them a voice in the public square. Citizens who peacefully protested oppression were branded as "hooligans." Jews and Christians who sought to practice their faiths were dubbed "anti-social elements."

Nations that timidly opposed Soviet barbarities were smeared as "aggressors," while the reflexively belligerent USSR and its puppets fraudulently described themselves as "peace-loving peoples."

The German National Socialists and Italian Fascists employed the same strategy -- constantly accusing their victims of being the aggressors. Indeed, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, is credited with the saying: "The bigger the lie, the more it will be believed."

This explains my instinctive mistrust of the folks calling themselves "Antifa" -- a contraction of the word "Antifascist" -- a

mistrust that in the light of experience is amply justified. The Antifa, whose animating ideology is socialism, claim to be fighting "Fascism" by violent disrupting events featuring conservative speakers, beating up participants and destroying property.

Actually, there is nothing conservative about Fascism, quite to the contrary.

Fascism is, in fact, a totalitarian form of socialism, not only synonymous with Nazism but closely akin to Communism, that brooks no opposition.

Both Fascists and Communists are socialist in philosophy, the difference being the Communists believe the state should own the means of production, while the Fascists believe ownership is irrelevant providing the owners follow the state's direction.

In the century just past, the Nazis and Fascists were responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people. And among the first to be arrested and imprisoned by their "thought police" were conservatives who, as a fundamental principle, were committed to the concept of limited government.

Ironically, the Antifa's tactics closely resemble the tactics of the Fascists they claim to be opposing, while the beliefs of the people they prey on are those of the original Fascists' conservative victims.

One can't help thinking Dr. Goebbels would be pleased. GPH✳

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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The Ven. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*

The Ven. Michael Kerouac, *Vicar* ·

Associate Rectors:

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki,

The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, The Rev. Robert Ludwig. &

The Rev. Dr. Norman Flowers

Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Sungl Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

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

Choral Services (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

The Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, August 15th, 7.00 pm

Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, August 15th at 12.00 PM

Papas Restaurant, Cranbrook Road,

Reservations: Call Sara Douglas at 410-560-9026

Weekly Silly Summer Suppers

Wednesday August 31st, 6.30 PM



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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