

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH • TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

Volume XIX, No. 35 *A parish in the classical Anglican tradition* September 11th, 2018

FROM THE RECTOR

The high price of failing to honor our principles

A time traveler arriving at this point in time from fifty or sixty years ago would be struck by fact the religious beliefs – or lack thereof – of the candidates in upcoming mid-term elections have figured very little in either the national or local campaigns.

This reflects the fashionable notion that the constitutional separation of church and state demands the total exclusion of Christianity from the public square. But, in fact, demanding that people in public office repress their religious opinions when formulating public policy runs contrary not just to human nature, but to historical precedent.

A vast majority of the Founding Fathers believed the U.S. Constitution was suited only to a nation animated by Christian principles and absent those principles it would be sure to fail. Indeed, James Madison, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson – among others – expressed such opinions in forceful terms.

This should not altogether surprising. The founding fathers, no matter their personal religious persuasions, were firmly convinced the Bible contains the highest, noblest, the most just principles for ordering human society ever enunciated.

They were also well aware of the religious roots of American society and took at face value the Fifth Commandment: “Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

This commandment is not a sloppy, sentimental appeal to be nice to mom and dad. It is a solemn warning that should we forget the principles upon which our ancestors founded our society we would lose it – *pronto!* And the sad thing is we would probably never notice it had gone.

It might, thus, be worth considering what has happened not to just to America, but to the West as whole, in the half century-plus that has passed since we embraced the notion that Christian principles should be rigorously excluded from in-forming public debate and policy.

Arguably, the fundamental thing that has been lost is the concept of honor. After all, when last did a prominent person in public life resign over a matter of honor – a relatively common event a half-century ago?

Indeed, once upon a time if something went seriously wrong in a government department the departmental chief would feel honor bound to resign to atone for the failure – even if they, themselves, were not directly responsible for it.

Similarly, officials who had betrayed the public trust with lies – or even with false information, unwittingly proffered – would also tender their resignations as a matter of honor.

Indeed, a British defense minister who, in the early 1960s, lied to Parliament to cover up an embarrassing sexual peccadillo, spent the remaining 40 years of his life volunteering as a janitor in an inner-city settlement house for the poorest of the poor to atone for his misdeed. That reflects a truly Judeo-Christian sense of honor!

“Trickle down” is not merely an economic theory. The elite’s abandonment of honor as a principle of public and personal conduct has trickled down to the public at large. And, as a consequence, convenience has replaced honor as an animating force.

Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and 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 at (410) 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Gene, 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: Senator John McCain

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN: The McCain Family

N 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.

No longer is it a matter of honor to be scrupulously honest in our dealings with our fellow men. It is no longer a matter of honor to keep promises to spouses, friends and business associates.

Even less is it an obligation of honor to spring to the defense of folks weaker than our selves – whether they be women and children or an entire oppressed people.

However, shedding these obligations has not been without cost. Indeed, it has exacted a fearful toll on

on society, because when honor went out the window so, too, did trust.

Absent honor, we are unable to trust our politicians and they are unable to trust each other. Absent honor, we are unable to trust those with whom we do business.

Absent honor, we are unable to trust our teachers and our clergy to protect and care for our children. Absent honor, we are unable to trust our neighbors and the folks we encounter on a daily basis.

This atmosphere of mistrust has immeasurably corroded our quality of life. And, not only that, it has cost us dear in financial terms as well. For where honor is held cheap the resultant mistrust becomes a very expensive commodity

Where honor is held sacred there are slim pickings for lawyers in the worlds of industry, commerce and civil administration, not to mention personal and private affairs. When one's word is one's bond, there is rarely a need to resort to the courts.

It should thus come as no surprise that, absent honor, we have become one of the most litigious societies the world has seen.

Honoring the principles enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights can sometimes be painful, costly and occasionally contrary to our short-term interests. But undermining the foundations of trust upon which our society is grounded exacts a far higher price. GPH✘

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Mays Chapel school supplies

Again this year, St Stephen's is collecting supplies for Mays Chapel Elementary School. A container in the Cadwalader Room, and a list of needed supplies posted on the wall. In addition to traditional supplies such as backpacks, notebooks, pens and pencils, donations also needed are baby wipes, gallon and quart re-sealable plastic bags, Post-It notes, and paper towels. The response last year was greatly appreciated by the school.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093

Office: 410 560 6776 · **Rectory:** 410 665 1278

Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

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

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Noon: Bible Study

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

The Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, September 19th, 7.00 pm

Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, September 19th at 12.00 PM

Reservations: Call Sara Douglas at 410-560-9026

Farewell Picnic for Bill & Anne

Sunday, September 9th at 4.00 PM

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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