

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH • TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

VOLUME XXX, No. 8 A PARISH IN THE CLASSICAL ANGLICAN TRADITION MARCH 12TH, 2019

EPISCOPAL VISIT

Bishop Vaughan to visit on March 23rd & 24th

The Rt. Rev. John Vaughan, Bishop Ordinary of the Eastern United States, will be visiting St Stephen's on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, March 23rd and 25th in order to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on those who wish it. .

Catechist Brock Johnson has prepared a number of candidates for Confirmation. Others who would like receive the Sacrament should contact Mr. Johnson (Tel: 410-825-8007) or the rector (Tel: 443-425-2420) as soon as possible.

For those who have not met him, Bishop Vaughan, as you can tell by his brogue, hails from County Cork in the Republic of Ireland. so it is a shame he will not be here for our St Patrick's Day Corned Beef and Cabbage lunch. Nevertheless St Stephen's will be sure to give him a hearty welcome.

FROM THE RECTOR

Eggs, bunnies and trees are not intrinsically Christian

Forty years or so ago the battles over the public display of Nativity scenes were just gearing up. Hitherto in cities and townships with sizable Jewish minorities mangers and menorahs co-existed, side by side, in comfortable neighborly harmony.

Back then, Christians wished their Jewish neighbors a "happy Hanukkah" while the Jews would reply with a "Merry Christmas." And tree lots, often in church car parks, did a land office business with the adherents of both faiths – for there was not a jot's worth of difference between a Christmas Tree and a Hanukkah Bush.

Things were changing, however, in the early 1980s when, by freak happenstance, I became president the Parent-teacher Association of my daughters' elementary school.

(The ladies, who constituted the vast majority of the membership, apparently couldn't agree on a female candidate for the job and instead elected me – presumably on the assumption that clergymen are harmless).

I took the reins as Easter was approaching, and was immediately confronted with my first controversy: A Jewish lady raised her hand to protest the school displaying Christian symbols at the Spring Break.

Her complaint was somewhat puzzling as I had never seen crosses or empty tombs displayed at the school, so I asked her what symbols offended her. Eggs and bunnies, she replied.

I explained that Christians don't worship eggs or bunnies, nor are they displayed on church altars. Eggs and rabbits are not, in fact, Christian symbols at all, but, like Easter bonnets, "corn dollies" and seasonal wreaths, they are holdovers from pagan rites of spring.

Similarly, evergreen trees have nothing to do with Christmas. They are actually an entirely innocent modern echo of the pagan Germanic form of grisly tree worship.

The practice of displaying trees was unknown in England and America until Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert of Coburg, introduced evergreens to Buckingham Palace in the mid-19th Century as part of the Christmas decorations. Initially, they weren't much liked either.

Eggs and rabbits simply symbolize the end of the long and hungry winter. Easter takes place at the time when, before factory farming, hens started laying again and when piglets and lambs were old enough for slaughter.

Thus, our tradition of Easter egg hunts and Easter dinners of roast lamb and baked ham simply hark back to the pre-Christian celebrations that heralded the arrival spring. Folks who object to Easter eggs and

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 visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the parish office (410) 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Daniel, Leona, Charlotte, Bryan, Rachel, Elizabeth, Dorothy, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Robert✕, Jan, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, Adrian, Tom, Michell, Al, Kathy, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, Judy, Elizabeth, Wade, Sifa, Theresa, Lisa, Larry, Dan & Scott

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

IN MEMORIAM:

THOSE WHO MOURN:

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt. Col. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army.

bunnies should do so not because their origin is Christian but because they are pagan.

That said, the practice of fasting during Lent is one of the most ancient traditions of the Christian Church. During the Middle Ages, it was particularly rigorous: Not only did the faithful abstain from eating meat, but milk, eggs and dairy products as well.

This, however, should not be construed as proof positive that folks in the Middle Ages were far more pious than their post Reformation counterparts. The truth is that Lenten fasts in the Middle Ages were as much a matter of practical necessity as demonstrations of Christian piety.

Winter fodder was reserved for cattle, sheep and pigs needed for breeding purposes. The other animals were slaughtered in the fall and their meat pickled in brine, salted down or smoked to preserve it for later consumption.

Salt, however, was an expensive commodity and, by the beginning of Lent, meat was in very short supply even for the wealthy. Eggs and dairy products were also

running low because Lent happened to coincide with the breeding season.

As a consequence, the Lenten diet was boring in the extreme – rye or barley bread without butter and cheese (wheat bread was too expensive for all but the wealthy) and root vegetables such as turnips, parsnips and rutabagas.

The only “meat” generally available during Lent was fish – a food that St. Thomas Aquinas (an enthusiastic trencherman who earned the sobriquet “Great Tom” for his girth rather than his learning) dismissed contemptuously as far less appetizing than eggs, meat and cheese.

Poor St. Thomas was an Italian by birth and, though widely travelled, had never visited Britain. If he had, he might well have changed his mind about fish.

Folks who have done the math claim there is no place in the British Isles that is more than 50 miles from the sea. It means that throughout their history the British people have always enjoyed an abundance of fresh fish.

True, it took far longer to transport fish 50 miles in the Middle Ages than it does today. But there was always plenty of fresh fish – trout, pike, carp and eels (delicious

fried, smoked, stewed or served in aspic) as well as smoked fish (Lowestoft kippers and Yarmouth bloaters) and shellfish in barrels of brine.

Folks who lived closer to the sea enjoyed a cornucopia of delectable seafood – haddock, hake and the ubiquitous cod, flat fish such as plaice, sole, turbot and skate (actually a species of ray), glistening silver herring, blue striped mackerel, sardines, sprats and the lowly white bait. As there is an “R” in all of the Lenten months, oysters were always available, together with lobster, crab and shrimp and delicious, cockles, mussels, whelks and winkles.

In short, Lent was no real hardship for British seafood lovers. Certainly, a diet solely of fresh fish lacks variety, but British Christians were an awful lot better off than folks who dwelt inland on the Continent whose selection of fish was largely restricted to salt cod.

Salt cod might well be a Baltimore favorite and, indeed, I am, I confess, an enthusiastic *aficionado* of Gibby’s “coddies.” Even so – call it chauvinism if you will – for my money kippers, bloaters, smoked haddock and smoked eels beat “coddies” hands down. 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 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: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11am: Sung 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

“Our Odd Anglican Ways”

(The Lenten Series)

Wednesdays, March 13th to April 10th, 6.45 pm

Ladies Who Lunch

Wednesday, Noon, March 20th

at the Pepper Mill

Reservations: Call Sara Douglas at 410-560-9026

The Evening Choral Office

Sunday, April 7th at 6.00 PM

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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