

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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FROM THE RECTOR

A political history that is perilous to repeat

Ever since his election victory was announced, opponents of President Donald Trump have been loudly calling for the House of Representatives to impeach him in order to engineer his removal from office.

However, while the impeachment process resembles a courtroom trial, it is not a judicial proceeding. It is, in fact, a political process and, thus, is open to the sort of abuse that risks dividing the nation and rebounding upon those who instituted it.

A glaring example of the abuse of the process is found in the impeachment of William Laud, one of the Anglican Church's greatest Archbishops of Canterbury. Laud, born in 1573, was beheaded 1645 at the outset of England's Civil War, otherwise known as the Great Parliamentary Rebellion.

Archbishop Laud was a courageous defender of the faith, who was judicially murdered for his stout resistance to the political extremists who sought to impose their puritanical views on the spiritual and secular life of the nation.

Laud was a formidable intellectual. He had been elected Chancellor of Oxford University in 1630, three years before his consecration as archbishop. But he was not without his faults. His critics accused him of fussiness and pomposity, and of being overly severe in his treatment of religious radicals. In that regard, however, he was considerably less harsh in the application of the grisly panoply of 17th century justice than his puritan opponents.

As bishop and archbishop, Laud was a champion of the ordinary English people – a fact that earned him the undying enmity of the wealthy merchants who controlled London's municipal government and who financed the rebellion. The common people, however, loved Laud not merely for his political support but for restoring reverence to worship.

He continued the teaching of Cranmer and Hooker, holding that the basis of belief was the Bible. Like them, however, he held that the Bible was to be interpreted by the tradition of the early Church, and that all doubtful points were to be subjected, not to heated arguments in the pulpits, but to sober discussion by learned men.

Laud, as did the early English reformers, believed the Church of England to be in direct continuity with the medieval Church, and upheld the ancient English understanding of the unity of the Church and State. If his defense of the Divine Right of Kings carried things too far, his views were rather more in tune with those of the common man than those of his opponents. Among other unappealing things, the puritan agenda included not only outlawing popular amusements like the theater, but also observance of such beloved religious festivals as Christmas and Easter.

Against vociferous puritan opposition, Laud restored the traditional emphasis the ministerial priesthood, the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, and reverent Prayer Book ritual. Moreover, he restored altars and altar rails to the east wall of churches from which the puritans had banished them.

As head of the courts of High Commission and the Star Chamber, Laud presided over the trials of a number of

religious radicals. And as a close advisor to King Charles I – he was appointed to the Privy Council in 1627 – he was closely identified with royal policies the puritans found abhorrent.

King Charles summoned the Long Parliament in November 1640. Rather than criticize the King directly, the puritan John Pym and his allies concentrated their attacks on his closest advisers who were blamed for all the nation's grievances.

Among the earliest proceedings of the Long Parliament were moves to impeach the King's "evil councilors", the Earl of Strafford, and Archbishop Laud. On December 18th, Denzil Holles, by order of the House of Commons, impeached Laud for high treason at the bar of the House of Lords.

On February 26th, 1641, articles of impeachment against Laud were presented by Sir Henry Vane. The archbishop was accused of assuming tyrannical powers in church and state, of subverting the true religion with

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: Catherine, Richard✘, Janis, Parisa, Daniel, Judy, Leona, Charlotte, Bryan, Rachel, Elizabeth, Dorothy, Donna, Skip, Dan, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Heidi, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Neal, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Jan, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, Adrian, Tom, Michell, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, David, Wade, Sifa, Theresa, Lisa, Larry Ricard & Scott

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Caroline, Karen, Ardis, Mavis, Michael, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Kath, Rebecca, Catherine & Elizabeth

IN MEMORIAM: Pauline Flowers

THOSE WHO MOURN: Fr. Norman Flowers and family

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

popish superstition and of causing a disastrous wars against the Scots.

Laud was imprisoned in the Tower of London on March 1st, 1641. On the morning of May 12th, he watched from a window as his friend the Earl of Strafford was led to his execution. Overcome with emotion, Laud fainted before he could pronounce a final blessing on him. The archbishop remained a prisoner for three years before finally being brought to trial before the House of Lords in March 1644. The prosecution was led by William Prynne, his most bitter enemy.

Prynne was granted full access to all of Laud's papers and diaries but, even so, was unable to produce evidence to prove him guilty of treason. The Lords – overwhelmingly puritan and anti-royalist in their sympathies, and uniformly biased against Laud – adjourned without voting on the issue.

In November 1644, the House of Commons abandoned its impeachment of Laud and resorted to a bill of attainder to condemn him by special decree. The bill was passed by the Commons on November 15th and by the House of Lords on January 4th 1645.

Archbishop Laud was beheaded on Tower Hill, London's public execution ground, on January 10th, 1645. He died bravely, indeed, nobly. His final words were: "The Lord receive my soul, and have mercy on me, and bless this kingdom with peace and charity, that there may not be this effusion of Christian blood amongst them."

He was buried in the Church of All Hallows by the Tower, alongside other victims of religious persecution including the Roman Catholic Sir Thomas Moore and the reformer Bishop John Fisher. After the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, however, Laud's remains were reburied in a vault under the altar at the chapel of St John's College, Oxford.

Laud's impeachment was a political lynching that lastingly stained the reputations of the men who participated in it. By contrast, the failed impeachment of the radical English politician and pamphleteer John Wilkes was a culmination of a political farce that made a laughingstock of all those involved.

Wilkes, a member of the English Parliament, was accused of publishing a pornographic libel of the Bishop of London and, indeed, it is likely Wilkes was its author. His prosecutor before the bar of House of Commons was the Earl of Sandwich, immortalized on the menus of virtually every fast food joint in the English-speaking world.

Summing up for the prosecution, Sandwich pointed at Wilkes and thundered: "This man is born to die either upon the gallows or of the pox."

"Ah," riposted Wilkes, "That depends upon whether I embrace your morals or your mistress!" With this, the case against him collapsed in gales of laughter.

I am not trying to compare President Trump – love him or loathe him – with either Laud or Wilkes. I am simply arguing that there is a less divisive way of removing unpopular politicians from office than impeachment. It's called the ballot box. GPH✘

FROM THE TREASURER

Help keep the roof overhead

The time has come to replace the flat roof over the Cadwalader Room. The cost of replacing it will besome \$29,0000. The Vestry has appealed for donations to cover the cost. To date we have received checks and pledges totaling slightly more than \$6,0000. So we still have a long way to go. Please prayerfully consider helping us keep the roof over our heads by sending your contribution to The Treasurer, St Stephen's Anglican Church, 11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21057. Mark your check "Flat Roof Fund." God bless you – Bob Reynolds

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Very Rev. Guy P Hawtin, Dean & Rector
The Ven. Michael Kerouac, Vicar ·
Associate Rectors:

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki,
The Rev. M Wiley Hawks
and 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)
11 am: 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

The Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, 7.00 PM, August 21st

Ladies Who Lunch

Noon, Wednesday, August 21st

A potluck lunch at the parish church
Information, call Sara Douglas at 410-560-9026

Choral Events

As announced

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