

# St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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FROM THE RECTOR

## Services on the Internet

This is the first time in the best part of 370 years that Anglican Churches in the English speaking world have been closed by order of the government. Back then they were closed at the whim of Oliver Cromwell. Today, by stark contrast, they are shuttered to inhibit the spread of a deadly disease.

The parochial clergy, however, are doing their best to care for the spiritual welfare of our parishioners, friends and neighbors near and far. Remember each of us is available on the telephone for folks in need of comfort, counsel or simply a chat. We can also stay in contact with each other through the weekly newsletter.

We had also been video recording Sunday Eucharists to enable you to maintain your Sunday worship. They may be a poor substitute from sharing the celebration person, but we hope that it will offer you some solace.

The Eucharists will be broadcast on the internet and a link to the services will be posted on the parish website ([www.ststeve.com](http://www.ststeve.com)) at 9.00 AM ever Sunday morning as long as the emergency lasts. They will remain available all week. You will find them at the bottom of the Home Page, under "Recent Blog Posts."

Meanwhile here is a prayer for God's aid in this time of trouble. GPH\*

### In Time of Peril

*O ALMIGHTY God, the supreme Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, Save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, from the great sickness that afflicts not only our countrymen, but all the peoples of the earth; that we, being armed with thy defense, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the giver of all succor; through the merits of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

J A SERMON FOR EASTER DAY

## Alleluia! The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Our history books bear graphic witness to the disastrous consequences that usually follow the failure of national leaders to learn from the past. And perhaps the most consequential of all these failures led to the event we're celebrating today,

No event in the history of the human race has been telegraphed to those who would live through it as often, as accurately and as completely as the coming of the Savior of the World, his judicial murder and his triumphant resurrection.

The Old Testament contains more than 300 detailed prophecies telling the coming generations precisely how to recognize the Messiah. (If you'd like to see just how precise the details are, take a look at the description of the crucifixion in *Psalm 22*.)

In addition to such exceedingly precise prophecies, there are a host of lesser prophecies – some 700 in all – that lend support to the major ones.

The main participants in the drama – Sadducees, Pharisees and scribes, the chief priests and elders, the apostles and disciples, down to the ordinary citizens of the holy city of Jerusalem – all were entirely familiar with them. Never has a people been more literate.

Every one of them could speak at least two languages: Aramaic and Hebrew. Most of them were fluent in three

tongues: Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek. Many of them also spoke Latin, the language of their Roman occupiers.

What's more, all of these people, as a matter of religious duty, were scriptural scholars, whose Biblical knowledge, made them theoretically at least, fully aware that the Messiah's arrival was imminent.

Yet when the chips were down – despite the fact that the prophecies had been fulfilled to the letter before their very eyes – they failed to recognize the Son of God when they met him face to face. This should be a truly sobering thought for all of us – for they were very much better scriptural scholars than we are.

All of them, of course, had perfectly credible excuses for their failure. The scribes and Pharisees could easily see he simply wasn't pious enough. They knew God's Messiah would absolutely punctilious in observing the rules of his religion.

Ordinary folk believed he was going raise an army

## 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:** Eileen, Rebecca, Catherine, Richard\*, Janis, Parisa, Daniel, Leona, Rachel, Elizabeth, Kim, 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 Tom, Michell, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, David, Wade, Sifa, Eileen, Ravi, Theresa, Lisa, Larry Ricard, Judy & Scott

**FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Cameron, Caroline, Karen, Ardis, Mavis, Michael, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Chip, Elizabeth, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Kath, Rebecca, Colin & Christian.

**IN MEMORIAM:**

**THOSE WHO MOURN:**

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

and conquer the world. When he declined to do so, Jerusalem's John Q. Public refused to accept that God knows what he is doing. Thus they turned their backs on him.

His disciples were certainly no better. They thought he was failing to start his revolution because he was because he was having a poor spell. All of them thought he needed geeing to launch the rebellion. Judas engineered a confrontation with the Temple authorities to force his hand.

The national leaders – mainly Sadducees like the chief priests and elders – were terrified that, despite all the evidence to the contrary, he actually was preparing a rebellion.

They knew it would be doomed because an untrained rabble was no match for Rome's veteran legions. Caiaphas, chief priest and an astute politician, cynically proposed, as a matter of simple expedience, to lynch a solitary innocent man in order to save the whole nation from destruction. It never seems to have occurred to any of the onlookers at the foot of the cross – the chief priests and elders, the scribes and Pharisees, the

disciples and the folks in the crowd – that every word that was said, and everything being done, had been foretold to the letter centuries before in Holy Scripture. The dialogue at the foot of the cross had, in fact, been precisely scripted hundreds of years before.

Plainly they didn't recognize what was taking place. Had they done so, Jesus' resurrection – the most important event in the history of the world – would not have come as such a shock. Yet shock it was. Even the disciples were amazed. This is really surprising because Jesus had warned them on many occasions he would be arrested, tortured and crucified, and that on the third day he would rise again. What did they imagine he was talking about when he repeatedly urged them to take up the cross and follow him?

The reason, of course, is they couldn't imagine God would do such a thing. They thought he would act as they would have acted. They would never have sacrificed a child of theirs to save anyone – least of all sinners, people they utterly despised. They believed sinners merited punishment, not salvation. They believed the Messiah would be an instrument of God's wrath – that he would punish everyone who had strayed from the paths of righteousness.

## St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Office: 410 560 6776 · Rector: 443 425-2420  
Vicar: 410 878-5275 · Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

[www.ststeve.com](http://www.ststeve.com)

The Very Rev. Guy P Hawtin, Dean & Rector  
The Rev. John Novicki, Vicar ·

Associate Rectors:

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. C. Daniel Bursi,  
The Rev. Dr. Norman Flowers,

The Rev. M. Wiley Hawks & The Rev. Mark Newsome,  
Mrs Happy Riley, Director of Pastoral Care  
& Wedding Coordinator

### SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15 am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)  
11 am: Sung Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)  
Choral Services (as announced) – [evensong.ststeve.com](http://evensong.ststeve.com)

### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6 pm: Evening Prayer  
Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist  
Saturday, 5 pm: Family Eucharist

They didn't occur to them that they were sinners as much in need of forgiveness as the folks they despised. This isn't unusual. It's all simply the human condition. Other people's sins are far more serious than our own. Indeed, we don't actually commit sins. We just have little weaknesses.

Mercifully, God doesn't hold our hypocrisy against us. He sent his only begotten Son to redeem not only those serious sinners, but all those who merely experience little weaknesses – folks like Caiaphas, Annas and Judas, not to mention the scribes and Pharisees and, of course, me and you.

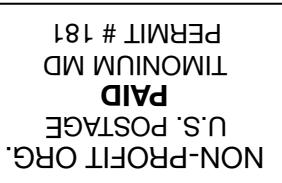
So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The empty tomb is our assurance of a new beginning. It is the physical affirmation that the slate will be wiped clean of the wrongs we have done, the evils we have committed.

All God asks is that we repent our wrong-doing and accept his forgiveness. All we need to do to receive his extraordinarily generous gift of everlasting life is accept the gift of forgiveness he offers. If you are ever offered a better deal than that . . . take it! *AMEN. GPH*✿

## For Our Country.

*ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage; We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favour and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honourable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogancy, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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