

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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FROM THE PARISH CLERGY

We're open at 50% capacity; Sadly, no singing is allowed

Governor Larry Hogan has implemented the beginning of the end of the "lockdown" in Maryland. This allows us to "re-open: at 50 percent of capacity, but, while music is permitted, we are not allowed to sing

Experts at the Centers for Disease Control believe that singing expels more air from our lungs than talking, and that it greatly increases the risk of spreading the Covid-19 virus. Our Sunday service schedule will thus resume at 8.00 AM, 9.15 AM and 11.00 AM subject to "social distancing" requirements.

We will celebrate the Eucharist at all three Sunday services until things return to some degree of normality. This will enable parishioners who usually attend the 9.15 AM Eucharist to consider occasionally worshipping at 8.00 AM or 11.00 AM. services.

In view of restrictions on school attendance, Sunday School will be temporarily suspended.

For shut-ins and folks still in quarantine we will be continuing our video recordings of Feast Day and Sunday Eucharists. These are posted on the **parish website (www.ststeve.com)**, **Youtube** and **Isaac the Eagle's Facebook** page.

You'll find them from 9.00 AM onwards every Sunday and Day of Obligation at **ststeve.com** at the bottom of the Home Page, under "Recent Blog Posts. A new midweek "broadcast" talk by the rector can also be found on the website every Wednesday or Thursday.

Meanwhile, please remember that in a bid to prevent the theft of checks mailed to the church, we have opened a Post Office Box for the exclusive use of the treasurer. Please mail your offerings to: **St Stephen's Anglican Church, P.O. Box 6161, Timonium, MD 21094**. All other mail should be sent to our street address. **GPH✘ & JPN✘**

A MEDITATION ON THE TRINITY

The Trinity should present no problem for Sci-fi fans

Trinity Sunday is always a bit of a challenge. It is not particularly easy to preach a sermon on the infinitely complicated nature of God's domestic arrangements. And how else can you describe the concept of three divine persons sharing one divine nature other than "infinitely complicated."

The notion is so complicated, in fact, that throughout all ages folks have had great difficulty coming to terms with the reality of the Trinity. Indeed, it is so difficult to understand that some people have even gone so far as to claim the idea is simply the invention of Fourth Century Christians.

But that's not true at all. Not by a long chalk. Read your Bibles and you'll discover the Holy Trinity there in the first three verses of Genesis, the very first book of the Bible.

"In the beginning God [*the Father*] created the heaven and earth. And the earth was without form, and

void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God [*the Holy Ghost*] moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, [*the Son, Jesus Christ, the divine Word, the Logos in Greek*] Let there be light: and there was light."

St. John put it this way in the first verse of his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, And the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The only conclusion to draw from this is that the Trinity is right at the heart of everything.

Some of the newer translations of the Bible do not make this entirely clear. The translators of the New English Bible, for example, saw fit to cut the Holy Ghost out of the act in Genesis altogether. They render the words "the Spirit of God" as "the wind" – as in "And a mighty wind that swept over the surface of the waters."

But that's not what the Hebrew says. The Hebrew reads: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of

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: The Very Rev. Mark Siegel

THOSE WHO MOURN: Mrs Victoria Siegel & family

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

the waters." And it is rendered in this fashion not only in both 16th Century English and German, but in 3rd Century BC Greek, not to omit First century AD Latin, Syriac (Aramaic), and Coptic – the four languages into which the most ancient translations of the Hebrew Bible were transcribed.

This gives you an indication of the serious nature of liberties modern translators take with the text of God's Holy Word – liberties that help explain why cutting edge theologians claim Jesus didn't teach the doctrine of the Trinity, but rather, that it was invented by early gentile theologians, who had been "tainted" with Greek religious ideas.

Actually, there's nothing uniquely modern about people denying the Trinity. The notion is so complicated that throughout all ages even devout Christians have had difficulty coming to terms with the reality of the Trinity.

Indeed, here in America the 18th Century gave birth to a sect that rejected the Trinity in its entirety. They are still around. They call themselves Unitarians.

But, truth to tell, denying the Trinity is more than a

little old fashioned and outmoded. We, who live in the second decade of the 21st Century, are much better equipped than previous generations to comprehend the concept a Trinitarian being and to grasp Aristotle's assertion that God's nature is likely to be very different from our own.

Most of us today are more familiar with scientific concepts than our forebears – if only through the medium of science fiction. But this makes it much easier for us to envisage life forms radically different from our own.

We can concede the possibility, for example, that while life on earth is carbon-based, life forms based on other compounds are possible: silicon, for instance. And just as we can conceive of non-carbon-based life forms, so we can also grasp the concept of three divine persons sharing one divine nature.

There is, however, a vast difference being coming to terms with the concept of a trinitarian life form and actually gaining an inkling of what it must be like to share something as intimate as one's own nature with two other people. It's far more intimate, for example, than sharing

an apartment or a breakfast table. In fact, the nearest we can come to it is Christian marriage.

Marriage is the oldest of the sacraments. The Book of Genesis tells us that in marriage, a man and a woman become – in a mystical, but no less real sense " – one flesh." And St. Paul tells us that marriage in making us "one flesh" reflects the mystical union between Christ and his Church.

This is an extraordinary statement. It means nothing less than the fact that it is in marriage human beings come closest to reflecting the nature God. For it is only in marriage that we can approach experiencing the bonds of altruistic love that bind together the three persons of Holy and Undivided Trinity.

In a very real sense, Christian marriage is like being born anew. In marriage, Christian husbands and wives can no longer to think of themselves in the first person singular. For them, the solitary letter "I" is replaced by the word "we." And in them, together with their children, we see an icon, a reflection – however imperfect – of the Holy, Blessed and Undivided Trinity. GPH✠

St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Office: 410 560 6776 · Rector: 443 425-2420
Vicar: 410 878-5275 · Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

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

9.15am: 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

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

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

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