

# St. Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church  
Timonium, Maryland

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Edited by Don Ruthig

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013

## FROM THE RECTOR

### Thanksgiving to God for the fruits of the earth

THERE'S something a bit odd about organizing a lavish feast to celebrate some mighty achievement and deliberately fail to invite the person who made it all happen. It wouldn't just be a case of bad manners, it would also be utterly stupid. It would make the celebration completely pointless. Yet that today is exactly the way most Americans seem to treat Thanksgiving.

The purpose of Thanksgiving is not to celebrate the turkey – one of the most profoundly simple minded creatures that ever lived; an animal (if it can rightly be termed an animal rather than a barely mobile vegetable) that absolutely deserves to be cooked.

The entire *raison d'être* for Thanksgiving is to give thanks to God for the bountiful gifts he has showered upon us. This is why the first settlers in Virginia, Maryland and Massachusetts initiated the celebration. And this is the reason why President George Washington proclaimed it after the defeat of the British army, then the most formidable fighting force in the world.

Yet today God is far from the central focus of Thanksgiving Day. Indeed, he comes far behind turkey, pumpkin pie and football. Thanksgiving, in fact, has become more a celebration of the family than a celebration of God's gifts at the harvest.

This is by no means entirely bad. Indeed, how can one condemn something that offers America's tens of thousands of fractured and dysfunctional families a taste of togetherness, if not in front of a flickering fire then a flickering TV screen.

Yet even in the countryside, Thanksgiving celebrations in the traditional manner are rapidly vanishing. We live in an age of factory farming. Technology is king. We plant two or three crops and grow

## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

Schedule, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013 to Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### CHRISTMAS EVE

Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

4.00 PM: Children's Christmas Service  
& Blessing of the Creche

7.00 PM: Family Candlelight Eucharist

10.30 PM: Choir sings carols followed by  
Solemn High Christmas Eucharist

### CHRISTMAS DAY

Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>

10.00 AM Sung Holy Communion

### PATRONAL FESTIVAL

The Feast of St. Stephen

Comm. Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>

8.00 AM: Holy Communion

9.15 AM: Choral Eucharist

11.15 AM: Choral Mattins

### NEW YEAR'S EVE

The Feast of St. Sylvester

Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013

11.15 PM

### EPIPHANY

Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014

At 6.00 PM The Choir will sing

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS FOR  
EPIPHANY

## Calendar of Events

### Weekly Activities at St Stephens

**Tuesdays, 7.00 AM:** Breakfast Fellowship at the Nautilus Diner

**Thursdays, 10.00 AM:** Knitting Circle meets in Quimby Hall

**Wednesdays, 6.30 PM:** Bridge Group meets in Quimby Hall

**Fridays, 10.30 AM:** Bible Study in the Cadwalader Room

### Special Events

**Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2.00 PM.** Afternoon Tea, Quimby Hall

**Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 12.00 Noon.** The Ladies Who Lunch at Bluestone Restaurant.

**Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9.00 AM:** Volunteers needed to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas.

them by hundreds of acres. Farm kids are raised on the same pre-packaged, homogenized diets as their counterparts in town. And they, too, probably wouldn't even recognize their foodstuffs in their natural state.

But the fact of the matter is that we are not a whit less dependent on God's grace for what the prayer book calls "the returns of the fruits of the earth" than we were 350 years ago. The fact that most of us can't tell the difference between a field of wheat, barley, rye or linseed doesn't make the grain harvest any less important.

Modern pesticides and fertilizers have vastly increased our farmers' yields, and the enormous advances in food preservation and refrigeration technologies in recent years have enormously improved our storage and distribution capabilities.

But this does not diminish the importance of God's role in the process. There are so many more mouths to feed than there were half a century ago, famine would have been endemic had God not endowed us with powers of invention.

Indeed, back in the late 1970, long before "climate change" had become the *cris de jour* – even before "global warming" and its predecessor: "nuclear winter – doomsayer Paul Ehrlich wrote *The Population Bomb*", a book prophesying widespread and catastrophic famines starting in the mid-1970s.

Thanks to our God-given resourcefulness, newly developed farming

## Christmas Memorial Flowers

To make a contribution towards the Church Christmas decorations in honor or memory of a loved one please complete this form and return it with a check (payable to St. Stephen's Church and marked for Christmas flowers) by December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Name of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Poinsettias (Red, White or Pink) 6 inches, single (5-8 blooms @ \$10 (# of plants.....))

7 inches, double, (10-12 blooms) @ \$16 (# of plants.....)

8 inches, triple, (Red) (12-18 blooms) @ \$27 (# of plants.....)

Total # of plants \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is IN HONOR, IN MEMORY OF, IN THANKSGIVING FOR (please circle)

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE  
THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**8.00 AM & 9.15 AM HOLY COMMUNION**

For the Epistle: I Corinthians 4:1-5

The Gospel: St. Matthew 11:2-10

**11.15 AM CHORAL MATTINS**

The Psalter: 85

The First Lesson: Isaiah 35

The Second Lesson: St. Matthew 11:2-10

techniques and agricultural technologies – including genetic engineering -- have not only granted our nation an abundant food supply, it has also enabled us to feed many parts of the world where hunger was once endemic. That is a very real reason for us – and the rest of the world – to give him thanks.

But our God-given cleverness has proved a bane as well as a blessing. It often develops into an infatuation with our own intellects that keeps us from developing any meaningful relationship with our Maker. We give ourselves the credit for our ability to grow larger, less flavorful vegetables than our forebears, oblivious of the fact that cultivation and creation are horses of entirely different colors.

In the gospel of St. Matthew Jesus tells us “take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed.” If we believe that he really is the Almighty, all-seeing, all-loving Creator of all things then we ought to trust him to care for us and act in our best interests.

He is urging us cultivate a childlike faith. The word "childlike" is not be confused with the word "childish." There's nothing childish about a childlike faith. Nothing could be more mature. After all, Jesus says: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Children, for example, have no difficulty with the concept of miracles. Children instinctively grasp that, for God, doing a miracle is simply a piece of cake. Adults, by contrast, distract themselves

with pointless questions that have no bearing on the real issue. Rather than ponder why God performs a particular miracle, we try to figure out the unimportant technicalities concerning how he performs it.

Kids go directly to the heart of the matter – to the "Why?" not to the "How?" And they have no difficulty accepting that the unsophisticated but entirely correct answer is: "Because God loves us."

Knowing the right answer is very important. For until we can accept God's love, we will find it impossible to show him the gratitude we owe him. Indeed, it is the acceptance of his love that puts the “thanks” in Thanksgiving. **GUY HAWTIN ✱**

**FROM THE LADIES WHO LUNCH**

**Join Us On December 18<sup>th</sup>**

The Ladies of St Stephen’s will hold their Christmas lunch at Bluestone Restaurant on Aylesbury Road, Timonium, at noon on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. As has become custom, ladies are invited to bring their gentlemen with them to this time of fellowship and good food. **Please be sure to let us know you’re coming by December 10<sup>th</sup>**. Bluestone requires and accurate count for our reservation. Call Joyce Perlberg at 410-252-2680

**✠ PARISH PRAYER LIST ✠**

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice & Dr. Bob’s Place. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the parish office at 410 560 6776.

**RECOVERY:** Donna, Aida, Eunice, Cherry, Ruth, Carolyn, Hilarie, Vivian, Jack, Suzie, Pat, Mary John, Charlene, Bill, Rodney, Hamilton, Jane, Donald, Annie, Carolyn, Cynthia, Evelyn, Edith, Dee, Cal, Finton, Fran, Tracey, Linda Lou, Edie, John, Beth, Adele, Lydia, Chandra, Brady, Nina, Stacy, Dee, Val, baby Charlie and Maryann.

**LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Connie, Azalea, Stephen, Ann, Paige, Lydia, Remi, Melba, John

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE:** Lt. Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt. Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN. Lt. Col. Harry Hughes, Ian Cadwalader serving in Afghanistan.

**✠ St Stephen’s Anglican Church ✠**

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093  
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Rectory (410) 665-1278  
Web Address: [ststeve.com](http://ststeve.com)

RECTOR: The Rev. Canon Guy P. Hawtin

VICAR: The Venerable Michael Kerouac

ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric

DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Happy Riley  
(410- 252-8674)

WEDDING CO-ORDINATORS: Happy Riley (410-252-8674)  
Martha Miller (410-321-9038)

**SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.00 am: Said Eucharist

9.15 am: Sung Eucharist (*with Nursery & Church School*)

11.15 am: Choral Mattins (*1st Sunday: Choral Eucharist*)

6.00 pm: Choral Evensong (*1st Sunday only*)

**WEEKDAY SERVICES**

Wednesday, 6.00 pm: Evening Prayer

Friday Noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5.00 pm: Family Eucharist.

**COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY  
IN ADVENT AND THE CONCEPTION  
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

AMEN

*Book of Common Prayer Page 92*

Almighty and everlasting God, who stooped to raise fallen humanity through the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen your glory revealed in our human nature and your love made perfect in our weakness, may daily be renewed in your image and conformed to the pattern of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

AMEN

Return Service Requested

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