

St. Stephen's News

St. Stephen's Traditional Episcopal Church, Timonium, Maryland

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Edited by Anne Hawkins

May 5th, 2009

FROM THE RECTOR

Archaeologists reveal King Herod's grisly end

KING HEROD was so bitterly hated by his Jewish subjects that some 70 years after his death they ransacked the palace where he was buried and desecrated his grave. Professor Ehud Netzer of the Hebrew University's Institute of Archaeology in Jerusalem unearthed the smashed sarcophagus in the tomb at the Herodium fortress/palace last year, but Herod's bones were missing.

The desecration of the tomb of a long dead monarch might seem surprising. Herod was a highly cultured man with exquisite architectural taste. He adorned the Holy Land with magnificent buildings, including cities, palace fortresses such as Masada and Herodium, and his spectacular reconstruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Herod, whose father and grandfather were Jewish converts, was appointed by the Roman Senate governor of Galilee at the age of 25 and was made "King of the Jews" in about 40 BC. He remained king for around 34 years.

He was a highly capable economic manager. Under his governance trade and commerce flourished and the gross national product of his kingdom grew exponentially. The efficiency of his tax collection service kept his Roman masters very happy.

There was, however, a dark side to his character. All his life Herod suffered from depression and paranoia. It led him to commit terrible acts, one of which St. Matthew records in his account of the Nativity.

The aging Herod, only about two years from death, slaughtered all of the male infants in the neighborhood of Bethlehem in an effort to kill the new-born Messiah who he feared would steal his throne.

Nobody was safe from Herod's paranoia. He murdered uncles, cousins, nephews and his favorite wife. His friend Mark Anthony – Cleopatra's lover – quipped that it was safer to be Herod's pig than his son.

Spurred by paranoid suspicions, Herod executed two of his sons, fearing they were plotting against him. As a Jew, however, he refused to eat pork on religious grounds.

He died in the year 4 BC in Jericho after a long illness that medical experts believe was chronic kidney disease complicated by Fournier's gangrene. The visible worms and putrefaction described in his final days are likely to have been scabies.

The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus records Herod was so concerned nobody would mourn his death, he gave orders to have several thousand distinguished men killed at the time of his death so that the displays of grief that he craved would take place.

It was, above all things, this sort of cruelty that led Jewish rebels to desecrate his grave and scatter his bones when they occupied Herodium, a fortified palace seven and a half miles south of Jerusalem, during the first Jewish Revolt which began in AD 66.

The discovery of Herod's tomb solves one of Israel's greatest archeological mysteries. Based on the writings of Josephus, most researchers had believed that Herod was buried at Herodium, but multiple excavations at the site failed to locate the grave. Professor Netzer's successful dig focused on a different part of the site than previous excavations, between the upper part of Herodium and the site's two palaces.

Herod constructed his tomb at Herodium because the site played a role in two dramatic events in his life. In the year 43 BC, when Herod was still governor of the Galilee, he was forced to flee Jerusalem along with his family after his enemies the Parthians laid siege to the city.

His mother's chariot flipped over near Herodium, and Herod

became hysterical until he learned she was only lightly injured. Shortly after, the Parthians caught up with him, although Herod and his men emerged victorious in the ensuing battle.

At Herodium, Herod built one of the largest monarchical complexes in the Roman Empire. It served as a residential palace, a sanctuary, an administrative center and a mausoleum.

On an artificial cone-shaped hill that could be seen from Jerusalem, he constructed a fortified palace surrounded by watchtowers to be used solely in wartime. Below it was an additional palace, the size of a small town and known as "Lower Herodium." The palace included many buildings, fancy gardens, pools, stables, and storage areas.

Upon his death, Herod's eldest surviving son, Herod Archelaus, continued to live at Herodium. After Judea became a Roman province, the site served as a center for Roman prefects. With the outbreak of the Great Revolt, Herodium was seized by the rebels, but then handed over without resistance to the Romans following the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Fifty years later, Herodium was also used by the rebels during the Bar Kokhva revolt, but was abandoned thereafter.

In the 5th century AD, the site was settled by Byzantine monks, and then served as a leper colony before being finally abandoned in the 7th century AD.

FROM THE VESTRY

Parish Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 17th

ANNUAL Parish Meetings are rarely well attended affairs – unless, of course, something ghastly is going on. Praise be, nothing ghastly has been going at St. Stephen's for quite some time, so we have been expecting a less than impressive turnout for our Parish Meeting on Sunday, May 17th.

Over the years, we've tried all manner of strategies to improve attendance at our annual meetings with little success. This year, however, Chief Lay Reader Peter Threadgill and parishioner Elsie Entwisle have suggested a doozie – feeding you!

On Sunday, May 17th we plan to invite you all to a breakfast/brunch immediately following the 9.15 AM service. For this Sunday – and this Sunday only – the 9.15 AM and 11.15 AM services will be combined and the annual meeting will take place over breakfast.

At the meeting, the clergy and vestry will report on the parish's progress, discuss plans for the future and answer parishioners questions. We shall also be electing new vestry members. This year the nominating committee is re-nominating the three vestrymen whose terms expire this year. They are Brock Johnson, John Novicki and Dr. Kirby von Kessler. The candidates' biographies appear below:

Brock Johnson

A Baltimore native, Brock Johnson is a long time stalwart of St. Stephen's, who joined the vestry this year upon the resignation of Dr. Phil Briscoe. Brock has for many years served as the parish catechist, preparing our candidates for confirmation.

Brock teaches our Friday morning Bible study and leads the Discussion Group that meets between the 9.15 AM and 11.15 AM services. He also pinch hits for the clergy in leading the Tuesday Morning Bible Study which at 7.00 AM in the Nautilus Diner on York Road.

John Novicki

John Novicki has been a teacher since 1987 and is a Media Technology Specialist with Baltimore County School System. John is a Postulant for Holy Orders, a lay reader and serves as the parish's vergier. Before attending St. Stephen's, served as Vergier of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Catonsville. His wife, Diane, leads our Sunday School.

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR
THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**
Sunday, May, 10th, 2006

8:00 AM & 9:15 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
The Epistle: James 1:17-21
The Gospel: St. John 16:5-15
11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER
The Psalter: Psalm 116
First Lesson: Job 19:21-27a
Second Lesson: St. John 12:44-50

The couple have three children: Jamie, a graduate of Loyola University, who works in Washington, and John and Katie, who attend St. Stephen's Sunday School. Since the age of 16, John has been an enthusiastic member of the re-enactment movement. He specializes in the Civil War, World War I and World War II. Currently, he is researching the career of chaplain serving with a Canadian parachute regiment.

Dr Kirby von Kessler

Dr. Kirby von Kessler, one of Baltimore's leading orthopedic surgeons, retired from practice a couple of years ago. He remains active in his profession, however, serving as a consultant to the Social Security Administration.

Kirby, a long time member of the parish, serves as the lay reader and acolyte at the 8.00 AM service. He is also the parish registrar. A keen fox hunter, Kirby is an accomplished horseman and is active in Baltimore equestrian circles.

COLLECT FOR THE WEEK

Third Sunday After Easter

ALMIGHTY God, who showest to them that are in error the light of thy truth, to the intent they may return into the way of righteousness: Grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may avoid those

✠ St. Stephen's Traditional ✠ Episcopal Church

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RECTOR: The Ven. Guy P. Hawtin
ASSOCIATE RECTOR: The Rev. James V. Johnson, Jr.
VICARS: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley, The Rev. Robert Menas
& The Rev. Jonathan Filkins
ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric
DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)
WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

SUNDAY SERVICES
8.00am -- Holy Communion
9.15am -- Holy Communion (Nursery & Church School)
11.15am -- Morning Prayer (Nursery)
(1st. Sun. of the month: Holy Communion at 11.15am)

WEEKDAY SERVICES
Wednesday: 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Friday: Noon: Healing Eucharist
Saturday: 5.00PM Family Eucharist.

things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN. *Book of Common Prayer, Page 173*

✠ 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 list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the office at 410 560 6776.

RECOVERY: Rosemary, Ruth, James, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Rosemarie, Debbie, David, Skippy, Jack, Grace, Bob, Fran, Doris, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erlene, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, Polly, Katherine, Helen; William, Betty, Cal, Wendell, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Dorcas, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tracy, Tom. Lelilah, Jennifer, Miriam, Harriet, Karen, Steve, George, Eliza, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Marian, Edith Anne, Steven, Jeanne, Judith, Angela, Tammy; Ellen, Jim, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Robert, Christine, Ruth, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, George, Bryan, Jason, Jane, Joan, Frances, Ernie, Pat, Lynn, Michael, Ray, Leslie, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Robert, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D'Metrius, Rachel, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Alma, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, John, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Elizabeth, Gloria, Lee Emily, Elsie, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Eudora, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Mackie, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, Thomas, Jeanne, Sister Catherine-Grace, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Rebecca, Dorothy, Joanne, ✠Albion, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Geraldine, Maxine, Ann Sharon & Dennis.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Donna, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Georgetta, Carolyn, Perry, Suzanne, Tony, Robert, Doris, Drake, The Norris family; Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Tom, Susan, Debbie, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, Jo Anne, Mary, Gregory, Isabel, Bobby, Dorothy, Harriet, Darren, Scott, Rebecca, William, Charles, Joyce, Asfa, Eleanor, Kathy, Linda, James, Barry, Ann, Evelyn, Jeanette, Elizabeth, Virginia, Mildred, Chris, Micki, Stephen, Erik, Carol, Sandra, Elsie, Rhae, John, Robert, Mary, Michael & Loyal.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Alex Bursi, US. Navy; Capt. Charles Bursi & Lt. Col. Harry Hughes, U.S. Air Force; Lt. Col. R. J. Lytle & PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, U.S. Army.

HYMNS FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Sunday, May 10th, 2006

PROCESSIONAL: 296 (Lucerna Laudoniae)
For the beauty of the earth

GRADUAL HYMN: 375 (Nova vita)
Breath on me, breath of God

SERMON : 376 (Down Ampney)
Come down, O love divine

COMMUNION HYMN: 210 (Schmuecke Dich)
Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness

RECESSIONAL: 282 (Laud anima)
Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

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