

St. Michael and All Angels Annual Vestry Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 2017

2016 Report of the Parish Priest

“You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house” 1 Peter 2:5

Looking back over 2016 the overriding theme has been the celebration of St. Michael's 50th Anniversary. In all things there was an underlying sense of gratitude for the fifty years of Christian community, worship and ministry of the parish. Building up to the celebration of 50 years since the placing of the cornerstone, there was a tremendous sense of appreciation for early parishioners who were founding members, their vision so passionate and their work so dedicated. The accompanying joy in those early beginnings was not more evident than in the stories and memorabilia presented by Edie Stewart at one of the 50th Anniversary Planning Committee meetings. Having been inspired by her we arranged for a reproduction of the Thorndale Anglican Mission cookbook published by these early parishioners who clearly applied themselves wholeheartedly to this fundraising project back in 1965.

Looking through the cookbook at the many local services and merchants who endorsed the project, it is easy to see that our neighbourhood has changed. Most of them no longer exist. I went on a little sensitivity tour to the addresses given in the cookbook and saw that out of the 30 or so establishments that endorsed the cookbook, a little electrical and plumbing supplies enterprise that advertises over its door “since 1958”, and the bar, “Chez Paul” (previously, “Chez Paul Valade”), still exist. But, the pharmacies, flower shops, variety stores, hardware stores, meat wholesaler, shoe store, home decor are nowhere to be found. The Hotel Ste. Genevieve has been re-purposed and is presently the Chateau Sur le Lac, seniors' Residence.

I believe the only reason the Church of St. Michael and All Angels is still alive and well is because it has been built here by God for us, the members, the “living stones”, to do the work in this community that God has purposed us to do. But we are called not only to do, but to be the body of Christ reaching out to the people around us to reveal the presence of God. In this season of Epiphany, we are invited to ask ourselves about the manifestation of God's presence. How does God reveal His presence to us? How does God reveal His presence to people living around us? How are we forming ourselves to recognize that revelation and be agents of the glory that is revealed?

The final event of our 50th Anniversary will be a Parish Retreat in mid-February where we will be led by one of our previous rectors, the Rev. Murray Henderson. More about this event is being announced and everyone is encouraged to attend. This retreat weekend will end with a Service of Holy Communion in Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Consecration of the church in February 1967.

This past year we have had the privilege of having a student, Stanley Brooks, from the Diocesan College come to St. Michael's for his In Ministry year and then to stay on as our Honorary Deacon

Assistant. Stanley has been a wonderful addition to the leadership of the parish. He has been leading the Wednesday Lunchtime Bible Study and is working on developing a Men's Group. He is also interested in visiting the elderly and those who have difficulty getting out. He has preached and helped with the Advent Quiet Day. Please be sure to read his report.

Looking ahead to the coming year, the parishes of the West Island are meeting to discuss new possibilities for ministry in the West Island. Our discussions are in the very early stages but changes will come this year. Members of St. Michael's have been involved in the conversations held at two Archdeaconry meetings and more will be made known as ideas develop into something more concrete.

St. Michael's has been working as part of a group of churches and benevolent organizations called "Lutheran-Anglican Refugee Alliance Montreal" (LARAM) over this past year. We have now filled out the request, through *Action Réfugiés Montréal*, to the Government of Quebec to sponsor a specific family. Until approvals have been received we are limited as to how much information we can share about the family we hope to sponsor. As soon as approvals have been received details about the family will be available. The family we are hoping to bring to Canada is a mother and father and four children. We've been told that it may take a number of years before the family arrives. Financial support for this project is shared among the various groups in the alliance. It is my hope that St. Michael's will be able to contribute our share of the cost.

Finally, this coming year it is my hope to take a 4 month sabbatical starting late summer early fall. The details are not in place yet but more will be announced in the coming months. While I am away, Rev. Deacon Stanley will take on the leadership of the parish.

I am deeply grateful for the honour and privilege of being part of St. Michael and All Angels. I am blessed beyond words and I thank God for you and for your faith, for your love of the brothers and sisters. I want to thank all those who are involved as leaders at St. Michaels, and I especially thank Alaina Benoit for her leadership of the Children's ministry. Thank you to Dawn Bontemps for sharing her gift of music. Lynn Cloutier continues with the weekly Power Point and I thank her for her dependability and creativity. Thank you to our administrative assistant, Pat Drinkwater for her work in the office. My deepest gratitude is for Cheryl Thoms, Lydia Latulip and Dominick Merle who work so hard in their service to our parish. They are people of profound faith and love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Our Lord's Service

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Michelle+

January 14, 2017