

anglican parish of BOKSBURG;

RECTOR'S REPORT TO VESTRY 2018

It's my pleasure once again to present my report on the needs of the parish.

The story of the parish is a personal story, a story of many people doing a lot. Let me begin with what is being achieved. It is the dependability of so many that I value.

Sacristans;

Although we have many dedicated sacristans, we need to fill a gap or two at St Gabriel's, and also at St Michael's where teams have been reduced to one person. For the rest the team continues to be dedicated and totally dependable.

Music and Sound;

At the helm of our music is the talent we have in Kyle. Visitors to our services comment on his ability. And the regulars are sure to be enthralled every service by fresh expressions of his artistic playing. A wonderful development has been the move to start a young persons choir. In this Kyle has been helped by Dalene Woods, and their first showing (contributing some items to our Carols service) was very well received. A Lenten devotion is planned for Palm Sunday. Again we were able to join with the Cathedral and the Parish of Germiston in a programme of worship for Advent and Christmas that saw choirs of around twenty people and congregations exceeding 90. At the other congregations the ability of the techs continues to improve and the congregations on the whole are able to sing lustily to the accompaniment given. I must not forget to mention Merrill who is growing in stature as an accompanist and is learning to speed read music. At St Raphael's we have taken the step of doing away with hymn books. Because of worshipping on chairs, with nowhere to put books but on the floor, I had adopted a practice of selecting hymns from one hymn book only each Sunday. This was very limiting. Now with the use of the digital projectors the choice is open. Books are not used, but a few hymn sheets are produced each week for those who cannot see the screens from where

they are, or those who prefer not to look up. It is going well. We have added to that, having the readings and the entire liturgy displayed on screen. This has entailed a "little" extra work every week for the person responsible for putting this out digitally. In time though a whole library of hymns and readings will have been accumulated.

Servers, and lay ministers;

I was delighted to be able to introduce 8 Eucharistic Assistants (5 at St Michael's and 3 at St Raphael's). Most of them were young adults (all at St Michael's were.) Sadly with her hardly getting into the swing of things we are to lose Karabo Maupa from St Raphael's, but we wish her well as she continues on the process of her marriage and leaves us for her new family in Delmas.

We have also seen the retirement of two lay ministers from St Michael's, Anne MacKay and Aubrey Jeremiah. Perhaps they should be considered for the Bishop's Medal as both have served in many ways for many years. As I mentioned to the Lay Ministers at their termly breakfast, it is really as Eucharistic ministers rather than as Lay Ministers that they retire. At least Anne will continue with ministry in the parish outside of liturgical duties. I would love to have a crack at trying to bring this separation of terminology into the Diocesan Rules at our next Synod.

Lectionary

We continue to put together our own Lectionary, following the official ACSA lectionary for Sundays and the daily offices, but drawing on Common Worship of the Church of England for Sunday Evensongs and for Weekday Eucharists, and on the APB'89 lectionary for Feast Days which remains vastly superior to the new readings for Feasts drawn from a compromising Church of England and Episcopal Church which informs the official lectionary. On this matter too I addressed the Lay Ministers. (The Revised Common Lectionary being mainly Protestant / Reformed, does not include the Feasts, and each Anglican Province or National Church does its own thing.) An improvisation this year was the publishing of the Sunday readings in their entirety with the introductions on our web-site each week.

Clergy:

The Bishop was kind enough to allow me to stay on an extra year, till July of this year, after I reached retirement age last year. This may be renewed for another year. Our clergy team was strengthened by the arrival on retirement of Fr Atholl Selkirk, so that we are well covered for priests.

Readers; and Flowers;

Again congratulations go to our readers for the quality of their reading. The flower arrangers have continued to delight.

Sidesmen and Welcomers.

As always sidesmen arrive mostly on time and carry out their duties well. While the welcomers are extending a friendly welcome to those coming to church, they are not yet fulfilling the main task of identifying and caring for newcomers. Hopefully, this will be addressed shortly.

Prayer Ministry

We have had two new members join our prayer ministry team at St Raphael's, Linda Selkirk and Jenny Barr. Linda joins our resource personnel as a Diocesan Siyalalela counsellor. For the rest the ministry seems to be appreciated by the congregants.

Car Guards

Again, at St Michael's the worshippers can worship in relative peace relying on our car guard teams to keep watch over their cars. Thanks to them. .

Teas

An extra burden has been placed on the tea teams with the introduction of our monthly birthday teas on the first Sunday of each month. The Council needs to sort out some problems with regard to this.

Youth Worship;

Last but not least is our team of ministers for Youth worship. This year we are up to 21 ministers, only one short of our full complement required to provide for all different age levels in teams so that no minister carries

the burden of being on duty every Sunday. The number of attendees has been up this year on 2017, though 2017 itself was not bad. Of course (as was the case last year,) with a range of ages from grade 2 to grade 6 meeting together, those in the under-represented age spectrum will drift as indeed they have. I hope we will maintain the division of ages throughout this year and in the years to come.

How to show appreciation to them?

Still I would like to see the Council come up with some idea for showing appreciation to all the individuals, who keep all this going. I have mentioned to the Council without any response the possibility of an annual dinner in their honour. We need something.

Aside from these time and talents tasks, there are many other tasks that get done in the parish.

Parish Council

The tea groups at Council continue to be a valuable way of getting councillors involved in bringing their ideas forward. Looking at the minutes for the past year (and I hope you do read them, either at church or from the web-page) it seems that only a few things have been introduced and accomplished this year - and often taking a long time. Council structure needs to be looked at, and there is a proposal to vestry in this regard.

Thank you to the councillors.

Fund - Raising and Fellowship Committee.

This has been a year of maintenance for fund-raising and fellowship with the past being repeated without much creativity. I hope we can restructure to assist in promoting this, and particularly to bring in youth fellowship.

Maintenance;

This is another area that needs to be taken into consideration in a restructuring of Council. Fortunately there have been some individuals (not on council) who have kept things going in this regard.

Pedlar Place

Pip Chaplin has done great work at Pedlar Place this past year as manager, but there has been no structure of intercommunication with Council. Councillors were asked to approve quotes without anyone present to speak to them. This needs to be included in the restructuring.

School

The school has grown slightly over the past year, and would have come close to turning over a profit had it not been for the necessary decision to employ another teacher so that Grade R could be separated from grade 00. Towards the end of the year the Head of School Barbara Ford resigned. She was a very good teacher who had stepped in to fill the gap after the many disasters we had in the area of Head. She has been temporarily replaced by Diane Amooore who brings great administrative educational experience to the school. Ann will report on this herself.

Creche.

The past year has seen the creche at St Michael's being registered with the Dept of Social Welfare. As always the dedication of Fr Michael and Ursula have changed the lives of many in the neighbourhood.

Dedicated Giving.

In past years we had a system in which DG numbers were allocated according to the method of giving. This was primarily so that we could keep the number of sets of envelopes ordered from the printer to a minimum. Over the years as people discontinued giving, upon which we would give their number to someone else, and then take up giving, remarkably remembering what their number was, there has grown a large confusion of numbers. We have now introduced a system where each family has a unique number which will never be given to anybody else. We are stamping the number on envelopes where this is required. We hope this will sort out the confusion. At present there is a little resistance and some teething problems that we are encountering. WE would like to ask for your support. In addition we ask that you take note that we do not give out envelopes each year unless we have received a pledge for that year. Sadly so many parishioners come to the office and say they did not get envelopes, and we find that they did not fill in a pledge form. Please assist us in this.

VISION

This year I find myself moved to speak very sternly on our vision, the vision of one parish of three congregations. We have experienced great tension with people wanting to move in separate directions, especially at St Raphael's, with Teen Worship Ministers first , and now Kid's Praise ministers actually going ahead in making their own local arrangements around this ministry. We have had suggestions that each congregation (often referred to as parishes even by those in positions where they should know better) should hold their own vestries.

AN INDEPENDENT PARISH OF SUNWARD PARK

I tested the waters at Council by suggesting that we put on the agenda at vestry a motion proposing that St Raphael's become an independent parish. This was rejected (the councillors are the ones who should be most able to appreciate the need to stay together,) However if the majority of the congregation desire to be separate, then maybe one has to go that way.

THE WARDENS AND UNITY

We have introduced a statement of responsibilities of wardens that will see the wardens become parish figures and not local congregation figures. Of course there is no way that we can enforce this. There is no provision for the removal of a warden who does not fulfil his or her obligations. I believe our structure can and should be taken further to enhance this role of the wardens. This is in the proposal of structural change.

LAST WORDS

In my thanks I have left out some - I have left out the employees of the parish. To Stellah Chitenje at St Gabriel's to Silvia Tagane at St Raphael's, to Amanda Motsoane with her cheerful smile at St Michael's, to Buti Peter Mohlala with his sense of humour, and to Debbie West-Mace in the office who holds it all together so well, thank you to all of you.

A last thank you to the Wardens and to my wife Di , who often feels taken for granted and neglected, for their support for me.