

St. Michael and All Angels

Anglican Church

The Diocese of Saldanha Bay



Our Mission

To honour God by proclaiming God's Word in a spirit filled church, through nurturing leadership, holistic growth, mission and care groups in a Discipling Environment

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RECTOR: The Revd Canon David Mills

TO THE PARISH FAMILY OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, EDGEMOED

PASTORAL LETTER AND PARISH NEWS SEPTEMBER 2018

Dear Friends,

I greet you in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blesses us with abundance, surrounding us with Angels and Archangels, the messengers of God to protect us in all things.

In my sermon, preached on Sunday 9th September at the 09h00 service, I felt led to make several points, which relate to our life together as the parish Family of St Michael's. I want to encourage you to listen to this sermon, via our Parish Website.

In essence I drew from the following passage, contained in the letter of St Paul to the Philippian church, chapter 4, vs. 10-14.

"10 I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. 11 Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. 12 I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. 14 In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress." NRSV

The context of the passage and indeed most of Chapter 4, which parallels 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9, is the plea for support for the Christians in Palestine, who were suffering greatly through a severe famine.

We must remember too that Paul writes this letter from prison and yet has, "...learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need." (Phil. 4: 12 b. NRSV). In addition it must be borne in mind that this state of contentment not only applies in respect of physical resources, but equally to a state of having a spirit of contentment – being spiritually enabled to learn, "*the secret of contentment*", regardless of what life brings to us.

I preached on this text, in order to address what I perceive to be a spirit of discontent in the hearts and lives of some of our parish family. Possible signs of this are: lower attendances at our Sunday services, a feeling that our worship could be more dynamic and for some a feeling of deep concern, at the consideration by the Diocese of pastoral responses to those in the LGBTIQ+ communities, who are members of our Church.

One of the great signs of having concerns about our parish and the wider church is that this shows that we are invested in the church and really care about what is happening – if no concerns were being felt, it might be asserted that we are simply passive spectators in the life of the church. Can I appeal to all those who have ideas and or concerns to speak to me or to anyone else in leadership at St Michael's – let's keep the conversation going, so that we can grow into a place where we learn the secret of being content, no matter what happens both materially and spiritually in our lives.

Ministry initiatives and information for our Parish Family

- *Availability of your rector to the parish* – I recently announced that the Bishop has accepted my resignation as Canon Theologian and Dean of Studies, effective from the end of this month – this means that I will be able to fully devote my energies to leadership and pastoral ministry in our parish;
- *Worship and Praise* – Eugene has kindly agreed to pick up this vital ministry, as Sean has indicated that he wishes to step down from this ministry, after many years of choosing songs for our services and managing the media desk. We owe Sean an enormous debt of gratitude, for this sterling ministry over the years and will soon advise when we will have an opportunity to appropriately honour him;
- ***Forthcoming 40th Anniversary Events:***
 - *40th Anniversary Dinner* – we look forward to welcoming those who will be joining us for our Anniversary Dinner – the Anniversary Planning Team have been hard at work planning a very special meal and function for us, for which we are truly grateful. Sadly the Bishop is not able to join us, as he will be away at this time, attending the Synod of Bishops and Provincial Standing Committee meetings.
 - ***NB: There will only be one service at 09h00 on Sunday 30th September – please make a note of this.***
 - *The Licensing of 4 trainees to join our Guild of Lay Ministers* – I am delighted to confirm that Bishop Raphael will license 4 newly trained Lay Ministers, on Sunday 7th October at the 09h00 Patronal Festival Service, which also celebrates our 40th anniversary as a parish. ***The four to be licensed are: Amy Adams, Mo Ditodi, Clinton Abrahams and Sabine Bailey.***
 - *2018 Annual Parish photograph* – if you can, please will you join us on ***Sunday 7th October, to be included in our annual parish photograph***, which will be taken at the end of the service - the Bishop and his Executive Chaplain will form part of this photograph.
- *St Michael's Band* – we have begun the process of assembling a Band, to accompany our worship on the 1st Sunday of each month (and possibly other Sundays, as discerned) - the challenge is that we do not have, apart from Geoff Lombard and Johan Franz, local musicians and have thus been dependant on bringing in musicians from further afield. The Praise and Worship Focus Ministry is looking at ways of addressing this, in building towards having a permanent Band at St Michael's.

- *The Season of Creation* – will be launched on Sunday, 14th October and will run over 5 Sundays – full details will be sent you shortly. Do make a point of attending our services through this time, when we will be able to honour God's Creation, which is, in so many ways, being polluted and destroyed.
- *The Parish Open Forum* – I am very grateful to those who were able to attend the recently held Open Forum to discuss the proposed Motion on Human Sexuality to go before the Synod, taking place from 3rd to 6th October. This was a sensitive, challenging and emotive subject to address – I am inspired at the spirit of openness, which prevailed at this forum and believe this bodes well, as the highest decision making body in our Diocese considers this.
- *2019 Alpha Course* – although Alpha was run quite a number of years ago at St Michael's, we are hoping that, God willing, this programme will be offered again next year. I understand that the material has been considerably updated and thus is, in many respects, quite different to that which will have been experienced by those in who have been on Alpha in the past. Details of the when Alpha will run will be made known soon.
- *Focus on the ministry of our Home Cells* – Sunday 4th November will profile our Home Cell ministry at St Michael's – do come along to her about this special and ministry which has, over the years, provided so many blessings to members of this ministry.
- *Use of the New Revised Standard Bible (NRSV)* – following a trial period in January this year, the use of this version of the NRSV Bible in our services was endorsed by the Parish Council. In this version of the Bible, sexist language has been altered into inclusive language – this is an important change, as it reinforces the Church's call to move away from the use of patriarchal language. This Bible is an accurate translation of both the Hebrew and Greek texts and yet easy to read and understand.

I encourage you to embrace this version – comparison with, for example, the NIV Version of the Bible immediately shows this change – Tanya at our parish office will take orders, should you wish to purchase a copy online – the cost is approximately R 169.00.

In closing, it should be clear from the above, that there are many activities taking place at Michael's, in which you are cordially invited to share – let's strive to learn the secret of what it means to be content in all circumstances – let us keep being in conversation as we trust our Lord and Saviour to guide us in these challenging times.

God bless you all,
Fr David

Our Vision

To be a Multi-Generational Church creating a culture of discipleship where all people can Believe, Belong and Become
◆ Relevant ◆ Effective ◆ Dynamic
Followers of Jesus Christ.