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# ST MICHAEL'S SWORD

SEPTEMBER 2017

ST MICHAEL'S  
ANGLICAN CHURCH  
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF  
SOUTHERN AFRICA



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## MESSAGE FROM REVD LINDA SCHWARTZ

It is that time of year when the Churchwardens and the Treasurer will be giving us an indication of where St Michael's is financially. Some of you will already be aware that our income is down and so it will not come as too much of a surprise to hear requests for us all to re-examine our giving to the Church.

One of our parishioners visited a church in England and brought back a pamphlet on 'The why, what, where and how of giving'. I found this to be useful and, because it is a public document, I will quote some of what it says.

"It has often been said that the last thing to get converted is our pockets. Many of us warm up gradually to trusting God with our finances... Making decisions about how we allocate the money God has enabled us to earn requires deliberate thought ... In the Old Testament, God gave his people a stepping stone towards full obedience, and set a realistic, manageable, but still faith-building rate of stewardship. God asked them to set apart 10% of their income – the 'first fruits' of their harvest and allocate that back to God. This 'tithe' or 1/10<sup>th</sup> of our money, can be a good *starting point* for us today. How you calculate this 10% may need consideration and prayer." *Christ Church, Turnham Green*

This might be a little too legalistic for some of us, rather like working out 10% of our bill at a restaurant, and we may give more or less, depending on the service! My suggestion is not so much that we all calculate an exact percentage, but that we consider *whether* we are giving, *why* we are giving, and *what* we can realistically give given our personal circumstances.

A few Sundays ago I was preaching on Matthew's account of the Feeding of the 5000. We so often focus our attention on the miracle of five loaves of bread and two fish being multiplied into enough for all those people to eat and then to have twelve baskets of leftovers. But there are at least two other points of the story that caught my attention.

Firstly, whoever had that meagre portion of food, in John's gospel it is a small boy who brings the loaves and fish to Jesus, in the other gospels the disciples say, "We have only five loaves and two fish."

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As we move towards our Dedicated Giving Service on Sunday 8th October we are reminded of the awesome generosity of our God. Many of us grew up believing that it's nobler to give than to receive. We believe that it is selfish to receive. And we may feel vulnerable because we are not in control. We may also feel a (self-imposed) pressure to reciprocate. When responding to God's Gift of Grace we are free to accept God's unconditional love for us knowing that God is not expecting anything from us. One of my favourite movies was "Pay it Forward." When 12-year-old Trevor McKinney begins 7th grade his social studies teacher gives the class an assignment to devise and put into action a plan that will change the world for the better. Trevor's plan is a charitable programme based on the networking of good deeds.

He calls his plan "[pay it forward](#)", which means the recipient of a favour does a favour for three others rather than paying the favour back.

I would suggest that God would want us to accept his love and grace and "pay it forward" to others.

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 Paul writes words of encouragement that give reasons why we should be generous givers. It is the **best investment** you can make. It should be **fun**. It **takes away the burden of financial worry**. It **'enriches'** you. It **transforms your character**.

It **inspires others**. It **meets people's needs**. It is **evidence of real faith**. It **makes you a stakeholder** in the church.

It is **a response to God's gift to you**.

[Ten Reasons to Give Generously https://www.bibleinoneyear.org](https://www.bibleinoneyear.org)

Yours in Christ,

Barbara

(Continued from page 1)

It was the custom in those days for people travelling around to take a day's ration of food and, apparently, five loaves and two fish would have been enough for thirteen people so it is plausible that the food was the day's ration for the disciples and Jesus. In a crowd of that size and with everyone being hungry it would have taken a very generous spirit to let anyone know that there was some food around. Surely if we had a little food we would keep it for ourselves and not think of sharing in case we didn't get any. So the sharing of the food is in itself a miracle. What was it that prompted the child or the disciples to take what they had and give it to Jesus? Was it because they had been in the presence of Jesus and what they heard and received from him prompted them to give something back?

Secondly, when the disciples speak to Jesus about the lateness of the hour and the lack of food, Jesus tells them to feed the people. They know their financial situation does not remotely allow for the purchase of food for that crowd.

But they give to Jesus what they do have and he does something astonishing with it and, in the end, it is in fact the disciples who feed the crowd.

All they had to do was to give the food, meagre as it seemed, to Jesus. Then they were the ones who did the feeding by taking the baskets around.

Might we conclude that we are asked to give what we can, in a spirit of sharing, to offer to God what we can, and see what God can do with what we give, no matter how large or small the amount?

Yours in Christ

Linda

**FR RANTHITE NAMO CELEBRATES HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY**



The Social Responsibility Committee celebrated Father Ranthite Namó's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 30 July. In the photo are Fr Godfrey & Fr Namó.



Some members of the SR committee at the celebration:  
Moira Marcelino, Wendy Henwood, Zeldá Nhlápo, Fr Ranthite Namó, Di Levinsohn, Barney Curtis (chair), Gerry Gallow, Lynn Gibson.

Note in Parish Magazine: "The congregation is to remain seated until the end of the recession."

A parishioner asked the question: "Will all denominations be welcome at the ecumenical service." "Of course!" the vicar replied, "particularly tens, twenties and fifties."

**PILGRIMAGE TO LADY GREY—EASTER 2018**



**St Michael's is organising a pilgrimage to Lady Grey in 2018.**

Fr Godfrey will be leading a group of eighteen people. Please contact the Parish Office as soon as possible if you are interested. There are ten places left. The estimated cost is R4 500 per person which includes the event ticket and programme, four nights dinner/bed/breakfast and excludes transport. Transport arrangements will be made once we have our full complement of pilgrims.

The great Lady Grey Passion Play takes place once a year during the Easter weekend. For three days the cast and audience are lead from place to place in the village to act out the various scenes. This makes for great audience participation.

## AN AFTERNOON OUT AT LILIESLEAF FARM (BY TSELI THABANE)

I learned a lot of unexpectedly interesting things on 5 Aug 2017. That day, a group of us from St Michael's church took a trip to Liliesleaf Farm on Rivonia Road in Johannesburg. It took all of 10 minutes to get there so calling it a trip might be reaching.

Just one of the interesting things I learned was that some, not all, of the 10 Rivonia Treason trialists were taken into custody from Liliesleaf Farm – but, let me not bore you with information you probably already have.

I was excited to get plugged into St Michael's as I'm a relatively new congregant and I was quite curious about what had prompted the church to initiate the outing. I am a 30-something year old female that is originally from Lesotho. Being a South African citizen and being part of the South African workforce has meant that different aspects of this country's apartheid history and legacy, as well as the broader history and legacy of colonialism in Africa, have become quite topical. I have observed an elevated sense of urgency to talk about these topics in recent times.

Until recent months, I had distanced myself from thinking and talking about these topics with meaning or purpose. I thought myself to be separate from those with the responsibility of thinking and talking about apartheid and South Africa after the first democratic elections in 1994. My mind set was that of a spectator and I reasoned that was due to being from a different country.

The Liliesleaf trip challenged me and my spectator mind set, as have the growing discussions about apartheid, its legacy and race relations in South Africa post-1994.

So, being a South African citizen has begun to mean more to me than just paying taxes and complaining about one thing or another. Here's my thinking: I have the right to vote in this country, therefore, I have a responsibility to shape the country, to think, talk and act in constructive ways.

I noticed that these conversations evoke any number of feelings, for example, discomfort, anger, fatigue, confusion, dissatisfaction, helplessness and apathy. These negative feelings impact daily life and interactions, so I found a growing need to work through these in constructive ways. For this reason, I thought the timing of the outing to be just right.

The Liliesleaf trip reminded me that there are innumerable men, women and children who are no longer alive because of the apartheid system. Its legacy is broad and deep. So, I have taken up the role of student, learning about apartheid and South Africa as well as colonialism across the African continent. I may not be sure about what my role should be in these times and the future, but it is with consciousness and appreciation that I move forward. It is also with a keenness to change how I engage with these topics, mainly through intellectual debate, to listening for God's voice and direction.



Liliesleaf is open daily with discounts for children, students, pensioners and groups of 10 or more. See [www.liliesleaf.co.za](http://www.liliesleaf.co.za)

Back row l to r: Godfrey Henwood, Prashen Kika, Michael Klink, Chris Francis, Martha Gordon, Sandiso Dhlomo  
Front row: Rudo Pswarayi, Tseli Thabane, Bulelwa Vundla

## INSPIRATIONAL PRAYERS



Rise early  
when summer darkness  
still enwraps the trees.  
Walk into the dark forest  
with only your attentive heart.  
Gaze toward the east,  
take a deep breath, and wait.

After a short while you will see God  
carrying a lantern through the forest,  
bits of light bobbing up and down  
in and out, higher and higher  
the light climbs, spilling over  
into the spaces between the leaves  
and on into the world  
beyond the forest.

Then the beautiful darkness  
hands you over to the light.  
It slips away reverently  
into the bark of the tree trunks  
into the black earth  
into all those other countries  
that wait for its return.

Lift your face to the day-star now.  
Experience the coming of dawn.  
Bathed in morning light, pray  
that the lantern of your life  
move gently this day  
into all those places  
where light is needed.

posted on *Spirit First* with the permission of the  
poem's author  
© Macrina Wiederkehr

## A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY NUN'S PRAYER

This prayer was forwarded to me by Teresa Moore, whose father, James Leo Schuster, was the Bishop of St. John's, Mthatha, from 1956 to 1980. (Since 2006 it is known as the Bishopric of Mthatha). The prayer was found among the papers in his desk following his death. Sara Cox

“LORD, Thou knowest, better than I know myself, that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from the craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all; but Thou, Lord, knowest that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memory of others. Teach me the glorious lesson - that occasionally I may be wrong.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. And give me, Lord, the grace to tell them so.

AMEN”

*A poem from “The Five Silent Years” by Corrie Ten Boom*

“My life is like a weaving  
Between my God and me  
I do not choose the colours  
He worketh steadily.

Sometimes He weaveth sorrow  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget he see the upper  
And I the underside

Not ‘till the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly  
Will God unroll the canvas  
And explain the reason why

The dark threads are as needful  
In the skilful Weaver’s hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.”

## CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

Dear Parishioners

As we approach DG Sunday which will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2017, we wish to remind you that this is a very important time in our parish calendar when we are all called upon to renew our Dedicated Giving commitment to St Michael's for the 2018 financial period. This is also a time for us to commit our time and talents to the different Portfolios in our Parish in order to contribute to the growth of God's kingdom.

We humbly request that you continue to pray for God's blessing and grace as you decide on your Dedicated Giving commitment which will form the basis for the budget in 2018. It is our fervent hope that our Dedicated Giving contributions, which make up 86% of the total parish contribution, will increase by 10%. We believe this increase will be sufficient for us to meet our expense budget for 2018.

2017 YTD Financial performance

Dedicated Giving (DG) is the main source of income to St Michael's and goes a long way in helping us to meet our monthly Parish expenses. In 2017, we budgeted to receive R4.2m from existing contributors as well as a small base of new members. We were also hoping that a sizeable existing base of parishioners who are currently not contributing through Dedicated Giving would heed the call through our regular Wardens' talks and start contributing. Our financials for the period ending 31 August indicate a shortfall R208 000 in DG and we are projecting the situation to remain the same for the rest of the year. We are however encouraged that several parishioners are now committing to increase their contributions.

To date, total income which includes Dedicated Giving and Plate collection amounted to R3.2m versus a budgeted income of R3.4m. Although it is pleasing to report that Council managed to contain the expenses in line with the income received so as to avoid a deficit, it must be noted that the projected loss for the year will amount to R60k if the shortfall in income is not recovered.

On behalf of the Parish council, we wish to express our appreciation to you for continuing to honour your commitment of Dedicated Giving. We appeal for your generosity of spirit as you pray for your Dedicated Giving commitment for 2018. We are cognisant that our country continues to experience a tough economic environment and that many parishioners are affected by this situation. We continue to pray that the economic turn-around our country has experienced in this quarter which has saved us from recession will be sustained.

God bless

Joel Dikgole, Cuz Grindley, Tebogo Mogashoa  
& Mokaedi Dilotsotlhe

### DATES TO DIARISE

Patronal Festival : 24 September - please join us for tea after the 07:00 and 08:15 service and/or come along to the Bring & Braai lunch after the 10:15 service.

Art in the Hall : 7 October - Families with children and teens are invited to join us on Saturday October 7 for an afternoon of fun where we will be making a spring themed mural. Art activities will run from 15:00 to 17:00. We then have a bring and share supper until 19:00. Donations of kokis, wax crayons, fineliners, aquarelle pencil crayons, paint brushes, pastels can be dropped off at the office or left in a box on the welcome table before Sunday Oct 1. RSVP Itumeleng 0717811778 or Jeanette 0825237285 by Oct 3.

Dedicated Giving Sunday : 8 October - pledge forms will be emailed during the week. There are forms at the back of the Church.

**AND SO... INTO THE 21ST CENTURY!**

Thank you, dear family of St Michael's, for so readily embracing the new visual format of following worship. After the odd reservation the "new way of doing things" has been accepted by all and has ensured a smooth transition. It will, over time, also enable the costly prayer books to be phased out too. Of further benefit was the easy to follow the Portfolio presentation today (July 2, 2017) depicting one of our church's Outreach programmes, the Sandton Community Policing Forum, and especially the vital Domestic Watch programme therein. The impact would have been considerably less without the use of slides!

Bless you for living up to our parish vision of 'being a vibrant, growing and inclusive community of God's people.'  
(Include adaptable!)

Bob Hornsby

**CATHEDRAL CANDLESTICKS**

I took these photographs of the beautiful hollow twisted candlesticks in St. Mary's Cathedral when I attended Barbara's Ordination last year.

My Grandfather, Thomas Howard, came to South Africa from England with his 2 brothers in the late 1890's. They came from a family of wood turners in London dating back to 1780. My Grandfather started his business in the old suburb of Jeppe, in the 1920's, and he made these Candlesticks for the Cathedral when it was built. He loved working with wood, and was quite a talented musician. He played the violin in the Johannesburg Symphony/Philharmonic Orchestra in the early days.

Sally Penaluna

**PARISH PROFILE ... HOW FAR ARE WE?**

Thank you to all who participated in the parish profile questionnaire.

The forms have been sent to Revd Dr Anastasia Bukashe.

Once she has completed her report it will be approved by Council  
and then sent to the Bishop.