

Annual Report of the Parish Priest for 2010

The first highlight for me is that after serving in this parish for over two years in a temporary capacity, I am now with you as your rector. On Thursday, Jan. 20 was the induction service which was a blessed time of celebration and declaration of our willingness to continue to work together as we are being called by God in Christ Jesus to be His church in this place.

Reviewing the past year is exciting because it gives us an opportunity to reflect on how God has been at work at St. Michael's. Last year at this time we were receiving results from a diocesan wide study of the parishes of our diocese. The purpose of the study was to help parishes better understand our context and how we might improve our work of ministry and mission. St. Michael's was found to be a strongly viable parish engaged in meaningful ministries. That was the Boken report. We have the details of that report for our parish in the office and it can be referred to for information about our area to help us find more ways to reach out into our surrounding community.

The time we spent looking at the Five Marks of Mission gave us a way to assess what we do as a parish and how we are engaged in the mission God calls his church to. It was encouraging to meet together and find areas where we could see ourselves fully engaged and also to see areas of mission where we might work at improving. The reports submitted from the various ministries of the parish really help us to focus on reviewing the year, not only from a financial perspective, but also from the perspective of what we are enabled to do as the parish is supported for ministry. Please be sure to read these reports if you have not yet done so.

Back to Church Sunday in October was a highlight. Several parishioners invited neighbours and friends and as a result some people were re-introduced to church. I hope to have more "Back to Church Sundays" and encourage us all to continue to very simply invite people to come to church with us.

I am encouraged by the readiness of so many parishioners to step up to help with special events and support outreach projects throughout the year. Our Outreach Committee prayerfully considers ways St. Michael's can offer support and hope for those in need. By the grace of God we are able to make a difference for some and share the gospel in these ways.

I am also encouraged by the work of the Pastoral Care Team, the Healing Prayer Team and the Adult Christian Education committee who have put together several programs over the past year that offer learning opportunities for a wide range of interests. I am thankful to Nicki Latulipe for taking the leadership of the Sunday School.

Two things concern me. One is the shrinking number of people who attend Sunday Morning services. This may be because people are working or are very busy with other things. I would simply remind us all of the value of coming together to worship each week and how doing so can only strengthen our community and the ministry we can engage in when more people take part. The second is that there are very few parishioners who seem to be willing to take on roles of responsibility and leadership. We presently have strong lay leadership but groups like Greeters, Newcomers, Pastoral Care and Adult Christian Education are in great need of new leaders and for the past couple of years none have been coming forward. If we are to continue as a strong parish we need more people to step into these ministries.

Our worship services have been meaningful and uplifting and I thank all those who help to organize and lead. Of particular note this past year was the service of Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday. I believe it was well received and I hope to continue making this service a part of Holy Week observance. We held two Healing services and will continue holding these services in the coming year. I especially want to thank our Music Director, Sean Mayes, for cheerfully leading the music ministry. I also want to thank Mel Hill and the Praise Team, Lydia Latulipe and the Altar Guild, all the servers, and lay assistants who carefully carry out their part in the leadership of worship at St. Michael's.

Also, at this time last year we were beginning a new confirmation class. Since then eight of our young people have been confirmed and are now learning to be involved in parish life in various ways. St. Michael's highly values youth ministry and this year, a few months after the departure of Trevor Potter, we hired Jaclyn O'Connor to be the Youth Director. I am thankful to her for what she does and pray for continued direction in youth ministry.

One of the major changes in the daily administration of the parish has been the retirement of our parish secretary of 28 years. Carole Meakin has served this parish during the leadership of several past rectors and has been a great help to the parish. It is difficult to let her go but after so many years of faithful service a happy retirement is in order. I would like to thank Carole for all her hard work over the years. Jean Parnell has been graciously filling in while the corporation searches for a new Administrative Assistant for the parish office.

On a Diocesan level I have regularly attended our monthly Clericus meetings with the clergy of our deanery. I have also been involved with Tuesday Fellowship. The Tuesday Fellowship group is working with the Bishop to design a way to accommodate parishes when there is a request for an alternative bishop to exercise Episcopal acts, such as confirmation. This allows those who believe that the direction chosen by our bishop at times conflict with the teaching of scripture, to remain part of existing parishes of the diocese.

I continue my involvement in Spiritual Direction seeing a number of people on a one on one basis for Spiritual Direction. I am part of the Diocesan Spiritual Direction group and presently working on plans for a youth retreat with two other members of this group.

This year, sadly, we had to bid farewell to some long standing parishioners, Heather Scheer, and the Irwin family as they moved to Ontario.

Finally, I want to thank Don MacDonald, Brian Hammond, and Dominick Merle for their dedication to the Parish of St. Michael and All Angels and for always being ready to be of help.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Michelle+

“ Brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Phil. 4:8