

St Thomas Church, Rondebosch
Church Wardens' Report for the 2018 calendar year

Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus

Introduction

The stately ship St Thomas has been cruising gently through the becalmed waters of 2018. Our crew of buccaneers have ensured a smooth journey in the main, although a few squalls, various in nature, have not made the journey all plain sailing. This voyage of 2018 has been experienced as a period of consolidation, and maintenance of a physical parish fabric, some delightful occasions of fellowship, and some sadness as officers of the bridge have moved on.

The ebb and flow of our clergy

It was in June of 2016 the parish welcomed Lorna Lavarello Smith, as well as Drew on board. Together, and singly they brought knowledge from their distant port of experience of their previous ministries to provide St Thomas with a broader and textured spiritual life. Lorna very quickly came into her own in our parish life, providing wisdom and encouragement from the pulpit, and generating ideas and energy into the family service. Added to this was the genesis of Messy Church which has settled into a lovely time of monthly fellowship. Drew has provided impetus to our 09h30 service music and, together with Melanie, has taken the Inspire group from strength to strength. We are grateful that he has committed himself to this ministry, coming all the way from Fishhoek. We bade 'farewell' to Lorna in June and we wish her well in her important ministry at Herschel.

Our Rev Nicky Ing retired to the distant Port of Noordhoek after serving the parish so lovingly during her stay aboard. We all know full well how much gracious support she provided to so many of us, her deep concern for others, and the wise insights humbly shared. She remains involved, with her Lenten quiet morning already on the horizon.

We bade +Garth an early farewell at the Thanksgiving service in November. Over the years it became apparent that he had a soft spot for the parish; presiding, preaching, confirming, and taking part in many of our social events. We will miss him and Marion.

Barry Wood. Man of Faith, Visionary, Healer, Friend. Fittingly his funeral at St. Thomas was presided by ++Thabo and his memorial service held at Volmoed; place of healing, and indeed a true legacy of his ministry and faith.

The Spiritual log

This portfolio will be more than adequately reported by the rector, but highlights have been a thought-provoking Lent course based on the 10 commandments, the parish weekend at Wortelgat, the licencing of the new lay ministers, the picnic and Taize service in December attended by 2 brothers of the Taize order, and the steady determination and faith of the laity team that lead the youth ministries.

Below decks

Precinct maintenance

The campus has seen steady improvement. Notably the security has been upgraded by construction of the perimeter fence with the complementary restricted access. Though this development has been

subject to rigorous debate over some while, culminating in a Special Vestry Meeting in August, it seems we are all settling into the routine and the various benefits.

The Garden of Remembrance has had 2 attractive walls erected for the display of the memorial plaques, a graceful addition to a quiet corner.

The rectory has recently had a thorough facelift externally which will see it through for an anticipated 10 years.

Hidden from sight on the north side of the church hall a much needed staff room is in the final stages of completion, this for the use of our ground staff.

The hall itself has been painted internally, all the windows serviced, some fire-escape doors replaced and the stage curtains repaired.

And a family of pigeons, who had set up home within the church rafters, were told to 'walk the plank' with the help of a pest-control company.

Congratulations to Ian Paul and Peter Oscroft, whose combined vision and diligence have not only maintained, but added to the infrastructure.

Fellowship

Highlights in our social year have been few, but the fun and fellowship factors have been superb. The Patronal Sunday was preceded by a Friday evening dinner, with a good turn out. It very quickly became apparent that the inner child in all of us is much entertained by sleight-of-hand or magic.

Thanksgiving Sunday was the true highlight in our year. It was a suitable occasion to say goodbye to +Garth who not only presided, but as ++Thabo's representative, awarded the Order of Simon of Cyrene to Geoff Burton. The service was followed by the Potjie Festival -a great success.

We have witnessed some rather diverse activities, such as river clean-ups championed by the Inspire group, a pavement art competition for scholars and an art exhibition hosted by Peter and Michael Hyslop.

Ministries

There are many parishioners who faithfully continue to support the various ministries, including Fikelela, Junior Church, Teen Church, Gardens, Flowers, Sideswomen and men, Prayer warriors, Sacristans, Women's group, Lay ministers, Home and Hospital Visits, Teas, Readings, Small groups and Home churches, Transport, St Thomas for Touch, Sandwiches for Red Cross, Sewing Classes, Social Justice and Stewardship representatives.

Fikelela continues steadily, with the addition of a special packing morning in December in memory of Sheila Bloomer – a poignant occasion.

Our Organist Dave Milligan has integrated very well into the body of the church. He has coerced, cajoled, and encouraged the ragtag choir to sing at some of the red letter days. He has composed hymns for our use. We wish him well as he recovers from surgery.

The engine room of the parish, our parish office, continues to amaze us with the quiet efficiency that keeps everything running so smoothly. Our heartfelt thanks to Caro who gets so much done, and so much more outside of the office hours allocated. We continue to be blessed with Margie two mornings a week to manage the book-keeping of the parish.

Our small team of domestic workers and gardeners continue to provide a valuable contribution to the look and feel of the precinct.

As usual our rector has faced many challenges at so many levels of his ministry, all of which are faced with a calm and deep faith. We give thanks to God for this faith, his example, and his leadership.

As we set sail into the new church year we say 'Bon Voyage'. However, near the end of the year, with the retirement of our rector, we could well move into uncharted seas, where there be dragons. We remind ourselves: Christ is our light, Christ is our journey, and Christ is our destination.

Thank you

Hugh Nourse and Ian Paul