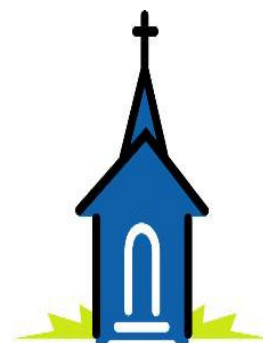


My Dear Friends:

The month of September is always an important one for our church in that we celebrate the start of St. Michael's on September 9 and the Feast of our Patron Saint, Michael the Archangel on September 29. However this year is even more special for we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of ministry in the city of O'Fallon and the surrounding areas. It was on Wednesday, September 9, 1987 that the first worship service was held in the basement of Faith Lutheran Church. Formed from members of St. George's Episcopal Church in Belleville, who volunteered to be members of the new mission for two years after which they decided for themselves whether to stay or return to St. George's. Two of these members are part of our congregational family today—Viola “Vi” Ohlemeier and Shelby Hamilton.



ST. MICHAEL'S
20 TH. ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

During the years, St. Michael's has grown due to the grace and blessings of God and the work and ministry of hundreds of faithful members. By October 1990, the church had moved from being a provisional mission to be a mission of the Diocese of Springfield. At this time the members of the church chose as their patron saint, Michael, the Archangel. The congregation worshipped at Faith Lutheran until March 2000, when after two years of construction, held their first service in their new building. The consecration and dedication of the new edifice was held on May 14, 2000 by our bishop, The Right Reverend Peter H. Beckwith. The stained glass windows in the church were made by members of the church family. The church, which started with thirty members, has grown to a membership of over two hundred persons. Part of this growth is attributed to the eighty-nine persons baptized, seventy-four (with an additional five persons this year) confirmed, and twenty-six marriage services that have taken place in this church. In addition, St. Michael's has seen a continuous turnover in its membership due to many of our members serving in the military actively, particularly the Air Force. This has offered a freshness to ministry and congregation but we are also thankful for those who have made O'Fallon and surrounding areas their home and as a result have created stability for our church.

Prior to the commencement of my ministry in March 2001, the Church was guided under the clerical leadership of The Rev. L. Gary Patience (1987-1990), The Rev. Walter B. LaBatt (1991-1994), The Rev. Gretchen W. Zimmerman (1994-1995), The Rev. Linda A. Cornelius (1996-1999), and The Rev. Maurice C. Lee (1999-2001). We thank God for the leadership and vision of these shepherds and servants.

This twentieth anniversary will be even more special in that on that day, five of our members— Devin Bopp, Monica Bopp, Elaine Etheridge, Michael Konieczny and Samantha Puckett—will receive the laying on of hands by the Bishop in the Sacrament of Holy Confirmation. Having engaged in eight months of classes I'm sure they are happy that it is all coming to an end. We thank God for them and pray that He will continually bless them in their ministry.

This day is also special because we will be dedicating the lower level of our church edifice. This has been a dream that has come true for all of us. We now have a beautiful lower level—fellowship hall, kitchen, classrooms, restrooms and showers, youth room and library. We give thanks to God for the members of the Building Fund-raising and Design Committees led by Ann Wilt for the diligent work they have done. I, particularly would like to commend Ann for the tremendous work and exceptional leadership in bringing this project to its completion. She has truly done an excellent job. We also thank all persons who contributed financially to the Building Fund or in other ways so that our Church Hall become a realization. Our gratitude is extended to Leroy Dawson, our Architect for his yeoman service, going even beyond the call of duty, and Calhoun Construction for constructing the edifice. This new facility will be of tremendous benefit to us but even more particularly to the people within our community as we reach out to them. What a fitting way to celebrate twenty years of ministry in this area.

We have been blessed by all who have served in this church and have departed this life. We give thanks to God for their lives, gifts and ministries among us and pray that God will continue to grant them a peaceful rest. We continue to be blessed by faithful people who work fervently for this church and all of you must be commended. May we continue to work together to show Christ in this part of God's world so that people will be edified and God's kingdom be built up.

A Blessed and Happy 20th Anniversary!

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Tony