From the Rector
By the Rev. David Benedict Hedges, n/BSG

One of my favorite parts of our worship is the Collect of the Day. This is a short prayer prayed each week at the Mass, after the song “Glory to God in the highest” and before the readings. There is a Collect of the Day appointed for every Sunday and feast day of the year, as well as some for saints and various other occasions. The Collect of the Day comes and goes pretty quickly, but many of them are quite powerfully worded, and taking time to reflect on these can be very fruitful. They are found in the Book of Common Prayer starting on page 211.

One of the collects for Christmas asks God to “grant that we who joyfully receive [Jesus Christ] as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge.” This is not exactly what we expect when we adore the baby Jesus in the manger, but it reminds us that Jesus came the first time when he was born in Bethlehem, and he will come again in glory, to bring to completion what he started – to receive the faithful into his heavenly kingdom.

But how will he judge us? By what criterion will we be judged to be faithful? Faith, of course, is belief – and Christian faith is belief in Jesus as the Son of God. But as St. James reminds us in his epistle, faith without works is dead. The good works we do give testimony to our faith in Jesus Christ. The Collect for the Second Sunday after Christmas Day is helpful here: “O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored the dignity of human nature…” Because Jesus Christ was born as a human being, the whole concept of humanity and of human nature is redeemed and restored. It is no longer the fundamental nature of human beings to be corrupt; Jesus has offered us a new human nature – with restored dignity.

Therefore we are obliged as Christians to see that restored dignity of human nature reflected in every person we meet, and in every person we do not meet. We are required by the Incarnation (and by our baptismal vow) to respect the dignity of every person. This is a fundamental sign of our faith – that we treat our fellow human beings with dignity, honor, and respect. We must especially strive to see the Christlike dignity of those who differ most from us, and those it is difficult to love: the marginalized, the outcast, the needy, the enslaved, the imprisoned, and the rejected.

This is part of the work of Christmas – and not only of this holy season, but of the whole year and our whole lives. So let us feast and make merry in the cold and darkness of winter, and let us also take time and effort to remember and work for the dignity of every human being. †
Love to Share
By the Reverend Ellen Morell

Are you looking for an activity that brings joy to others, yourself and your pet at the same time? Pet therapy is for you. The people you visit have a spot of joy in a day that otherwise is often dreary or even painful. You get the joy of seeing the smiles on the faces of the people you visit, and the dog enjoys being fussed over and perhaps getting treats for the tricks it does. (Note I refer to dogs because I happen to have a dog, but you could substitute cat, rabbit, bird, or even miniature horse) My English Bulldog, Laci, and I have been doing pet therapy visits for several months and it is one of the most rewarding things I have done with an animal. Laci loves it. When I say “Laci, it’s time to go to work,” she runs to where her harness is and waits impatiently to “get dressed.”

I am a hospice chaplain, and I take Laci on visits to any of my patients or Adult Care Homes who welcome us. Of course, I am careful to be certain to ask before we go because there are places where for various reasons a dog would not be welcome. I find it especially rewarding to go to ‘memory’ units at care facilities. People who have lost most of their short term memories can tell you stories of the dogs or cats they have had years ago. The stories are wonderful to hear. The sight of a dog often triggers memories that are otherwise lost. For example, I had been seeing one lady who had advanced dementia and could not speak intelligibly. When I walked in the first time with Laci she sat up smiled and said very clearly, “Nice dog.”

The opportunities to do pet therapy is almost unlimited. Almost every day I get requests from the Humane Society of Southern AZ seeking teams to go out and share love. The opportunities range from children reading to dogs at the library, to a chance for AU students to snuggle with a dog to relax during finals week, to special events. Laci does not do well with small children or other dogs so we avoid those situations. But there is enough need that everyone can find the right place to take your pet.

Your pet does need to be under control at all times. For dogs this means they must be on a leash and must obey the commands Sit, Stay, Come, and Leave it. Most dogs can learn these things easily. If the dog knows a few tricks that is even better but it is not necessary. The dog’s person must be alert to possible problems and act as the champion for the
Senior Warden’s Column

By John Hsieh

Dear family of St. Michael’s,

Since 2012, I have taken the liberty to write in this column what I deemed relevant to us at the time, ranging from stewardship to activities in our parish and in our diocese, to transition between Rectors, etc. Each time, I tried to accentuate the interactions among ourselves and between us and the larger world. Our religion is about proclaiming to the world God’s love, as manifested in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the life of the Body of Christ, the Church, through our love for God, hence all his creation, and for our neighbor, hence all human kind, in our thoughts, words and deeds. So I share with you my thoughts on the 2016 election and my intentions. Please share your thoughts on this matter with me, also.

I did my citizen’s duty, but reluctantly voted for Mrs. Clinton only because she finally ran on Mr. Sanders’ platform. A good friend and fellow parishioner confided with me, “I voted for Trump holding my nose – don’t really like the guy – because I think we need a change, so take a chance.” So, he and I did the best we could.

Now the election is over. While many are exuberant because their long-held views of themselves and of others are vindicated, and many are angered because their fears are confirmed, many thoughts want to jump out of my mouth. The following reading from the Lectionary (http://satucket.com/lectionary/2propr28.htm) came and helped me.

“...For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue – a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.” (James 3:7-12)

These ancient words warned me against the restless evil, deadly poison and hypocrisy, like those so wantonly trumpeted in the campaign that unleashed the long-veiled bigotry, distrust and hatred and the damages they wreak. These ancient words also prompted me to give blessings and to pour forth fresh water. So without malice, but full of hope, I plead with you, my friends, to raise and to respond to questions like:

• How can we Christians working with others, as a people, create a culture that truly respects the dignity of every human being, courageously faces verified facts, earnestly seeks the truth, courageously strive for justice and peace among all people, and passionately cares for the education, health and safety of all, especially the young and the vulnerable?

• How can we Christians working with others, as voters, help the political parties to produce trustworthy and qualified candidates for the next election to set priorities for the common good?

• How can we Christians working with others, as a nation, lead the world in making Earth a safer home for all in generations to come?

Blessings and fresh water, as I felt compelled by the Epistle reading to provide, must yield life-giving fruits. Thus, I shall join others, in and out of the church, to support all policies that would improve the lot of the less privileged and voiceless as the president-elect promised. At the same time, as an immigrant and one who believes all people are made in the likeness of God, I will join others to firmly oppose any actions rooted in the restless evil, deadly poison and hypocrisy. I will be vigilant to stand up against any policies that violate our universal human rights (http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/). To begin, I declare, in the footsteps of others: Should the State of Arizona and/or the United States of America register all Muslims, then I, an Episcopalian upholding my Baptismal Covenant, shall register as a Muslim.

The election is over; we are challenged. I shall continue to pray for wisdom and courage to work for the harmonious unity – the sweet symphony of diversity. Let’s not forget that we Christians live in hope, a hope anchored in trust, a trust enabled by love, as we celebrate the love that leads us into light. “The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.” (John 1:9)

Note: If you haven’t read Bishop Smith’s E-pistle of 2 December 2016, I urge you to read it now: http://www.azdiocese.org/dfc/newsdetail_2/318253²

John Hsieh
hsieh@dakotacom.net †
2016 Bazaar Participants Say Thanks
By Jim Steinman

Here are highlights of the many thank yous we received from the sellers it is our mission to support.

“We loved being with you and your church. See you next year!” - The Rev. Canon Cynthia Hizer, The Episcopal Church in Navajoland

“Thank you again, for all your kindness, help, and showing what a great church/school/programs you have there!!!” - Marsha, HOPE Animal Shelter

“I am impressed every year with the variety of organizations at the Bazaar who are doing such good work year ’round for so many people. Blessings on you all as you continue what God calls you to do” - Sister Karen (representing the Joliet Franciscans who work in the U.S. and Brazil)

“Thank you for your wonderful event, it was great help to all of us. The girls had a wonderful time and will never forget the great opportunity... Hope you come and visit us in Magdalena, we would love to greet you there.”- Ana Maria Vasquez, Bridges Across Borders

“Thanks so much for giving me the opportunity to make people aware of our organization... I had many wonderful conversations with people about the persecution of people of faith in China and North Korea... It did my heart good to see so many kind people from diverse backgrounds working together for the greater good.” - Mel Etherton, Falundafa Association

“I’m grateful for events that gather people together and moments that bring out the heart of folks. The bazaar does both.... The best part of the bazaar can never be measured in dollars and cents, but rather laughter, smiles, and conversation. Thank you for what you’re doing to nurture this moment...” - Mariposa John, from Casa Mariposa †

“How can St. Michaels help the children and families crossing our border?”
By Marjorie King

Many St. Michael’s parishioners have asked me about the children coming across the border. In 2014, Catholic Community Services donated the use of a half-way house, called “Casa Alitas” or “Little Angel Wings House” to offer temporary food and shelter to mothers and their young children who the border patrol releases to their families in the United States while awaiting their court hearings. This is the group that previously the Border Patrol had dumped at the Greyhound Bus Station without any food, water, or other support for their long journeys to family members elsewhere in the U.S. Jim and I were deeply involved in those early years but phased out after the Catholic Church and many other volunteers came forth.

Now the Border Patrol is anticipating a huge surge of new border-crossers so two Tucson churches have each opened their doors to fifty men, women and children per day. “Little Angel Wings House” continues its own hospitality. More than ten guests a day pass through the Casa. They desperately need to have outside space available to deal with so many little children coming and going. Casa Alitas has a very big back yard, but it needs help to be accessible for children to play and for adults to use as an outside space. They could really use our help in many ways. One of the St. Michael’s boy scouts may take on part of the backyard as his Eagle Scout project. Mother Clare is organizing some of the students to prepare travel bags for the kids. I’d love to see our church and school members get together for a work party or otherwise do some hands-on support of these folks. Volunteers are also needed for four-hour shifts, where they cook and clean for the families. And of course, they need monetary donations for the backyard project and daily care-giving.

Here is an opportunity for many different committees and parishioners at St. Michael’s to really come together in a joint project. If you feel inspired to offer your skills, expertise, labor, or other donations to the “Little Angels,” please contact me at 310-903-0280 or mmarjorieking@gmail.com.

MANY THANKS! MUCHAS GRACIAS! †
From the Director of Music  
By Doug Leightenheimer  

On December 11, I began my fifth year as Director of Music for St. Michael’s. It is hard for me to believe that I have been in Tucson that long, let alone having begun and completed a degree at the University of Arizona. St. Michael’s has been a wonderful church home, and I thank each of you for your continued support of both the music ministry and myself. It is a joy to serve in a place where importance is placed on music as part of the liturgy. As Brother Dave reminded the choir a few weeks ago, music does not simply enhance liturgy, it IS liturgy.

Especially at this time of year, I want to express my appreciation to the members of the St. Michael’s Choir for their hard work and dedication all year long. Our choir is composed of volunteers and four staff singers. Abigail Hart, our soprano staff singer, is a Master’s student at UA in vocal performance. Erin McMullen, alto, is completing her Bachelor’s degree in voice at UA. Participating in choir at St. Michael’s also has lead Erin to become a catechumen. Sandy Delozier, tenor, graduated from UA this past spring and is now a teacher at Mesa Verde Elementary School. Our newest staff singer is baritone Tony Spar who takes the position left by Jeff Simpson. Tony is a graduate of Pima Community College and teaches at Santa Rita High School. Jeff Simpson was the longest serving staff singer at St. Michael’s having begun in 1999. Jeff graduated from UA in May and is now teaching in the TUSD. Sadly for us, his work load necessitated his leaving us at St. Michael’s. Jeff’s last Sunday was December 18, and we celebrated his time with us at the coffee hour.

Lest there be any confusion, the St. Michael’s Choir is NOT a closed group! Our ranks are slowly growing, and in the past few weeks we welcomed another new member, Mary Deasy, who has relocated to Tucson from Key West, FL. Last season we welcomed to our ranks Laurie Chase and Phyllis Peterson. New members always are welcome. There is no audition process, although I do require a conversation with prospective members to determine if service in the choir is a good fit. Our regular choir season runs from September through June, with rehearsals on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30. During the summer months of July and August, the choir rehearses only on Sunday mornings. Although we are in the middle of the choir season, January is always a good time to become involved in choir as we regroup from Advent and Christmas and begin looking forward to the seasons of Lent and Easter. If you have an interest in the St. Michael’s Choir, please contact me at dleightnc@aol.com, or 910-515-2404.

Lastly, as any church musician knows, the most important choir of the church is the congregation, and the choir “up front” has the primary responsibility of leading the congregation in the singing of the hymns and liturgy. And so ALL of you are choir members! I encourage you to participate fully in the liturgy by singing the hymns and service music. Even if you are not quite comfortable singing the hymns, please open the hymnal and read the words for the wonderful theology they contain; hymns are liturgy!

With a new year upon us, I look forward to continued music making at St. Michael’s as, together, we “sing to the Lord a new song.”

From all of us in the St. Michael’s Choir, a most blessed Christmas and a joyous New Year to you all. Doug Leightenheimer †
The Messenger
St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church
602 N. Wilmot Road
Tucson AZ 85711

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**SUNDAY SERVICES**
7:45 AM Mass with Homily
9:00 AM Family Mass
10:15 AM High Mass with Sermon
12:30 PM Misa en Español
5:00 PM Mass with Homily

**WEekDAY SERVICES**
Tuesday: 8:10 AM Lower School Mass
Wednesday: 12:10 PM Healing Mass with laying on of hands
Thursday: 9:40 AM Upper School Mass
Saturday: 8:30 AM Low Mass
Friday: 8:00 AM Low Mass (Rite One)

**MORNING PRAYER**
7:15 AM Sunday
7:30 AM Monday through Friday
8:15 AM Saturday

**Office Hours**
Monday - Thursday 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon

**Telephone:** 520-886-7292
**Email:** church@stsmichael.net
**Blog:** [http://smaa.blogspot.com](http://smaa.blogspot.com)
**Web:** [http://smallangelstucson.org](http://smallangelstucson.org)