



# The Habit

*Reaching out in the Community*

December 2017 –  
January 2018

Dear Habitual Friends

On Advent Sunday, 3 December 2017 we began our 4<sup>th</sup> year of **Vision 2020**. Our theme for the year will be ***Reaching out in the Community***. More about that next month.

As we focus our attention on getting ready to celebrate once again the coming of Christ our Saviour as a little Baby, we also look back over the past year's work and ministry with gratitude. I encourage you to read the reports of the various ministries in the Parish and begin praying for and nominating those whom you would like to serve on Parish Council in 2018.

A big thank you to all who faithfully offered their time, talents and treasures to make 2017 a year to remember. A special thank you to our Parish Council: Wardens Sandy and Pheli, Councillors Alton, Beryl, Jenny and Keith. A small, but powerful team who guided us through two massive projects: The *Solar Energy Project* and the Parish *Prayer Garden Project*, so say nothing of all the day-to-day running of the Parish. Well done guys!

I would like to share with you what Trevor Hudson says about God being 'with' us in his ***Pauses for Advent***: "One of my favourite versions of scripture is The Life with God Bible. The title is a powerful reminder that the Bible is all about human beings living with God. Little wonder that one of the names given to Jesus is *Emmanuel*, which means, "God is with us." What does this mean for us during Advent?

Throughout scripture, God promises again and again, "I am with you." Beginning in Genesis, we witness God's living presence with people in all the ordinary and extraordinary circumstances of their lives. Advent



reminds us that God's promise became flesh and blood in Jesus Christ. Perhaps we must never again think of the world as being without God or God being distant and faraway. Throughout all our experiences and encounters, God is present with us and will be even to the end of the age.

Moreover, God's promise - "I am with you"- comes with an invitation -"Will you be with me?" **'With'** is a powerful word that evokes a sense of connection and partnership. God does not bulldoze over us, forcing God's self into our lives. He can choose to live without God. Adam and Eve make this decision with their devastating choice in the garden, and the consequences of their decision affect us even today. Wonderfully, even though we repeatedly turn our backs on God, Advent reminds us that God never gives up on us and continues to live within us, offering a steadfast love that will not let us go.

Advent is a time to remember both God's promise and God's invitation. Let us today hear again God saying to us in our depths, "I am with you," and may we respond by saying to God, "I want to live with you." As we listen for God's grace-filled invitation and respond to it, we will experience for ourselves the gift of the with-God life."

As you take some rest from work, school and the business of your life this Christmas season, please spend some time thinking about Jesus, Emmanuel, God with you. How can Jesus be more present with you now as you relax and have some fun with family and friends? How does Jesus want to be more present in your life in 2018? God never leaves us, so what can you do to remember that Jesus is with you more often and regularly in 2018?

God bless you all as we conclude 2017 and enter 2018 *with* Jesus!



*Reggie*

## From the Diocese of the Highveld

- **Nativity! Carols for Choirs and Congregations.** A number of Sunday evenings have been arranged to observe Advent and celebrate the Epiphany. Choirs and individual singers are invited to make up a choir for the various days, rehearsing for a couple of hours before the service. Congregations are invited to join in the worship. See the attached poster and do a little extra as you spiritually prepare for Christmas.
- CDs of the **Women's Day Celebration** are available at R50.00 for the speakers and R75.00 for the speakers and Eucharist service. Please order from Judy in the HABSR office. (Cell 083 657-4644)
- **2018 Counselling Courses:**  
The following courses will be offered in **2018:**  
**Basic Counselling:** 3, 10, 17, 24 Feb; 3, 10, 17, 24 March. 2018  
**Marriage:** 12 and 19 May 2018

**Trauma:** August 2018 – Dates to be announced.

- **Diocesan Gender Committee:** Bishop Charles has asked the Parish to nominate two persons to serve on the Diocesan Gender Committee called for at our last Diocesan Synod. If you feel God is asking you to play a role in building the Kingdom in this way, please speak to Fr Reggie or one of the Wardens.



## Parish Notices

### Important Dates in December 2017 / January 2018

#### Parish Notices

- **Advent Sunday, 3 December.** Parish Vestry reports will be available and Nomination Lists for 2018 Parish Council will be up.
- **THE NATIVITY – Events for Singers and Carollers!** – See our notice board.
  - Advent Sunday - 3rd December **Advent Carols:** 7pm at St Michael's, Boksburg
  - Advent II - 10th December **Advent Compline:** 6pm at St Dunstan's Cathedral
  - Advent III - 11th December **Festival of Lessons & Carols:** 6pm at St Dunstan's Cathedral
  - Epiphany - 7th January **Epiphany Carol Service:** 6pm at St Michael's, Boksburg
- **Dedicated Giving Sunday** was held on 26 November. Thank you to all who have made their dedication of time, talents and treasures to the Lord. If you have not yet done so, please let us have your dedication as soon as possible. We do not assume that your past dedication will continue.
- **Budgeting process.** Our budgeting process has started with the dedications of treasures which we have received from parishioners.
  - We have met to look at our **Parish Planning for 2018.**
  - We have looked at the past year's expenditure and begun to build our 2018 budget.
- The **Parish Calendar** for 2018 will be finalised and made available to parishioners
- Information on the dedication of Time and Talents will be collated and given to the various ministry group leaders, so that they can begin to plan and prepare for ministry in 2018.
- **Christmas Services:**
  - **Midnight Mass:** 11:45 on Saturday, 24 December
  - **Christmas Family Services:** 07:00 and 09:00 on Christmas Day, 25 December
  - **Sunday after Christmas:** Services as usual (Said Eucharist at 07:00 and Sung Eucharist at 09:00)
- **There will be no New Year Midnight Mass.**

- Sunday, 21 January - **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany**: Said Eucharist at 07:00 and **Sung Eucharist with CROSS ROAD** at 09:00
- Sunday, 28 January: There will be only one Eucharist Service at 09:00 followed by our **Vestry Meeting**

## Dedicated Giving Progress 2017

Month	Amount Dedicated	Amount Received	Surplus + Shortfall -	Accumulated Surplus + / Shortfall -
<b>August</b>	R 95 000.00	R 95 779.00	+R 779.00	+ R 111 144.00
<b>September</b>	R 95 000.00	R 92 000.00	- R 3 000.00	+ R 108 144.00
<b>October</b>	R 95 000.00	R 104 085.00	+R 9 085.00	+ R 117 229.00
<b>November</b>	R 95 000.00	R 97 800.00	+R 2 800.00	+ R 120 029.00

- Honour your dedication promise to God
- Increase your monthly giving if it is not in proportion to what God gives you
- Let Patricia know if you are unable to give what you promised so that the budget can be adjusted



*The Church Wardens, Clergy and Lay Ministers wish you all a Joyful Christmas and a New Year filled with Peace, Love and Happiness*

**If you are going on holiday, please travel safely and return well rested**

### Parish Contact Details

Office hours (weekdays): **08.30 - 16.30**

Website: [www.sfc.org.za](http://www.sfc.org.za)

E-mail addresses:

☎ 011 867 5922

Secretary: [sec@sfc.org.za](mailto:sec@sfc.org.za)

☎ 086 238 0686

Administrator: [admin@sfc.org.za](mailto:admin@sfc.org.za)

✉ PO Box 11346 RANDHART 1457

Rector: [rector@sfc.org.za](mailto:rector@sfc.org.za)

#### BANKING DETAILS: Standard Bank - Alberton

Account Name: The Parish of St Francis

Account No: 421855282

#### TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<b>Rector:</b>	Rev Reggie Venter	Tel	011 867 5922	Cell	079 506 6660
<b>Prayer Chain:</b>	Kay Peace			Cell	082 401 0645
<b>Church Wardens:</b>	Sandy Engelbrecht	Tel	011 867 2109	Cell	082 480 5822
	Pheli Mbambo	Tel	011 021 6428	Cell	083 397 0024
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mpumi Mapholoba	Tel	011 867 5922		
<b>Administrator:</b>	Patricia Lendis-Hartnick	Tel	011 867 5922		

