



The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA

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For the New Year

By the Reverend Canon Mark Shier

Sermon given at St. Michael's on January 2, 2011.

The year is new upon us, at least, the secular year; the church is already well into its year. Today is the last Sunday in Christmas for the church and points us to the baptism of Jesus next Sunday, the beginning of His public work. What can we take from today's Bible readings for the rest of our year? What wisdom of the heart and mind is ours from the Spirit of God working through our scriptures?

As often the case, the story of the wise men adoring the Christ Child is so familiar that it is easy to miss significance in the verses. The Evangelist Matthew, writing after the resurrection of Jesus and mindful of the enormity of God's power shown in that resurrection, uses his stories of Jesus' birth to show that God was from the beginning in Jesus and that the world recognized its Creator in Him.

- A. What we call the "natural world" pays homage to the Child in the star that announced His birth and guided wise worshipers to the unlikely temple of the barn in Bethlehem.
- B. The magi were priests of Zoroaster, a non-Jewish religion regarded with disdain and repugnance by the people of the Baby. Yet it is these despised ones who possess the wisdom to see and the openness to accept God working in unlikely ways, to know that the Creator of all is the God of all. And so they kneel in awe and wonder before a Child of the working class, and give gifts to the One who owns everything by right of creation.
- C. The shepherds are not part of today's reading but they are an integral part of Matthew's story. They represent the instinctual wisdom of God's chosen people to identify God's authentic presence and activity. That God should

be acting in this Baby is to them both wondrous and commonplace: wondrous because God has seemed to be silent for so long and that silence and absence is now ended, commonplace because in their history and tradition this is how God works, choosing the unexpected and incapable in whom to work for the welfare of the people.



In a world that sneers at the idea of a loving God intimately involved with Her creation and people, I take for this new year the reassurance that comes from knowing that my faith of God in Jesus has been witnessed by God's chosen beloved people, by God's other beloved people, indeed by the whole of creation itself.

Paul writes his letter to the Ephesians also from the perspective of the powerful intervention of God into the world in Jesus' life and resurrection. That understanding led to other implications in Paul's mind. If God had given Himself to the world in Jesus, then we of the world are fortunate, are favored, are blessed beyond all reckoning. The power of heaven itself works among us. That power recreates all that is, including you and me and every human person, healing the wounds, strengthening our spirits, forgiving our faults. In God's power we become innocent and holy. This is what God has intended from before the creation of time and space, "before the foundation of the world."

Some mistaken Christian theologies have seen predestination in an exclusionary sense: God chose a few and excluded the many, and there's nothing anyone can do about it. It is certainly equally as valid to understand predestination as God's choosing of all that

exists to be with Him. That anyone exists is the evidence that she has been chosen by God.

Our part in the process is what we make of our chosen state: do we, along with God, create and beautify and love, or do we destroy and mar and hate? In our acceptance and trust, what Paul calls belief, God is enabled to work powerfully: we are enlightened or knowledgeable; we are optimists, for God works for the welfare of everyone; we are filled with hope, for God's intention of goodness cannot be permanently prevented; we are wealthy, for God gives us Himself and with Himself all of creation. And I am encouraged for the new year.

The truth-teller or prophet Jeremiah points us toward the results of God acting in the world: all is made right. The exile is brought home, the blind see, the lame walk, the child is born into security, all are consoled, for God is our Father and God is our Mother. We are saved from those who are stronger than we are, we are fed with the banquet of plenty, we are merry and joyful as young men and women are, our sadness is replaced with exhilaration,

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Sermon *from page 1*

and we are satisfied more than we could ever guess. What we know of this world is not the end product but rather a work-in-progress. There is a teleos, a goal, a completion. We are being brought to a state that is of such happiness and fulfillment that our language fails to describe it. In this year, I will hold on to God's intention for our ultimate bliss.

This is a good way to begin the year. The next twelve months will hold for each of us challenge and hurt and triumph and joy. We will be sometimes discouraged and depressed and at other times joyful and ecstatic. This is what life is about, and it is good. What is the best is that our year, whatever will be, is cupped in the hand of God. The Creator of the cosmos is on our side. The Baby in Bethlehem, worshipped by the world, loves us beyond all reason. That is the reason we are confident and optimistic. In God's time, in God's good will, in God's encompassing love, may each of us live a happy, blessed new year.

The full text of Canon Shier's sermons at St. Michael's may be read at www.stmikessc.org/sermons_index.htm.

As you do your weekly grocery shopping, remember these items that are always needed by the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry

*Canned fruit and vegetables.
Baby food in plastic jars.
Tuna.
Peanut butter in plastic jars.
Powdered milk in individual packets.
Individual size snacks.
Bags of dry beans and rice.
Plastic and paper shopping bags.
Diapers and feminine hygiene items.
Travel-size soap, toothpaste & disposable razors.
And money!*

February Birthdays

| Day | Name |
|-----|------------------------------------------|
| 8 | Peter Juzwiak Sophis Schmutz |
| 14 | Patrick Holder |
| 15 | David Basta Jon Albert George Byrd |
| 16 | Ron Schwartz |
| 17 | Hunter Wedaa |
| 20 | Meredith Reese |
| 25 | Lynne Lang Mia Chapman-Young |
| 26 | Miranda Cornwell |
| 28 | Michel Rodriguez |

February Anniversaries

| Day | Name |
|-----|------------------------|
| 3 | John & Jenifer Schmutz |

Should you be listed here? Or, if you wish to leave your birthday or anniversary unpublished, give the church office a call or e-mail (administrator@stmikessc.org) to let us know. *Please Note: Birthdays and Anniversaries will be celebrated on the last Sunday of each month.*

March 2011 MIKE Deadline

Please send copy and/or pictures via e-mail to administrator@stmikessc.org by Tuesday, February 22. If you don't have a computer, bring your articles to the Parish Office by that time.

Read the MIKE Online! All you do is go to the website, www.stmikessc.org, and click on "THE MIKE ONLINE." Back issues are available there as well. And while you're at the website, you can shop at Amazon.com through its link. St. Michael's gets a small rebate for each purchase made through this link.

Thanksgiving for a Job Well Done

To: We would like to express our greatest thanks and appreciation to Preston Fray, Leonard Harmon, Mary Ann Jacobson, and Ed Sugar. All four have dedicated an incredible amount of time to St. Michael's through their service on the Vestry. During their time on the Vestry, each contributed so much time, talent, and energy to our community of faith. When you see them, please thank them for their wonderful service.

In the months that follow, the Vestry will continue to recognize the gifts of work and time that help keep St. Michael's a beautiful and useful campus, and a thriving parish.

Treasurer's Corner

December 2010—Revenue and Expense Summary

| | <i>December Actual</i> | <i>December Budget</i> | <i>YTD Actual</i> | <i>YTD Budget</i> |
|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total Revenue | \$ 37,446 | \$ 29,676 | \$345,643 | \$356,736 |
| Total Expense | 25,871 | 36,818 | 386,251 | 467,071 |
| Net | \$ 11,575 | (\$ 7,142) | (\$ 40,608) | (\$ 110,335) |



From the Vestry

Anne Kelly, Senior Warden
David Connors, Junior Warden



Although 2011 began on January 1st, the year for St. Michael's really began with the Annual Meeting. On Sunday, January 23rd, our Annual Meeting was attended by a significant number of parishioners. We shared a wonderful potluck lunch and we were able to reflect on the many worship and outreach activities we had in 2010. One of the many reasons why we look forward to the Annual Meeting is that it gives us the opportunity to recognize and thank the many folks who contribute time, talent, and energy to making St. Michael's such a warm and welcoming community.

We also had the opportunity to thank our four outgoing Vestry members, Preston Fray, Leonard Harmon, Mary Ann Jacobson, and Ed Sugar for their outstanding service on the Vestry. We welcome our four new Vestry members Diane Collins, Sarah Cook, Hank Meiman, and Meredith Reese and we look forward to the addition of their leadership skills to the St. Michael's Vestry.

We also welcome back Mark Shier who will return to us on Sunday, February 6th, and will assume the duties of Interim Priest. Mark will remain with us until we have a new Rector in place.

The search/discernment process continues to move forward. The committee now has five new candidates and is looking at materials they each provided. These include two sermons and a written response to several questions we asked.

The Vestry will have an all-day retreat on Saturday, February 19th. This will be an opportunity to learn more about our individual faith journeys and determine Vestry liaisons for the various parish ministries.

As we begin this new year in earnest, we are excited about all the opportunities that lay before us.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Progressive Christians Uniting

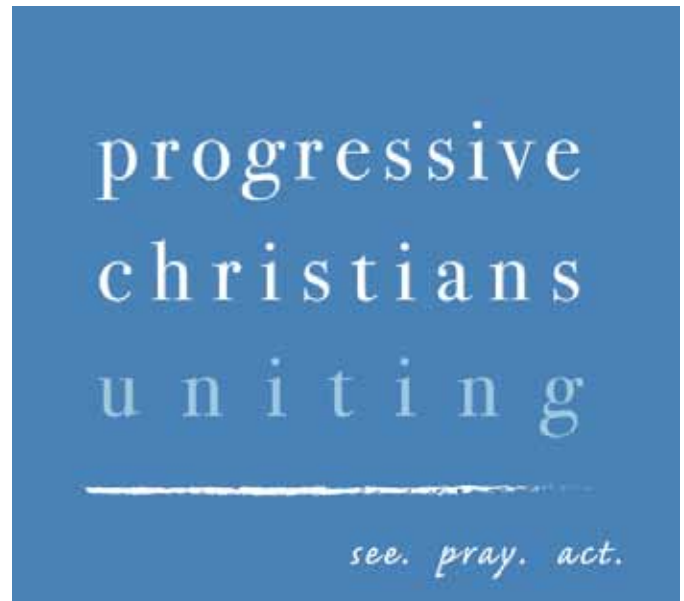
By Betsy Hailey

Progressive Christians Uniting was formed in 1996 in response to the "religiosity" of leaders on the religious right like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson with the goal of "expressing and embodying a version of Christianity that looks more like the religion of Jesus than the religion of empire."

St. Michael's became a supporter with the creation of a Peace and Justice committee on the Vestry that works with PCU on a variety of programs including a workshop on environmental stewardship, a project to strengthen progressive Christian groups on college campuses in Southern California, and education and government reform.

Executive Director Peter Laarman has received an enthusiastic response at the adult ed forums he has addressed over the past few years.

St. Michael's is a presence every year at the annual PCU Presidents' Day gathering. This year's event on Monday, February 21, will be a two-part program at the First Congregational Church of Long Beach, 241 Cedar Avenue, Long Beach 90802: a 3:00 p.m. panel on "Going Public with Our Faith," featuring PCU founders John Cobb and George Regas to be followed at 5:00 p.m. by a cocktail reception ("hefty hors d'oeuvres" are promised). The panel is free; the cocktail reception is \$35. To make reservations call 213.625.0149 or e-mail adm@pcu-la.org. If you'd like to carpool, contact Betsy Hailey at 818.763.7827 or efhailey@aol.com.



**Proceeds From This
Performance Benefit**

**EQUALITY
CALIFORNIA**

Since it was founded in 1998, Equality California has strategically moved California from a state with extremely limited legal protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals to a state with some of the most comprehensive civil rights protections in the nation.

EQCA works to achieve equality and secure legal protections for LGBT people. To improve the lives of LGBT Californians, EQCA sponsors legislation and coordinates efforts to ensure its passage, lobbies legislators and other policy makers, builds coalitions, develops community strength and empowers individuals and other organizations to engage in the political process.

**Gary Lucy
Emcee**

**Jane Edith Wilson
Curator**

**Free childcare is
provided.**

**Hosts
St. Michael's
Community Outreach
Projects Committee**

Saint Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church presents

LIT.UP!

Readings, Standup, Poetry and a Little Music by some of LA's Finest Talent!

**Saturday
February 12th**

Theme: "WHAT I DID FOR LOVE"

FEATURING

**Jon Kinnally, Jimmy Dore, Dorothea Coelho,
Jim Earl, Betsy Meiman, Jimmy Doyle,
Eddie Pepitone, and a short play by Marcia Wilkie,
starring Beverly Sanders and Austin Basis,
as well as emcee Gary Lucy**

8:00 PM

**In the Parish Hall
SUGGESTED DONATION \$10
FREE PARKING & CHILDCARE**

**St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church
3646 Coldwater Canyon Avenue
Studio City, CA 91604
818.763.9193
www.stmikessc.org**



Update from St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects

By Jane Wilson

St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects enters 2011 with a full plate of outreach work that we need to get done. As we look at what lies ahead, I again am sending out a plea to our faith community at St. Michael's that we need your involvement and would love to have you join our team. St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects is a part of St. Michael's that is attracting and inspiring new members to our church—we need all hands on deck! Here are some areas where we are looking for team leaders to step in and take on a deeper commitment to the work we are doing to help those living in extreme need in Los Angeles. We would hate to have to say goodbye to any of these ministries, but if we do not have more involvement soon, this might be the case. Even if you simply commit to upping your involvement in one aspect of SMCOP, it will help us enormously.

- 1. Wig Exchange:** We need someone to work with Louisa Herrmann in various capacities: intake of wigs, scheduling wig washings, outreach to local hospitals and cancer patient outreach groups, help with wrangling hats, scarves and other items for our huge wellness event in June where we come into contact with hundreds of women undergoing cancer treatment. Louisa can be emailed at herrmann24@earthlink.net.
- 2. Sponsored Family:** We are helping a single mom who is raising 6 kids in South Central. Three of her kids are being treated at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Her husband has abandoned her and all responsibilities to her, including financial ones. We are working with the city and various agencies to help her with housing, work and transportation issues, but for the time-being they need help with groceries, work opportunities (she cleans houses), clothes and outings for the kids. This mom is working harder than any person I have ever met to keep it together and she and all of her kids are just delightful to be around. If you have a home with a pool, maybe consider having them over for a little party; you have no idea what an afternoon of swimming and BBQ would mean to this family.
- 3. Lit.Up!:** We do this fun show the second Saturday of each and every month. Over the past four years we have raised tens of thousands of dollars for local charities through the box-office from this show—everything from Get on the Bus to the Episcopal Urban Internship Program to Team Survivor. This is the way we take our tiny SMCOP budget and stretch it to serve more groups in need. We need folks to volunteer for set-up, clean-up, to bring food and drink for the buffet, to do PR for the shows and to run the tech side of things. The next show is February 12th; please let us know if you can help in any capacity.

Also, we are always open to partnering with anyone who has a charity idea for us. Please note: the recipient of the money must serve a community in Los Angeles serving an extreme need or issue.

- 4. Valentine Pizza Party:** We are going to the Good Shepherd shelter in East Hollywood on Sunday, February 13th, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. to make Valentines with the kids and bake pizzas. We need someone to help oversee this entire event.
- 5. Get on the Bus:** This group brings kids to see their incarcerated parents on Mother's Day and Father's Day. Simply put, we need a team leader for this as we like to be a hub each year for the Father's day trip and, if possible, send folks on the bus. Please contact Nancy Woods if you wish to be involved in this great endeavor: nancy2k@adelphia.net.
- 6. SMCOP Secretary:** We need a person to attend our monthly meetings, take minutes and send them to the group and vestry. We meet the first Tuesday of each month.
- 7. Big Sunday:** We are a major hub for this yearly day of city-wide charity (event this year is Sunday, May 15th). Our hub focuses on wounded soldiers and their families as well as collecting items for soldiers that are still deployed. We need help with PR, neighborhood outreach, outreach to local soldiers, food, activities, outreach to faith communities and local schools. If you can do this and wish to partner with SoldierCare chairperson David Rosenberg, please email him ASAP: inkdrone@gmail.com.
- 8. Auction Items:** We are already prepping for next September's Angel Award Dinner. Please, if you have any ideas for or access to good items for the silent auction, let us know. Things like weekends at a vacation home, tickets to events, electronics/computers, services and consultations are always a big money-maker for this event and are all tax-deductible.

Upcoming Meetings: We will be meeting Tuesday, February 1st. All meetings are at 7:30 p.m. in the Junior High/Projects Room (the room with the couches and TV's on the East side of the grassy quad).

If you have an interest in taking over/helping with any of the items listed, please call the contact person listed or call me directly, Jane Wilson, 818.267.4058, email superqueerjane@yahoo.com. Also, if you have friends outside of St. Michael's interested in getting involved, they are welcome to join SMCOP without being members of the church—we need all the help we can get as we continue to grow our wonderful programs.

Caroling, Caroling, Now We Go

On Friday December 17th, while the rain beat down on Los Angeles, a hardy group of St. Michael's parishioners met in the choir room to tune their voices and organize a caravan that would visit those unable to join us in the sanctuary for a good old-fashioned Christmas Carol Sing. We serenaded Sylvia McHugh who was wheeled into the lobby at Sherman Village, marched the halls of Studio City Rehab where Tom Heuer leads a monthly service (they really loved us there!), braved the misty cold, spilling out over the porch at Bea Andrews' home and sang under the garage light at the King's house. Diane Collins made homemade fudge which sweetened the deal as we delivered it to our carolees, and the favor was returned in the form of cookies and sparkling cider. Talk to anyone who attended and they'll agree that it was a beautiful night, full of fun and tenderness and even a bit of harmony. One thing is for sure: this is now a tradition and not to be missed! Carols in June? Hmmmm.

Kristen Toedtman





The Calendar

February 2011

Sunday Schedule • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*
 • *Sunday School (Godly Play, Middle School, Sr. High, and Adult Forums) and Adult Choir begin at 9:30 am.*
 • *Children's Church begins at 10:30 in the Blue Room and the children are brought into Eucharist for the Peace.*
 • *Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service unless otherwise noted.*

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | 1 7:30 PM SMCOP (Youth Lounge) | 2 The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple | 3 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR) | 4 | 5 |
| 6 Epiphany 5 12:15 PM Healing Prayer Gathering (FR) | 7 | 8 7:00 PM Finance Committee (CO) | 9 | 10 | 11 12:00 NOON Fourth Quarter Luncheon (CO) | 12 8:00 PM Lit.Up! (PH) |
| 13 Epiphany 6 | 14 6:15 PM Book Discussion Group (Woods Home) | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 Vestry Retreat |
| 20 Epiphany 7 12:15 PM Healing Prayer Gathering (FR) | 21 Presidents' Day Holiday | 22 | 23 | 24 St. Matthias the Apostle 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR) | 25 | 26 |
| 27 Epiphany 8 | 28 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Group (YL) 7:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group (YL) | | | | | |

Locations:
 CO: Church Office
 CR: Choir Room
 MR: Music Room
 FR: Fireside Room
 PH: Parish Hall
 UR: Upper Room
 YL: Youth Lounge
 S: Sanctuary

St. Michael and All Angels Church

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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David Connors, Junior Warden
Amador Rondilla, Treasurer
Alex Morales, Clerk
Rodney Dickson
Diane Collins
Sarah Cook
Gail Green
Betsy Hailey
Norma Johnson
Hank Meiman
Meredith Reese
Ron Schwartz

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Organist Emil Iliev (emil_iliev@yahoo.com)

THE MIKE STAFF

Publisher Duane Steadman
Editor Emerita Soni Wright

Vision Statement

We are a welcoming and evolving community of conscience engaged in the renewal of our faith by embracing diversity and encouraging growth through prayer, scholarship, social action, and artistic endeavor.

Our Mission Priority

Our mission priority is to focus on the United Nations' First Millennium Goal: To eradicate extreme hunger and poverty.