



# The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA  
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## A Spirituality of Liberation, Part 1

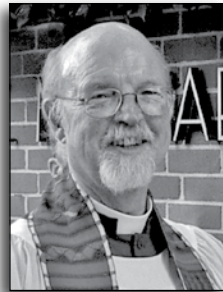
by the Reverend Canon Henry L. Atkins, Jr., D.Min.

In Romans 8:14, St. Paul refers to "those who are in Christ" as those "who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." This, I believe, is, in its essence, the meaning of Christian Spirituality. This understanding is closely related to the understanding that Segundo Galilea develops in his book *Following Jesus*. For Galilea, Christian spirituality is following Jesus, which for Galilea is the only way of knowing Jesus.

However, to walk according to the Spirit seems to me to be a third moment in our spiritual formation. The first moment is always, I believe, one of belief, of silence and awe. In this first moment, one is in touch with the transcendence of God, the power and the glory of the Almighty, the Creator, Liberator and Sustainer of the universe. The first moment is the experience of Moses in Exodus 3. Moses is keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, and he sees the burning bush which is not consumed. Exodus 3:4-6 reads, "When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' and he said, 'Here am I'. Then he said, 'Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' And he said, 'I am the God of your Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God." In this moment, one knows that one is on holy ground and there is trembling. It is no small matter to know that one is in the presence of the living God.

One of my former teachers is a man named Hasan Askari. Askari taught that the moment of meditation for him was the moment, whatever moment, in which he remembered that there was God. The primary point in his spirituality was to remember the presence of God. Whenever one remembers that there is God, that moment is not one of words, but a moment of silence.

This first moment, whether it is occasioned by an external experience, such as a fire that does not consume a bush or by an internal remembrance, is always one of awe and silence. It is a moment of not knowing what to say. It is an experience of being overwhelmed by the holy.



It is a moment of fear and trembling and, at the same time, a moment of grace and love. It is in this moment of silence, when no words will do, that we realize that only that which can cause us to tremble can be

the source of our liberation. In this first moment, we realize that God is God.

There is following this first moment, a second moment. It is a moment that we enter not seeing clearly. When God tells Moses that he is to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let God's people go free from their oppression, Moses responds by saying, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the people of Israel out of Egypt?" Moses did not yet see clearly the nature of God. In Mark 8, a blind man is brought to Jesus at Bethsaida. Mark 8:23-25 says, "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands upon him, he asked him, 'Do you see anything?' And he looked up and said, 'I see men; but they look like trees, walking.' Then, again he laid his hands upon his eyes, and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly." Moses, coming from the moment of the burning bush, still saw God and people as trees. Moses, as did the blind man at Bethsaida, needed a second moment. God spoke again to Moses, and Jesus laid his hands on the blind man a second time, and they both saw clearly.

This second moment, which is also a moment of silence on our part, enables us to see reality. In this second moment, we are not only enabled to see the reality of the world in which we live, but also to see that the will of God is to liberate creation from all that keeps it in bondage.

The third moment is the moment of walking according to the Spirit. It is to walk, to journey toward the reign of God, the reign of justice and peace where all tears shall be wiped away and God shall be all in all. It is a coming out of an old order and moving into a new order. The first and second moments are authenticated in the third moment. The third moment most likely will involve work but it also involves silence. One is not always talking when one is walking according to the Spirit.

During the civil war in El Salvador, I lived for a short while in a Salvadoran refugee camp in La Virtud, Honduras. Along with several other North Americans I had been asked to go to La Virtud to live with the refugees as  
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a form of protection for them. Salvadoran soldiers and members of Salvadoran death squads had been going over into the refugee camps in Honduras, capturing and killing the refugees. On a visit by several North American church representatives, it was discovered that the presence of North Americans among the refugees tended to halt this activity. Hence, several of us North American church people were asked to spend time living in the camp with the refugees.

While living in La Virtud, I learned several stories that I believe relate to the third moment. In one of the stories of the refugees, they first told of how when Moses was a child, he was supposed to have been killed by the Egyptians. However, a woman, Pharaoh's daughter, found this slave child, who had been hidden, and took Moses into the Pharaoh's palace, and the oppressed child grew up in the place of the oppressor. When he was older, Moses was out one day and saw an Egyptian kill a Hebrew. Moses also responded in a moment of anger by killing the Egyptian and in that moment began the process of moving out of Pharaoh's palace. The refugees said that when Oscar Romero became Archbishop

of San Salvador, he was a rather conservative man and considered safe by the Vatican. Shortly after he became Archbishop, his close friend, Fr. Rutilio Grande, was murdered by Salvadoran soldiers. The following Sunday, in the pulpit from his cathedral, Oscar Romero, denounced the Salvadoran government. The peasants say that that is when Archbishop Romero decided to come out of Pharaoh's palace. For the refugees, the coming of Archbishop Romero out of Pharaoh's palace meant identification with the oppressed. The third moment, and I must point out that these three moments overlap and recur, always involves, for those in the privileged or dominant classes, an identification with the poor and the oppressed. For Moses, this identification meant that he had to take the "rod of God" and go and confront the rulers of Egypt. For Oscar Romero, this meant that he had to confront the rulers of El Salvador and become a martyr in the process. In the words of St. John of the Cross, this third moment is "to do a way." It is a way to be Christian in this world.

St Anselm said, "I believe in order to understand." The first moment is the moment of belief. The second moment, which is, of course, related to the first, without the

first there can be no second, is the moment of seeing clearly, of understanding. St Bernard of Clairvaux wrote, "We must learn to drink deep from our own well." This second moment is crucial for a Christian Spirituality of liberation. When we see clearly, I believe that we see that spirituality has to do with all of life. We see that our spirituality is concerned with the whole of life and not just some part that we call spiritual, as if the spiritual were somehow a certain face we put on to be "holy". In a Christian Spirituality of liberation, there is no dualism.

To drink deeply from our own well is to see that God is deeply concerned about God's creation, which, of course, means that God is deeply concerned about and involved in human history. When we see clearly, we see that our spirituality is always involved in a specific history. A spirituality of liberation is a concrete spirituality. In order to walk according to the Spirit we must seek to understand, as well as we can, with the best resources available to us, what God is doing in our present world. At this point, socio-political analysis will be of great help to us, but it is important to remember that only through prayer will we finally be able to see clearly the action of God in our world.

*Pax, The Rev. Canon Henry L. Atkins, Jr.*

## **Maunder Thursday and Easter Vigil Baptisms**

(Photos courtesy of Treadwell Atkins.)



Agapé Soup Supper

Newly Baptized:  
Rodney Dickson

Jon Freis  
and Daughter Jamison  
(apologies to Jon for  
misspelling his name  
in Vigil service bulletin)

Trevor Vincent  
(center)



# From the Vestry

*Betty Ferrell, Senior Warden; John Pryor, Junior Warden*

We at St. Michael's were richly blessed during the season of Easter to have many opportunities to renew our commitment to our faith community and the work of God in the world. One of the most meaningful days was Maundy Thursday when we participated in the ritual of washing of the feet, remembering that as Jesus taught his disciples to serve one another, so we "washed the feet" of our fellow parishioners. We were also really blessed to have Bishop Robinson with us on April 19. His message and his ministry are also reminders of the critical work of justice we are called to do. For the remainder of our church year, the Vestry is committed to serving our parish and strengthening the work that we have as disciples in the world through our commitment to the Millenium Goals. May the spirit of Easter and the risen Christ continue with us.



*Betty Ferrell, Senior Warden  
John H. Pryor, Jr., Junior Warden*



## Treasurer's Corner *by Margie Mullen, Treasurer*

### March, 2009 – Revenues and Expense Summary

	March Actual	March Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenues:	\$27,356	\$30,727	\$ 78,796	\$ 93,697
Total Expenses:	<u>\$39,521</u>	<u>\$44,281</u>	<u>\$123,601</u>	<u>\$141,509</u>
Net Total:	(\$12,165)	(\$13,554)	(\$ 44,805)	(\$ 47,812)

No specific comments for this month.

**June/July 2009 MIKE Deadline:** Please send copy and/or pictures via e-mail to [lauren@stmikessc.org](mailto:lauren@stmikessc.org) by Tuesday, May 19. If you don't have a computer, bring your articles to the Parish Office by that time.

### Easter Sunday, 2009

(Photos courtesy of Bill Haddock.)



St. Michael's Adult Choir & Choristers

The Haddocks: Karen & Bill Annabel and William

Gary & Preston Lucy with mom Jane Wilson

Easter Egg Hunters



# The Calendar

May, 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Sunday Services are 8:00 AM (no choir) and 10:30 AM (with choir) in the Sanctuary.            Sunday School (Godly Play, Youth, and Adult Forums) begin for all ages at 9:30 am. (Last Sunday 5/24)            Children's Church begins at 10:30 in the Purple Room and the children are brought into Eucharist for the Peace.            (Last Sunday 5/24)            Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 AM service unless otherwise noted.</p>					<b>1</b> 12:00 NOON Fourth Quarter (CO)	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> BIG SUNDAY Noon to 3pm Women's Care Cottage Clothing Collection 9:00 AM Men's Group Morning Prayer 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Choristers Reh 12:15 PM Healing Prayer (FR)	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Clergy Conference 7:30 PM Community Outreach Projects Committee (UR)	<b>6</b> Clergy Conference	<b>7</b> Clergy Conference 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (CR)	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> All Day: Revlon Run/Walk 8:00 PM Lit.UP! (PH)
<b>10</b> 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Choristers Reh	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 7:00 PM Finance Committee (CO)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (CR)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 11:15 AM Liturgical Committee (UR)
<b>17</b> 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Choristers Reh 12:15 PM Healing Prayer (Location TBD) 12:30 PM Ushers & Greeters Luncheon (FR) 12:30 PM Youth Group (YL)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting (UR)  <i>June '09 Newsletter Articles DUE</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (CR)	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Camp Stevens Family Camp 11:15 AM Adult Education Committee (UR)
<b>24</b> Camp Stevens Family Camp 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Choristers Reh 12:15 PM Pastoral Care (UR)	<b>25</b> Memorial Day Parish Office Closed. Camp Stevens Family Camp 10:00 AM & 7:00 PM Prayer Shawl Knitting Groups (FR) (Tentative)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7:00 PM Bioneers (PH)	<b>28</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (CR) (Last Practice 'Til Fall!)	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Pentecost LAST Day Choir Sings						<p><i>Locations:</i>            CO: Church Office            CR: Choir Room            FR: Fireside Room            PH: Parish Hall            UR: Upper Room            YL: Youth Lounge            S: Sanctuary</p>

# GOINGS ON AT ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH

## Thanksgiving for a Job Well Done

To: **Mary Ann Jacobson and the Coffee Hour Team:** *for organizing the extra activities such as Holy Week, Bernice Fowler's memorial reception, Bishop Robinson's visit, and the Newcomers dinner.*

**The Maundy Thursday Agapé Supper Team—Treadwell Atkins, Maria Aukee, Mary Ann Jacobson, Norma Johnson, Jane Mason, Martha Shaw, Nancy Woods, Hallie Walker & Dan Baran, and Gail Wright** *(who spent her wedding anniversary with us!): for the wonderful soups and the moving services.*

**Jane Wilson:** *for Lit.UP!*

**Nancy Woods:** *for her ongoing work to strengthen our Lay Eucharistic Visitor and pastoral care efforts.*

*The next time you see these individuals, please give each heartfelt thanks for their contributions.*

*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.*

### **Always-Needed Food Pantry Items**

*Canned fruit and vegetables.*

*Baby food in plastic jars.*

*Tuna.*

*Peanut butter in plastic jars.*

*Powdered milk in individual packets.*

*Individual size snacks.*

*Plastic and paper shopping bags.*

*Diapers and feminine hygiene items.*

*Travel-size soap, toothpaste and disposable razors.*

*And money!*

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

## May Birthdays

Day	Name
1	Ayana Coha
3	Lise Friedman
8	Mike Seaman
11	Cole Walker
13	Rock Costas
15	Amanda Schwartz
16	John Pryor Jr
17	Peter Bull
18	Lois Vaughan
19	Brooks Taylor
21	Cathy Lewis-Dougherty
23	Anna Wilson
24	Gary Lucy
25	Kline Swonger
28	Barbara King
30	Rae Markus
31	Bonnie Winings

## May Anniversaries

Day	Name
8	Jose Carrillo & William Kastak
26	Norma & Donald Johnson
27	Jane Wilson & Gary Lucy

**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 ([lauren@stmikessc.org](mailto:lauren@stmikessc.org)) to let us know. *Please Note: Birthdays and Anniversaries will be celebrated on the last Sunday of each month.*

## Quotation for May

*"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."*

*César Chavez, Labor Leader  
(March 31, 1927–April 23, 1993)*

# St. Michael's in its Fourth Year Supporting the GET ON THE BUS Program *By Nancy Woods GOTB Coordinator*

This is the fourth year that St. Michael's is supporting Get On The Bus. For those of you that are not familiar with Get On The Bus, it is a program to reunite children with their parents in prison on Mothers and Fathers day weekends. This year we are helping out with a bus that is going in June to the men's prison in Soledad which is north of King City—a long way to be separated from dad. Many families don't have the ability or means to make such a long trip. That is why we are helping to make this possible. The children and their guardians will board a tour bus very early in the morning. After breakfast is served, games, activities, videos and munchies help make the trip fun and seem not so long. When the bus arrives at the prison and hugs bring the family together, the children have a long visit with their dads. After lunch and more visiting, everyone says their tearful good-byes. After the children board the bus, each receives a gift from dad—a teddy bear for comfort on the long trip back home.

We have completed the initial step on the road to Soledad. We visited the guardians and children in the San Fernando Valley and completed all the necessary paperwork—lots of paperwork. Thanks to Treadwell Atkins, Diana Benjamin, Kelly Freis,

Mary Ann Jacobson, Ricki Sawyer and Jenifer Schmutz for making this first, important contact with the families.



We are excited that two of our members, Diana Benjamin and Jenifer Schmutz, will be going on the bus to Soledad as counselors. They will help with the activities as well as be alert to special needs and give support to both the children and caregivers as this can be a very emotional time.

As you can imagine, the teddy bears are an important part of the trip as they are a way for the children to remember their dad as well as a source of comfort. Avery Wright volunteered to have a teddy bear drive at her school, Immaculate Heart. What a wonderful thing to do. A big thanks to Avery! You can also help in this

way. The bears will go not only to the children on the bus to Soledad but also to the children from the general public that visit on Fathers Day weekend. There are never too many bears. We need new bears (no animal substitutions please) of medium size (not tiny or huge) for girls and boys of all ages.

I hope everyone will get involved in this wonderful reunion. Pick up a brochure at church to read more about Get On The Bus. A great way you can help is to make a donation to help cover the costs. The brochures and donation envelopes are on the Outreach table in parish hall. Also, watch the Sunday bulletin for more ways to get involved with Get On The Bus this year.

100% of the proceeds from Lit.UP! on Saturday, May 9th, will go to Get On The Bus. Please come, enjoy an evening of comedy and support this very important outreach program.

No one can imagine what is going on in the heart and mind of a child whose parent is in prison so far from home. We only get a glimpse of the joy they experience in seeing and touching and feeling the love of their parent.

## Newcomer Dinner

(Photos courtesy of Margie Mullen.)



Betsy Hailey, Phyllis Bracey,  
Susan Guire

Karen Rogers, Martha Shaw,  
Diana Goodwin

Messina Trefethen (front)  
(L to R) John Wyman,  
Karen Rogers, Diana Goodwin,  
LeDoux, Patrick Holder

Mary Ann Jacobson  
with cake and friends

## O Bioneers! *By Betsy Meiman*

Via Susan Clark, who graced our parish hall with a stirring performance of Betsy Hailey's *A Woman of Independent Means*, we are fortunate to host the Bioneers. Bioneers is a worldwide forum that connects and helps to galvanize people from writers to scientists from activists to economists whose work spans many fields and cultures. Together, they offer a dynamic vision for restoring the Earth, combining ecological approaches with social, spiritual and political strategies. They produce an award-winning radio series and an annual conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico, of which former California senator and environmental activist Tom Hayden says "The Bioneers Conference is one of the most important educational, networking and motivating experiences available today."

What this means for St. Mike's is that on the last Wednesday of every month, we get to hear innovative acclaimed speakers from diverse environmental backgrounds and areas of expertise in our very own parish hall, combining the visionary and the practical.

For more info on Bioneers:  
<http://www.bioneers.org>

### *Our first guest on Wednesday, April 29th at 7PM is Tom Kostigen.*

Who... "has traveled the world—from the deserts of the Middle East to the slums of India; from polluted cities in China to the jungles of Borneo; from the Arctic Circle to the Amazon; as well as many other environmental hot spots—to investigate the effect of man on the planet." Kostigen is the *New York Times* best-selling coauthor of *The Green Book: The Everyday Guide to Saving the Planet One Simple Step at a Time*. His new book, *You Are Here: The Surprising Link Between What We Do and What That Does to the Planet* was published in September 2008.

Kostigen writes the *Better Planet* column and blog for *Discover Magazine*, as well as the "Ethics Monitor" column for *Dow Jones MarketWatch*. He has spent almost two decades exploring issues related to global warming, the environment, social issues, and governmental policies.

At the podium, Kostigen employs images from his world travels to powerfully demonstrate the impact

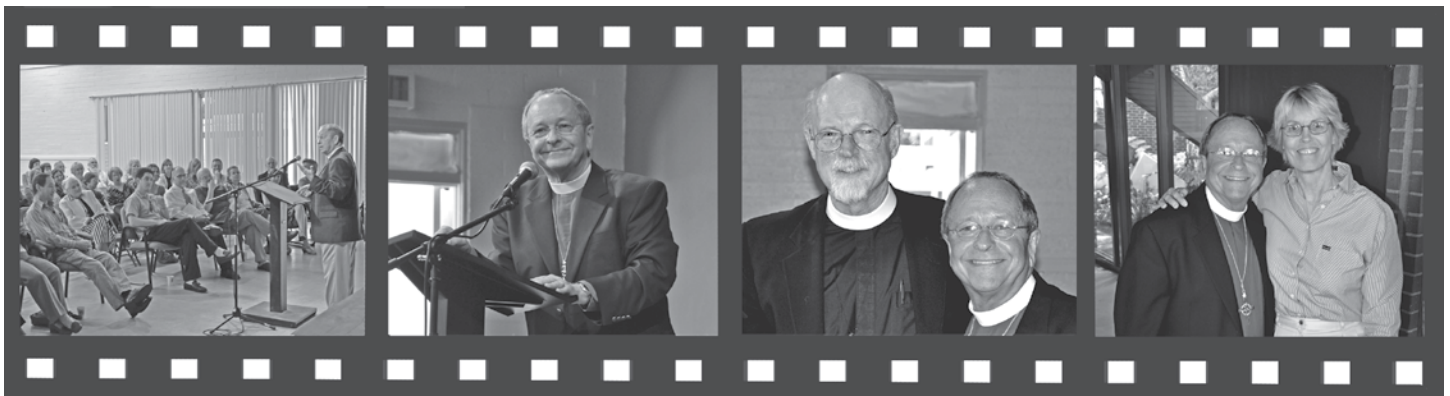


of our actions. He takes people to the front lines of the most environmentally significant places on Earth and explains how everyday actions matter. Bringing the audience with him on his adventures to exotic locales, he provides "Wow!" factoids and empowering messages, as well as highlights the opportunities—for sustainability, profitability and natural resource efficiency. In a program that imparts an understanding of here-and-now issues, Kostigen educates audiences on the importance of their actions and leaves them emboldened to make changes in their businesses and their lives."

"Inspiration for change.  
Education for action." ~ *Bioneers*

## Bishop V. Gene Robinson Visit

(copies of LA Times article are available in the church office. Photos courtesy of Bill Wright.)



Speaking to the Adult Forum

Bishop Robinson fielding questions

Father Atkins with the Bishop

Margie Mullen with the Bishop

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### 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.*