



The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA
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We Need Your Prayers...and Your Money

By the Reverend Dan Justin

My pharmacist is a devout Armenian Orthodox Christian. He plays the organ at his church when he is not working at his small pharmacy in Burbank. He enjoys chatting with me when I come in. He is interested in learning about our traditions and specifically our music. When it is time for me to pay my bill he always says the same thing, "Father, we need your prayers... and your money." His comment makes me chuckle every time. And yet, sometimes it also makes me think. His words are a fairly practical and honest approach to stewardship.

It is that time of year again. Every fall the church embarks on its annual stewardship campaign. And to be honest, we need your prayers...and your money. Stewardship has two sides: the spiritual and practical. There are great debates about which side should be highlighted. Well, this year, let's talk about both!

Stewardship is first and foremost an act of prayer. It is an act of worship and gratitude. It is a spiritual discipline by which we become fully devoted followers of Jesus. When we give our money back to God we are recognizing and acknowledging that all we have and all we are is a gift from God. Even our ability to work and make money is a gift from God. Through giving we show our thanksgiving for all God has done in our lives. We have received unimaginable grace. Our response to that grace is to give our whole lives back to God. Giving of our finances is the tangible expression of this. Jesus taught, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Giving helps us to prioritize our relationship with God. And it is through giving that God will transform us into the generous people God longs for us to be. Our goal is to live our lives by the example we see in Jesus. His life was marked by generosity. He gave all he could. The Holy Spirit uses the discipline of stewardship to help us become more like Jesus. These are the spiritual aspects of stewardship. In a very real sense, stewardship is deeply personal and is about our personal spiritual growth. We need your prayer.

But we also need your money. There is a very practical side of stewardship as well. In a very real sense, stewardship is deeply communal and is also about the growth of the parish. Your estimate of giving (your pledge) allows us to create our budget. We have seen wonderful growth in giving over the past two years. We also had significant increases



in our rental income from Destination Science and Sunnyside Preschool. This year we will not be seeing any increase in rental income. That means in order to continue to grow we must rely solely on pledges to expand our ministry and care for the needs of the church.

Each year we base our budget on where we believe God is leading us. We have focused on our music program and our outreach program in the past. Both of these programs are now fully funded through the budget. We have eliminated additional fundraisers for outreach. When you give to the church you can be confident that a percentage of what you give is going to feed the hungry and care for the poor.

As we look to the future we believe God is now inviting us to focus on our ministry to children. Each time a member of the church is baptized we vow to support them in their life of faith. Children's formation is the responsibility of the entire parish—not just the responsibility of parents and Sunday school teachers. To this end, we need to begin taking steps towards hiring a Children's Pastor. This part-time position would be more than just a Director of Religious Education. They would take responsibility for nurturing spiritual growth in our youngest members and in families. They would partner with, equip, and train our wonderful Sunday school teachers. Stronger ministry for children and families is the next step for our parish. But we cannot

even begin to search for the right candidate until we have fully funded this position. And that cannot happen without you.

We face a hard truth for 2015. If giving decreases or stays static we will face a budget deficit. If we hope to maintain the ministries we have built in the recent past, and begin planting the seeds necessary to expand our ministry to children and families—each of us must contribute. We need your prayers, and your money.

We are not asking for equal gifts. We are asking for equal participation. Are you already a pledging member? Prayerfully consider increasing your pledge this year? Are you a proportional giver? Consider giving the tithe this year (10% of your income). Have you never given before? Join with us as we seek to follow where Christ leads. If every member contributes we will continue to have a very bright future. And as you give, please do not neglect that first part—let us always be a people of prayer!

Blessings,
Dan+

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Youth Group Has Started Up Again

By Stephanie Wilson

If you are in 6th to 12th grade, we want you to join the St. Michael's Youth Group. We meet once a month during coffee hour after the 10:30 am service and, starting this year, once a month for a social event. During our monthly meetings we play games, share about our lives, and pray together. We hope you will join us.

If you have any questions, please contact the Rev. Stefanie Wilson at 818.358.5729 or at wilsons@campbellhall.org.

Upcoming Youth Group events:

October

Sunday, October 5—Youth Group meeting at Coffee Hour

Saturday, October 25—Movie and game night

November

Sunday, November 2—Youth Group meeting at Coffee Hour

Saturday, November 15—TBA service project

December

Sunday, December 7—Youth Group meeting at Coffee Hour and shopping trip for Christmas presents for adopted family

Saturday, December 13—TBA social event

January

Sunday, January 4—Youth Group meeting at Coffee Hour

Saturday, January 31—Bishop's Ball at St. Mark's, Downey (high school only)

Mid-Week

October 8, 2014, at 6:30 pm

All are invited to our next Mid-Week dinner and class. We will gather at 6:30 pm in the Ministry Center for a family style dinner. Please RSVP if you plan to attend by e-mailing Duane Steadman at administrator@stmikessc.org. Please note, childcare is not available at Mid-Week but all ages are welcome to attend the class. This month our topic is:

History Lessons

The story of the Christian faith is fascinating. But most people don't really know that story. We have the book of Acts that provides a picture of how the church began...but what happened after all that? How did the church grow and change? Where did it go? How did it mess up and how did it try to put itself back on the right track? Join the Rev. Dan Justin as we take a look at the highlights of church history.

Pet Blessings

October 5, 2014, at the 10:30 am service

Each year we celebrate the Feast of St. Francis on the first weekend of October. Francis, who is one of the most popular saints, lived a life dedicated to the care of the poor and needy. He lived a life of poverty. He is also known for his care of creation and all of God's creatures.

Once again our celebration will include the blessing of pets. You are welcome to bring your pets to church for the 10:30am service. There will be a general blessing at the conclusion of the service. We will then process to the courtyard where the priests will be available to give individual pet blessings. If you are unable to bring your pet to church you may bring a surrogate—either a photo or a stuffed animal. God knows where the blessings are meant to go.



Blessing of the Costumes

October 26, 2014, at the 10:30 am service

The children of the parish are invited to wear their Halloween costumes to church on Sunday, October 26th. During the 10:30 am service all children will be invited to come forward to show off their costumes and receive a blessing.



October Birthdays

Day	Name
3	Caitlyn Fields
4	Diane Collins
5	Bruce Rankin
11	Connor Smith
15	Marjie Hathaway
20	Hadley Brown
22	Olivier Whelan Ethan Piekutowski
26	Ging Molera

October Anniversaries

Day	Name
2	Paul & Meredith Reese
3	Ging Molera & Amador Rondilla
10	David & Melissa Basta
18	Jaycen Armstrong & Joyce Kim
24	Louisa & André Herrmann

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.

Treasurer's Corner

August 2014—Revenue and Expense Summary

	August Actual	August Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 47,490	\$ 36,067	\$342,759	\$288,540
Total Expense	29,802	36,065	306,348	288,525
Net	\$ 17,688	\$ 2	\$ 36,411	\$ 15



Last month, Fr. Dan wrote, "As long as we are alive, we should always be growing, changing, learning, and seeking to move ever closer to God". St. Michael's has many opportunities to achieve this that continue this month. At our 9:15 am Adult Forum, the Bible study group is reading and studying the gospel of Mathew. We started this gospel in September and continue through November. This is a wonderful, exciting chance to learn more about a beloved, familiar book of the Bible.



We will have our second mid-week class on October 8th. The topic will be "History Lessons." Last month we studied the two creeds. We recite the Nicene Creed each Sunday at communion and the Apostles' Creed we say during Baptisms. We learned that in the Nicene Creed we praise the full divinity of the Son, the second Person of the Trinity. We learned that the Apostles' Creed is an authentic expression of the apostolic faith and contains twelve articles (its origins are not from the twelve apostles).

Last month, Fr. Dan started including at the end of our Sunday bulletin, a one page

piece titled "What I Did Not Preach On". These articles are a wonderful opportunity for us to explore an additional facet of the material covered in the Sunday's biblical readings.

We are in the midst of stewardship and working on a budget for the next year. Please prayerfully consider making a pledge to St. Michael and All Angels for this coming year. You may choose to tithe or practice proportional giving. Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God.

St. Michael's has many opportunities for the parish family to explore and learn more about the cornerstone of our faith, the Bible. Come join members of our community as we move ever closer to God.

Why We Need a Church

By Eliza Diliberti

It is a Wednesday evening, and I am setting up for the monthly Young Adult Group meeting in the Ministry Center. I can hear a woman talking on her cellphone in the courtyard through the doors I just opened. The woman on the phone interrupts her conversation to call a dog towards her. I recall the sign in the courtyard asking people to refrain from walking their dogs on the church grounds in order to preserve the grass for the children who play on it. I don't understand why she is walking her dog in the courtyard. I don't understand what she thinks a church is.

A church is a spiritual home, a provider of charity, a place of learning, a supportive community, and a sacred space. A church is a place to pray, for oneself, for others. All day, every day the very marrow of the church rings out in prayer and worship, lament and praise. It is soaked in years of blessings and absolutions. Within the church, the mundane turns into the miraculous. St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church has seen countless baptisms, weddings, and funerals. There is no end to the reasons one might need a church. I get out of bed early on Sundays because I spend all week in this beautiful, unknowable world, and the only response I can think of is worship.

Currently, there are pressures on all sides of St. Michael and All Angels Church from institutions that value its land, facilities, and parking more than the church itself. But a healthy community needs a house of faith, whether it is a church, a mosque, a synagogue,

a temple, or otherwise. A church is a spiritual home, and to eradicate faith from your neighborhood is to starve your spirit, even if you never set foot in the structure. The modern assault on faith saddens me. A person cannot survive on literalism alone.

St. Michael and All Angels...is a spiritual engine, manufacturing an infinity of love and forgiveness.

Perhaps the disinterest in having a church in the canyon is because being Christian is never fashionable. Living in solidarity with those who are poor and suffering is unglamorous, anguishing work. And yet we live in a world of terrible sin and poverty that cries out for mercy and rescue. A serene hike in the mountains may bring a sense of closeness to God, but Christianity says that God is just as much in the homeless on the streets as he is in those majestic peaks. It's a sure downer for polite dinner conversation.

St. Michael's could not be a more respectful

and accepting parish. And Episcopalians will never knock on your door inquiring into your personal religious beliefs. St. Michael's does not even ring a church bell on Sunday mornings. No, as Episcopalians, we believe that worship and charity are the best public expressions of our faith.

Even if you are not a member of St. Michael's, we will always keep the light on for you. You can never know when you will need a church in your life. Perhaps one evening, you'll need a place to rest your weary soul. Perhaps, after exhausting all other options, you'll need to say a long, deep prayer. Perhaps you will be struck one morning by the sheer magnitude of existence and you'll feel the need to express praise or thanks. Or perhaps you wish to band with others who are disgusted by the level of poverty in the world. The doors will be open, and the home fire kept burning.

At the end of our worship service, we thank God for feeding us "with spiritual food." We use this nourishment to nourish others in our community—to comfort the sick and dying, to care for those in need, to fight for justice and peace. And even if you have never entered the sanctuary, it is your church, too. It exists to serve you and your spiritual needs.

St. Michael and All Angels is a church. It is a spiritual engine, manufacturing an infinity of love and forgiveness. Who wouldn't want it in their neighborhood?

Feast of St. Michael

On Friday, September 26, following Evensong in the church, the parish enjoyed an elegant, festive, and delicious meal prepared by our own Maureen Lisi-MacReady and One Great Chef. After dinner, the festivities continued with the music of Brooks Taylor and The Skinwalkers.





The Calendar

October 2014

Sunday Schedule • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*
 • *Adult Learning Opportunity begins at 9:15 in the Ministry Center*
 • *Sunday School begins at 10:15 with Family Sing in the Ministry Center; 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 7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S) 7:30 pm Young Adults Group (L)	2 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	3	4 Francis of Assisi
5 Pentecost 17 <i>Pet Blessings at the 10:30 Eucharist</i> 12:00 noon Youth Group (L) 12:00 noon St. Michael's Outreach (CO)	6	7	8 6:30 pm Mid-Week (MC) 7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)	9 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	10	11 ¹
12 Pentecost 18	13	14 7:00 pm Finance Committee (CO)	15 7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S) 7:00 pm Women's Group	16 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	17	18 St. Luke
19 Pentecost 19	20	21 7:00 pm Vestry (L)	22 Cathedral Center Day 7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)	23 St. James of Jerusalem 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	24	25
26 Pentecost 20 <i>Blessing of Costumes at the 10:30 Eucharist</i> 11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (MC)	27	28 St. Simon & St. Jude	29 7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)	30 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	31	

Locations:
 CO Church Office
 MR Music Room
 FR Fireside Room
 MC Ministry Center
 L The Loft (formerly the stage)
 S Sanctuary

St. Michael and All Angels Church

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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.