



# The Mike

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

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## A Holy Lent

By the Very Reverend Dan Justin

On March 5th I will stand before the congregation and invite you, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent. What exactly is Lent and how can we make it holy? For many, Lent is a season of giving up chocolate or exercising more than normal, or not watching as much television. But all of those things can be fairly meaningless if we do not understand why we are doing them. I have also heard it said that Lent is that season of the church year when we remember just how bad we are. Some assume Lent is all about our sinfulness and therefore a need to grovel before God. But that too is a misunderstanding. Focusing on giving things up or just on how bad of people we are is actually the opposite of a holy Lent.

The season of Lent, in the history of the church, was the final period of preparation for those who were soon to be baptized in the church. It was not until the fourth century that the season of Lent began to last for a period of forty days. In fact, from the fourth century until the seventh century it only lasted thirty six days. In the seventh century someone figured out that they should add the four days from Ash Wednesday to the first Sunday of Lent to round up to an actual forty days. This period of preparation was marked by prayer, fasting, and acts of service as the new converts sought to live more like the example Jesus provides.

Our prayer book indicates that Lent was also a time "For those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful, were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church." Lent was the time to come back to Church after falling away for some reason. It was a time to seek forgiveness.

So Lent, according to the prayer book, is about preparing for baptism, reconciliation, and restoration. Three wonderful and beautiful things that all communicate the unmerited and free grace of a God who promises that

nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Why then do we think that Lent is all about sin and reminding ourselves of our depravity? That is not the message of Lent at all. The message of Lent is the message that "God so



loved the world that God gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). It is because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus that these three wonderful and beautiful things,

adoption as God's children in baptism, reconciliation, and restoration, are available to us. Jesus brings God's salvation to us, freely. But it came with a price.

And so this year I invite you to a holy Lent. Not a Lent in which you give up things just for sake of giving them up, nor a Lent in which you beat yourself up over a list of vices. But rather a holy Lent which takes time to remember the gift of Jesus. A holy Lent where you focus on your relationship with God and growth in faith through things like self-examination, prayer, fasting, self-denial, reading and reflecting on God's holy Word, and yes, even repentance. And we do these things because we know that God freely offers adoption, reconciliation and restoration. The message of Lent is good news. God loves us; God made a way for us; God has redeemed us. We join the pilgrim road of Lent, walking with Jesus as he gives his life for the life of the world. Through our Lenten disciplines we will identify with the sufferings of Jesus, experiencing and living into his amazing love. And our goal is to learn to live like our Lord, Master, and Savior lived. That, my friends, will be a holy Lent indeed.

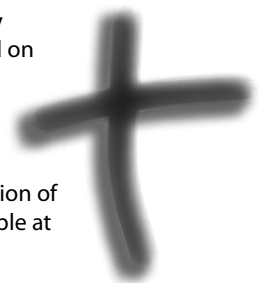
Blessings,

Dan+

## Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday

Lent is upon us. All members of the Parish are invited to our annual **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper!** We will gather on Tuesday, March 4th, at 6:30pm in the Ministry Center. The Men's Ministry will once again prepare a feast—including our famous Monkey Pancakes! There will be family fun for the kids with Mardi Gras masks, games, and a parade. You won't want to miss it.

**Ash Wednesday** will be observed on Wednesday, March 5th, with services at 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm. The imposition of ashes will available at both services.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Rector .....	1
Notes from the Music Department .....	2
Birthdays & Anniversaries .....	2
Treasurer's Corner .....	2
From the Vestry .....	3
Confirmation Makes It Official .....	3
Young Adults Group .....	4
Meet our Junior Warden .....	4
Youth Group .....	4
Confirmation Photos .....	5
Calendar .....	6-7

# Notes from the Music Department

by Kristen Toedtman

I am delighted to welcome our new organist Duane Steadman, whom you may know as our Parish Administrator. In that role, he has already devoted thoughtful energy and time to us over the years, yet now he will expand his service to include Sunday worship and Thursday night choir rehearsals. As I welcome him, allow me to offer a bit of an introduction to you.

Perhaps you weren't aware that Duane is an accomplished musician. If that's the case, you would have been delighted and awed had you heard his first service with us on Sunday, February 23rd. For the prelude, he beautifully and contemplatively opened the service with an *Andante Sostenuto* of Charles-Marie Widor (from his *Symphonie Gothique*) and seemed to celebrate at the end of the service with Dietrich Buxtehude's Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C Major. Whatever his motivations for the choices, it is evident he gives great care for each one, one of his traits for which I am most grateful as he begins his service as our new organist.



Duane has worked as a church musician for 43 years, most recently as the organist at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Fullerton where he was for 11 years. After 7 years of piano lessons, he began studying the organ at the age of 12 and took his first church job only 6 years later. He has played in Episcopal, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches. He holds two degrees in organ performance.

Duane has a deep interest in liturgy and in the past has even helped me to navigate special services (particularly Evensong). I asked Duane to share a bit about his knowledge and how he came to it.

"I gained my knowledge of Anglican liturgy through lots of reading and observation going back to high school . . . I had an interest in the organ as long as I can remember and certainly by the time I was in high school I was fascinated by liturgy and wanted to know much more. I remember looking forward to the Christmas morning broadcasts from the National Cathedral. That was a glimpse into something utterly unlike anything I had experienced."

"My second organ teacher was organist at the Episcopal church in my home town and I occasionally played a prelude or postlude. By the time I was in college I had all but become Episcopalian. My first two organ positions were at Episcopal churches and I was finally confirmed in 1976 while in graduate school."

I hope you will join me in giving a hearty welcome to Duane Steadman, truly a fine musician and

## What Happened to the Doxology?!

Each Sunday, as our offerings of money and food are brought to the altar, we sing what is known as the Doxology. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..." But you may notice as we move into Lent that the Doxology has been replaced. Now, I know how difficult change can be, so I wanted to explain that decision. As the seasons of the Church year change we also change our liturgy to reflect the various themes of the new season. We actually change lots of different things in the service—the colors in the church, the vestments, the service music, the prayers of the people—each of these changes with the seasons. As we enter the season of Lent this year we have decided to change from the Doxology to what is known as a presentation hymn.

This Lent, as our gifts of money and food are brought to the altar, we will sing the first stanza of hymn 149. "Eternal Lord of love, behold your Church walking once more the pilgrim way of Lent, led by your cloud by day, by night your fire, moved by your love and toward your presence bent: far off yet here—the goal of all desire."

These words will be for us a prayer as we offer our gifts and our lives to God. A prayer which acknowledges that we are seeking to walk toward God, our goal is to be in God's presence. It is our deepest desire. And we know that God will answer our prayer in the gift of the Eucharist. This presentation hymn will help us connect more deeply with the season of Lent. And of course, after these forty days have come to an end, that stone has been rolled away, and the alleluias are again on our lips, we will once again sing with all our hearts, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

Dan+

an asset to our worship. This change is one that both Dan and I felt would enhance our worship and further the mission to grow in our faith and spirituality at St. Michael's.

## March Birthdays

Day	Name
3	Jack Eddleman Jay Hathaway Tina Wilson
4	Gail Green
7	Mack MacReady
8	Lindsay Hebbe-Zubiate
10	Oliver Helmink
15	Betty Ferrell Samantha Rupnik
17	Ella Sage
20	Julia Kirkpatrick
21	Gwynneth Renton
23	Margaret Renton
26	Jaycen Armstrong
27	Steve Wright
28	Chris Long
29	Austin Baggett
30	Keira Burbage
31	Masha Best Vitaly Best

## March Anniversaries

Day	Name
3	Ron & Denise Schwartz
10	Julie Meine & Dick Bate
25	Margie & Liz Mullen

### 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

### January 2014—Revenue and Expense Summary

	January Actual	January Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 26,933	\$ 33,805	\$407,500	\$371,859
Total Expense	38,957	37,978	381,805	373,404
Net	\$( 12,024)	\$( 4,173)	\$ 25,695	\$( 1,545)



Although 2014 began on January 1st, the year for St. Michael's really began with the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 19th. At the Annual Meeting we shared a wonderful potluck lunch and we reflected on the many successful worship and outreach activities we had the previous year. This year we thanked Sarah Cook and Meredith Reese for their outstanding service on the Vestry and we welcomed Julie Bellevue, Gail Green, Jenni Hernandez, and Ron Schwartz who were newly elected to the Vestry. (Gail and Ron have previously served on the Vestry.)



On February 7-8, 2014, the Vestry held a retreat at the Loft in the Ministry Center. This was an opportunity for each Vestry member to share the story of their own personal spiritual journey. We also discussed the roles and responsibilities of Vestry members and Vestry liaison positions to the various parish commissions. The Vestry elects a Junior Warden each

year and this year Ron Schwartz was elected to the Junior Warden position. (Please see a separate article about Ron in this issue.)

What a difference two years make! February 5th marked the two year anniversary of Father Dan's first Sunday with us. St. Michael's is a very different place than it was two years ago. Physically the entire campus has been renovated. Spiritually we have seen a renewal and a deepening of our faith and commitment that matches, or surpasses, the physical change in the campus. Every day we are grateful that God brought Father Dan and St. Michael's together!

As we move into Lent and prepare for Easter, we continue to pray for all that God has given to St. Michael's and that we may continue to grow in our faith.

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## Confirmation Makes It Official

### An Interview with Three of Our Recent Confirmands

by the Rev. Stefanie Wilson

On February 16, many members of our parish were confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church by the Bishop Suffragan Mary D. Glasspool. Included in the group of confirmands, were several members of the St. Michael's Youth Group.

A week after the confirmation, I asked Youth Group members Nikolay, Vitaly, and Masha Best what it was like for them to be confirmed.

In preparation for confirmation, all of those participating met with Fr. Dan for two classes to learn more about the Episcopal Church, its history, its liturgy, and more. Nikolay, Vitaly, and Masha expressed that they most enjoyed learning about how the church is structured. Vitaly enjoyed learning about General Convention and the way decisions are made, and looking at the robes we use in church. Masha and Nikolay enjoyed learning about the different roles of deacons, priests, and bishops.

We also talked about the experience of being confirmed: being presented by the congregation, making promises to renew their commitment to Christ, kneeling in front of the bishop, and having her hands laid on them. Masha worried that it would be scary, but said that it "felt really spiritual." Vitaly enjoyed meeting and talking to the bishop. He said, "Kneeling in front of the bishop didn't feel weird or anything. She is a normal person...I felt glad that I did it." He said that it was fun and a different experience than baptism. Nikolay agreed, "I never thought that having

hands laid on by a bishop would be so holy. It felt so great. When I got baptized, it was water being poured on me and the Holy Spirit being received, but having hands laid on me by the bishop was something that you could feel. It was special."

When I asked each of the Bests why they got confirmed, they all expressed their love for being a part of the St. Michael and All Angels community. For example, when I told Vitaly that some people explain confirmation for teenagers as

a way to signify that you are an adult in the church, he looked at me confused. He said, "I never felt like I wasn't." He feels like he has always been accepted and fully a part of the church. He likes how friendly the church is and that "they allow anybody and everybody to come in."

Masha felt that she too is already a part of the church as an acolyte and a member of the Youth Group. Confirmation was another way to be more a part of the church. For her, "confirmation made it official."

Nikolay explained, "I really like the church. I love the people in the church. I love being part of the Youth Group." He described that when he was confirmed, he was "uniting with the people in the church."

At the close of our conversation, all three agreed that anyone interested in being confirmed should definitely do it. In the words of Nikolay, "If you have the chance to be confirmed, be confirmed."





# Young Adult Group

By Eliza Diliberti

Recently, the Young Adult Group met with Fr. Dan for a discussion on prayer. In the group's previous monthly discussions, the topic of prayer would come up frequently. It seems that many young adults at St. Michael's are seeking a more fulfilling prayer life, but aren't sure how to accomplish that. In response to this interest, we invited Fr. Dan to come speak more in depth on this topic.

The meeting went very well and was the most well-attended of any of the monthly meetings so far. Through the course of the evening, we explored different ways to pray (including how to pray the daily offices from the Book of Common Prayer), the purpose of prayer, and where prayer fits into the Episcopal faith.

We learned that prayer is absolutely essential to Episcopal faith and worship, and that incorporating prayer into our lives is a vital component of living the Episcopal faith, not to mention having a fulfilling spiritual life. There was an especially interesting dialogue regarding whom prayer is for. Do we expect something in return for our prayers or is it an offering to God, something we give?

Our next meeting will be on Ash Wednesday (March 5th) after the 7:00pm service. We'll meet around 8:00 pm in The Loft, our usual meeting place. We plan to have a follow-up discussion to our meeting with Fr. Dan, but please feel free to join regardless of whether you were able to come to last month's discussion or not.

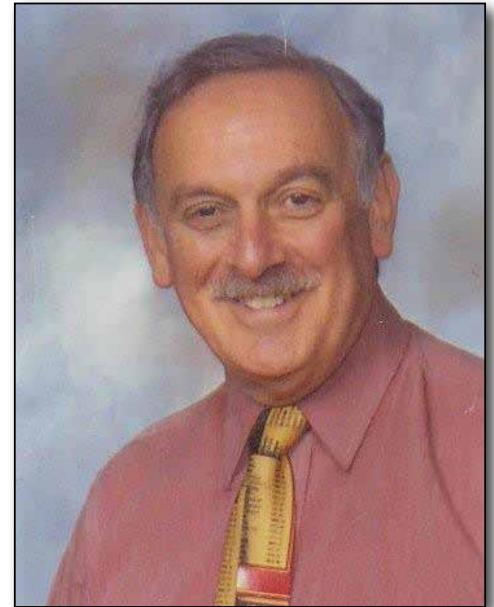
And if you're wondering what constitutes a "young adult," we generally have people in their 20s, 30s, and early 40s.

# Ron Schwartz, New Junior Warden

At the Vestry Retreat, this year held on February 7-8, 2014, the Vestry elects someone to be Junior Warden for the year. This year Ron Schwartz was elected to be Junior Warden for 2014. Ron was born in Boston, but has lived in Los Angeles since the age of eight. After serving in the military, his first career was as a manufacturer's agent for the electronic industry and he eventually became the owner of the business. His most recent career, for the past thirteen years, has been in teaching. He enjoys substitute teaching which allows him to work with various grades and subject matter. Ron and Denise are planning their 40th wedding anniversary in March 2014 in North Carolina. They met at St. Michael's in 1973 and in 1990 they were blessed with the birth of Amanda. She works for IBIS World editing research reports. Their son, Robert, is now out of the Navy and is finishing his degree. Robert is now married and has four step-children and an 18 month old son. Ron's older daughter, Tracy, and her husband have given Ron and Denise three beautiful granddaughters. They live in Chicago.

Ron came to St. Michael's in 1967 and left in 1974 when he and Denise were married. They attended St. Mark's in Van Nuys for 17 years, where he served on their Vestry several times. Ron and Denise returned to St. Michael's in 1991 and have been involved in parish life ever since. Ron feels privileged to be able to serve at the altar as an MC, he also serves on the Altar Guild and provides invaluable service to St. Michael's in many capacities.

When you have a chance, please thank Ron for all of his past service and thank him for serving this year as our Junior Warden.



## Youth Group Laser Tag

In January, the St. Michael's Youth Group took a trip to play Laser Tag in Sherman Oaks. While it is unclear who racked up the most points, it is clear that between the two rounds of laser tag, the multiple arcade games, and the delicious dinner, we all had a great time. We cannot wait for our next adventure!

If you are interested in joining the youth group, getting youth group e-mails, or chaperoning Youth Group events, please contact Stefanie Wilson ([wilsons@campbellhall.edu](mailto:wilsons@campbellhall.edu)).

# Confirmation

February 16, 2014





# The Calendar

March 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

Locations:

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

1

**2** Epiphany Last

12:00 noon Youth Group (L)

**3**

6:15 pm Book Discussion  
 Group (Beckner Home)

**4**

**5** Ash Wednesday

12:00 noon Ash  
 Wednesday Liturgy (S)  
 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday  
 Liturgy (S)  
 8:00 pm Young Adults  
 Group (L)

**6**

**7**

**8**

**9** Lent 1

11:30 am Second Sunday Sack  
 Lunches (MC)

**10**

**11**

**12**

7:00 pm Handbell Choir  
 Rehearsal (S)

**13**

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal  
 (MR)

**14**

**15**

9:00 am Women's Group  
 (FR)

**16** Lent 2

12:15 pm Young Adults Group  
 (Panera, 12131 Ventura Blvd)

**17**

**18**

7:00 pm Vestry (L)

**19** St. Joseph

7:00 pm Men's Group  
 7:00 pm Handbell Choir  
 Rehearsal (S)

**20**

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal  
 (MR)

**21**

**22**

**23** Lent 3

11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry  
 (MC)

**24**

**25** Annunciation

**26**

7:00 pm Handbell Choir  
 Rehearsal (S)

**27**

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal  
 (MR)

**28**

**29**

**30** Lent 4

**31**





# The Calendar

April 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

**Locations:**

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

1

2

7:30 pm Young Adults Group (L)  
7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

3

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

4

5

6 Lent 5

12:00 noon St. Michael's Outreach (Parish Office)  
12:00 noon Youth Group (L)

7

8

7:00 pm Finance Committee (Parish Office)

9

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

10

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

11

12

13 Palm Sunday

11:30 am Second Sunday Sack Lunches (MC)

14

15

7:00 pm Vestry (L)

16

7:00 pm Women's Group (FR)  
7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

17 Maundy Thursday

6:30 pm Agapé Supper with Holy Eucharist, Washing of Feet & Stripping of the Altar (MC, S)

18 Good Friday

12:00 noon Good Friday Liturgy (S)  
7:00 pm Good Friday Liturgy (S)

19 Easter Eve

8:00 am Men's Group (MC)  
7:30 pm Great Vigil of Easter (S)

20 Easter Day

21

22

23

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

24

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

25

26

27 Easter 2

11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (MC)  
12:15 pm Young Adults Group (Panera, 12131 Ventura Blvd)

28 Saint Mark the Evangelist

29

30

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

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*Gail Green*

*Betsy Hailey*

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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.*