



The Mike

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

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Our Forty-Day Journey

By the Reverend Dan Justin

Ready or not, Lent is coming. February 10th is Ash Wednesday and with that event, our forty-day journey begins once again. Have you ever noticed that Lent actually lasts forty-six days? If you pull out your calendar and count the days you will see that I am correct. The secret here is that Sundays are not part of Lent. Every Sunday is a feast day in which we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord. So yes, there are forty-six calendar days, but we don't count the six Sundays as a part of Lent. That leaves us with forty.

The number forty is significant. In the Bible the number forty represents a sufficient span of time for something to happen or for something to be prepared. We see the number forty showing up in many different stories. In his book *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church*, author Laurence Hull Stookey writes, "Rain fell in Noah's time for forty days and nights; for this same period of time Moses and Elijah (who represent respectively the Law and the Prophets) dwelt at Horeb; for forty days Jesus endured temptation in the wilderness and later, for the same period, was revealed to the disciples after the resurrection. Ninevah was given forty days in which to repent. For forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness prior to admission into the promised land. Eli was judge over Israel for forty years, and Saul, David, and Solomon are reported to have reigned for forty years each. In the early centuries, forty days was the time sufficient for converts to make their final, intensive preparation for baptism; and thus a pattern for Lent developed."

Our yearly forty-day journey is also one of preparation. We are going somewhere; we are preparing for something. The journey begins with Ash Wednesday. This day is the reminder of our mortality. Lent eventually brings us to Holy Week and the Triduum (the Three Great Days). It brings us ultimately to our celebration of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus by which death was defeated once and for all.

I would suggest asking ourselves some questions as we begin this pilgrim road of Lent once again. How will this Lent prepare me? Where is God taking me? Where am I going? These are important questions to consider as we begin this journey. It is the tradition to give something up for Lent. Some people give up chocolate. Others



decide to watch less television. Some people make vows to exercise more. Unfortunately, Lenten disciplines often times last about as long as our New Year's resolutions. The problem is that giving something up for the sake of giving something up is not very helpful. It does not assist us on our journey. I suspect Lent could be so much more meaningful if we took time to consider where God is leading us, where we are going, and/or for what God might be preparing us. We can develop our Lenten disciplines as we consider the answers to these questions. Done this way our disciplines will mean something. They will be the path by which God brings us where we are going.

At its core, Lent is about deepening our relationship with God. Our path this Lent will lead us closer to God. It can help us live lives that reflect the love and grace

of Jesus. In the book I quoted earlier, Laurence Stookey suggests some good questions that could be of help as we consider our disciplines. He suggests the following questions:

- What progress am I making in sharing gladly what I have with others, particularly with the stranger and the poor?
- What attitudes do I convey to those who irritate me? How can awareness of my own need of God's grace enable me to be more gracious to them?
- How has my sense of interconnectedness in corporate worship grown of late, and how can I move ahead in appreciating the contributions and needs of other members in the congregation to which I belong?
- Am I as charitable and thoughtful to family members as to others? Or do I "take it out" on my family when life at school or work gets hectic?
- Can I redistribute my long-range personal budget in order to have more money to give away?
- When I hear someone being unjustly maligned, do I speak up to correct the record, or am I a silent accomplice?
- How can I more effectively and consistently

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Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday

All are welcome to join us on Tuesday, February 9th, at 6:30pm for our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. There is fun for the whole family. We will have delicious food and a fun Mardi Gras Party. There will be costumes for kids as well as a parade. And you won't want to miss the ever popular Pancake Toss in the courtyard.

Ash Wednesday will be observed on Wednesday, February 10th, with services at 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Both services will include the imposition of ashes.



support legislation and social programs that help the disadvantaged rather than hurt them?

- In devotional acts of prayer and reading, am I increasing my attention span and discovering new ways of listening rather than of talking, of giving thanks rather than complaining?
- As I uncover and attempt to deal with one level of prejudice in my life, what other levels do I find lurking underneath, and how can I confront them?
- In addition to intercessory prayer, what habits can I develop that allow me to be more responsive to the sick, the distressed, and the bereaved, particularly when their needs emerge suddenly and require immediate attention? Can I plan spaces into my life to allow for unanticipated opportunities to minister to others?
- Am I, by consistent attendance at worship, a witness to others of the worthiness of the God I follow? Or am I, by my sporadic attendance, suggesting that

God is worth serving sometimes, but not others?

Any of these questions could lead you to a Lenten discipline that will help you grow in your faith. They can result in a discipline that will be a means to an end. Pick one of these, or come up with your own question. There are no rules, only grace.

It is time for our forty-day journey to begin. It is rarely a good idea to set out on a journey without having a destination in mind. Where is God leading you? Where are you going? How will you get there?

At least we have an answer to the final and perhaps the most important question: who is going with you? That is the other great joy of this forty-day journey. We get to walk this road together. Share your Lenten discipline with others in this faith community. Hold one another up in prayer. We get to grow in faith together. We never walk this road alone. Please know you are in my prayers as we begin this journey once again.

Blessings,
Dan+

Wanted: Sunday School Teachers!

By Amber Russo

Many of you may have noticed my belly growing larger and larger over the last few months. As my due date approaches, my excitement grows, and we look forward to meeting our new baby girl.

As the Children's Pastor at St. Michael's, I have many duties including writing the lessons, leading the music, scheduling the teachers, shopping for crafts, keeping the classrooms stocked and organized, overseeing the nursery, and also teaching a couple of times a month. Unfortunately, I won't be able to take on many of these tasks while I'm caring for my new baby so I'm reaching out for help. Particularly, I'm seeking volunteers to teach over the next few months. This is a great opportunity to see what we're doing with children's ministry and to meet some of our outstanding kids. You can commit to teach one Sunday or several, and I promise you will have fun. Also, if you decide you like teaching, we'd be happy to have you join our team!

Please e-mail me at childrenspastor@stmikessc.org for more information. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

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!*

The Coming

And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look, he said.
The son looked. Far off,
As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, a river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.

On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The Sky. Many people
Held out their thin arms
To it, as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.

R. S. Thomas (1913-2000)

Treasurer's Corner

December 2015—Revenue and Expense Summary

	December Actual	December Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 43,375	\$ 37,592	\$468,780	\$451,104
Total Expense	78,114	37,589	468,780	451,067
Net	\$ (34,739)	\$ 3	\$ 0	\$ 37



The New Year has begun. With the New Year we look forward to starting anew, going to the gym more often, losing a few pounds, walking the dog more, organizing that special drawer or staying more connected to friends and family.

As members of St. Michael's, we began January with a recommitment to ourselves, to our Baptismal covenant, to each other and the work of our church community.



At the annual meeting on January 17th, we elected four new Vestry members, Avi Aazami, Elizabeth Bartolomea, Karen Hollerman and Steven Wright. Four of our members, Bill Fields, Janet Kirkpatrick, Bill Wright, and Karen Andrews, have completed their term on the Vestry and we are so thankful for their service, commitment and leadership. There are four officers of the vestry. The Senior Warden and Clerk are an annual appointment by Father Dan and the Junior Warden and Treasurer are elected by the Vestry. Avi Aazami will serve as Clerk, Jenni Hernandez as Treasurer, and Ron Swartz and I are ever so blessed to continue our roles as Junior and Senior Wardens.

On February 6th, the Vestry will hold its annual retreat. Our work will include a review of the past year's accomplishments,

development of goals for the coming year, and discussion of the special contributions that each member brings to the team. Vestry members will have the opportunity to select the parish ministry that best aligns with their own talents and passions. This day is also a time of reflection, renewal and rededication to the work of the Vestry as we look for ways to best identify, articulate, and demonstrate our mission as members of this faith community.

As your Vestry leadership, we are asking each of you to renew your commitment to St Michael's, to find your passion, identify your role, and dive in to make this our best year ever. Please consider volunteering with one of many commissions, be an ambassador to new members, serve as an usher, or attend a parish activity for the first time. Tell your friends outside of the church community about the amazing work we do and invite them to the celebration!

I look forward to our work together, continuing our vision, and setting a course for action that will allow us to do the work that God has called us to do.

On behalf of the Vestry Members, thank you for your commitment to St. Michael's and for all you do every day to fulfill our mission and vision.

February Birthdays

Day	Name
5	Donald Robertson
8	Peter Juzwiak
14	Patrick Holder
15	David Basta
	Jon Albert
16	Ron Schwartz
20	Meredith Reese
	Naomi Fox
21	Anaïs Rodriguez
28	Michel Rodriguez

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.

Read the MIKE Online! Go to the St. Michael's website, www.stmikessc.org, and click on Newsletter. Back issues are available there as well.

Youth Group Calendar

Date	Event	Time/Place/Details
02/07/2016 (Sunday)	Youth Group Meeting	After the 10:30 am service—11:30 to 1:00.
02/20/2016 (Saturday)	Laser Tag	Meet at St. Michael's at 6:00 pm and return at 9:00 pm
03/06/2016 (Sunday)	Youth Group Meeting	After the 10:30 am service—11:30 to 1:00.
03/19/2016 (Saturday)	Bowling Night	Meet at Pinz at 6:00 pm and get picked up at 8:30 pm
03/20/2016 (Palm Sunday)	Youth Group Leads Sunday School	The Youth Group will be leading Sunday School during the 10:30 am service. We will do an activity around Palm Sunday
04/03/2016 (Sunday)	Youth Group Meeting	After the 10:30 am service—11:30 to 1:00.
04/29-30/2016 (Friday-Saturday)	30 Hour Fast Overnight	Church of Our Saviour is hosting an event to raise awareness about hunger. It will involve games, Taizé-style worship, and volunteering. More details to follow.
05/01/2016 (Sunday)	Youth Group Meeting	After the 10:30 am service—11:30 to 1:00.
05/21/2016 (Saturday)	Diocesan Youth Pentecost Extravaganza	Join youth from around the diocese for games, snacks, and worship from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. More details to follow.
06/05/2016 (Sunday)	Youth Group Meeting	After the 10:30 am service—11:30 to 1:00.
06/18/2016 (Saturday)	End of the Year Party with the Fifth Grade	Details to follow.
Break for summer	Youth Group will start back in September!	

Other Events:

- We are working with MEND to schedule a day of service at the MEND site in Pacoima.
- The LA City Pilgrimage is happening June 26-July 1. It is a great, formational experience offered by the diocese for high school youth. If you are interested in applying, e-mail Stefanie Wilson at wilsons@campbellhall.org.

Holiday Cheer

December 12, 2015



Christmas Eve



Christmas Day Breakfast

Parishioners enjoy breakfast in the Ministry Center prior to the Christmas Day Eucharist.



Bishops' Ball

January 30, 2016





The Calendar

February 2016

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	2 The Presentation	3	4 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	5	6
7 Pentecost Last 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 9:00 am St. Michael's Outreach (CO) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 11:30 am Sunday Sack Lunches (MC) 11:30 am Youth Group (L)	8	9 6:30 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (MC)	10 Ash Wednesday 12:00 noon Ash Wednesday Liturgy (S) 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Liturgy (S)	11	12	13 1:00 pm Concerned United Birthparents (FR)
14 Lent 1 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S)	15 Presidents' Day Parish Office Closed	16 7:00 pm Vestry (L)	17	18 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	19	20 6:00 pm Youth Group meet at St. Michael's for laser tag
21 Lent 2 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S)	22	23	24	25 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	26	27
28 Lent 3 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (MC)	29					

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.