



THE GUARDIAN

St. Michael the Archangel Episcopal Church El Segundo

The Reverend Joshua Wong, Rector

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St. Michael's Children's Center

Ms. Lauren Cherrington
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Mission Statement for St. Michael's Church

Growing in God's Love.

Working in God's Spirit.

Worship Schedule

Sunday 8:00am Rite I Spoken Service
Sunday 10:00am Rite II Choral Eucharist
10:00 Children's Worship Second Sunday of
each month

September 2025

Why do we say what we say at a service? A break down of the meaning behind a Holy Eucharist Rite 1 and 2 service.

The Reverend Joshua Wong

Our beautiful service is one of the reasons why we are Episcopalians. But no full liturgies are known before the 3rd century. The Letters of Paul, written between the year 40 and the year 60 speak of the tradition of the celebration of the Eucharist originating in the words and actions of Jesus at his Last Supper, which were passed on to him and which he in turn passed on to the communities he established. As you can see, our liturgy is old and meaningful, so let's find out the meaning behind what we do and say at our Eucharist.

On page 323 (Rite 1) and 355 (Rite 2) in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), you will find an example of the liturgy we use in our Sunday service. As you can see, after the first section "The Word of God" or sometimes referred to as "Liturgy of the Word," when we arrive at "The Holy Communion," there are alternative forms we can use during different times of the year or for certain appropriate occasions. Whichever alternative form is chosen, the structure always will contain what we will discuss below, just in different words.

By the way, besides the Book of Common Prayer, there are other liturgy sources churches use, for example, *The New Zealand Prayer Book, Enriching our Worship*, *The Book of Occasional Services*, or other Anglican sources that are permitted to be used. But for our learning, I will describe the different sections that describe the richness of our worship.

Now, let's get back to page 323 or 355 where the phrase you often hear when we begin a service is, "Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, etc. This phrase is known as **The Acclamation**, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, begins the following praises.

The section that begins..."Almighty God, to you all hearts are open..." is called "**The Collect of Purity.**" It invites a depth of reflection on preparing the heart for worship.

The Lessons: the First, Second, Psalm, and Gospel lessons are taken each week from the assigned readings from the church. You can find it yourself at <https://www.lectionarypage.net/>. If you are one of our lectors, you can practice before hand by going onto the website and finding the date.

Cont. on pg.3

Cont. from pg. 2

Sometimes sung, or read, we begin **The Great Thanksgiving** with the **Sursum Cordo**, Latin for “Lift up your hearts.” This is the preface of **The anaphora**, also known as the “Eucharistic Prayer,” “It is right, and a good and joyful thing...” which dates back at least to the 3rd century and to the Anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition.

At the Holy Communion on page 362, “Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels,” is known as **The Introduction to the Sanctus**,” following with **The Sanctus**: “Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory...” The Sanctus is derived from Isaiah 6:3, in which the Seraphim cry to one another the praises of God in the heavenly throne room of the Lord. This is where you will notice some parishioners bowing in respect.

Following the Sanctus we will find, “Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself;” this section is called **The Anamnesis (memorial or our history)** of the Eucharistic prayer, which calls to mind the Pascal Mystery—the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord.

When the Celebrant holds the bread, and for the words concerning the cup, you will hear, “On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ...” which is called, **“Words of Institution” or “Words of Consecration,”** these are the words echoing those of Jesus himself at his Last Supper.



When we say together, “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again,” we call this section, **“Memorial Acclamation from the people.”**

Next comes the **Epiclesis for the gifts**, “Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son...” Epiclesis is a Greek word meaning, “invocation.” We are calling on the Holy Spirit who prays for and in us, even when we do not have words to pray. Then at the end of the paragraph is the **Epiclesis for the people**, “and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.”

Cont. On pg. 4

Cont. from pg. 4

I hope this information was helpful to you. When I was first taught this information by my professor who defined all of these sections, I found that when I know the history behind what we say and do, I value our worship even more. I hope you also find amazement at some of the rich sacred ancient meaning behind our worship. The Eucharist is desirable to be celebrated in a community, as we are part of our heritage joining with all the saints that have gone before us and with all who are worshipping with us together across the world.

But if you find yourself unable to attend church for a length of time, please let me know and I can give you Holy Communion at your home. It is important that we remember the Lord's supper on a regular basis, whether together as a community or individually.

Church Calendar for September 2025



Monday, September 1, Labor Day, Church Office and School are closed

Tuesday, September 2, First day of 2025-2026 School year.

Tuesday, September 2, First PBJ ministry at Otis College of Art and Design

Wednesday, September 3, Children's Worship, 11 am

Sunday, September 7, Grandparent's Day

Sunday September 7, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 8 am and 10 am Service

Tuesday, September 2, Second PBJ ministry at Otis College of Art and Design

Wednesday, September 10, Children's Worship, 11 am

Sunday September 14, Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 8 am and 10 am Service, **Children's Family Service at 10 am**

Monday, September 15, Holy Cross Day

Tuesday, September 16, Third PBJ ministry at Otis College of Art and Design

Wednesday, September 17, Hildegard of Bingen Remembrance

Wednesday, September 17, Children's Worship, 11 am

Sunday September 21, Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 8 am and 10 am Service, **CASE and Centering Prayer at 9 am, Yeaton Hall**

Monday-Wednesday, September 22-24, Rosh Hashanah

Tuesday, September 23, Fourth PBJ ministry at Otis College of Art and Design

Wednesday, September 24, Children's Worship, 11 am

Friday, September 26, Native American Day

Sunday September 28, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 8 am and 10 am Service

Monday, September 29, Michaelmas, the Feast of Michael and All Angels

Tuesday, September 30, Fifth PBJ ministry at Otis College of Art and Design

Voices from the Vestry

In my job I oversee a program that trains Peer Support Specialists. These are individuals with lived experience of mental health or substance use challenges who provide support to others facing similar challenges. As part of the course, students complete a Wellness Recovery Action Plan or a WRAP, which is a personalized plan that helps the person manage their mental health. One of the components of the WRAP is a Wellness Toolbox, where the individual identifies things that make them feel better when they are having a hard time.



While I don't have an official WRAP, after a few recent events left me feeling incredibly stressed, I started thinking about what I include in my toolbox – the things that make me feel better. In addition to exercise and eating right, I realized several of my coping mechanisms are directly tied to St. Michael's.

The hour in church each Sunday where I am at peace, away from outside distractions, and receiving the important messages of God's love.

Spending time with friends and sharing what's going on in life. Attending coffee hour you quickly learn that the congregation is full of good listeners.

Making time for prayer and contemplation. I have found the two sessions of Centering Prayer led by Bill Watkins to be extremely helpful and for those who have not attended one, I highly encourage you to do so.

Doing things for others. One of the things I love about St Michael's is the congregation's commitment to helping others.

As the saying goes, "Life is not for the faint of heart," but it can be a little less stressful if you think in advance about what should be in your Wellness Toolbox.

Peace,

Elizabeth Tobias

Children's Center News

Our summer adventures around the world have ended and we are ready to embark on a new school year. We have sent our oldest friends off to Transitional Kindergarten, or Kindergarten, and will be welcoming some new friends to our classes. We will spend the month of September getting to know new friends and our new teachers. We will play cooperative games and read stories to help us learn how to get along as well as our usual arts and crafts. We are looking forward to an exciting new school year!



Lauren Cherrington St. Micheal's Children's Center Director

If you have people you would like to have remembered and prayed for, please speak to Melissa or Fr. Joshua. We will add them to our weekly prayer list. The names on the list will remain for 4 weeks unless you ask for the person to be removed or to stay on the list. Thank you.





PRISM Prism Restorative Justice

On Sunday June 1, we had a presentation in Yeaton Hall by Sharon Crandall, the director of PRISM ministry. Prism Restorative Justice is an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, which provides spiritual care and companionship for the incarcerated in our L.A. community.

On most Sundays, Sharon and her PRISM volunteers lead worship services at three different jails in Los Angeles, serving both women's and men's facilities. In addition, they provide chaplaincy visits and facilitate various groups and classes for our incarcerated friends. During the year, Sharon and Father Greg Boyle of Homeboy Industries work in collaboration with their visits.

Sharon began the introduction of PRISM by reminding us of two of our baptismal vows—"We will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourself, and we will strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being, with God's help." Then, she clarified the difference between "jail" and "prison." Jail is where one waits for trial, while, "prison" is where one serves time. PRISM serves both. She shared with us many insights about the inmate experience in our jails and prisons, how much freedom they have, and how safe it was to service this community. Much of what she shared was new information for our audience and importantly, it helped us remove some of the prejudice we had held before her engaging presentation.

Part of what PRISM offers our incarcerated friends is to provide them with an ecumenical and interfaith Holy Communion space to be with God. Sharon and her staff are there not to judge what the inmates may have done in the past, but to be present in their lives. Often inmates share with her that she and her staff were the first people who cared to hear their stories. *Cont. on pg.7*

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Because of their life circumstances, they lived invisibly, seemingly unimportant in society. Under Federal law, all churches are prohibited from proselytizing to the inmates. Unlike some other religious groups that goes into the jails, the Episcopal church honors this by being there to spend time with people to offer compassion and understanding. Sharon also stated that after talking to many of the incarcerated, she feels that most of them would never again commit the crime they are serving, especially for murder. For many, just being incarcerated was enough to pay the punishment they committed; constantly, prisoners are haunted in their minds over and over again of the tragedy they committed, especially each year on the anniversary date.

Besides providing one-on-one presence with the incarcerated in jail and prison, PRISM works to deliver care boxes to the prisoners containing clothing, toiletries, and detergent. Many families of inmates do not have enough money to provide essential items for their loved ones. Along with these items, a frequently requested need are unused all-occasion greeting cards and soft cover books to read.

Prisoners use cards to stay in touch with their friends and family back home. They also enjoy novels and romance novels to read, and for safety reasons, only accepts paper back copies. Currently with staff shortages and budget cuts, PRISM operates by donations and grants alone. Along with financial assistance and daily product donations, they are looking for committed volunteers with a calling to serve others. If you are interested in volunteering your presence, or if you'd like to know how you can support them with care boxes, or financial offering, please inquire with Father Joshua who can connect you directly to Sharon.

—Geri Pisciotta, along with Fr. Joshua+



September Birthday Blessings

Oliver Mason	13	Stephan Saylor	16
Kay Wallace	17	Adam Behlen	17
Marilyn McCaverty	19	Kristie Wallace	19
James Voluterno	23		



PBJ ministry to the students at Otis College of Art and Design

Starting on September 2, 2025, St. Michael's has been given an opportunity by the Board of Directors at Otis College of Art and Design to be their interfaith spiritual support to their students. We will be joined by another parish in our community, Holy Nativity in Westchester.



During the semester, Otis holds a weekly student forum on Tuesdays, where there are many resource tables at the quad. We often have the misconception that students who attend a private college have unlimited resources, which is not true. Many students count on state scholarships, and commute by bus from home, and many are foreign students who are far away from their families for the first time with limited resources. Some students, I was told, often find themselves homeless and the school has to find immediate housing for them.. We are there to be companions with these students in which many are also in the midst of finding their identities in society.

This is where St. Michael's and Holy Nativity parishes can be their support. Each week we will be present with our banner, "Create Your Free Sandwiches, While Creating New Friendships." Students are encouraged to come by the table, make as many sandwiches they need for the week in order to sustain their energy and nutrition. While they make their sandwiches, we begin to develop friendships with them, and gain trust. We are not there to proselytize or invite them to church, although they know they are welcomed. More importantly, we are there to journey with them in their spiritual lives.

This is where you can help. We need all types of peanut butter, jams, bread, foil, zip lock bags, plastic knives, and napkins. Drop them off in Yeaton Hall under the sign, and we will bring them every Tuesday to the table to begin new friendships. Better yet, if you have 2 hours available on Tuesdays, from 11-12:30, and like to do "hands on" ministry, we need one more volunteer each week. The more volunteers we have, the bigger the rotation cycle will be. St. Michael's will take four weeks, and alternate monthly with Holy Nativity.

I started this ministry before at UC Irvine sponsored by St. George's Episcopal Church in Laguna Nigel, and it was very successful. You will be amazed at how many students welcome this food source in their lives, and how many live with food and financial insecurities. And, surprisingly, how many want to be part of a community, they just need to be welcomed.

Fr. Joshua+

C.A.S.E. Ingathering September 21

Honey Nut Cheerios, Frosted Flakes, Fruit Loops, Lucky Charms, Captain Crunch

Oatmeal – Plain Old Fashion or instant Quaker Oats in the cardboard cylinder or name brand

(NO off brands or steel cut oatmeal please)

Canned Chicken

SPAM

Rosarita Refried Beans

Ketchup

Sugar

Salt

Cake Mixes - Chocolate or Yellow

Brownie & Cookie Mixes

Syrup

Strawberry and other fruit jams (not grape)

Peanut Butter - prefer Skippy, Jif or recognized store brand

Juice

Cookies

Toothpaste

Dish detergent

Multi-purpose cleaning solution

Canned Tuna

Pasta Sauce

Progresso or Campbells Chunky Soups

Mayonnaise - Best Foods is preferred

Flour

Cooking Oil

Frosting - Chocolate or Vanilla

Pancake Mix - Store brands please

White Rice

Honey

Snacks

Coffee (No decaf)

Shampoo

Laundry detergent

PRAYERS UNANSWERED, *a sermon by Sister Greta*

“So, I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.”

Isn't it wonderful that Jesus tells us that what we ask for we will receive? That what we are looking for we will find, and that by knocking, the doors will open? What good news! Just imagine that our prayers will be answered and all we need to do is to ask. How pleasant the world would be if this were true. Imagine if all our prayers were answered. Well, maybe not our selfish asks about jobs and real estate deals but it sure would be nice if the really important things we ask for were answered.

When I was training to be a chaplain at Good Samaritan Hospital, I watched a devout woman pray on her knees for her child to survive. She had gone through years of fertility issues and had just given birth and now her baby was in terrible trouble. She begged God for a miracle, for her child to live. I also prayed with all my heart, but our prayers were not answered. Her infant died.

I have since been asked to pray with thousands of incarcerated men and women for their trials or for their families. Over the years I decided to simply ask for God's for mercy and for the strength to accept the outcome. The hardest part of being a prison chaplain is witnessing the injustice of the system and the broken hearts of the innocent sent to prison. How much nicer the world would be if we could pray away injustice, and that families could ask for God to prevent the government deporting them with confidence in this prayer being answered.

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Yes, Jesus, I want to live in the world of answered prayers.

Why does Jesus say this to us? How can he tell us this? It is one of the most confounding questions I have for my beloved Christ. I sincerely hope that when I die, I will be able to ask him why he promises this. I long to understand this over all the other mysteries.

An important book that has had a deep influence on my faith walk is *Revelations of Divine Love* by the 14th century mystic, Julian of Norwich. She lived at the time of the Black Plague which wiped out over 25 million people in Europe in only 4 years, so she was immersed in suffering and loss. She was given 16 mystical experiences and spent 20 years as an anchoress, entombed at a church, reckoning with their meaning. Out of this time she wrote what has now become her most famous words, "All shall be well and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." This isn't some Hallmark sentiment but a profound understanding of God and God's goodness. She found that there is no purposeless suffering, but that we may not know the purpose in our lifetime. We have only to look to the cross to see how God transforms suffering into freedom – the promise of eternal life. The path of compassion is not to pretend that we have answers but to stand with the sufferer in faithful allegiance.

Another one of my bedside books was written by a young Jewish woman who was taken to a concentration camp with her family where they were all killed. Her name is Etty Hillesum and her book, *An Interrupted Life*, is composed of her journals which survived the war.

As Etty watched the horror of the Nazis killing machine, she came to realize that God cannot help us. But she went on to say that "We must safeguard that little piece of You, God, in ourselves. And perhaps in others as well."

Etty maintained her faith as she went through the horror of that time. She never stopped loving God as she wrote, "You cannot help us, but we must help You and defend Your dwelling place inside us to the last." She found that there is no purposeless suffering, but that we may not know the purpose in our lifetime. We have only to look to the cross to see how God transforms suffering into freedom – the promise of eternal life.

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Jim Finley, one of the most brilliant spiritual teachers of our time, who suffered an extremely abusive childhood writes, "God does not rescue us, in fact God is a presence that protects us from nothing, even as God unexplainably sustains us in all things."

cont. on pg. 11

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Yes – terrible unjust things are happening all over the world as we sit here today. At the same time our God of love and mercy is abiding with us as we sit here today. Both are true. How do we reconcile these two truths?

I wish there was less suffering, less injustice, and less oppression in our world. I can hardly stand hearing of the horrors that are going on in Gaza, the starvation and violence these people are enduring. But I also believe that my distress is not helpful. I must stand up to oppression in all its many forms. Today I will be attending a rally to support the end of arm shipments to Israel and in support of the people of Gaza at the Avila Pier. Maybe some of you are going too?

My faith in a loving God who is longing for us to create a better world is alive in me. I feel the presence of the Holy Spirit as Love within me, and I make an effort every single day to protect or nourish this truth. Just as Etty says in her journals while experiencing the worst of human behavior, we must guard that part of God that dwells within.

Jesus came to awaken the divine in all of us. It is up to us to co-create a loving world and to stand for justice and love for all of God's family. Now it is more important than ever before in our lifetime that we participate in the divine nature by standing in solidarity with all who are suffering and who are afraid. May we be agents of God's Divine Love bringing ever more justice and peace and healing into the world. Amen.



Printed with permission. Sister Greta is an Episcopal priest from our diocese who is a founding member of Community of Divine Love in San Luis Obispo. She served alongside Sharon Crandall in PRISM while she was in Los Angeles.

Help support Family Promise and other charities by donating your used/new, good condition items.

Please remember PV Resale Thrift Shop as you clean out your cabinets and closets! PV Resale Thrift Shop is a huge blessing to Family Promise. The thrift shop provides funding quarterly from their proceeds to 13 local charities, including Family Promise. Please support this non-profit committed to community service and the support of charities by donating items in clean, working, and very good condition. They sell almost everything: clothes, bedding, towels, dishes, furniture, small appliances, books and toys. I am happy to take donations for you if they fit in my car – let me know if you want a receipt. We have a place to drop your items off in Yeaton Hall. Palos Verdes Resale Thrift Shop is located at 2321 PCH in Lomita. If you drop off yourself.

Jeanie Powell



Centering Prayer By Bill Watkins

Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.

2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word.
3. When engaged with thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

"I do not know how it works, but when a group of like-minded people committed to the transformative process are together, the force of the energy is certainly up a number of decibels higher. You do not have to do anything but sit still, and let your mind be quiet. Know that God's word is spoken fully only in silence. Be still, and you will know, not by the knowledge of the mind, but by the knowledge of the heart, who God is and who you are."

-Thomas Keating, *God is All in All*

When you catch yourself trying hard, relax and let go. Introduce the sacred word gently, incredibly gently, as if you were laying a feather on a piece of absorbent cotton."

-Thomas Keating, *Open Mind Open Heart*

Be still and know that I am God. Be still and know that I. Be still and know. Be still. Be.

***OUR NEXT MEDITATION WILL BE ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, IN YEATON HALL @ 9:00 AM
(COME AND JOIN US EVERY THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.)***

Learn more about Father Keating at www.contemplativeoutreach.org



REUNION REFLECTIONS

I went to one of those high school reunions that end in a zero,. It was a very nostalgic experience--not only the reunion, but seeing again the high school, which appeared basically unchanged after all those years. I was 16 when I graduated from high school, and got my first job as a secretary a couple of weeks later. Attached are some thoughts and reflections on the experience.

Each decade the high school class from which we've come
Has gathered together to share in some fun.
The passing years have continued to show
How our character and values evolve and grow.
We speak now of issues that really matter,
Unlike the young years of just social chatter.
We speak of accomplishments, we admit defeat,
Gone away is the need to brag or compete.
But—no matter what else our classmates are thinking
We can't help but notice our numbers are shrinking.
We speak of illnesses and operations,
Instead of travels or exciting vacations.
Conversations aren't only about homes and careers,
There's memories of the departed, and sharing of tears.
Some of us have started to lose our agility
To move around with unlimited mobility.
In just a few years, we'll be in our eighties
Getting together may not come with great ease.
Ten years seems too long, and so does five
To meet again so friendships still thrive.
We happily decide we will next meet in just two,
Until a few say "I may not still be here---will you?"
The next gathering may be the reunion's swan song,
But we'll still keep friendships that have become lifelong.
We'll still keep in touch—by mail, net, or phone,
Along with us, technology has grown!!!
The years we have left, we can't totally control,
We don't know when our name will be next on God's role.
And, even if that day wouldn't have been our choice,
We will all "go home" when we hear God's voice.
We just hope the memories that we leave behind,
Are that we were helpful, thoughtful, loving, and kind.

Gerri Pisciotto, MA, MFT

