

THE GUARDIAN

St. Michael the Archangel Episcopal Church El Segundo

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St. Michael's Children's Center
Ms. Lauren Cherrington
School Office: 310-322-7522

Worship Schedule

Sunday 8:00am Rite I Said Service
Sunday 10:00am Rite II
with Music

The Reverend Joshua Wong, Rector

Mission Statement for St. Michael's Church

*Growing in God's Love.
Working in God's Spirit.*

September 2026



Rector's Thoughts for September

er issue of The Guardian. Summer officially ends on September 21. In my Chinese culture, September 25 is celebrated as The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival where we eat a pastry known as Mooncake. (You can also see it on sale at select Costco stores) Each small individual cake has a cooked sweet duck egg that symbolizes the moon which is at its fullest and brightest during that time of year. (It's a guarantee). It coincides with the time of harvest in the middle of autumn. During the festival, lanterns of all sizes and shapes – symbolizing beacons that light the path toward prosperity and good fortune for the people – are carried and displayed. The Mid-Autumn Festival is based on the legend of Chang'e, the Moon goddess in Chinese mythology.

The Mid-Autumn Festival is one of the most important holidays and celebrations in Chinese culture. The history of the festival dates back now over 3,000 years. I remember fond memories as a young child in Hong Kong before immigrating to the United States of parades where everyone walked around in colorful lanterns in the shapes of rabbits and other animals. Some required a few people to maneuver them using sticks, while others carried the lanterns themselves. They are still magical memories for me.

As an Asian American, I enjoy celebrating this and many other yearly festivals that remember our long history. But, we are all deeply ingrained in our own cultural history as well. As children of God, we are also a part of a deep history because of our ties with Jesus. When we read from the Bible every Sunday, we uncover our connection with the Jewish people. This is not just someone else's history we are reading, it is also part of us.

Fall is alive with many new happenings. Everyone will be back from their rest and recuperation during the summer break. Church and ministries are in full force. I hope you will take advantage of the exciting things happening this month with the "Meet and Greet" with our new Bishop Antonio on September 19 and our St. Michael's Day potluck on September 27, just to mention a few. Refer to our calendar in this issue and stay connected.

Welcome home everyone!

Father Joshua+



September Calendar

Tuesday, September 1, PBJ ministry at Otis, 10:45 am

Wednesday, September 2, Children's Chapel at 10 am

Sunday, September 6, Sunday services 8 and 10 am. Pentecost 15 **ZOOM PRESENTATION, CANONIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, YEATON HALL, 9AM**

Monday, September 7, Labor Day, SMCC and office are closed

Tuesday, September 8, PBJ ministry at Otis, 10:45 am

Wednesday, September 9, Children's Chapel at 10 am

Sunday, September 13, Sunday services 8 and 10 am. Pentecost 16 **FAMILY WORSHIP, CHOIR RETURNS**

Tuesday, September 15, PBJ ministry at Otis, 10:45 am

Wednesday, September 16, Children's Chapel at 10 am

Saturday, September 19, **Meet and Greet Bishop Gallardo at St. Gregory's Church, 6201 E. Willow St., Long Beach. 11am**

Sunday, September 20, Sunday services 8 and 10 am. Pentecost 17 **CASE AND LECTIO DIVINA, 9AM YEATON HALL, VESTRY MEETING AFTER 10AM SERVICE**

Tuesday, September 22, PBJ ministry at Otis, 10:45 am

Wednesday, September 23, Children's Chapel at 10 am

Thursday, September 24, SMCC finance meeting 10am

Sunday September 27, Sunday services 8 and 10 am, Pentecost 18, **FAMILY WORSHIP, Annual St. Michael's Day potluck after 10am service at Chris Powell's home**

Tuesday, September 29, PBJ ministry at Otis, 10:45 am

Wednesday, September 30, Children's Chapel at 10 am

October newsletter articles are due September 25th. Send articles and pictures to melissaasings@gmail.com



September Birthdays

Stephan Saylor	6
Oliver Mason	13
Kay Wallace	17
Adam Behlen	17
Kristie Wallace	19
James Volyurno	23

Outreach



Bunco night for SPY

Join us on October 9th in Yeaton Hall for a fun-filled Bunco game night as we come together as a church to enjoy fellowship all while supporting a meaningful cause. We will be raising money for Safe Place for Youth (SPY), a Los Angeles organization dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness. SPY serves people age 12-25 who are experiencing or are at risk for homelessness. SPY provides services such as housing support, case management, education and employment assistance, and health and wellness services. Bunco night will give us an opportunity to be together as a church while making a difference in our community. We hope you will join us on October 9th and bring your friends and family! We request you consider a donation of \$20 for this important cause.

OTIS Ministry

Beginning September 1st Otis Ministry is back! Our church serves at Otis College of Art and Design every Tuesday of every other month with two volunteers. This outreach includes preparing and distributing peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for students. Volunteers are responsible for ensuring enough donated supplies are available, including bread, peanut butter and jelly, Nutella, marshmallow fluff, and bananas. Please coordinate with the other scheduled volunteer ahead of time and plan to meet at Otis around 10:45 AM to set up. Most importantly, volunteers offer a warm, welcoming presence through friendly conversation, encouragement, and prayer when appropriate. A sign-up sheet will be available in Yeaton Hall! If you have any questions, please ask any member of the vestry.

St. Michael's Day Annual Picnic

Our annual BBQ will be on Sunday, September 27 in honor of St. Michael's Day! Directly after the 10am service, there will be a party at Chris Powell's house. This is a great opportunity for you to invite your friends and bring your favorite recipe to share! There will be family fun in the backyard as well. Look for the sign-up sheet soon in Yeaton Hall.

Children's Center News

The Children's Center is excited to begin its 25th year of serving the St. Michael's and El Segundo community. Stay tuned for celebration information coming soon.

The children spent the summer learning about the state of California and all the beautiful cities that make up our state. Parent volunteers brought stories, photos and food to share about the places they visited.

This month the children will spend time getting to know new teachers, new friends and new routines. We will play cooperative games and read stories about being a good friend, sharing, and including others. We are also looking forward to returning to Chapel with Father Joshua. Looking forward to another great year!

Lauren Cherrington

Knowing our religious neighbors.

Who are the Quakers?

The Quakers originated in England during the mid-17th century, which was a period of significant turmoil. England was undergoing political instability due to their civil war and the execution of King Charles I along with various groups inspired by the Reformation were breaking away from the official church to forge their own paths.

George Fox, the founder of the Quaker religion, preached a message of returning to a simpler Christianity that moved away from the complexity and hierarchy of the existing church. However, the authorities did not approve of their beliefs and frequently persecuted the early Quakers, even in the New England colonies where many had emigrated. It wasn't until William Penn, a Quaker himself, founded Pennsylvania in 1681 and proclaimed religious liberty, that the Quakers finally had a place where they could practice their faith freely. Their voices became an essential part of colonial America.

What were the early Quakers Beliefs? What were the particular convictions of this group that both contributed to their vitality and created so much opposition?

The early Quakers had unique perspectives about the relationship between the individual and God, as well as on how we relate to one another. During Fox's era, the connection between God and individuals was mediated by the complex institution of the church, with its priests, obscure theology, and rigid ceremonies. Conversely, Fox believed that God was accessible to anyone by looking inward and being attentive to what he called the "inner light." He emphasized that the key to hearing God's guidance was to be tranquil and attentive, listening to the inner voice.

Quakers believe in the equality of all persons because they hold the conviction that every individual possesses this "inner light." They believe that the inner light is the source of individual inspiration and guidance, and that it is not limited by gender, race, social status, or any other external factors. Therefore, Quakers reject social hierarchies and institutionalized discrimination, as they see such practices as violations of the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. This belief in equality is a central tenet of the Quaker faith and continues to influence the movement's values and practices to this day.

Finally, Quakers feel deeply that an authentic faith should show itself in a changed life. These beliefs aren't just intellectual ideas, but principles that should guide how we live. From the beginning, Quakers wanted to change the world around them to make it a place where their basic equality is recognized by the culture and its institutions. The Quaker testimonies are often simplified into the acronym SPICES – simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equity or equality, service, and stewardship.

These distinctive emphases that characterized their origins had a profound impact not just on the Quakers but on the world they inhabited as they tried to follow where their convictions led. These include: equal treatment of women; abolishing slavery and freeing enslaved people; pacifism—

abstaining from participation in violent acts. consistently pursuing peace and avoiding talking against others. In times of war, many Quakers have been conscientious objectors; in the business world—their integrity, simplicity, and close-knit community were fertile soil for efficient and innovative business practices.

Today, Quakers are a diverse group with members living all over the globe. What ties different Quakers together is their continuing commitment to principles like the importance of finding one's inner light, the equality of all people, the need to live their convictions out in the world, and the pursuit of peace.

Source: Quakers Friends Academy

-----From My Perspective by Tom Connare

No two words conjure up feelings of bias and judgement against LGBTQia individuals more than the words "practicing homosexual" – as spoken by faith groups across the country seeking to admonish same-sex relationships. As Jesus said, however, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged". The universal calling, therefore, is to view those who are unlike us with mercy and to remember that each of us depend on God's forgiveness and love. The reality of the matter is that neither Jesus nor anywhere in the New Testament were judgements rendered against same-sex relationships. Sodom and Gomorrah was reprehensible not because of sexual orientation but due to violence and sexual assault which had befallen visitors to the city. Romans 1:25-26 would apply to heterosexuals as well, if back in those days, excessive lust, prostitution, or other exploitive practices had created idolatry and/or false worship among the community. And for that one/infamous Leviticus quote (Lev 18:22) which certainly does appear contrary to LGBTQia relationships, there are at least half-a-dozen "other" quotes (also within Leviticus) which are contrary to the lifestyle of even straight people (e.g. Leviticus 19, Verses 19, 23, 26, 27, 28, 34)

Accusations that Gay Pride is synonymous with promiscuous activity can likewise be said about "straight-themed" celebrations, as well, such as Mardi Gras, Burning man, or Saturday nights "out in the town" at local Gentlemen's clubs. Indeed, the struggles/challenges related to temperance and avoiding degrading behaviors are not unique to the LGBT community but apply equally -- male, female, gay or straight. One's sexual orientation is almost immaterial. Indeed, the true purpose of Gay Pride (like Black pride) is, at its base, just to celebrate the dignity and respect of individuals -- regardless of sexual orientation (or skin color).

In Episcopal theology, sin is defined as actions or states that create separation from God, oneself, and neighbors. Because the church views a person's sexual orientation as an inherent part of how God created them, being homosexual is not considered a sin nor does the Church view any loving relationship as sinful. Romans 3:23 states clearly, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," which means no one is perfect. As followers of Jesus, therefore, we can only strive to reflect Christ's purity -- not a spirit of criticism or condemnation, but a heart turned toward God: humble, honest, loving, and open to His grace. This month, may we ask God to soften our hearts, replace criticism with prayer, and help us extend to others the same graces we have received.

In the language of the Hawaiians, Mahalo Tom C.

Since You Asked...

Questions from parishioners that you might also encounter.

What are the differences between The Nicene Creed, The Apostle's Creed and Athanasian Creed?

Creeds are statements of our basic beliefs about God. The term comes from the Latin *credo*, meaning I believe. We have two foundational creeds that we use during worship: the Apostles' Creed used at baptism and daily worship, and the Nicene Creed used at communion. In reciting and affirming these creeds, we join Christians across the world and throughout the ages in affirming our faith in the one God who created us, redeemed us, and sanctifies us.

In The Episcopal Church, the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, and Athanasian Creed serve as historic summaries of faith. They primarily differ in length, purpose, and the specific historical heresies they were written to address.

In summary, **The Apostle's Creed**, originally was a baptismal confession for new believers in the early Roman church. It is the most foundational and personal of the three. Written in the first person ("I believe..."). It is divided into 12 distinct articles focusing on the lives, deaths, and roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It uniquely includes the lines that Jesus "descended into hell" and mentions "the communion of saints." In our Episcopal Church, its traditional usage is in Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, and as the standard baptismal vow.

Formulated by early church councils (Nicaea in 325 AD and Constantinople in 381 AD) **The Nicene Creed** was written to combat specific heresies, primarily Arianism (the belief that Jesus was a created being rather than co-equal with God). Written in the plural ("We believe...") to reflect the communal belief of the whole church. It focuses heavily on the divine nature of Jesus, describing Him as "God from God, Light from Light, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father." **Episcopal Usage:** The primary usage of this Creed is found during Sunday Holy Eucharist, serving as our central statement of corporate worship.

The Athanasian Creed dates back to the 5th or 6th century, it was designed to clarify complex Trinitarian and Christological doctrines (the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity) and to distinguish Nicene Christianity from other theologies. This is the longest, most detailed, and highly technical of the three. It famously defines the Trinity: *"And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."* It contains "monitory clauses" (sometimes called anathemas)—warnings at the beginning and end stating that those who do not hold to this faith will "perish everlastingly". (In modern Episcopal practice, these warnings are generally understood as theological warnings against abandoning the faith, rather than literal condemnations of individuals). Its usage is found in the historical documents section of the Book of Common Prayer, and only occasionally recited in public worship, usually on Trinity Sunday. Let me know if you have other topics you'd like to discover.

Fr. Joshua+

Do you know what LGBTQia+ stands for?

It is important for us to learn about these terms as we recognize the sacred dignity of every human being.

L= Lesbian—a woman (or woman-aligned person) who is attracted to other women.

G= Gay—a person who is primarily attracted to people of the same gender. While often used to describe men attracted to men, it can also be used as a broad term for women attracted to women.

B= Bisexual—a person who experiences attraction to more than one gender.

T= Transgender—refers to individuals whose internal gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Q= Queer/Questioning—an umbrella term used by individuals whose sexual orientation or gender identity falls outside of societal norms. "Questioning" refers to someone who is still exploring or figuring out their sexual orientation or gender identity.

I= Intersex—people born with reproductive or sexual anatomy, chromosomes, or hormones that do not fit the typical definitions of male or female bodies.

A= Asexual—an identifier for people who experience little to no sexual attraction (Asexual), little to no romantic attraction (Aromantic), or who do not identify with any gender.

+Plus—a symbol to encompass all other sexual orientations and gender identities not specifically represented by the letters in the acronym (such as pansexual, nonbinary, or gender-fluid individuals).

The Kinsey Scale developed by Alfred Kinsey in 1948 is used in research to describe a person's sexual orientation based on one's experience or response at a given time. Everyone falls somewhere in the range from 0, meaning exclusively heterosexual, to a 6, meaning exclusively homosexual.

It is important to remember that these categories of sexuality have been in existence since the beginning of history, yes even during Biblical times. Sexual and gender diversity spans all times and all cultures around the world. It is only now that we can acknowledge that human sexual identity is complex. With the information we have at hand, Jesus asks us to show human kindness to all God created.

For further definitions and resources on gender and sexuality, you can consult the UC Davis LGBTQIA+ Resource Center Glossary or the UCSF LGBTQIA+ Glossary. And to learn more about Kinsey's scale: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kinsey_scale

Fr. Joshua+

