



Mike's Missal



January 2024

St. Michael's Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 720326
Norman, OK 73070

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www.stmichaelsnorman.org

Sunday Services are at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M.

Live on YOUTUBE at 11:00

From Father Joseph Farber

From the very beginning, Christians' relationship to the Law of Moses has caused difficulties in the Church. Until the turn of the first century, Christians proudly thought of themselves as a sub-sect, an enlightened sect, of Judaism. St. Paul is the prime example of this self-understanding. Gentile "God-fearers" (non-Jews who worshiped and associated with Jewish synagogues) were considered by this sub-sect to have been "grafted into the Olive Tree" but without the requirements of circumcision, keeping kosher, and following all the other commandment of the Law. This was a problem because Jews understood themselves to have been chosen by God to receive *and* follow the Law. Following that Law as closely as possible was their means of showing thankfulness and faithfulness to God.

The Law is central to Jewish identity. If one converts to Judaism, one is expected to follow the Law. Christians like Paul taught that it was not necessary to follow the letter of the Law, *but always necessary to follow the Spirit of the Law*. Technically speaking, you could even break the Law and eat meat sacrificed to pagan idols, although the real question, says Paul to the Corinthians, is whether by doing so you might cause offense to someone else. The question for Christians, he says, is not whether it is lawful; we don't care whether it is lawful or not, because we are free of the law. What we really care about, says Paul, is *whether it is helpful*. In short, Christians understood themselves to be required to always do the loving thing, rather than merely follow what was lawful. Thus, Christians saw no necessity for circumcision, keeping kosher, or even avoiding table fellowship with other Gentiles, even though these are clear commands of the Law.

Largely because of this stance, Christians were eventually kicked out of the synagogues around 100 AD. (Though it seems that Christians continued to associate and worship with Jews well into the 4th and even 5th century. This we know because the Greek Patriarch John Chrysostom (349-407) who thought of Christianity as a principally Gentile religion, complains about Christians continuing to live and worship with Jews and not separating themselves from Jewish life.)

Keeping oneself pure from defilement as defined by the law and seeking purification from defilement when it inevitably occurs was essential to Jewish identity as a separate people. Christians, in sharp contrast, held that God had made nothing which was by its nature defiled, and that any act done in faithfulness and love, even if unlawful (like plucking grains of wheat on the Sabbath (Mt 12), or welcoming Gentiles into fellowship (Acts 10)), is pure in the eyes of God.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, St. Paul gives us a laundry list of what Christian love ("agape") looks like: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does

not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

For Christians, the Law is a reference point, but it can never be finally determinative of what constitutes good or bad behavior. Indeed, over and over the New Testament calls upon us to do our own constant discernment, constantly “testing the spirits” to see if our own actions are rightly motivated.

For early (male) Christians, whether or not to get circumcised was a huge issue. Jesus was a Jew, so it made sense to fully convert to Judaism if you intended to follow him. Both Scripture and tradition were unequivocal: If you want to share in the blessings of God’s Chosen, you *have to* be circumcised and you *have to* follow all the other 613 commandments, as well. Paul says no. God is doing something new. The Spirit that informs the Law of Moses, says Paul, is the Spirit of Love, the Spirit of Holiness. Christians, he says, should always follow the Spirit rather than the letter of the Law.

Financial Report

Our total pledges for 2024 are \$189,350.00. Our deepest thanks to all who have pledged.

After bottoming in October, we’ve ended 2023 in good financial standing due to those who contributed extra. We are truly blessed with our community at St. Michael’s.

Individual Giving Statements for 2023 will be out in January. Please check for any mistakes and let Debi Kelley know.

A few bills for December:

OEC \$1261.00

APS Fire Inspection \$319.33

Jan-Pro Cleaning \$590

Mutual Ministry Support \$3595.85

Gas Leak Repair \$424

An updated 2024 Budget will be in the Annual Report.

Mark your calendars:

Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, January 28

Following the 11:00 a.m. service

Lunch will be shared after the meeting.

JANUARY EVENTS

January 5

Yoga Class 9:00 a.m.

St. Michael's is adding a new offering for our parishioners and the greater Norman community: Yoga on Friday mornings, beginning on January 5th, at 9:00 a.m. The cost is \$10 per class.

Join Yoga Instructor, Anne Roberts, for a slow-paced hour of yoga, uniting mind, body and spirit. No experience is needed. The class will be suited to all levels – beginners are welcome! We will have a limited supply of yoga equipment available, but it will be helpful for you to bring your own mat, and perhaps a pillow or folded blanket to place under your knees. Dress in a T-shirt and sweatpants or yoga pants. For questions, text Anne at 405-627-9877.

January 6

Outreach Committee 10:00 a.m.

Epiphany Celebration and Pot Luck Dinner



Join us Saturday, January 6th at 5:00 p.m. to celebrate Epiphany! We will have a service, a pageant, and a potluck meal. We'll have dessert from La Baguette. Come help us celebrate Twelfth Night and bring a dish to share!!

January 7

**Digital Engagement Committee
Following the 11:00 Service**

Book Discussion Group 1:00 p.m.
See details below

January 9

Budget Committee 10:00 via Zoom

January 12

WILD MENS NIGHT OUT 7:00 p.m.



St. Michael's men will meet for an evening of fellowship and conversation at 7:00 p.m. Friday, January 12th. For just \$15 you can enjoy giant ribeye steaks charcoal-grilled to perfection, baked potatoes, salad, garlic bread and a plentiful choice of craft beers. Non-steak-eaters are welcome to bring other items to grill. First-time participants & guests can enjoy all this for free. Please sign up as we need an accurate count for our steak order by January 10th. Contact: Brandt Cassidy.

**January 14 Worship Committee
after the 11:00 service**

January 18

Care-A-Van Meals Prep for the Unhoused

In January we will start doing the meals on Thursdays instead of Wednesdays. Our deepest thanks to those who continue to help with this ministry. If you would like to cook or buy something for these meals, there is a sign-up sheet available. Contact: Debi Kelley

January 21 Vestry Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend Vestry meetings as visitors.

**January 28 Annual Membership Meeting
after the 11:00 a.m. service**

Please review the Annual Report and plan to attend. We will enjoy lunch together after the meeting.

Ministries & News

Annual Report and Meeting

The annual report will be distributed in paper on Sunday, January 14th for your review before the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28th. Let Nancy know if you would like a copy of the report sent to you.

Altar Guild

Thank you to everyone currently serving on the Altar Guild – your work is greatly appreciated! New members are: Sachia Miller and Patty Wright

Bible Study

The study of the Old Testament continues Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Come read with us.

Book Discussion Group

On Sunday, January 7th at 1:00 p.m. the group will discuss “*Calling for a Blanket Dance*” by Oscar Hokeah. A moving and deeply engaging novel about a young Native American man as he learns to find strength in his familial identity. The author is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma and currently lives in his hometown of Tahlequah where he works with Indian Child Welfare.

Book Sale

The first book sale of 2024 will be on March 16th, so mark your calendars and donate what you can. Place them near the table in the choir room. Book sale proceeds are used to meet or enhance any special needs at St. Michael's. Contact: Amy Gardner

Budget & Finance Committee

Our Budget Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 9th at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom with host Jaci Williams. We will finalize the 2024 budget for the annual meeting. Any questions? Contact Amy Gardner

Care Team and Special Services

Only a few people have signed up for the Care Team or Special services. Prayerfully consider if you should volunteer for the Care Team or the Special Services. It takes more than a few people to have enough so that whenever there is a need, we can cover it.

Care Team may provide meals after surgery or an illness or a ride to an appointment. Special Services help mainly with funeral receptions and other events.

Carpet in offices

We are still collecting donations to pay for new carpet in the church offices. The total estimated cost is \$3,811.00. Since our regular budget is not able to cover this expense, we are asking for donations. As of today, we have donations for \$2,125.00. If you would like to donate to the new carpet, please put "carpet" in the memo of your check.

Choir

St. Mike's choir rehearses at 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays. If you are interested in singing in the choir, contact Jon Roberts.

Churches Caring for Creation

The Foam Recycling Project continues to receive clean items for densifying. A current accounting of these contributions is posted on the News bulletin board: 180 ingots at 1980 lbs. CC4C has reached a total of 9000 lbs. Thank you for recycling!

Crafters – Note Date Changes

Beginning on January 8th, the crafters will meet on Monday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. We will meet on Wednesday, January 3rd for our last Wednesday meeting. Bring your knitting, crocheting, or other craft. We have a good supply of yarn for you to use. Any questions? Contact Amy Gardner

Diocesan Prayer School

The Diocese of Oklahoma, partnership with Grace Church Yukon, is offering Prayer School on January 20th, 2024, 9:30-2:00 p.m. This one-day workshop helps individuals develop their theology and understanding of prayer (how it works, how it changes us) as well as teaches several techniques of prayer from our rich Anglican tradition (from the Daily Office to contemplative techniques).

"I've seen people new to the Episcopal Church as well as seasoned Episcopalians gain a lot from this course and transform their practice." says Fr. Tim Baer.

The course is offered in person at Grace Church or via Zoom. From all corners of the diocese you can join in! Read more about Prayer School and register at: <https://www.graceyukon.org/prayerschool>

Directory Update

The new directory will be out very soon, so please send any name, address, phone, or email changes to the office.

Discretionary Fund

The last Sunday of each month all offering plate cash goes to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. Please consider putting cash in the plate on the last Sunday or donate any time by writing "Discretionary Fund" on a check. These funds are used to address unexpected needs.

Flowers and Candles

Sign-up sheets are out for you for flowers and candles for the altar on Sundays. Simply sign your name, who or what you are honoring and we will send you an invoice after that Sunday. Flowers are \$45 and Candles are \$10. Contact: Debi Kelley

Name Tags

Do you have a magnetic name tag to wear on Sundays? A Sign-up sheet is on the counter. Name tags are paid for by Rummage Sale funds.

Norman Coalition for Refugee Support

Norman Coalition for Refugee Support is looking for a member of St. Michael's to serve on its board. If you are interested, contact Amy Gardner, Debi Kelley, or Pam Wallace.

The note cards are still available – a package of 12 for \$20. The cards were made by Sayeda Fayaz, the sister of one of the refugees living in Norman. The funds will go to bring the rest of Sayeda's family to the U.S. See Amy Gardner.

Go to <https://www.nc4rs.org/> to see ways to help. Questions? Contact Amy Gardner or Debi Kelley.

Outreach Committee

Outreach will meet on Saturday, January 6th at 9:00 a.m. All are welcome to attend. Contact Amy Gardner with questions.

Photo Release Forms

We now have forms to complete when taking photographs, so we have permission to put them in our digital presence.

Prayer Aids to Benefit St. Michael's

Prayer aids such as the Marian rosary, Anglican rosary, chotki, and komboskini have a long and storied history of usage in Christianity.

In the Episcopal Church, we practice multiple usages. Marian rosaries ranging from 5-15 decades in length are devoted to the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries. The Anglican rosary is fashioned after the Chotki of the Orthodox faith which is a 33 beaded aid in reverence to the 33 years in the life of Jesus. . All funds will go to the general operating fund of St. Michael's. If you are interested in purchasing a custom hand-made prayer aid or have any questions about using a prayer aid, please contact Joshua Yarbrough at jry246@gmail.com or 405-226-5187.

Prayer Chain and Prayer List

A small group of members of St. Michael's are committed to praying daily for concerns. Our Prayer Chain is confidential (not published). Please bring concerns to this group. If you feel called to this ministry or have a prayer request, contact Amy Gardner. The Prayer List is a public list of those in need published in the Sunday service bulletin. Contact: Nancy Littlejohn

Prison Ministry of Oklahoma

The Prisons Ministries of Oklahoma have announced a need for paperback Bibles. If you have any paperback Bibles or religious works to donate, please contact Joshua Yarbrough at 405-226-5187.

Readers

Please contact Deacon Ann if you will be available to read during Sunday services.

Saucy Sisters

January's Saucy Sisters is canceled. In February we will join the Wild Men's Night Out. We will resume in March.

Sharon's Wagon

Sharon's Wagon is in honor and memory of Sharon Vaz who had great compassion for those in need of support. We fill her wagon with items which go to others in our community. In January we will collect condiments and spices for the Share Center at Food and Shelter for Friends. Think.... salt, pepper, mustard, ketchup, relish, mayonnaise, hot sauce, etc. These are items usually not available from the

Regional Food Bank and are not frequently donated but enhance our food.

In February, we will collect socks for our unhoused friends and Laundry Love. Contact: Amy Gardner

Sign Up Counter

Opportunities for Participation are on the Sign-Up Counter. We have many ways for you to be involved in the life of St. Mike's – check it out!

Tea in the Kitchen Al-Anon Family Groups

Tea in the Kitchen Al-Anon Family Group is for the friends, family, and loved ones of someone who is struggling with addiction. Please join us, all are welcome! This group meets on Fridays at 8:00 p.m. in the Education Building.

Ushers and Greeters are needed.

Would you be willing to organize and schedule our ushers and greeters? Contact Nancy Littlejohn.

Vestry

We will elect new vestry members at the Annual Meeting on January 28. Candidates' information will be in the Annual Report distributed on January 14.

Worship Committee

Our next meeting will be Sunday, January 14.



January Days to Remember

Birthdays

1/01	Deandra Warner	1/19	Richard Hancock
1/01	Andrew Fagg	1/23	Thomas Tahkofper
1/03	Carla Waugh	1/23	Richard Young
1/03	Gabriella Valdes	1/23	Elizabeth Blazek
1/04	Nancy Wakely	1/24	Suzette McDowell
1/07	Chris Clarke	1/27	Jeff Bugher
1/07	Mary Frances Albert	1/29	Serenity Bugher
1/10	Sue Harrington		
1/10	Ann Hamilton		
1/11	Amy Gardner		

Anniversaries

1/29/1990 Jeff and Sonia Bugher

On the anniversary of their death

1/6/1990	✠Inez Price
1/6/2022	✠Carolyn Demps
1/7/1990	✠Robert Bibens
1/8/2004	✠Margaret Long
1/11/1978	✠Nell Snead
1/11/1986	✠Robert Simmons
1/11/1978	✠Nell Snead
1/16/1978	✠Carolyn Gray
1/17/1988	✠Margaret Wheeler
1/17/1988	✠Arthur Parduhn
1/18/2022	✠Eric Zittel
1/18/2020	✠Warren Zittel
1/19/1985	✠James Dunn
1/19/1995	✠Dorothy Lower
1/19/1997	✠Sheila Dean
1/22/2010	✠Jonell Luttrell
1/25/1988	✠Marian Holmaas
1/27/2000	✠Vera Duke
1/30/2013	✠Carl Melton

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to thy never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that thou art doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Handy Information

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call the office at 405-321-8951 during regular hours, or call Father Joseph, Deacon Laura, or Deacon Ann in case of emergency outside office hours.

Office Hours: Monday – Wednesday 9:00 A.M.– 2:00 P.M. Thursdays 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

St. Michael’s Webpage: www.stmichaelsnorman.org

St. Michael’s Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6273015521>

St. Michael’s YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZX8EOJFq5VykheD5K9q8eA>
Subscribe to receive update notices when we post new videos for worship or other resources.

Father Joseph Farber rector@stmichaelsnorman.org 405-321-8951 or 541-300-9207

Deacon Laura Blazek laurablazek@sbcglobal.net 405-639-0300

Deacon Ann Murray deaconann18@gmail.com 405-919-8533

Parish Musician Jon Roberts dachs.mirabilis@icloud.com 405-850-5252

Peter Rodrigues, Senior Warden studiepete@gmail.com 405-651-7717

Tina Mahle, Junior Warden Tina.mahle@alumni.ou.edu 405-517-5142

Nancy Littlejohn, Parish Administrator administrator@stmichaelsnorman.org 405-321-8951 or
cell 405-924-2782

Debi Kelley, Financial Secretary, treasurer@stmichaelsnorman.org 405-321-8951 or d3bi.kelley@gmail.com
405-306-3450

OTHER CONTACTS:

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Amy Gardner awgardner@yahoo.com 405-410-5523

Your Vestry Through January 2024

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