



Mike's Missal



April 2024

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 720326

Norman, OK 73070

administrator@stmichaelsnorman.org

www.stmichaelsnorman.org

Sunday Service is at 10:00 A.M.

Live on YOUTUBE

From Father Joseph

Following the Law

As most count them, the Torah contains 613 different rules governing behaviors from clothing to crime. It is, for instance, forbidden to wear blended fabrics (meaning all my cotton-poly clergy shirts are, technically speaking, “abominations to the Lord”), or to eat any seafood that does not have fins and scales (shrimp and shellfish are definitely off the menu). Christianity quickly decided that it was not necessary for non-Jewish Christians to follow the law. But many early Christians Pharisees felt that Gentiles needed to be circumcised and subject to the Law of Moses. Jesus, after all, was a Jew. Righteousness, according to them, consisted in following the rules of Mosaic Law.

The Lord led the early Church in a different direction. In Acts 10 we are introduced to Cornelius, a Roman Centurion living in Caesarea known for his devotion to God and acts of charity. An angel instructs him to send people to bring Peter, who was then in Joppa. Now under the rules of the Torah, Peter would not be permitted to receive or associate with the Gentile Cornelius. But God caused Peter to have a dream (three times) in which a great sheet was lowered from heaven containing all kinds of animals which, according to the Torah, were considered un-Kosher, accompanied by the command from heaven, “Go Peter. Kill and eat.” Finally, Peter hears the Lord tell him to “**call nothing that I have made unclean**”, and understands that this message is not just about food. When Cornelius’ representatives arrive, Peter invites them in as his guests.

Like all Jews, Paul regarded the Law of Moses as a gift from God. But following the law was unnecessary for a people whose hearts are filled with the Spirit of Holiness. “[I]f you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law,” he says. It is unnecessary. People whose hearts belong to God naturally recoil from immoral and unethical behavior. “[T]he fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (Gal 5:22-23).

In practice, Christians have recognized that the Ten Commandments forbid immoral and unethical behaviors which the Spirit of Holiness would never countenance in any event, while other rules having to do with ritual purity (being circumcised, keeping Kosher, avoiding blended fabrics and the like) are not at all necessary to holiness. The ethical commandments still apply, but only because the Spirit leads us to the same actions and prohibitions. The commandments concerning ritual purity do not.¹

As Paul clearly states, the question for us is never whether something is “legal” or not. “ ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things build up.

Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor” (I Cor:10:23). The question we should always ask ourselves is whether our own acts (and attitudes) will, in fact, produce the fruits of the Spirit in us and others, namely, the aforementioned “[L]ove, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” This is a “higher righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees” (Mt 5:20). It involves much more than simply following the rules; it requires a selflessly loving heart - which comes as a gift of the Spirit - and constant discernment.

¹Jews would agree. In their view, we Gentiles are subject to the laws given to Noah, but not to the Mosaic Law, which is exclusive to the Jews.

From Senior Warden David Zittel

There are a couple of items I would like to share with you this month. The first is financial support for the music program and the second is some new/renewed parish activities that came out of the recent vestry retreat held March 2nd.

We currently have three paid positions to help lead the choir and occasionally fill in for our parish musician Jon Roberts. (They currently receive a weekly stipend of ~\$75.) We are good through April and are looking for additional support for the rest of the year. Please consider making a financial contribution to the music program. At its best, a choir not only leads the congregation in hymn singing but also enhances the overall worship experience without being a distraction. That said, as a recent guest noted, a choir can be a visible indication of church vibrancy. In the past, an active St. Cecilia Guild sponsored fund-raising events for the music program but in recent years the guild has been inactive mainly due to the pandemic. Also, we are blessed with endowments whose purpose is to support the music program. Last year we used them to help cover the costs for the paid singers but we need to allow these endowments time to rebuild. The remaining St. Cecilia Music Guild funds were transferred to the music fund earlier this year. Also, some funding has come from the semi-annual book sale and diocesan refund windfalls.

My second item covers ideas that came out of our vestry retreat. During our discussions we suggested that we needed improved signage (perhaps even a digital screen with scrolling capability), activities for the parish such as a games night (BYOG) or an outside discussion group meeting, and outreach activities such as an Ice Cream Social and Hymn Sing, a back-to-school event, and a St. Michael's Homecoming Event near Michaelmas on September 29th. The Ice Cream Social and Hymn Sing is scheduled for June 30th just before the Fourth of July; we have done these in the past. Our parish administrator Nancy Littlejohn attended a church reunion from her college days that she enjoyed greatly. Likewise, for our Homecoming Event we would invite past members, both local and those from out of town or state. It would be a wonderful opportunity to catch up with old friends. Regarding a Games Night, I remember sometime in my early years at St. Michael's playing bridge of an evening at the church. I am especially intrigued about starting a discussion group that would cover far-ranging topics. We are thinking that this group would meet monthly at a local pub or restaurant.

On a separate note, nearly everyone I know either has or knows of someone who is caring for a family member who cannot function as well as we would like them to or they themselves would like to. Caring for such family members can be stressful and I am open to ideas about how to share ways of coping. Some limitation-causing conditions that come to mind are chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia. These can sap the energy level of the person afflicted and cause them brain fog. Of course, some issues are simply age-related such as hearing loss. I encourage you to email me david12330@gmail.com with your thoughts on this or anything else I have mentioned.

Dave Zittel, Senior Warden

APRIL EVENTS

Worship Committee April 3

The Worship Committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. via Google Meet. Please contact Fr. Joseph if you want to be part of the committee that works on improving our worship so that he can email you an invite to the online meeting.

Big Event April 6

Students from OU will be here on Saturday, April 6th to serve our facility as part of the Big Event. Contact: Junior Warden Tina Mahle.

Library Committee April 6

The Library Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 6th. We will try to finish the final organization of the library in preparation for Bishop Poulson's visit on April 14. Please let Laura Blazek know if you are interested in being part of keeping our library organized and user-friendly.

Book Discussion Group April 7

The Book Discussion Group will meet at 1:00 pm on Sunday, April 7th. See book details on page 3.

Wild Men's Night Out April 12 7:00 p.m.

Saint Michael's men's group is meeting for an evening of fellowship and conversation on our usual 2nd Friday of the month. Join St. Mike's men for The Best Steak You Ever Had for only \$15.⁰⁰. Donations are always appreciated. Salad, baked potatoes, garlic bread and a plentiful selection of craft beers complete the menu. Please sign-up before April 9. Contact: Brandt Cassidy

Bishop's Visit April 14

Bishop Poulson will be with us on Sunday, April 14.

Vestry Meeting April 14

The Vestry will meet following the service on Sunday April 14th in the Education Building.

Care-A-Van Meals for the Unhoused April 18 5:00 p.m.

Our deepest thanks to those who continue to help with this ministry. We're signed up for the third Thursday of each month through the end of the year.

Sheets are out for sign up. If you have not helped with this ministry before and would like to, choose a month and sign up for what you would like to provide. Meals are for 50. You can be reimbursed up to \$50 for the main course. Don't cook? We always need extra snacks and water. Contact: Debi Kelley

Saucy Sisters April 19

The Saucy Sisters are having a Caribbean dinner on April 19th. Santa is hosting and it's her birthday! We gather at 5:30 p.m. and dinner starts at 6:00. The cost is \$10, but your first time is free. Please sign up in the ingathering space.

Outreach Meeting April 20th 9:00 a.m.

Laundry Love April 27th

See details on page 4 – We need a coordinator.

Other Ministries

Altar Flowers & Sanctuary Candles

We have not needed flowers through Lent, but it is time again to have flowers on the altar. Fresh altar flower arrangements may be donated to honor a friend or family member, to remember a loved one, to celebrate a birthday or anniversary, or

for any reason you wish. Your generosity will help to defray the cost to the parish and enhance the beauty of our church. Donations also can be made for the Sanctuary Candle. Candles are often donated in memory of loved ones or to the Glory of God. The cost is \$45 for flowers and \$10 for candles. Contact: Debi Kelley

Altar Guild

We appreciate the beautiful altar on Sunday mornings, and all the work done by our wonderful Altar Guild. If you are available once every few weeks on a Saturday morning to help set the altar and Sunday morning after church to clean the altar, please contact the church office.

Bible Study

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

Book Discussion Group

The Book Discussion Group will meet at 1:00 pm on Sunday, April 7th. We'll discuss *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. A novel from *The New York Times* best-selling author of *The Mothers*, this stunning new novel is about twin sisters, inseparable as children, who ultimately choose to live in two very different worlds, one Black and one white. The book group meets the first Sunday of each month. Contact: Carol Wittmer.

Book Sale

St. Michael's Book Sale in March made over \$900! Proceeds benefit the choir and Outreach programs. We continue to collect books in the choir room for our next sale. Contact Amy Gardner for details.

Budget & Finance Committee

The next budget meeting will be June 25. Action items: Propose an additional \$10 stipend when one of our paid singers directs the choir; moving St. Cecelia's funds and 2023 book sale funds to reimburse paid singers. So far, the budget is in line with expectations!

Care Team

Our thanks to those who have been wonderful about providing meals and transportation for our home bound members. If you have a need, please let Debi or Nancy know. If you would like to join the Care Team, there is a sign-up sheet available.

Choir

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

Churches Caring for Creation

The Densifier will be at the Moore Public Library on Saturday, April 6th from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

We densify weekly at University Lutheran Church, and volunteers are always needed. Contact Doug Bowden at 405-831-9951. Donations for this project should be made to University Lutheran or to St. Michael's for tax purposes. Contact: Tina Mahle, Green Team

Crafters

Our crafters meet from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. every Monday. We have a good supply of yarn for you to use. Contact: Amy Gardner

Cursillo

A Cursillo workday is scheduled at St. Crispin's on April 13th at 10:00 a.m. Contact: Fr. Joseph or Amy Gardner.

Discretionary Fund

The last Sunday of each month (April 28) 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.

Facility Use

Anyone using St. Mike's buildings for a purpose outside of regular church activities, must contact the office and complete an *Application for Facilities Use*. We need to have a record of all activities in our buildings and ensure that usage is appropriate.

Financial Report

We didn't have any major costs in March, so our finances look good. Summer is coming which means our cooling cost will rise significantly along with our lawn care. A few costs in March:

Lashar Heat and air \$480
Mutual Ministry \$2422.42
OEC \$1018
Copy Machine \$315
Various supplies \$1484.42

Laundry Love

St. Michael's will sponsor Laundry Love on April 27th from 9:00 a.m.-noon at Sooner Wash. We will provide about 50 of our neighbors with up to \$15 in laundry (including detergent, bleach, and dryer sheets) and a lunch. Save your quarters, as we need approximately \$900 to sponsor laundry and lunch.

Neighbors are also provided with breakfast from Dunkin' Donuts, dog and cat food from St. Francis Animal Resource Center, feminine products from Period OKC, and new socks from Sox of Love.

We need someone to coordinate the lunch for our guests in April. Contact: Amy Gardner

Lectio Divina

Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. in the Library

Lectio Divina is a contemplative way of reading the Bible. Dating back to the early centuries of the Christian Church, it was established as a monastic practice by Benedict in the 6th century. It is a way of praying the scriptures that leads us deeper into God's word. We slow down. We read a short passage more than once. We chew it over slowly and carefully. We savour it. Scripture begins to speak to us in a new way. It speaks to us personally and aids that union we have with God through Christ who is himself the Living Word. Contact: Rt. Rev. Wallis Ohl (ret)

Meals for the Unhoused

We need volunteers to sign up for upcoming meals. We have spots open in April. Slots for the entire year are available in the folder on the sign-up counter. Food is prepared at home and boxed up at 5:00 p.m. on the date. We always need water and extra snacks if you don't want to cook anything. Contact: Debi or Amy

Norman Coalition for Refugee Support

St. Michael's is in need for a volunteer to serve on the board of the NCRS. This entails 4 yearly meetings, plus occasional reading material. The board member should initiate fundraising and volunteer recruitment at St. Michael's. Contact Amy Gardner

Outreach Committee

The next Outreach Meeting will be April 20th at 9:00 a.m. Contact: Amy Gardner

Photo Release Forms

We need a signed form from everyone so that we have a record of your permission to be in photographs that may be used in our digital presence. Pick one up from the entrance counter and leave it in the office.

Prayer Chain

Members of St. Michael's have committed to praying daily for concerns that have been given to any member of the Prayer Chain. Our Prayer Chain is confidential (not published). Please bring concerns to this group or if you feel called to this ministry. Contact: Amy Gardner

Prayer List

The Prayer List printed in Sunday's bulletins will start anew at the beginning of each month. Please submit the names of those you wish to be added to the published prayer list. The list will continue throughout the month so additions may be made at any time.

Pride Weekend – See Page 6 for details.

Mark your calendars for May 4th and 5th for Norman's Pride Festival. Bring empty tissue boxes for the float! Bake Mini Breads! Bread instructions are on the front counter. Contact: Deacon Laura

Saucy Sisters

Saucy Sisters is St. Michael's women's evening of conversation and fun. Please sign up in the ingathering space for the Caribbean dinner on April 19th.

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 for those in need in our community. In April we will collect feminine hygiene products. Donations in March to Fostering Futures: 16 preemie onesies; 136 prs. socks; 286 pairs of underwear! 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!

Special Services Team

Would you be willing to be on a team to help at special services such as weddings or funerals? We have a small group and could really use more. We have a detailed procedures manual for funerals. Contact Nancy Littlejohn or Debi Kelley.

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 & Greeters Coordinator needed!

We need someone to schedule greeters and ushers. Contact: Fr. Joseph Farber

St. Michael's Website

Katie Blair and Tim Phillips are the webmasters for our site. Please help them out by sending them current information or new photos.

Yoga Class

Join instructor Anne Roberts on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. Each class session is \$10.00.

Order a St Michael's T-Shirt

“Let Your True Colors Shine!”



These 100% cotton shirts are \$22.00. Please write checks to St. Michaels with PRIDE in the memo. If paying with cash, please put it in an envelope with your order. Payment is due to Debi Kelley or the office when you order your shirt. The final order will be made on April 14th. This is to ensure the shirts will be delivered in time for our Pride Festival in May. Sizes are adult S to 3X Childrens sizes are available in XS -XL at the same cost.

Norman Pride Festival and Parade

The festival is on Saturday, May 4th from noon to 10:00 p.m. in Andrew's Park and the parade is at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 5th in downtown Norman. Sign-up sheets are on the counter to pack bread, work at the booth, and walk in the parade.



Pride Bread Pick up a copy of the *Pride Bread Guidelines*. All baked bread needs to be at the church before Friday, May 3rd. You can put them in the church freezer before then. If you are keeping your baked loaves in your freezer at home and plan to bring them to the bread packing event on Friday the 3rd, please make sure you set them out to start defrosting the day before. Contact: Kathy Rodrigues

Pride Prep- Friday, May 3rd at 5:00 p.m. We need volunteers to help pack our swag bags for the festival. Sign up to help or just show up!

Pride Festival, Saturday, May 4th at Andrews Park in Norman. We will have a

Pride Quilt made by Debi Kelley booth at the festival from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (this includes set up and breakdown time). You can volunteer at our booth for one or more 1-hour shifts. Volunteers will be standing in the front of our booth to engage festival goers, hand out goodie bags filled with St. Michael's swag and our signature mini bread loaf, and help people sign up for the raffle. We ask all volunteers to wear a St. Michael's Pride shirt or a St. Michael's shirt if you have one. Bring a chair if you need to sit and bring a water bottle. We will have name tags for volunteers at the booth. Debi Kelley has graciously made and donated this quilt for us to raffle off for free at the festival!

Pride Parade, Sunday, May 5th in downtown Norman. Susie Cassidy is building our Lego themed float, "Building Love Together". We need people to walk with the float to hand out 'goodies' during the parade. There are a limited number of spaces to ride on the float. See the parade sign-up sheet for more information about the route. We will gather at 6:45 p.m. at our float on Comanche St. south of the train depot.

Contact: Deacon Laura Blazek

April Days to Remember

Birthdays

4/1 Kate Kelly
4/10 La Crisa Green
4/12 Nelson Dent
4/17 Michelle Linnemann
4/18 Adam Falato
4/18 Judy Kellogg
4/19 Santa Velez
4/25 Sylvia Crucet
4/29 Joshua Blazek
4/30 Laura Blazek

On the anniversary of their death



4/4/2018 Julianne Parker
4/9/1996 Sylvia Adair
4/10/1980 Walter Zittel
4/12/1985 Richard Wallis
4/19/1995 Betsy McGonnell
4/26/1985 Dwight Morgan
4/10/1997 Albert Harrington
4/3/2000 Esther Mayfield
4/17/2000 Perry Dean
4/5/2008 Richard Schisser Jr.
4/24/2010 Jean Baker
4/27/2012 Ruth Roberts
4/12/2015 Don Taylor
4/23/2015 Keith Catto
4/4/2016 Francesca Smith
4/7/2017 Ted Sandridge
4/20/2019 John Stiehler
4/5/2021 Jeffrey Baldwin

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.

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

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

David Zittel, Senior Warden David12330@gmail.com 405-834-8764

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

Ann Selvidge, Treasurer annselster@gmail.com 405-365-8985

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

Debi Kelley, Financial Secretary, treasurer@stmichaelsnorman.org 405-321-8951

OTHER CONTACTS:

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