

# the messenger

A PERIODICAL PUBLICATION OF THE EPISCOPAL MINISTRY AT ST. MICHAEL'S UNIVERSITY CHAPEL SUMMER 2010



## THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

With graduation behind us, Isla Vista settles into its summer rhythm. Join me in pulling up a chair, sipping a glass of lemonade and reading about the remarkable ministry emerging at St. Michael's University Church. What a delight and privilege it is to minister in this university community. The Spirit IS indeed ALIVE HERE!  
Summer blessings,

Nicole Janelle+, Episcopal Chaplain at UCSB

## CAMPUS MINISTRY STUDENT CREATES LABYRINTH AT ST. MIKE'S!

St. Mike's new labyrinth, made from recycled materials, has finally reached completion. Thanks to community contributions of plastic bags, bottles, and coat hangers, as well as the hard work of 20+ helpers on Big Sunday Volunteer Day, the labyrinth project is a testament to the amazing community collaboration in Isla Vista. This is truly artwork made for the community by the community.

Senior art major, Dawn Bailey, led the design and installation. The idea of incorporating recycled materials was inspired by her concern for the immense amount of plastic waste discarded into our ocean. Care for our planet is something we all can reflect on, and what better way to reflect than by walking the path of a labyrinth; a tool conducive for meditation.

The labyrinth path is formed using recycled materials in an innovative way. Plastic drink bottles are linked by plastic



Above: Students walk the new labyrinth made from recycled materials at St. Mike's. The labyrinth is located behind the chapel on the corner of property.

bags braided around metal coat hangers. The braided chains are draped between the bottle posts to create an overall scalloped design. Upon closer inspection, one realizes the surprising application of materials. Familiar objects have taken on a new form in order to create functional and meaningful art. From a distance the installation draws awareness to the environmental movement, just as thematically intended.

With a communal blessing from Rev. Nicole, the labyrinth is now open for public use. Experience it for yourself, and

reap all the benefits that labyrinth meditation has to offer. Or if not for a spiritual purpose, at least one can appreciate it for the huge community effort that it represents. Dawn Bailey would like to thank those at St. Michael's, Trinity, and Transfiguration who contributed donations and volunteer assistance to this endeavor. This project could not have been possible without all your help. Enjoy!

*Dawn Bailey is a graduating senior who hails from the Diocese of California.*



Above: Young Adults participating in the Urban Pilgrimage speak to the Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, rector of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Harlem, who is active in various homelessness and anti-poverty community organizing initiatives.

## CAMPUS MINISTRY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP'S URBAN PILGRIMAGE

*In March, young adults across the Episcopal Church met in New York City with their leaders the Revs. Valerie Bailey Fischer and Nicole Janelle to participate in an urban pilgrimage sponsored by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship that focused on issues of poverty and homelessness. During their time in New York City, the young adults visited faith communities and non profits that serve the needs of the poor. You can read more about their adventures below and on the Urban Pilgrimage blog: <http://2010.urbanpilgrimage.org/>.*

### Monday: Service with a Smile

I have never experienced anything quite like today's outreach to Holy Apostles, which was remodeled into a full-fledged soup kitchen after the church was badly burned in the early 1980's. Every day this amazing facility opens as early as 8 AM to start setting up. When we arrived there at 8:30, just in time for a simple morning prayer service, there were already a few individuals seated at the dozen tables set up with chairs around the sanctuary. It would become full to bursting when the church opened its doors for the actual meal—the kitchen serves an average of 1200 meals per day. EVERY day of the year. And today we got an intimate look into how they operate from a volunteer and a guest perspective.

My first task was to be a floor volunteer, keeping track of people's table supplies and keeping the area clean: similar to what I've done as a waitress for Elks Club banquets in my own town. I also tried to be as welcoming and upbeat as I could while working, asking our guests how their days were going. Most of them responded politely, returning the greeting with a smile. Some were more ostentatious—one man who called himself "Wall Street" was even conversing (and/or flirting) animatedly with all the floor servers, including me.

But the most inspiring and eye-opening part of the day happened when I was in the shoes of a guest myself: I went very quickly through the smooth-operating line, grabbing a tray of meat with macaroni, veggies, fruit and bread, and chose a seat at a random table. Tyson, a kind man with a Jamaican accent who had seen me patrolling as a volunteer, immediately pulled up a chair beside me and he chatted to me all about his travels and family (he even showed a picture of his twin nephews, whom he feels obligated to protect despite his living situation). A couple in their 20s sat on the other side, complaining angrily about the Dept. of Homeless Services and their recent apartment evictions, as well as the food quality. It took a bit of salt and pepper, but the food was good and monitored by dieticians who made sure the nutrition content was enough to last for 24 hours.

Later, I talked to a man who was employed and on his way to his truck-driving job. We talked about all the places he'd been and we shared in common, hitting it off very well. In fact, most of the people I spoke with had traveling in common; two were from military families. And amazingly, all but two mentioned that they were college graduates. It really was a shock to my senses, because it was one of my unconscious assumptions that all of these people must not have even been able to afford college, perhaps even graduate high school. What a challenge to my assumptions of MY options as a post-grad....

Holy Apostles members describe themselves as "a place of humanity, compassion, and dignity," and they hit the nail on the head. Steve, who coordinates the operation, described it as a place where people could get away to be normal for a little while: to have talks about politics, chit-chat about rainy weather, flirt with waitresses. Y'know, the usual. The entire place is set up like a restaurant, where people can theoretically relax and enjoy a good hot sit-down meal; it even has the same health code standards. The regular volunteers, Steve especially, are incredibly dedicated



Left: Urban pilgrims prepare lunches for hungry participants of a weekly Healing Eucharist in a nearby public park. Right: UCSB student Jake Sopher at St. Mary's, Harlem.



to their roles, truly putting all of their love and passion into their work. It's easy to see why: I felt like a social magnet the entire time I was engaging with these individuals, and I was amazed how energized and just plain good I felt after the experience.

*Cristy Thies is a rising UCSB junior majoring in Religious Studies and hails from Bakersfield.*

### Leaving NYC with a New Perspective

Our tour of Wall Street was an interesting juxtaposition to our immersion in Harlem. The conversation we had with successful stock market investor, gave me a different perspective as to business' contribution to the betterment of society. The investor has decided to give 100% of his future company profits to charity, specifically social entrepreneurship. He has looked into charity organizations like Doctors without Borders and Transparency International which counteracts political corruption hindering economic development in third world countries. At his career level, the investor explained, business is like a video game – people just work to earn the highest score possible; the value of money doesn't matter so much. It's crazy to think what could be done with the money when given to people who actually depend on every dime for survival.

When asked why he's doing what he's doing, the investor explained that he wants to contribute to something that's sustainable and leave the world a better place than when he entered it. The investor's lack of faith is another driving factor in his charity. He says he believes in making his life meaningful "because I don't believe in a higher justice". This helps me understand why so many social activists/humanitarians are atheist. They have found life meaning outside of religion because ultimately, in their minds, we are the world's only saving grace. It was inspiring to hear the investor's ambitions to make the world a better place. I think we all, whether Christian or not, can benefit from his perspective.

The investor uses his privilege to help the poor – an overarching message reinforced on the pilgrimage. The fact that we were able to fly out to New York for this trip at all, speaks of our financial privilege. Yet I learned on this trip that it isn't about "us" and "them" (the homeless). Our differences do not need to separate us apart. I learned on this trip how easily one can fall into the same unfortunate circumstances. Homelessness, for many, is only an injury, an illness, a decreased paycheck, or a failed relationship away. Estimates of 1.5 to 3.5 million people are homeless annually, about 1% of the U.S. population. Even this fact underestimates, since it's based on the number utilizing social service providers. Homelessness is more common than I originally had thought.

Before this trip my perception of homeless people was generalized – a stereotype based on the scruffy pan-handler on the street corner who holds a sign and utters nonsense. Since my direct experience and immersion within Harlem, I see homelessness in a new light. I realize how complex the issue is, the various contributing reasons it exists, and the diversity within the homeless population. Though factors like the rise in affordable housing and increased poverty seem beyond our control, there is still a lot we can do to better conditions for the homeless. Learning about the extent of it is a start. Getting involved with food banks, soup kitchens, social services is another way in which we can help. But mostly, respect for the poor and homeless is the most valuable thing I've taken from this trip. After having experienced it firsthand, I better understand the gospel message. And now that I've gained insight, I can act on it, living a Christian life of purpose. I look forward to sharing my experiences and insight with others. More importantly, I look forward to doing what I can in regards to poverty and homelessness on the home-front. This a national issue that needs addressing – and it starts with us.

*Dawn Bailey is a graduating senior who will participate in the Episcopal Church's New York Intern Program beginning this fall.*

## LA ESCUELITA TUTORING PROGRAM AT ST. MIKE'S HELPS ISLA VISTA CHILDREN TO THRIVE ACADEMICALLY

La Escuelita is a community service based organization that offers programs that strive to provide young students with the necessary skills and resources to be more prepared to thrive academically. These children benefit from the afterschool tutoring program the three days of the week that it is offered throughout the school year because they obtain the help that they need to complete their homework. For various reasons, such as their parent's lack of fluency in the English Language or lack of time due to long work hours, such aid is not available in their home. The Little House at St. Mike's has become a second classroom for the students this year, and more importantly, a second home for each of these children. Every time they came to tutoring, the children are enthusiastic because they looked forward to spending time with each other and with their tutors.

As tutors, with time, each of us get to know each child's personality and their study styles; consequently, we are able to adapt our teaching methods to match their needs. Working with these children has been a truly rewarding experience because in addition to us teaching them, they always manage to teach us something new. Their presence warms our hearts and allows the child in each of us to come back to life. We are very thankful to the Saint Michael's community for their support because that undying support allows us to create long-lasting relationships with the children and their parents. Furthermore, it allows us to provide this vital service for these children who may, in the future, become the leaders of our community.

*Jeanette Rodriguez Villegas  
UCSB La Escuelita's Community Service  
Chair, 2009-2010*



Above: Participants in La Escuelita tutoring program which meets three times a week at the Campus Ministry.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON CAMPUS MINISTRY CORNER

### Ministry and Service

St. Michael's University Church and Episcopal Campus Ministry has a long and storied history of providing service to the UCSB and Isla Vista communities, as well as to the larger surrounding communities. This service is a fundamental part of the Campus Ministry's mission which, in ecclesiastic terms, is its ministry. The universal Christian Church, of which the Episcopal Church of the United States is a part, is called to minister the good news of God's love for humanity and creation to all people.

This ministry takes on varied forms, which are realized in their full strength and beauty as individuals and groups put into practice the call to honor and respect all of God's creation, human and otherwise, through a multitude of outreach actions and programs, both large and small. Examples of current Campus Ministry outreach ministries are the new, vibrant Community Garden, the Guitar Works program, and the ongoing weekly Bilingual Community Yoga & Meditation.

An important part of St. Mike's operating structure is the Standing Committee on Campus Ministry (SCCM), a subcommittee of the Bishop's Advisory Committee. This standing committee was established to assist the chaplain and staff in the areas of fundraising and grant writing, outreach program design, informing local parishes and community members of St. Mike's activities and needs through biannual appeal and newsletter publications, and raising and maintaining the church's profile in the community. This core committee, comprised of members from local Episcopal parishes who agree to serve for two years, meets once a month at the Little House at St. Mike's.

Even after serving on this standing committee for two years, I'm still amazed by the creativity and effectiveness of this group, comprised of individuals of different ages, interests and abilities. The common thread is the vision of St. Michael's ministry and mission, and the service provided by SCCM to realize this vision.

*Robert Brown participates on the SCCM as a representative from  
All Saints By The Sea, Montecito.*



Above: A young Guitar Works student.

## GUITAR WORKS PROGRAM @ ST. MIKE'S

The Guitar Works at St. Mike's recently celebrated its one-year anniversary! Funded by seed grants from Trinity, Santa Barbara and the Bishop Stevens Foundation, this program enables 12 students between the age range from 12-18 to study guitar in a group setting. Students are provided with guitars, gig bags, instructional books and instruction from members of the UCSB Mariachi Ensemble.

With an even split of males and female students being served, the majority of the students hail from two of the local high schools, Dos Pueblos and San Marcos, with a couple of the younger students attending local junior high schools. It has been wonderful experience to have the older students foster a great deal of support and developing their mentoring skills with the younger students, thus developing a sense of community at the practice site and home of Guitar Works, St. Michael's Church in Isla Vista.

The goal of the Guitar Works program, in addition to providing a safe, nurturing, and teaching environment, is to offer the local community performances with an emphasis on justice and youth outreach through music.

The students from Guitar Works have performed at St. Mike's a couple of times including annual Service of Lessons and Carols, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara for their Justice Sunday event, and a recent Mother's Day recital at St. Mike's, followed by a BBQ reception full of good food and fellowship, in which both students and their mothers were recognized for their support of the program.

Guitar Works is currently seeking funding for the 2010-2011 calendar including instruction throughout the summer, which is a critical time for some youth. The program plans to apply for grants from the Santa Barbara Foundation and the Santa Barbara Arts Commission. The program eventually plans to expand the program to include other musical instruction of violin (fiddle) and voice (bi-lingual).

If you have any suggestions, comments, and/or letters of support that we can include in our grant applications that would be greatly appreciated. I may be reached at 805 455 3661 or by email at jaznmuz@sbceo.org. Thanks for your support!

*Juan Zaragoza, a Santa Barbara native and Director of UCSB Mariachi Integral, teaches the Guitar Works students along with Daisy Leon, a UCSB junior majoring in sociology.*

## A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON DIOCESAN CONVENTION

This year I had the privilege -- and more accurately the duty -- of being a delegate for St. Mike's at the annual Diocesan Convention of the Los Angeles Diocese. (Unlike last year at Convention wasn't able to hang out all day behind the campus ministry table in the exhibit hall and socialize with the other presenters, especially other young people in the church from the other campus ministries and the Episcopal Urban Intern Program in LA.) Electing the two new suffragan bishops for the LA diocese was very exciting and I am glad that I had the opportunity to participate. It took a long time, and there was certainly an exciting debate towards the end and I was honored to be a part of it and to witness the resolution of this political process in our Diocese.

A few highlights for me were the contemporary worship presented by St. Stephen's Church in Simi Valley, which reminded me of the evangelical hymns we used to sing in my family's church I grew up in. I often miss the energy of those services. It was also great to see the other ministries of the Episcopal church here in Southern California. I'm glad I was able to go, serve our congregation here, and have had this eye-opening experience.

*Jacob Sopher is a graduating senior majoring in geography. He heads to Oregon post-graduation.*



Above: UCSB students Jake Sopher, Jonathan Prefill and Dan Lowrey represented St. Michael's at this year's historic Diocesan Convention in Riverside.

## ST. MIKE'S IN THE NEWS: ISLA VISTA'S NEWEST COMMUNITY GARDEN

*Santa Barbara Independent -  
Monday, May 17, 2010*

It's always nice to hear a story about Isla Vista community members helping each other. In January, a group of volunteers got together and dug, nailed together boards, and set up an area of raised-bed gardens on the grounds of St. Michael & All Angels Church, St. Mike's for short.

The Reverend Nicole Janelle, who is the chaplain and vicar of St. Michael's, said, "It was a community effort." She said the Isla Vista Food Co-op and All Saints by the Sea Episcopal Church in Montecito provided money for the gardens.

If you swing by the church, located on the corner of Camino Pescadero and Picasso Road, you can find the beds near the parking lot. The plants are just starting to grow. It may not look like much right now, but if you use your imagination, you can see how things will go. At this time you'll see tomato plants with names like Better Boy, lettuce, kale, and Japanese cucumber. You'll even see a bed of flowers.

Janelle said that most of the 16 raised-bed gardens have been claimed for a term of use, but there are still two plots left that don't have gardeners. The gardeners include students and families. "It's a good cross section of folks," Janelle said.



Above: With the help of area church and community members, the Community Garden was built over three weekends in January.



Our garden grows!

### St. Michael's Community Garden

The transient nature of the I.V. community will ensure a higher turnover of gardeners than in most community gardens. Originally, the goal was to try to get a mix of English and Spanish speakers. While this hasn't happened yet, Janelle said, she is trying to spread the word throughout Isla Vista that the gardens are available. She also said that you don't have to be a churchgoer to garden at St. Michael's. Most of the gardeners are not regular churchgoers. She added, "We see this as a ministry, a community outreach."

It costs \$5 a month to rent a garden, and the money is used to offset water costs. Before beginning to plant their plots, gardeners sign a terms-of-use contract agreeing to keep their garden well maintained and promising not to use pesticides: The gardeners have to keep things organic. A garden committee composed of church members is in charge of managing the gardens to make sure that things run smoothly. In the future, Janelle envisions having pot lucks and other gatherings to get gardeners together. "We are just getting this rolling," Janelle said. "It's a good group of people," she said.

This is not the only community garden in I.V. There is also one in Estero Park, run by the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District. Those plots already have a waiting list. St. Michael's is involved in other community outreach programs as well. The church offers bilingual yoga, meditation,

and other classes. It even hosts an open mic night, where singers and songwriters can share their work.

There is also artwork displayed in front of the church. Artist Dawn Bailey created a labyrinth made out of recycled materials: plastic bottles joined by ropes that are also made from plastic. When you first gaze upon it, you might not spot the plastic bags, but then will come a moment when you finally get it. Labyrinths are a meditative device found near many churches. What makes this one special is its connection to the environment. While you are walking through the maze, thinking about life, you will be reminded by the rows of plastic bottles of our effect on the world.

Every time I hear a story about a community garden, or a youth project, or a plan to create a public open space, I feel good knowing that there are people out there trying to make a difference. What it also does is highlight the need for more people to take the initiative and start their own projects. One of the things that should be addressed in I.V. is the need for somewhere appealing for children to go and hang out after school. The Isla Vista Teen Center is a safe and pleasant place for students to go, but it doesn't have the bells and whistles of the Twelve35 Teen Center downtown, which has a computer center, and musical instruments. If you walk around I.V. in the evening, you might see children hanging around looking for something to do. I'm not sure what the solution is. Maybe it's a new and improved teen center. Maybe it's enticing after school programs. Maybe it's a skate park. Either way, this is one of those community projects that needs to be taken on.



Above: Campus Ministry grad student Kitty Currier constructs one of the garden's sixteen raised beds.



Top: ECM students Dan Lowrey and Hannah Anderson (left) share a moment with the mayor of San Francisco on the steps of Grace Cathedral following a service honoring Archbishop Romero. Bottom: Retreat participant Liz Powers (center) at Grace.

## PROVINCE VIII CAMPUS MINISTRY RETREAT IN SAN FRANCISCO

I spent all four summers of my high school career fund-raising for and participating in mission trips with a group of local Episcopal parishes. However, the Province VIII Retreat in San Francisco was the first time I had ever participated in any activity with the Episcopal Church on a broader level. There were participants all the way from Arizona and Hawaii! I felt so fortunate to have this retreat held in my own back yard. What's more, the retreat was scheduled to coincide with a celebration at the beautiful Grace Cathedral of the life of Archbishop Óscar Romero, who worked to improve the lives of the poor under the Salvadoran government, and was assassinated as a result. The service was especially powerful to me as a Spanish speaker, as portions were conducted in Spanish, the way they would have been by Romero himself, and the familiar words gained new meaning for me.

I made brief connections with several members of the large group of Prov. VIII young adults, but the weekend was such a brief time to get to know any of them that I understand why these are annual events, and part of me wishes they happened more often. On the other hand, the unique gathering summed up what I like best about the Episcopal church in its modern incarnation: that these connections with fellow young people who are struggling with the same doubts and questions I am can be made at all, and grow into dependable friendships. I plan to stay in touch (hooray for the web 2.0!) with several of those I met on this retreat, and hopefully I'll make it out again next year. *Liz Powers is a rising sophomore in the College of Creative Studies at UCSB.*

## ST. MIKE'S MEMBERS TO PUBLISH SONG BOOK

"Wait for the Lord," a new hymn first performed at St. Michael's University Episcopal Church in Isla Vista, is being published by Church Music Publications, based in New York City. The music for the hymn is composed by Karen Tanaka, music director for St. Michael's Church, and the lyrics are by Mark Juergensmeyer, a member of the choir.

The hymn is part of a series of new hymns created by Tanaka and Juergensmeyer for the song book, *St. Mike's Hymns from the Bible*. The idea behind the songbook is to have a series of hymns on biblical themes that are set to modern musical tastes.

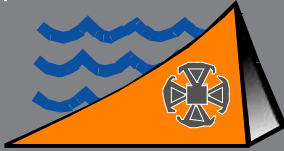
"Wait for the Lord" was written for two seasons in the Christian calendar, Advent and Lent. Advent is the period of waiting in anticipation of the birth of Christ at Christmas, and Lent is the forty-day period of reflection preceding the Easter season.

The hymn includes the line, "I wait in the forest for a ray of light, I wait in the desert for a bloom," a phrase that evokes the image of Christ's meditation in the desert. Another line, "I wait in the silence for a still small voice, I wait in the ocean for the calm," suggests the "still small voice" of salvation, and the act of Christ in calming the troubled seas.

Karen Tanaka is a versatile composer, pianist and organist. Her works have been performed by distinguished orchestras worldwide including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Berkeley Symphony Orchestra and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. Her works are often based on biblical themes such as *The Song of Songs*, *Guardian Angel* and *Urban Prayer*.

Mark Juergensmeyer, who has written the lyrics, is a professor of sociology and global studies and director of the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In addition to his research publications on religious nationalism and conflict, he has been the co-translator of a book of poems by medieval Indian saints, *Songs of the Saints of India*.

The hymn is currently available in the publisher's on-line catalogue. It is expected that it will eventually be published in print, and that other hymns by Tanaka and Juergensmeyer will be selected for publication as well.



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*Thank you to Leslie Lewis Sigler for designing this edition of The Messenger. Leslie is a parishioner at All Saints' Montecito. [www.leslie-lewis.com](http://www.leslie-lewis.com)*

Below: Campus Connection students from diocesan urban, first generation congregations gathered at St. Mike's this winter for a weekend immersion experience in university life.



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