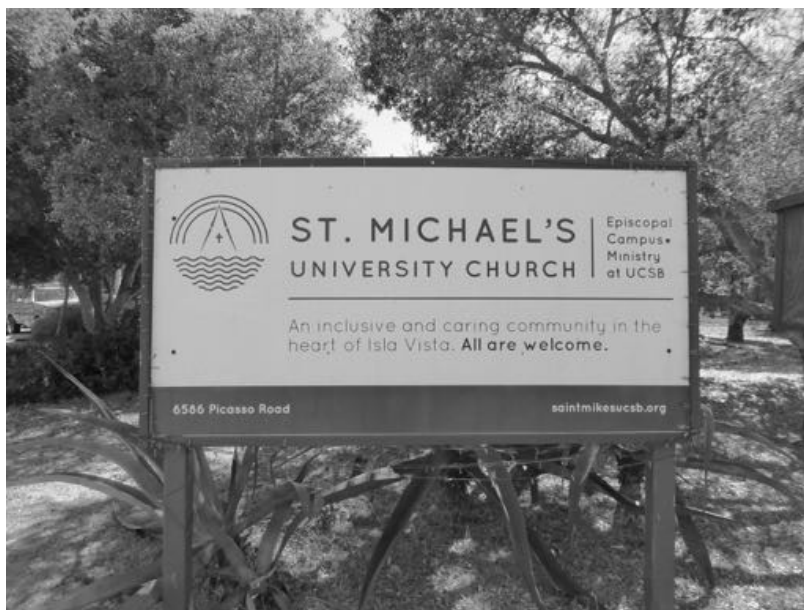


# St. Michael's University Church

## Episcopal Campus Ministry at UCSB

65 Years of Stories From the Little Church  
in  
Isla Vista, California



Diana Thomas

## **St. Michael's Episcopal Church List of Clergy**

1954-57	The Rev. James Hacke-	1 <sup>st</sup> Chaplain
1958-61	The Rev. Henry Coke—	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
1961-65	The Rev. John C. Keester—	3 <sup>rd</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
1965-76	The Rev. George F. Hartung—	4 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
1976-82	The Rev. Harlan Weitzel—	5 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
1981-82	The Rev. Dr. George Hall	Interim Priest
1983-1990	The Rev. Gary Commins—	6 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
1990	The Rev. Rob Voyle	Interim Priest
1991-1999	The Rev. Mark Gardner—	7 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
2000—2006	The Rev. Norm Freeman—	8 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
2006-2015	The Rev. Nichole Janelle—	9 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain
2015-	The Rev. Scott Claassen—	10 <sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain

## **St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Isla Vista, also known as:**

University Chapel of Trinity Episcopal Church (1949 property dedication)

St. Michael and All Angels (1954)

St Michael's University Episcopal Church

Episcopal Campus Ministries—St. Michael's Episcopal Church

St. Michael's University Church -- Episcopal Campus Ministry at UCSB

St. Mike's

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## Acknowledgements

This book began as a simple question to my pastor, The Rev. Scott Claassen: "Has anyone updated the church history since Mark Gardner wrote the history for the first 40 years?" And with his answer, my life for the next 2 years involved research, formal interviews, and informal conversations (after church, and in the garden, and over tea, and over coffee and cake, and in my dreams.) Emails flew around the country to past and present congregants who graciously roamed the depths of their memories to provide me with stories and photos. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank all the people who helped this book see the light of day. I could not have done it without you.

The Rev. Mark Gardner (who wrote the original history up through the 1990s), The Rev. Norm Freeman (who has a wonderful website with a tab for the St. Michael's years), The Rev. Nicole Janelle (who let me take up huge amounts of her precious time to meet with me, talk on the phone, text, proof-read her section, and continually encouraged me throughout the process), The Rev. Scott Claassen (who had more faith in my abilities to do this project than I have for myself, and whose example of living life in God's abundance is infectious): You are my heroes. Thank you for being beacons of light in the world.

There are a few people who not only proof-read the narrative covering 2000-2019 for me, but also helped me clarify my meaning, my tone, my presentation, and a whole host of other important aspects of this book. Thank you from the depths of my heart to Rosemary Thomas, Jim and MK Micallef, Scott Claassen, and my husband Bill Thomas. Additional thanks to Lillian Palermo and Beth Schmid, who proof-read the original book by Mark Gardner (covering church history for the first 40 years) after I converted it to a Word doc. None of my proof-readers are to blame if errors are found in any part of this book. Those errors are mine and mine alone. No one gets credit for errors other than me. So let me say in advance, "mea culpa".

And to all the contributors, there would be no book without your generous contributions (in alphabetical order): Madeline Blickley, David Boyd, Doug Clegg, The Rev. Gary Commins, Frances Hahn, Sally Hall, Ann Jaqua, Casey Jones, Mark Juergensmeyer, John W.I. Lee, Yuzheung Lin, Kim Mawson and Bob McDonald, Kathleen (Kathie) Moore, Norm and Linda Nelson, Lillian Palermo, Elizabeth (Beth) Schmid, Roberto Strongman, The Rev. Toni Stuart, Norma Stuck, Sarah Thomas, Stephanie Waeteraere. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

I am terrified that I have left names off the list. And with that in mind, let me say that if your name should be on this page but is not, it is not because you are not worthy of mention. It is because this project has overwhelmed me and taxed my organizational skills to the max. That is no excuse, but it is the truth. If you do notice that you went unnoticed, please tell me. You shall be rewarded.



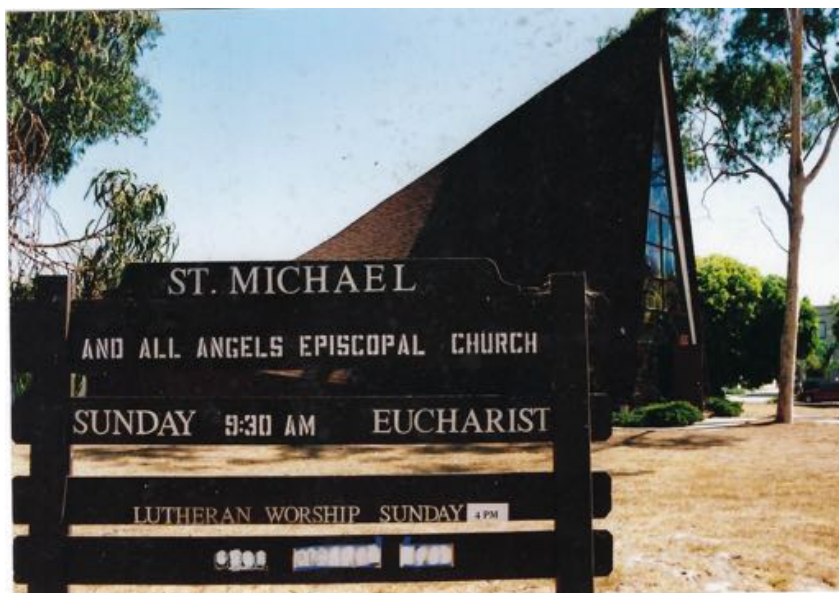


**The Rev. Norm Freeman  
2000-2006**



**The Reverend  
Anne Adams-Harris,  
Deacon**

**The Reverend  
Norman Freeman  
Vicar, St. Michael's  
Episcopal Church  
and  
Chaplain  
UCSB Campus**





Province 8: Raising The Tent Experience



Hands in Healing 2003



Pictured left are Syd Walker of All Saints-by-the-Sea and Michael Behrens of St. Michael's Isla Vista as they prepare the beverage coolers for a student gathering. Center and right you see Dave Boyd and Alyce Boyd of All Saints-by-the-Sea serving box lunches to student visitors from Arizona, California and Oregon.



Mark Juergensmeyer  
and Libuska Smart

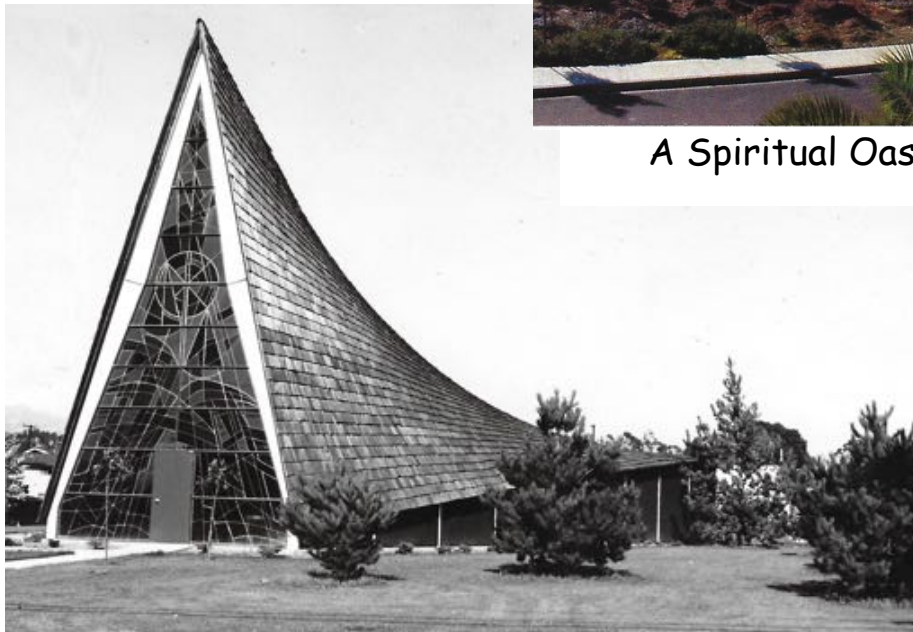


Students enjoying dinner and Bible Study at the  
Freemans' home

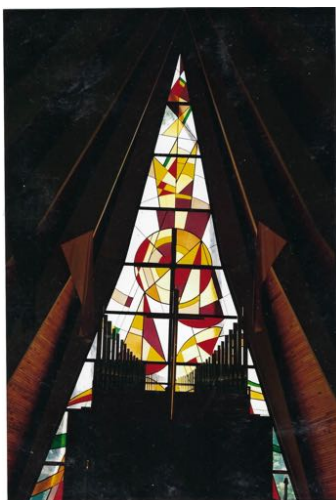




A Spiritual Oasis



The New Chapel



The Isaiah Bell

## Mission Light Shines Bright at St. Michael's...



**Members of the Student Leadership Committee, along with Michael Behrens, Jeff Gerbec, Andrea Welden-Morden, meet with Rev. Freeman:**

## Baptisms



Kim Mawson, daughter Shyla, Fr. Freeman, Bob McDonald



Jeff Gerbec, Christine Thomas, Mike Munson, Tara Munson, Kira Munson, Chris Freeman, Norm Freeman, Lori Freeman



Preparing Meals for the Homeless



**The Rev. Nicole Janelle**  
**2006-2015 The 9<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain**



Ash Wednesday



Good Friday in Isla Vista



Bilingual Yoga and Compline in the Chapel



Progressive Christian Students  
@UCSB



Field Trip to The Abundant Table Farm  
Project in Santa Paula



House  
Church/Spirituality  
Group



Mariachi Integral de UCSB



Open Mike's Night



IV Community Music Program





Cafe Picasso garden workshop with Master Gardeners



Choir Practice for Lessons and Carols



One of the Tributes after  
the mass shooting in Isla  
Vista in 2014



Labyrinth made of recycled materials



Nicole and Family in  
Peace Labyrinth



Painted Peace Rocks placed in Labyrinth





# The Rev. Scott Claassen 2015-Current (2019)--The 10<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain



Scott and Wife Maribeth



The Claassen Family



Casey Jones, Parish Administrator  
and Verger, Campus Missioner



Community Garden at St. Mike's



Edible Campus Program



Lucy and Ethel



## St. Mike's Band







Baptisms



Singing Happy Birthday to Bill Thomas



Children in the service



The Sycamore Cross



2016 Intern Seminarian,  
Sarah Thomas



Casey serving Heart-Shaped Pancakes



Cafe Picasso



Norm Nelson at the grill



Bill and Diana Thomas feeding  
students at Province VIII



UCSB Intervals 2019





## Surfing and Spirituality





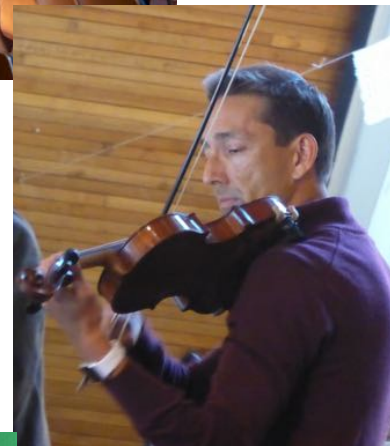
The Peace Labyrinth



Amazing



Grace



No importa de dónde eres,  
estamos contentos que seas  
nuestro vecino.

No matter where you are  
from, we're glad you're  
our neighbor.

لا يهم أين ولدتم، و لكننا  
سعداء انكم جيراننا.

## **A Summary of The History of St. Michael's prior to 2000\***

St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church was founded as a Mission in 1949 as an outreach of Trinity Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara. The Mission was funded in response to the opening of the University of California's Santa Barbara campus, with its attendant need for an Episcopal presence. In 1954, The Rev. James Hacke was called as the 1<sup>st</sup> Chaplain of St. Michael and All Angels. He served from 1954-57. In its early years, as the only Episcopal Church in the area, St. Michael's grew and developed as a traditional parish, with its mission to students as an adjunct ministry. The church sanctuary was completed in 1962, and its old meeting building became home to a nursery school. In the 1960s, membership peaked at about 200 persons.

The upheaval of the late sixties and early seventies took a toll on St. Michael's. A new Episcopal church, Christ the King, was established nearby, and it became the destination for those seeking a more traditional parish environment. By 1982, parish activity at St. Michael's had diminished to a point where then Bishop Robert Rusack appointed a vicar to concentrate on campus ministry, relying primarily on diocesan financial support. A small, faithful group of ongoing parishioners also continued attending throughout this time. St. Michael's also began Transition House, a ministry to the homeless. Eventually, the Transition House ministry found other quarters, and St. Michael's was again left with a dilemma: should its focus be campus ministry, or an effort to grow a more traditional parish? It was clear that the traditional model of a mission, growing over time with stepped-down diocesan financial support as it grows, simply wasn't working at St. Michael's. It was also becoming clear that the Isla Vista community presents special needs and challenges beyond those of a traditional campus ministry.

In 1991 the new vicar, The Rev. Mark Gardner, tried to minister to both groups. Funding was difficult, as the more traditional aspects of parish life were not growing, and the diocesan support had diminished. Trying to develop the two ministries jointly under the circumstances of reduced resources was very stressful. St. Michael's property was essentially an entire city block, 2 acres, far more than it needed. A plan was undertaken whereby a portion of the property would be sold to Hillel, the campus Jewish ministry, for their worship center. The funds generated from the sale would



provide a long-term endowment for St. Michael's. As part of the sale, St. Michael's would also receive improvements: new parking lots and landscaping that would hopefully make the property more accessible and attractive. The diocese approved the sale.

Following the resignation of The Rev. Mark Gardner in 1999, Bishop Frederick Borsch was motivated to try to re-imagine the role of a Mission like St. Michael's. He convened a search committee consisting not only of members of the St. Michael's Bishop's Committee, but also clergy and representatives from Trinity Episcopal Church, and diocesan representative The Rev. Thad Bennett. The search group found The Rev. Norm Freeman, who took up his call to St. Michael's on March 1, 2000. When he began his leadership at St. Michael's, it was decided to expand the search group to include representatives from other Episcopal churches in the area along with St. Michael's to form a discernment team that would directly address the long-term goals for St. Michael's. The team included Trinity (Santa Barbara), All-Saints-By-The-Sea (Montecito), and St. Mark's (Los Olivos). Clergy members included The Rev. Norm Freeman, The Rev. Mark Asman, and The Rev. Thad Bennett. The purpose of the group was to discern the mission and ministry of St. Michael's.

Ann Jaqua, former part-time parishioner and friend of St. Michael's, recalls that after Mark Gardner left, the local Episcopal Churches met to try to get St. Michael's into a healthy status. Mark was exhausted because it had been a difficult ministry right from the start for him. The congregation was small, and would continue to be an ongoing issue at St. Michael's. Another ongoing issue was whether the focus for mission and ministry should be on students (campus), the immediate community (Isla Vista), or the larger community (Goleta).

And it is with this background that we begin the ministry of The Rev. Norm Freeman from 2000-2006.

**\*To read the full written history of St. Michael's from 1949 -1999, see Appendix.**



## **The Rev. Norm Freeman** **2000–2006--8<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain**

### **Music and Radical Hospitality...**

**Arrival of Norm:** When Norm Freeman arrived, the congregation was small. Part-time parishioner and friend of St. Michael's from All Saints-by-the-Sea (in Montecito), David Boyd, recalls that Norm Freeman and St. Michael's had a great first year together, even with a small congregation. The core parish community was stabilized and its needs met. Energetic outreach to the University community was undertaken, creative programs such as Jazz Vespers and Saturday evening contemporary liturgies were successful.

**Music:** One of the many things that Norm brought to St. Michael's was his extraordinary gift of music. Norm Freeman is a world-class vibraphonist and his "musical sermons were a real treat," recalls Mark Juergensmeyer, a St. Michael's parishioner at that time. The quality of the music he shared at St. Michael's began with a musical background that would serve him well. The Rev. Norm Freeman, Jr. earned a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Music from the Juilliard School; he began a Jazz Vespers while curate at St. Paul's in Riverside, Connecticut, which led to New York Times press coverage of "*Where Music and the Ministry Merge*". Norm Freeman continued his career blending the special language of jazz with liturgy. His musical career includes performances with the New York Philharmonic, Barbra Streisand, Jessye Norman and Kathleen Battle, and the New York Pops, as well as numerous Broadway shows. He served for eleven years as Percussion Dept. chair at Mannes College of Music, and performed on four Grammy nominated projects. It is with this background that The Rev. Freeman stepped into St. Michael's to serve as the 8<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain. He used music as the way to communicate with students and the community of St. Michael's and beyond.

As a way to attract more congregants to St. Michael's, Norm began evening **Jazz Vespers**. The new addition did attract more people, but mostly elders, not students, and mostly from the wider community, not Isla Vista. Norma Stuck, Administrative Assistant at St. Michael's, recalls, "Jazz Vespers was one of Norm's gifts to the area. He would bring a top artist to play along with him at these holy times. The Jazz music was wonderful and gave a new way to worship. Norm was about beauty, esthetics and the joy of music in a

jazz tradition." Madeline Blickley and Sally Hall (continuing congregants at St. Michael's) communicated to me that during Sunday worship, Norm would select songs to play that related to the sermon, and that his exquisite musical style was both meaningful and meditative.

The music became known throughout the community. The story of Bob McDonald and Kim Mawson is a good example: "We first started attending St Mike's about twenty years ago while searching for a comfortable environment in which to expose our daughter, Shyla, to God and Western religious concepts. We sampled different churches, and like Goldilocks found some too big and impersonal, some too constraining and dogmatic or simply not to our liking. One day Shyla's piano teacher, Claire, told us she played at St Michaels in Isla Vista and the vicar, Norm Freeman, was an excellent musician who sought to incorporate contemporary music in the services. As both of us had a history of living in Isla Vista and came from Catholic and Episcopalian backgrounds, we decided to give it a try. As we sat listening to Norm play a meditative piece on vibes at the start of services and gazed at the large stained-glass window, we felt a sense of peace and belonging. The welcoming congregation reinforced that feeling. We baptized Shyla there and attended until she grew older. Norm was a tough act to follow however, and when he left, we drifted away."

The Rev. Toni Stuart told me how and when she first met Norm: "I first met Norm Freeman when I was the rector of St. Matthews in Sacramento. The Rev. Connor Lynn had had Norm play a Jazz Mass at a church in Los Angeles and liked him very much. The City of Sacramento had sponsored a jazz weekend on Memorial Day weekend for many years, and many churches took advantage of that opportunity to have Jazz Masses on Sunday. St. Matthews had never had one, so I invited Norm to come up and do the first ever Jazz Mass at St. Matthews. He brought three young college students so we had a quartet and it was marvelous! Everyone loved it, so I invited him to come back for the next two years. He co-celebrated with me and did a 'quiet day' on the similarities between jazz and prayer! Wow! It was a Holy time indeed, very impactful. So when I retired and moved to Carpinteria, I took myself up to St. Mike's where Norm was the Vicar. He was a lovely priest and often played his vibraphone instead of a spoken sermon."

**Community Upheaval in 2001:** After only a year of being at St. Michael's, Norm found the little community of Isla Vista in emotional crisis. According to the local news (and since then on Wikipedia), "On the evening of February 23, 2001, just after 11:00 p.m., UCSB student David Attias, the 18-year-old son of television director Dan Attias, drove his father's 1991 Saab 9000 down the 6500 block of Sabado Tarde Road in Isla Vista at a speed of 50 to 65 miles per hour. Four pedestrians were killed and one was critically injured. According to a police statement, 'All five victims were thrown forward, some being knocked out of their shoes and socks.' According to witnesses, Attias got out and yelled 'I am the Angel of Death!' He continued to taunt a growing crowd, until he was subdued by the first CHP officer to arrive on the scene. In the initial aftermath, it was unclear if Attias was affected by taking drugs, or if the attack was intentional." As remembered by Mark Juergensmeyer: "On the night that Attias drove his car through Isla Vista killing several people there was an instantaneous crowd of thousands who came for mourning and a candle-light procession next to where the students were killed. That night, before a thousand candle lights, on a flat-bed truck with battery-powered amplification, The Rev. Norm Freeman played the tune 'Somewhere' from Bernstein's West Side Story in a beautiful and sad rendition that perfectly captured the mood of the moment. It was hauntingly beautiful on the vibraphone, especially in that setting. It was an example of Norm's ability to connect--especially musically--to the needs of the times. "

**New Mission and Ministry Focus:** Ann Jaqua remembers that the Diocese told Norm (and St. Michael's) to stop trying to achieve Parish Status...and simply to remain a Mission. Money was ALWAYS an issue. The goal for Norm was to be 75% students, and 25% mix of adults, families, and community. After long and thoughtful consideration, the Bishop's Discernment Committee (see "Summary of the History of St. Michael's Prior to 2000") formally decided that the primary focus of St. Michael's was to be a campus ministry. However, according to the BISHOP'S DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE REPORT OF 2002, "there should also be an effort to meet the needs of those seeking a stable, if non-traditional, parish environment. The Mission will also address itself to the social needs of the diverse, densely populated and economically stressed Isla Vista community." St. Michael's was to do this by drawing not only on its own resources of membership and personnel, but also upon those of the large, more traditional parishes surrounding it in Santa

Barbara County: All Saints-by-the-Sea in Montecito, Trinity in Santa Barbara, Christ The King in Goleta, and St. Mark's in Los Olivos. To that end, the report continued, "The traditional parishes may agree to participate, on an ongoing basis, at St. Michael's by assigning representatives to St. Michael's who will be part of an ongoing liaison committee that will meet regularly to develop group projects between St. Michael's and the other local parishes."

**Community Outreach 2000-2005:** There was an increase in the homeless population in Isla Vista during these years. The University and the Isla Vista community were just beginning to address this issue as well as the issues of substance use/abuse in the area. One way that The Rev. Freeman addressed these concerns and connected with students and the Isla Vista Community was through **Sober Block Party**: "These events attracted a wide variety of student and community residents for a time of food, music, fun and fellowship" (from DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE REPORT IN 2002). The Rev. Freeman recalls a letter from one neighbor who wrote: "For over two years I was struggling with alcohol. I knew of St. Mike's, I met Fr. Norm, I explained my problems, I began to go regularly to Thursday night AA meetings and later to Saturday night young people meetings. If it weren't for the meetings at St. Mike's, I don't know if I would have gotten sober. Having these meetings meant so much to me, and because of that I thank you for giving us the opportunity to use the church facilities..."

Norm's desire was not only to build community via the university, students, and residents of Isla Vista and beyond, but also to create a connection between Isla Vista's various places of worship. Quoting from Vicar Norm Freeman in 2003 regarding the use of facilities for student outreach: "There is a small strip of land in Isla Vista bounded by St. Mark's Newman Center and the University Religious Center. Sharing a large outdoor clock in the middle of the property is Hillel Jewish Center and St. Michael's where St. Mike's provides space for Sunday worship of the Lutheran Campus Ministry and the Episcopal Campus Ministry. The support we offer each other is essential. We join our sisters and brothers in community-based organization to embody and empower the hopes and dreams of most who call this home."

**Partnership with The University Religious Center** (across the street from St. Mike's): this was a frequent meeting site for guests electing to meet somewhere other than a sanctuary. And St. Michael's opened its sanctuary to reciprocate when the need arose. The mood among the religious community in Isla Vista and the University was one of respect and cooperation.

**Landscaping Changes: a plan for A Center of Peace and Meditation.**

Norma Stuck, who was an Administrative Assistant at St. Michael's said that Norm had to reorganize the office, update parochial reports with the diocese and create a plan for St. Mike's to become a center of peace and meditation, which was one of his goals.

When Norm arrived, the A-frame sanctuary of St. Michael's Mission was surrounded by weeds and dirt. All Saints By-The-Sea in Montecito paid for the services of award-winning landscape architects, Doug and Regula Campbell, to create a new landscape plan for St. Michael's. "They created a place of beauty," recalls Ann Jaqua. Additional money was raised for the project by selling part of the block owned by St. Michael's to Hillel. Wanting to plant oak trees, but finding that the cost of purchasing oak trees for planting was more than they wanted to pay, Ann Jaqua had her gardener bring oak tree seedlings in paper cups to the St. Michael's property. St. Michael's congregants, with the financial help of the other local Episcopal churches, planted these seedlings on the grounds of St. Michael's. Unbeknownst at the time, once oak trees are planted, they cannot be moved, pruned or taken out without special permits and specialized arborists. This would end up causing future problems many years later, as landscaping at St. Michael's evolved.

After the new landscape was put in, as reported in BUILDING FOR MISSION 2003, "It is an oasis, a holy garden that is filled with activity." Santa Barbara County acknowledged the success of the landscaping by returning the \$20,000 bond against landscape failure. With great joy, The Rev. Freeman returned that amount to the Mission Endowment Fund.

**The Little House building project:** Norma Stuck (Administrative Assistant) remembers, "The next big project was to turn The Little House into a more comfortable place for students and members. The original house setup had a

door from the bathroom into Norm's office. The living room and one bedroom were divided by a wall, making it difficult to have group activities. Lastly the bathroom had to be brought up to handicap access code. The diocese designated a \$25,000 grant for the bathroom upgrade." Under David Boyd's leadership, All Saints-by-the-Sea donated the funds to remove the wall between the living room and bedroom and to create a community room. Members of All Saints did the finishing work on the bathroom, resurfaced the wood floor, painted the walls, and purchased the furniture. Adds Norma, "The loving care that the people from All Saints provided gave new life to the area in such a holy way. It was a major face lift." David Boyd said that he worked closely with Norm on the renovation of the Little House and that "this was a major undertaking which Norm initiated, obtained the funding for, and pursued to a successful conclusion. Norm had the vision to recognize the importance of this upgrade to the Little House in accomplishing the St. Michael's mission."

As The Rev. Norm Freeman continued working to enhance the mission and ministry of St. Michael's, many other projects and renovations were addressed and accomplished:

- **New Chairs:** Norm got rid of pews and put in chairs. Norma Stuck recalls that an Episcopal church in Bakersfield was closing, and the diocese called Norm to ask if he would like the chairs for St. Michael's. Everyone was ecstatic to think they could get rid of the heavy long benches that could not be moved. The long wood benches limited the chapel's usefulness. Church members took the benches apart, put them in the dumpster and installed the new chairs with kneelers. This change added flexibility to worshiping in the chapel.
- **Carpet and Flooring:** A church member funded the carpet purchase and installation. The painting of the floor was part of that plan.
- **Lights and Electricity:** The electrical panel in the chapel had a detailed list of instructions on how to turn off the lights. There was an electrical box with no switch panel. Many times, the entire electricity was turned off using the breaker and causing problems. The building was used so often that it became the mission of the Administrative Assistant (Norma Stuck) to have switch panels installed when funds became available. Says

Norma, "To me that was one of the biggest improvements. The lights had always been a problem. The electricians rewired as many ceiling lights as possible. It simply was not feasible to upgrade the whole chapel lighting system at that time. One time, all electricity in the chapel ceased to work, but The Little House electricity was operational. It turned out that a new conduit had to be installed linking the chapel to the main unit in the house. That required digging up the old conduit and replacing it. The roots of the trees had invaded the conduit shorting it out. It was a relief to have everything repaired and updated."

- **Unwelcome guests:** Sometimes it is the unwelcomed guests that bring a range of emotions to a church administration and congregants. Again, from Norma Stuck: "I walked in one day to the glorious smell of **skunks** in the office. The lattice around the foundation of The Little House had breaches in many places allowing the native population of varmints access. After the skunks cleared out, all areas were repaired. But a second encounter of skunks happened when someone left the chapel doors open. When they were closed the skunk was locked inside all night. In the morning, I walked into the chapel to see shredded carpet all along the doors and windows. Finally locating the skunk behind tables, I quickly called the abatement people who informed me the best way to get the skunk out was to open one door, put water by the door, and install a blaring radio at the front of the chapel and wait for the varmint to exit. Glenn (my husband) and I sat on the deck in the early evening eating and waiting for the skunk to saunter out, which happened while the AA meeting was in session in the community room. Signs saying, 'Close the doors when you leave' were posted everywhere". **Termites:** Norm submitted a grant request to the Diocese for termite fumigation of the chapel and house. Again, Norma Stuck recalls: "We were expecting the usual chemical process. The Diocese upped the game and provided enough funds for an ecological fumigation method. It came with a 15-year guarantee. As we waited, we knew it was going to be a big job, but we never dreamed of how big. First, we had to wait until the company could locate a ladder tall enough. When that happened, they showed up on a sunny day and began the work in the chapel. Please note that the rafters had not been cleaned in years. Late in the day, the Senior Warden and I came to look at the work and all we could see was a big cloud of white dust in the chapel. The termites were taken care of but the floating debris was

yet to settle. Once it did settle, there were several church workdays of washing all the walls, vacuuming the carpet, cleaning all the chairs and all other surfaces. No one expected termite fumigation would be so exciting."

**2003-2004--Students, University, and furthering "the mission" took shape in many forms:**

**Student Leadership Committee:** Members of a student leadership committee met with The Rev. Freeman to discuss how to further the mission at St. Michael's: "to embody Christ's presence through service to the students, faculty, staff, and surrounding community; and to express the love of God in Christ, through worship, education and fellowship. "The student leadership committee included Michael Behrens, Jeff Gerbec and Andrea Walden-Morden.

**Hands in Healing:** Fourteen young adults from the L.A. Diocese traveled throughout the US offering a Christian alternative to violence and prejudice. They reunited at St. Michael's in 2003. The program was initiated by Bishop Jon Bruno to elevate awareness of the impact of violence upon communities.

**Hosting a gathering for Chaplains and students at St. Michael's:** Sixty students and chaplains attended the event in March. St. Mark's (Los Olivos) and a UCSB Sorority provided the housing. All Saints-by-the- Sea (Montecito), Trinity (Santa Barbara), St. Peter's (Santa Maria), St. Mary's (Lompoc), and St. Michael's provided Food and beverages. The event was a tremendous success, and would cement ongoing relationships.

**The Sanctuary as a Tent, Raising an Age-Old Concept...** was the theme of the Province 8 gathering where the St. Michael's Chapel was transformed into a Bedouin-like tent. Province 8 gatherings brought together students and clergy from Episcopal churches from the Western States for a time to share what is going on in each church community, and to explore new and exciting ideas for church ministry.

**"HANDS and HEARTS" to St. Michaels:** While The Rev. Martha Siegel served as assisting priest at St. Michael's, local churches lent their hands for a variety of projects and events. Included among these "saints" are Syd



Walker (All Saints), Michael Behrens (St. Michael's), David and Alice Boyd (All Saints), Mark Juergensmeyer (Director of UCSB Global and International Studies and Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies---and choir member at St. Mike's), and Libruska Smart (who with her husband Professor Ninian Smart, founded the UCSB Religious Studies Department and pioneered the integration of religious study within state universities.)

**Isla Vista Sunday Lunch Program:** Students from the Bishop's Advisory Committee (BAC) started this program to provide meals to homeless and needy members of the community. The program was entirely student organized and provided sack lunches to the homeless members of the community on Sundays on the grounds of St. Michael's.

**Weekly Bible Study:** Student members of St. Mike's organized a weekly student Bible study with the help of Father Norm. This gathering of students provided a unique opportunity for fellowship and insightful conversation every Tuesday night at the Freemans' home.

**Mission and Ministry and Money:** Finances continued to be an issue between St. Michael's and the Diocese. Correspondence revolved around clarifying the mission of St. Mike's and how St. Mike's was to be funded. In reading some of the letters, I could almost feel the frustration on both sides, while each side was trying to come to a place of mutual understanding.

- **2003:** In the publication BUILDING FOR MISSION, Norm Freeman clarifies for the Diocese who we are at St. Michael's: "We are an inclusive community, celebrating the dignity of all people, as we work together to promote Christian peace and justice."
- **2004:** In a letter to The Rev. Freeman in October of 2004 The Right Rev. Chester L. Talton, Bishop Suffragan, stated, "The sole focus for St. Michael's will now be on Campus Ministry." It was hoped that this change of directed focus would facilitate the involvement of other local parishes in the ministry of St. Michael's to the campus, and that St. Michael's ministry, and thus the social needs of its community, will be enhanced. Says the Bishop Suffragan, "The addition of the "End of Year Barbeque" for students at the vicarage, the "Back to School" Yard Sale for students,

and the renovation project of the church office space are positive steps towards the new focus."

- **2005:** In a letter of appeal for financial support written Dec. 1, 2005 to the diocese, The Rev. Freeman wrote, "We engage the community through radical hospitality, accessible buildings, beautiful grounds, interfaith dialogues and worship, by hosting three weekly 12-step meetings, and the Community Block Party, which is now a symbol of rebirth of this neighborhood. A Certificate of Appreciation from UCSB (to St. Michael's) for the 'continuous improvement and enhancement of the quality of life at this university' affirms our efforts." Additionally, he stated "that without added money coming in, there would be a \$22,000 shortfall for 2006. "Given the fixed costs of the facilities and grounds, the shortfall would force us to limit some programs and make other painful cuts to the budget."

**Charting a New Course:** Around the same time that The Rev. Freeman was dealing with continued money issues with the Diocese, overseeing church ministries and outreach, and making appeals to the congregation, he had an offer to serve a church in Orange County, and it felt like a better fit for him. As The Rev. Toni Stuart said "Too soon Norm answered another call and St. Mike's was without a priest."

The congregation was still small, but while Norm Freeman was the 8<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain, he brought many wonderful and positive changes to St. Michael's and to the Isla Vista community. Additionally, he created lasting memories (especially of music) by people both in the congregation and the community.

#### **Looking Back--2000-2006:**

- The Rev. Norm Freeman was all about creating beauty, making connections, and bringing life to liturgy through music.
- Under Norm's watch both young families and students were attracted to the church not only by the rich, unique, and exquisite music, but also by the beautiful grounds and chapel; by 12-step meetings held at the church; by the end of year barbeque; by back-to-school yard

sales; and by the outgoing, friendly, and engaging personality of Norm Freeman.

- The students and community (both families and students) had many small group dinners together on the church grounds, as well as gathering at block parties.
- Several congregants said that when students left, they would communicate with St. Michael's saying they had found another worship home. It was rewarding to hear how they were progressing in life and in their faith. St. Michael's was continuing the "tent" experience.
- With the renewed grounds, the upgraded house and parking lots, St. Michael's became a very inviting place to worship, have meetings, or to find peace and a place to meditate.
- Norm brought a serene order and made it a "go to place" in Isla Vista, especially at Christmas. Recalls Ann Jaqua, "The chapel was so beautifully and fully decorated that it looked like Beverly Hills."
- A partnership with the Isla Vista Lutheran community took shape in an agreement stating that the Lutherans could use the chapel on Sunday evenings. The agreement would further the bond of inter-church activities in Isla Vista.
- Leaders of Hillel, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Campus Ministry and Norm at St. Michael's were a group the college could contact for support. They worked together on programs and shared information. It was a special time of renewed spirit.

For a review in video of the Norm Freeman years, go to [www.jazzministry.org](http://www.jazzministry.org) for a 4-minute presentation under the BIO tab on "the Santa Barbara Years."

As The Rev. Norm Freeman left for another "call", the 9<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain was set to arrive. She would bring her own talents and ideas to further the mission and ministry of St. Michael's...

## **The Rev. Nicole Janelle**

### **2006-2015 The 9<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain**

#### **Campus Ministry with new neighborhood demographics...**

The Rev. Nicole Janelle arrived at St. Michael's on Dec. 17, 2006. In a letter from Nicole to the congregation prior to her arrival, she wrote "... For the past two and a half years, I have served Saint Mary's Episcopal Church in urban Los Angeles where much of my work has been dedicated to developing and nurturing a neighborhood-based Spanish language ministry. I am especially interested in the areas of young adult ministry, ministry to the un/dis-churched, peace and justice, multicultural ministry and congregational development. I am interested in exploring the intersection of faith, politics and daily life. "

When Nicole arrived at St. Mike's, there were two women who shared the musician role on Sundays; they each played a service every other Sunday. Hee-Kyung Juhn, a classically trained pianist who was connected to the UCSB music faculty alternated Sunday services with Karen Tanaka. Karen is a world-class composer. When Hee-Kyung Juhn resigned her position at St. Mike's, Karen continued to provide music accompaniment for all Sunday morning services. Congregant Mark Juergensmeyer recalls: "Nicole, who followed Norm, was not a musician in the same way as Norm, but she appreciated the music of Karen Tanaka, who was our organist/pianist/choir director. We had a functioning choir at the time, usually not more than 6-8 of us, of which I was a part, but we were spirited. I provided the lyrics for a series of hymns that Karen composed--the text was on biblical themes and the music was modern but sing-able. We created about a dozen of these, and I think our hymnbooks are still somewhere in St Mike's office. We also recorded a CD of the hymns, 'All Things New' (which was also the name of the Easter hymn in the collection) sung by the choir at Westmont College."

**Inter-Church support:** So, while music continued to play an important role at St. Michael's, the need to reach out to the changing demographics in Isla Vista, the wider community, and the university, necessitated reaching out to the community in new ways, including to the Spanish speaking families in the community. In order to assist Nicole develop a plan that would best utilize her gifts towards furthering the mission and ministry of St. Michael's, the

Diocese wanted the local churches to get involved. As told to me by David Boyd (from All Saints), "The Standing Committee on Campus Ministry (SCCM), established in 2007, had members from St. Mike's, Trinity, All Saints, and Christ the King and was important during Nicole Janelle's tenure for communicating among the area Episcopal churches on a working level and organizing to help St. Mike's in various ways. Christ the King withdrew from the SCCM in mid-2010 due to differences of opinion about how the St. Mike's chapel should be used for worship and campus ministry programs." The goals of the committee were to help St. Mike's develop a regional model of campus and social justice ministry; to invite area parish participation in St. Mike's campus and social justice ministries; and to facilitate a fundraising strategy to provide stability to St. Mike's Campus Ministry.

The first order of business was to agree on the definition of the "campus ministry" to which Nicole had been called. In 2007, St. Michael's publication THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER, quoted Nicole on her definition of Campus Ministry: "We engage young adults at a critical time in their development---they are often in the midst of making life-changing decisions. It's a sacred journey of growth and discernment. Campus ministry is a place where the leaders of the church and the world are formed, encouraged to take risks and supported." And from there began Nicole's journey to achieve the goals set down by the first Standing Committee of St. Michael's. The members of the first Standing Committee on Campus Ministry were Robert Brown (All-Saints-By-The-Sea), Jan Dependahl (All-Saints-By-The-Sea), Jennifer Parsons (Christ The King), Colleen Sterne (Trinity), Terry Roof (Trinity), Marina White (UCSB student and attended St. Mike's), Bill Macfadyen (All-Saints-By-The-Sea), Virginia Gardner (St. Mike's), David Boyd (All-Saints-By-The-Sea), and John Kennedy (Christ The King).

**Money Issues:** During Nicole's tenure at St. Michael's, Ann Jaqua (from Trinity) was asked to be on the Stewardship Committee. The relationship between the Diocese and St. Mike's regarding finances were always a problem. Ann said, "Part of the problem was that there seemed to be no clear model for the church. Who IS St. Michael's? If it was a church for students, it was unclear how to make the liturgy and services viable and inviting to the student population."

**Connection to Students:** Ann Jaqua continues: "Nicole's arrival brought so many new changes. It was her desire to continue the goal of Norm Freeman to have 75% students in the congregation. She was truly connected to students in a different way and saw the campus ministry in a different light from the previous Vicar- Chaplain, Norm Freeman. Being younger and more connected to the college scene, she moved immediately into implementing new ways of meeting the students and the congregation. "

With repairs and renovations to the grounds and house completed, it would be Nicole's job to address the problems in the chapel. She was able to add a new dimension to the Isla Vista ministry in general. Norma Stuck remembered that "The University Religious Center (URC) had seen its time, and now changes needed to be made. Nicole was a definite catalyst that finally resulted in the sale of the URC building with all the partner organizations receiving funds." The church benefited from these funds. A large portion was used to replace the chapel roof in 2014.

**Creating a Sense of Community:** Both Norma Stuck and Ann Jaqua told me that while Nicole was Vicar-Chaplain, many new changes at St. Mike's brought the community together. Nicole made changes: working and networking on the UCSB campus supporting the LBGTQ community and thus visibly making St Mike's an inclusive home; engaging with neighborhood Spanish speaking families; creating a labyrinth on the grounds for community use; starting a yoga program that brought another young group to St. Michael's; and starting a community garden which increased the local community use of the property.

**Generating more money:** The need for additional funding remained a topic of discussion. Creative ways to enhance/supplement funding at St. Mike's that were implemented by Nicole included renting out parking spaces, and renting out the chapel to UCSB program groups during the summer. Additionally, St. Michael's was used as a polling place for voting, and the poll workers, many of them Episcopalians from area congregations, donated their stipends to St Michaels. Every little bit of additional income was helpful.

As noted in THE MESSENGER IN 2006-2007-2008, the work of Nicole along with the congregation, the Standing Committee, and the local area Episcopal Churches, ministries at St. Mike's were created and reached out to students

and the Isla Vista Community in a variety of ways with much success. Some of those ministries during these 3 years included:

- **Standing Committee on Campus Ministry** was up and running.
- **Start of school year BBQ** for students and community held at St. Mike's included a newly formed relationship with the mariachi band. **Mariachi Integral de UCSB** was a band founded and directed by Juan Zaragoza, a graduate student in the UCSB Music Department.
- **Progressive Christian Students @UCSB** met for weekly brown bag lunch conversation on campus.
- **Advent Lessons & Carols**, a huge success, brought together members of the Santa Barbara area Episcopal Parishes, including a 30-voice choir.
- **Quarterly Lunches:** Episcopal Faculty, Staff and Graduate Students met quarterly for lunch and conversation on faith and the academic life.
- **Bilingual Community Yoga & Compline** debuted bringing together students and Isla Vista residents weekly in the St. Mike's Chapel.
- **Campus Connection**, a new initiative of the campus ministries at UCSB and Cal State Channel Islands brought 40 urban Episcopal Los Angeles and Oxnard youth to campus for an immersion experience in university life.
- **Province VIII College Student Retreats** brought together St. Mike's students and Clergy from the Western District of the Episcopal Church. St. Mike's students and clergy attended and/or hosted these gatherings.
- **Weekday House Church** gatherings met during the summer for Eucharist and Bible Study.
- **A Monthly Bible Study** was led by congregant and resident "supply clergy" at St. Mike's, Toni Stuart, on the Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible).

**Money Woes---**it was time to get more creative: The ongoing struggle for financial support continued with a letter in 2009 from Bishop Bruno stating that the **Mission Development Grant for the upcoming year (2010)** would be reduced. The reasoning behind the reduction was that Bishop Bruno believed that the grants should devolve over time and would ultimately not be needed. A reply letter to Bishop Bruno from Nicole, Tim Cooley

(Bishop's Warden), Ali Bjerke (People's Warden) and Madeline Blickley (Treasurer), explained the unique circumstances at St. Mike's as a Campus Ministry and asked for the grant to remain the same as given in 2008: \$17,500. While negotiations between the Diocese and St. Mike's continued over the funding of the Mission Development Fund, other avenues of funding were sought. As a way to garner financial support, grants were pursued; letters of appeal were sent to local parishes, community, as well as to current and former St. Mike's congregants. Donations came in, both small and large (like the \$50,000 donation from a couple who had attended St. Michael's during their time as students at UCSB). Fundraisers were held. Somehow, needs were met.

**What brought people to St. Michael's University Church?** As congregant Lillian Palermo wrote, "When I first arrived at St. Mike's, Nicole Janelle was Vicar. The year was 2009. I had just moved back to Santa Barbara after living for 28 years on an island in the Pacific Northwest. I was living with my daughter until I could find a place of my own and had not even had the chance to reconnect with friends from the Santa Barbara area. My daughter, knowing of my friendship with Betsey Ryan, saw her obituary in the local paper and asked me if this was my friend. Saddened and surprised by Betsey's sudden passing, I decided to attend her memorial service, which was being held at St. Michael's University Church in Isla Vista. That was my first introduction to St. Mike's. Much to my surprise I have been in regular attendance ever since, as I have never before been a member of organized religion. I am drawn to St. Mike's by the warmth, caring and inclusiveness of its members, by the acceptance of varied beliefs and non-beliefs, by the informality and sense of intimacy, by the weekly celebration of Holy Eucharist. One of my favorite services is the blessing of the animals on the Sunday that celebrates St. Francis of Assisi. St. Mike's offers community; a community of diverse and interesting people whose caring, acceptance and hospitality are natural offerings."

Kathie Moore (a congregant and who served on the Bishop's Advisory Committee as Bishop's Warden) recalls that she had visited St. Mike's a few times, but didn't stay because the church didn't have any kids in it. She writes, "I used to go to Trinity for the children's program, but once my son reached high school and didn't want to attend church anymore, I decided it was time for me to find a worship space that was more appealing to me. I



came to St. Mike's in roughly 2011 because it is close to home and Episcopal. I stayed because of the University connection and because of Nicole. It was nice to find a calm, cerebral, and youthful priest. At the time, there were a number of senior citizens in the congregation who had no connection to the University, and I was impressed that Nicole had a pastoral way about her that kept them coming regularly. A very small number of faculty and students attended worship services. Mark Juergensmeyer was a regular, and he helped with the worship music, often leading a small choir in singing the offertory. I also remember one Good Friday doing the Stations of the Cross in Isla Vista with Nicole. A small group of us walked around Isla Vista, stopping at points for Nicole to recite a prayer. Each prayer was oriented toward social justice, e.g., for people without houses, alleviating hunger, victims of rape and sexual abuse, etc. Nicole wore her vestments, which attracted attention and announced to the community our prayers for and emphasis on social justice issues."

And Congregant John W.I. Lee says, "I was baptized (Methodist, I recently discovered) and my family went to Episcopal churches when we lived in the Philippines and when we came back to Hawaii, but as an adult I wasn't a churchgoer at all until I met Ali. We surfed a lot when we first started dating, except on Sundays when she went to St. Mike's. Well, I guess I started going because she was going. I have joked that this is how the Roman Empire became Christianized in Late Antiquity (after Constantine legalized Christianity in AD 312)— men following the women to church. We got married here and our two children were baptized here." (The baptism of their third child would occur at St. Mike's in Oct 2019.)

**In 2010 and 2011**, there were some new ministries, as well as a continuation of the old (and successful) ones: Don and Nollie Dawson (from Trinity Episcopal) provided for and hosted the Welcome Back Barbeque at St. Mike's; Tuesday night Yoga continued in the Chapel; and Lessons and Carols continued. Some of the new ministries included:

- **Weekly home-cooked meals:** an outreach activity that provided students and community members meals through The Progressive Christians @UCSB Dinner Forum Series.
- **La Escuelita Tutoring Program:** a tutoring program formed by Jeannette Rodriquez Villega that matched university students with

Isla Vista youth grades K-7 for one-on-one tutoring 3 times a week in the Little House.

- **The Guitar Works Program:** a weekly gathering of Isla Vista youth in small groups to study guitar with the resident Mariachi Ensemble director, Juan Zaragoza.
- **Abundant Table in Oxnard:** a field trip to work the fields and learn about spirituality, environmental and food justice issues.
- **A benefit concert:** a fund-raising event to support St. Mike's, organized by the Standing Committee, and featuring Andrew Jackson, Stephanie Croff and members of Duende Journey.
- **The Community Garden:** a collaboration that began on the grounds of St. Mike's with grant support from All-Saints in Montecito and the Isla Vista Food Co-op.
- **Website:** new design and upgrades were done to create a user-friendly interface.
- **Freedom Warming Center:** A program that encouraged local churches to open its doors to the homeless during the cold and rainy season. St. Mike's participated with other churches in the area.

**2012 Working Together, Time Away, and Social Media:** This year brought a new ministry in collaboration with an Orthodox church in Goleta, gave the Vicar some time away, and saw St. Mike's get "connected":

**Connecting with the Houseless:** Because the problem of homelessness in the area was ongoing and was particularly acute in the then failing economy, St. Michael's continued to be a participant in the Freedom Warming Shelter program. But there was a desire in the congregation to do more. After the Bishop's Advisory Committee did some research on possibilities, they decided to partner with the St. Brigid's Fellowship, a group affiliated with St. Athanasius Church who provided weekday morning meals (and one weekly afternoon meal) to the homeless in Isla Vista. They would use the outdoor space at St. Mike's (in particular in front of the chapel) for St. Brigid's to do their food distributions. St. Brigid's provided volunteer workers and supplies. This connection with St. Brigid's and with St. Athanasius Church, ultimately led to another shared ministry called "Showers of Blessings".

**Sabbatical for Vicar:** Nicole was granted a three-month sabbatical leave and received a sabbatical grant for clergy that enabled her to go on

pilgrimage, participate in a peace delegation, visit family, and to gain inspiration by visiting intentional communities around the country for spiritual refreshment and new ideas. The Rev. Toni Stuart graciously agreed to celebrate Eucharist with St. Mike's three Sundays per month while Nicole was away.

**Facebook:** St. Mike's created its own Facebook page and encouraged people to become "friends" and fans of *St. Michael's University Church* and *Progressive Christian Students at UCSB* via Facebook.

**2013-14: Ministries continued and grew:** The Welcome BBQ Continued; Progressive Christians @UCSB continued with support from Episcopal, UCC, Presbyterian, ELCA, and Methodist Campus Ministries; Yoga continued in St. Mike's Chapel; On-site Community Garden allowed sixteen local student/community member teams to grow their own food in raised bed plots; Advent Lessons and Carols continued bringing together students, faculty, staff and members of all Santa Barbara area congregations; and Participation in Freedom Warming Center continued.

**New Ministries included:**

- **Monthly Evensong** began, and was followed by a community meal after the service.
- **Café Picasso** began with grant monies and provided a weekly food pantry and hospitality night for hungry students. It was developed and coordinated by student interns, and provided a Sunday Brunch for students in need, hosted study nights complete with snacks, organized helpful workshops for students, and kept the food pantry stocked with donations from area faith communities and the Santa Barbara Food Bank.
- **The new Peace Prayer Labyrinth** was dedicated shortly after the Isla Vista shooting in May 2014 (see below). The new labyrinth was spearheaded by Worship and The Arts intern, Hope Curran, and is made out of recycled materials.
- **"First Fridays" open mic events** was launched by Standing Committee Member Doug Clegg. Recalls Doug, "The series was called OPEN MIKE'S, which was an open mic night we did the first Friday of each month for about two or three years. Our hope was to bring in talent from the students as a place for them to come to perform their work, whether

instrumental, vocal, or even mariachi bands. We always had a 'featured performer' who, as I recall, got a small stipend, as it would have been a pro or semi-pro musician. Some of the featured acts were Caren Armstrong from Oakland, California; Jimmy McVay from Los Angeles; Tom Payne from Placerville; Rebecca Troon from Santa Barbara; Kate Wallace and Douglas Clegg from Santa Barbara; Susan Thomson and April Eaton from Carpinteria. A few times we had A cappella singing groups from campus. I would take my sound system up and have it in place for the performers and run sound, and Kate Wallace or I would host. It was a truly great little tradition, which we were sad to finally end, but there came a time when it seemed that the students weren't showing up either to play or listen as much as we had hoped. We realized that the majority of folks playing or listening were from town (and not from Isla Vista or UCSB)."

**Defining and redefining mission and ministry-- Balancing the Needs in 2014:** Nicole wrote a letter to the congregation in early 2014 (called THE COCOA LETTER). This letter articulated the difficulties of taking risks that create change and opportunities, while honoring those in the congregation who do not want change. It reflects the challenges facing a church when the two sentiments collide.

Within this letter regarding funding from The Los Angeles Diocese to St. Mike's is a description of the uniqueness of St. Michael's. Nicole explains it this way, "We are currently the only church the Diocese identifies and supports as both a university mission congregation and a campus ministry center. Continued support from the Diocese will only be forthcoming if we maintain a clear focus on the work of outreach to the Isla Vista community and campus ministry."

The letter goes on to describe how every decade had seen a different articulation of the mission at St. Michael's. This clarification of mission and ministry at St. Michael's had been an ongoing discussion between the Diocese and St. Michael's since its beginnings. The definition of St. Michael's mission is important because depending on how St. Michael's mission is being defined, determines the method and amount of funding that might be forthcoming from the Diocese each year. The problem seemed to be that St. Michael's was being asked to be everything to everybody: a daunting task indeed.

THE COCOA LETTER continues: "While our ministry and the use of the buildings have evolved at St. Mike's, our worship schedule has mostly remained the same, consisting of a mid-morning Sunday service. This year, we've been experimenting with something new. In January we started a once a month evening service. The idea has been to offer worship at a time that is more friendly to our surrounding community (many students use Sunday mornings to catch up on sleep, not attend church), to experiment with different kinds of music and liturgy, and to provide an opportunity for people to come together as a community over a home-cooked meal following each service. On all fronts, our first few evening services have been promising glimmers of hope. Twenty-seven came to the January service and eighteen to the February service. Students/young adults were abundant in the congregation, and greeted, read and soloed during the service. Most of the members attending the service lingered for dinner, staying nearly an hour in The Little House chatting with one another." Additionally, a later start time and shortened Sunday service was tried in order not only to help families, but also to attract more students.

It was a disappointment that these experiments did not yield a significant up-tick in student attendance. And, in fact, making changes at all was difficult for some of the longtime congregants. Again, the issue of change was front and center. Nicole closes the letter addressing this very issue: "Our goal is to be accessible, relevant and innovative in our worship and community life, taking risks as any worshipping community in a university setting should, yet not alienating those who hold tradition dear and have long-time ties to this congregation. "

#### **And then... May 23, 2014: A mass killing in Isla Vista.**

This event changed everyone's focus. The incident described by Pat McCaughan in the publication *DIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES EPISCOPAL NEWS* was titled **Santa Barbara: 'Resilience in the face of violence'**: "Southland Episcopalians from Santa Barbara to Irvine were among thousands who gathered May 27 to remember and to honor six college students who were killed and 13 others who were injured during a deadly May 23 rampage in Isla Vista. Local community college student, Elliot Rodger, embarked upon self-described 'retribution' for feeling rejected by female students. Rodger

detailed his intentions to target a UCSB sorority in a video and a 'manifesto' posted on YouTube. After fatally stabbing three students and fatally shooting three other students, Rodger continued his shooting spree and rammed others with his vehicle as he drove erratically across campus before dying of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot."

The Article continues: "In Isla Vista, The Rev. Nicole Janelle, Vicar of St. Michael's Episcopal Church... said the usually lively oceanside campus has been uncharacteristically quiet and somber and students spent Tuesday, a designated 'day of mourning', seeking solace and comfort in small groups. A peace labyrinth, already under construction on the grounds at St. Michael's, would be dedicated on May 31 (2014) at St. Michael's. During the church's regular Monday evening dinner for the homeless, participants lined up to paint 'peace rocks' for the labyrinth as an activity to honor what's happened in the last few days."

In August, The Rev. Nicole Janelle wrote an article for THE DIOCESE OF TEXAS as she recalled and reflected on the events of this tragedy:

"In the wee hours of Saturday, May 24, I was awakened by a series of texts from the local police force. The press releases spoke of a gunman and multiple casualties in Isla Vista. Stunned, I jumped on the Internet, only to find that sleepy Isla Vista, California, had already made its way on to the front page of leading news outlets, including the BBC, my go-to news source.

"The next week or two would be a blur for this college town and its inhabitants. Reporters would descend upon us in droves, probing for any new information they could use to embellish their stories. Candlelight vigils and university-wide memorials would be hastily organized. Heated campus-wide conversations around gun control, better mental health interventions, misogyny, racism and violence would take place. Students and professors would struggle to find a way forward in the short weeks leading up to final examinations and graduation. And in the midst of all of this, people would carve out both public and private spaces in which to grieve.

"In the hours after the shooting, our campus church mobilized and opened its doors in a gesture of hospitality. Parishioners took turns hanging out in the chapel and brought in snacks and beverages....

"What did surprise me, as I looked out upon the landscape of this college community, was the creative spaces where 'two or three' and even hundreds were gathering to grieve, process and connect.

"On the one-week anniversary of the shootings, our campus ministry installed a peace labyrinth outside of our chapel. The project had been in the works all quarter and it just so happened that the installation was scheduled for the weekend after the shooting. That day, students and area Episcopalians gathered to plunk down into the ground brightly colored river rocks that had been painted over the course of spring quarter by circles of students and community members in a 'peace theme.' The following day we blessed the new labyrinth after our church service, praying among other things that it would be a 'healing container where we can touch our joys and sorrows.' Then, all those present—church people, labyrinth installers, campus ministry students, Co-op members from across the street, homeless folks and Dreamer students—gathered on the front lawn to 'break bread' over potluck dishes and fancy grilled sausages.

"As I looked out over the scene, I thought to myself: "Yes, this is how we heal from such profound tragedy. One prayer at a time, one community meal at a time, one conversation at a time, one action at a time, one friendship at a time."

Months later, The Rev. Julie Morris wrote an article published in EPISCOPAL CAFE THE MAGAZINE: TOGETHER IN SORROW: "The Rev. Nicole Janelle, Vicar of St. Michael's University Church and Episcopal Chaplain at the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB), responded to the tragedy with a healing ministry of presence that is only possible when a priest and a church have a long relationship of trust and commitment to a particular neighborhood. She opened the church for prayer and support, she collaborated in planning and holding vigils for the whole community, she gave the final benediction at the memorial service for the dead students attended by more than 15,000 people at UCSB's Harder Stadium, and she had countless conversations helping those she serves to process shock, grief, fear, confusion, pain and anger." (To read full article, Google: [episcopalcafe.com/the-magazine-together-in-sorrow/](http://episcopalcafe.com/the-magazine-together-in-sorrow/)).

**Everyone Affected:** Brian Granger, 43, a doctoral student in theatre at UCSB at the time of the incident, and who sang in St. Michael's Episcopal Church choir, said that a former student/friend visiting from Los Angeles was among those wounded in the shootings. Granger said, "He (the friend)

had gone to grab a drink and was standing next to someone who was killed on the spot. He ducked behind a car and then ran into a nearby shop. When he got there he realized it was hard for him to move, and at that moment, realized he was shot." Fortunately, the injuries were not life threatening, and following surgery his friend was released from the hospital a few days later.

**"NOT ONE MORE":** The following was reported in the *DIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES EPISCOPAL NEWS*: "The Rev. Nicole Janelle, vicar and chaplain of St. Michael's University Church and the Episcopal campus ministry at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB), offered a final benediction to about 16,000 people at a Tuesday afternoon memorial service at the university's Harder Stadium. Invoking a spirit of healing and solace, strength and unity, Janelle called for 'resilience in the face of violence and the courage to face that violence with resolve. May we embrace our work as peacemakers, helping to nurture a culture of respect and loving compassion and a culture where there is NOT ONE MORE (senseless gun death) in our community and in our world.'"

**September of 2014:** In the fall of 2014, Nicole took several months of parental leave to care for her newborn child. She would return in January of 2015. In her absence, the Rev. Julie Morris, a long-time colleague of Nicole's, was the Clergy in charge during her parental leave. Rev. Morris was a co-founder of The Abundant Table (an organization with which Nicole was also affiliated), and came to St. Mike's only a few months after the horrific event in Isla Vista.

**November 2014:** The Rev. Julie Morris led "A Service of Communion and Community in the Wake of Violence in Isla Vista, California." Inspired by "Together in Sorrow, Together in Action", the Newton Action Alliance's national vigil for gun violence victims planned for December 11, 2014 at the National Cathedral, she named the St. Mike's service "Together in Sorrow." It was a service of Holy Eucharist held the evening of November 9, 2014.

In an article she later wrote for *EPISCOPAL CAFÉ* in Jan. 2015, Rev. Morris said, "The silence about the tragedy and the absence of a permanent memorial led to a false sense that people were 'over it' and had moved on. Those who did find themselves still feeling sad and scared wondered if they were the only ones who were still impacted by the violence. It became clear



to us at St. Michael's that, nearly six months after the killings, there was a need to remember publicly the events of May 23, 2014. The biblical tradition of lament seemed the most appropriate way to honor the emotions and experience of the community in the aftermath of violence and loss." (To read full article, Google [episcopalcafe.com/the-magazine-together-in-sorrow/](http://episcopalcafe.com/the-magazine-together-in-sorrow/))

The liturgy for the service was prayerfully planned to include Biblical passages dealing with lament and loss. For the Prayers of the People, they designed a ritual called "Prayers around the Broken Heart". Rev. Morris's article described the service this way: "On the floor in front of the altar was a large wooden heart stained on 4x4 plywood and cut into many pieces. Students and other members of St. Mike's wrote the intercessions. Each intercession named the victims of the tragedy and other causes of our pain and grief that included the events of May 23 but also extended to other heartbreaking situations. The sung response to each intercession was the Taizé song, "O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer: when we call, answer us. O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer. Come and listen to us." As we named the victims of the violence in the intercessions and the other causes of our pain and grief (such as the killings at Sandy Hook Elementary School, the deaths of loved ones, broken relationships and environmental degradation), people were invited to take out a piece of the heart and hold it. By the end of the prayers, many pieces of the heart had been removed and we just stood together around the broken heart. People returned to their seats with their piece or pieces of the heart and later placed those pieces on the altar at the offertory. The heart was not put back together. St. Michael's "Together in Sorrow" service became the first of a series of services of lament held in the Diocese of Los Angeles as a response to gun violence.

**2015 Money Woes...Again:** A letter received from the Diocese stated there would be NO Mission Development Funds for St. Mike's in 2015. Frances Hahn (Standing Committee Member in 2015) recalls of the committee meetings: "Most of the discussion concerned financial issues, which were increasingly challenging. Diocesan funding of St. Mike's as a mission (15K) had been discontinued during Nicole's last 2 years. The diocese maintained funding for Campus Ministry, which covered the vicar's salary, but the programs and operational expenses depended on a combination of parishioner pledges, fundraising activities, grants and withdrawal of principal from an endowment funded by sale of a portion of the property to Hillel. Thus

Nicole and the committee were always concerned with grants and fund raising."

**2015 a time of change:** While Nicole was on leave, she thought about what changes in her life might occur, especially with her new young family now based in Ventura County. Nicole had been involved already in The Abundant Table in Ventura County, and was also planning to begin a graduate program in Public Health. As Nicole thought about her future, it was her desire to work one-half time at The Abundant Table, and be in the graduate program in Public Health one-half time. In a conversation I had with Nicole, when asked about her decision to leave St. Mike's after eight years, she said the timing was right because her partner, a family medicine physician, had finished his residency and fellowship at Ventura County Medical Center and was now working in a new position at a County clinic in Santa Paula; and Nicole, who had already been involved in the work of The Abundant Table in Camarillo, was offered the position of part-time Executive Director of the organization. And so in September of 2015, The Rev. Nicole Janelle left her role as the 9<sup>th</sup> Vicar-Chaplain of St. Michael's in Isla Vista to begin a new adventure and new ministry, and to more fully ground their lives in Ventura County.

Recalls Frances Hahn, "Nicole's decision to pursue other opportunities for ministry was unexpected for most people, I believe. There was particular concern about how the vacancy would be filled and to what extent parishioners would be involved. As it turned out, the Diocese seemed to have made the decision to appoint Scott Claassen. This procedure did fill the vacancy considerably faster than a parish search would have and avoided the need for transition clergy."

On the other hand, without much input from the congregation and a transition process in place, the congregation felt unsettled. The new vicar-chaplain would come to St. Mike's without "the calling" from the congregation, and with no Mission Development Fund to help run programs.

**And thus, another new era for St. Michael's University Church was about to begin with a new Vicar-Chaplain to arrive one month after The Rev. Nicole Janelle left...**

## **The Rev. Scott Claassen 2015- Present (2019)**

### **A Vision of "People Over Programs: Cultivating Relationships".**

The congregation at St. Michael's had very little knowledge about their new Vicar-Chaplain. A month after the Rev. Nicole Janelle left, the Rev. Scott Claassen arrived. The first order of business for the congregation was to discover "who is this person?" and "what does he bring to St. Mike's?"

Over time, the congregation would learn the answers to those questions. As a fifth generation Californian, The Rev. Scott Claassen came to ministry through a church called Thad's in Los Angeles, following years of playing music alongside Willie Nelson, exploring wilderness, and wandering the globe.

After graduating from Yale Divinity School, Scott spent one year without flying or driving as part of a CARBON SABBATH. During that time in 2011-12, he bicycled around the country engaging Christian communities in dialogue about climate change. Scott explains it via his online site called MOVING STILLNESS ([amovingstillness.com](http://amovingstillness.com)), "In June 2011, I set off on a year-long adventure called the Carbon Sabbath. For one year, I refrained from riding in planes and cars. I also ate more locally and lower on the food chain, used much less electricity, did not heat or cool my home, and generally limited my carbon footprint. During that time, I bicycled over 11,500 miles around the country to engage Christian communities in dialogue about the relationship between climate change and the love of God and neighbor. In the course of those travels, I mined the cultural and environmental depths of the country, and I am left with an inexhaustible wealth of gratitude."

In 2014, Scott was ordained to the Episcopal diaconate during Thad's monthly Laundry Love program, and he was ordained to the priesthood later that year. Scott came to St. Michael's with his wife Maribeth and sons Henry and Jimmy. Later a third son, Amos, would enter their family. As Scott says about his family, "They are the greatest blessings of my life." When not with them, Scott is often surfing, playing music, or dreaming of new ways to make a love-spreading difference in the world. And it is with this background that The Rev. Scott Claassen began serving St. Michael's University (Episcopal) Church in Isla Vista in late 2015.

**2015:** Members of the congregation (and beyond) were researching "this guy" to find out more about him. People learned about his background, the CARBON SABBATH, that he had played mandolin with Willie Nelson, and that he surfed. But what did this mean for St. Mike's?

The Rev. Toni Stuart, who was "supply" clergy during the time between the departure of Nicole and the arrival of Scott, recalls her thoughts when Scott arrived at St. Mike's, "...wham, Scott came. He changed everything! No hymnal! No Confession. No Creed. Our wonderful and talented music director, Karen Tanaka, resigned. And when Scott played the guitar for every service, it sometimes seemed more like a performance than worship. Then, little by little, he added members to the band. Some were faculty at the university. Some were retired. Some were students. I grew to enjoy the music, but for me, the jury was still out about Scott. Then one Sunday he told us, 'Terrible things are happening at the University. There's graffiti everywhere about transgender people, and worst of all they're having a special rally with an outside speaker who plans to talk about THE ABSURDITY OF 'TRANSGENDERISM'. So Scott said, 'you know what we're going to do? We're going to have a dinner party the same night as the rally, and every transgender person and their friends are invited. And you are invited, too.'"

Rev. Stuart continued, "So that night I picked up my friend, Sally Hall, and we went to the dinner. The Sanctuary was all set up with tables with red-checked tablecloths and low lights and a long table full of food catered by Chipotle. Sally and I had a delightful dinner chatting with students and their friends. You couldn't tell who the transgender kids were; they don't look different. It was a lovely mellow evening. Because we're old ladies, we left at 8 pm but Scott said later that some of the kids stayed till 11 to talk to him. I decided then and there that Scott must be a Christian. He did what Jesus surely would have done. I never would have thought of it (providing the dinner party)!"

But Scott remembers his arrival to St. Mike's before he had even picked up the keys. He was to meet with outgoing Vicar Nicole Janelle, when he was presented with a stark reality. In a conversation I had with Scott, he tells it this way: "I arrived on site to meet with Nicole to pick up the keys to St. Mike's where I would begin my new calling. But what I saw before even

getting my keys to the place was that the glass door to the chapel, to which the BLACK LIVES MATTER sign had been attached, had been shot out. THIS was my introduction to St. Michael's." His response to the incident occurred in early November when in conjunction with the Progressive Christian Group, St. Mike's hosted a "BLACK LIVES MATTER SOLIDARITY MEAL." Said Scott, "The turnout was huge." The UCSB Student Newspaper, THE DAILY NEXUS (*dailynexus.com*), reported on the incident and the meal in Nov. 2015 in their lead article:

### **ST. MICHAEL'S HOSTS DINNER IN RESPONSE TO ALLEGED ANTI-BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT VANDALISM**

"Responding to a string of vandalism and theft at St. Michael's University Church, allegedly due to its backing of the Black Lives Matter movement, nearly 100 students, professors and Isla Vista residents attended a free dinner Tuesday at the church to show their support.

"An unknown vandal shattered the church's glass front door in September by firing small projectiles at the church, and the church's Black Lives Matter signs have been repeatedly stolen and torn apart. The "Free Dinner in Solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter" was organized by the Rev. Scott Claassen and members of the Progressive Christians group which includes pastors from multiple Santa Barbara churches. The gathering served to show continued support for the movement and allow people of various backgrounds to share their perspectives and fears. Bishop's Warden at St. Michael's and UCSB's Religious Studies Department Chair Kathleen Moore said the vandalism was a series of 'low-level attacks' showing 'resentment' towards the Black Lives Matter movement.

"As students and Isla Vista residents filtered into the church on Tuesday, Pastor Ronald Cox of Goleta's Christ Lutheran Church blessed the meal saying, 'Father, be with us as we share in food, share in dialogue.' Attendees used a microphone on the pulpit to convey criticisms of national and local race issues and shared their personal experiences of being students of color at UCSB. As members of the church began to clean up Woodstock's Pizza boxes, Cox explained the importance of Tuesday's dinner outside the church, pausing to shake the hand of a fourth-year UCSB student he had just met. 'That's what it's about,' Cox said. 'It's about making a one-on-one connection, because if you make a one-on-one connection, suddenly the other person isn't the other, it's Randy or Melissa or Kayla.' "

**Bringing past and present into the future of St. Mike's:** It would not take long for the congregation to see that The Rev. Scott Claassen brought to St. Michael's a new style and an expanded vision for the church. No one aspect of life at St. Michael's felt more or less important than any other aspect: everything and everyone was equally important. Music, liturgy, sermons, Bible readings, group discussions, announcements, food, conversation after Sunday services, reaching out to anyone in need, searching for common ground and understanding where there are differences, the new Vicar-Chaplain saw everything and everyone as being a part of the whole, the Divine Whole where there is no judgment, but simply the realization that everything is interconnected and that those relationships are important. Scott did not throw out everything that came before his arrival. In fact, he incorporated everything from the past, expanded on it and brought forward a sense of remembering history while living in the present. Some people in the congregation would happily grasp the new style and vision, while others would not. As told to me by congregant and former Bishop's Committee Member, Roberto Strongman, "With Scott came the music and an increase in congregation size. There was some dissatisfaction, from the older generation accustomed to more traditional worship, but the service became more acceptable to younger people and students. Liturgically it was a period of acclamation for the congregation: some people came less often, but another younger student demographic increased." Change in any form is usually never easy, nor always accepted as a good thing. Nonetheless change happens.

**2016 People, Programs, Purpose:** While some of the congregation left, others returned. Says Bob McDonald and Kim Mawson, who had left St. Mike's when the Rev. Norm Freeman left in 2005, "It was sometime after receiving a letter announcing a new vicar who held surf ministries and played music that we decided to give it (St. Mike's) another look. The old feelings soon resurfaced as the new vicar, Scott Claassen, played Americana type music with a mixture of students and older church members, and the congregation once again felt like someone wrapping a warm blanket around us. Isla Vista is a unique college community and St Mike's a unique church experience, and as Goldilocks would say 'this one feels just right'."

**An Unexpected Sea Change:** Not only was the congregation being encouraged to see the interconnectedness and interrelatedness among

people, but also (and equally important) the interconnectedness among people *and* nature. Scott spoke of the many ways we learn from nature if we observe carefully, and if we collaborate with nature as partners, not separate entities. One sermon incorporated his experience when he encountered an egret on the trail: the beauty, the grace, the pace, and the silence in which the egret lived in that moment, and the connection to the egret that Scott felt in that moment. Living spiritually *with* nature instead of only living *in* nature would lead to a new and unique ministry in the fall of 2016: **Surfing and Spirituality**.

In an article in the SANTA BARBARA INDEPENDENT in 2018 titled "**ISLA VISTA CHAPLAIN SCOTT CLAASSEN RUNS A MINISTRY OF SURFING AND SPIRIT**" (<https://www.independent.com › 2018/07/05>), Scott said, "We all have things that we do that connect us with the Divine. We all have things to do that help us keep in shape and make us feel healthy. And for me, the thing that combines both of those best is unquestionably surfing. Surfing is unique, in that we are actually stepping into the wild. We are leaving behind our day-to-day world, and our little silos, and we step into an area where we are actually prey. Where we are subject to the wind, and the rain, and the tides, and the swell, and we are out in part of this interconnected system, with dolphins jumping around out there, and sea lions, and pelicans."

Even though this is a group experience, it is mostly individualistic because the approach is more interpersonal. It is about building relationships, with people, with nature, with the planet, with the Divine. It can be described as deeply listening to one another (or to the world around you) with the same quality of attention that you would listen to God. UCSB Student Jerry Phillips who is a part of the weekly group, put it this way: "Surfing is, for me a spiritual practice. As a young man in a fragmented world, I find that my faith is scattered and often confusing. Surfing and Spirituality grounds me and is definitely part of my weekly search for divinity, deeper faith and purpose." THE INDEPENDENT quoted another participant and UCSB Student, Robby Russet, "Coasting on a cold wave is the nearest I've ever been to God. Catching waves with a gang of friends is truly the most healing activity that I'm invested in. This intention to build community through the adventure that Surfing and Spirituality embodies is the secret to peace on Earth. God has blessed the world with the beauty of nature to reconnect the mind with the body so the spirit can soar. So, I surf to soar!"

From the beginning, the ministry drew people from multiple belief systems, but rather than creating division, the differences allowed for the simple act of realizing that they (the participants) are a part of something much greater than themselves. As Scott said in the article, we "show the love of Christ without requiring dogmatic uniformity." When asked by THE INDEPENDENT to explain more about this ministry, Scott said, "...we could say it's a ministry of listening, but we could also say it is a ministry of noticing in that we've been together and listening and noticing what is going on with one another, but we are also practicing noticing what is going on with the ocean.... In surfing you have to pay attention to what is going on around you. We are practicing noticing." Focus, Attention, and Intentionality are key factors for spiritual growth. Surfing and Spirituality provide opportunity to practice all three.

**Music and Musicians:** While not everyone was ready for the changes in music style, Mark Juergensmeyer expressed the feelings of many in the congregation when The Rev. Scott Claassen arrived by saying, "Then came Scott with his wonderful music". And as Kathie Moore recently said to me: "Of course, the music is fabulous. Thank God we don't use the hymnal anymore! We're spoiled by Scott's enormous talent and the remarkable band he has put together." Adds Stephanie Waeteraere: "Saint Mike's has wrecked us, we never want to go back to simply old hymns (written in another language in another era) or back to praise style music that we experienced on our previous churches. The quality and choice of music at St. Mike's is unmatched."

The tradition of placing music hand-in-hand with liturgy and scripture continued with The Rev. Claassen. However, He brought a different style of music to St. Mike's. When asked to describe the role of music at St. Michael's, he said to me, "The role of music is to create community and to inspire." He referred to his style of music at St. Mike's as being "Gospel Americana". Combining his experience in musical performance along with his desire to have music be another aspect of forming relationships, the music at St. Mike's reaches back into the past for inspiration and encouragement. The congregation and the musicians are encouraged through music to participate in life as it is presented to us in each moment of the day, and to respond through a lens of God's loving intent and sense of community.



Scott's Gospel Americana presents itself in a variety of ways: Spirituals of old (e.g. "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" or "Down By the Riverside" or "I'll Fly Away"); songs from the old days in Sunday School (e.g. "Beloved, Let Us Love One Another" or "They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love"); Civil Rights music from activist days, advocating peace and justice (e.g. "Hold On" or "Freedom Highway" or "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" or "We Shall Not Be Moved"); as well as folk songs from the era of social activists like Woody Guthrie and his peers (e.g. "This Land is Your Land"). And the ultimate hymn of hope and encouragement "Amazing Grace" is either sung by the congregation or performed by one of the musicians many times a year. Sometimes original songs written by one of the band members is performed or sung by the congregation, such as "We are Children of the Lord". But along with the old gospels, traditional hymns, and folk songs, there is music from modern day activists and music with Country Western or Bluegrass flavors such as "God is God" (written by Steve Earle) or "Tenderhearted" (written by Sara Watkins) or "I Saw The Light" (written by Hank Williams). Scott brought with him to St. Mike's a wealth of knowledge about music and the people who wrote the music. One Sunday, during the offertory, the band played and Scott sang Bob Dylan's "She Belongs to Me" to coincide with the scripture and sermon on that morning. At the end of each Sunday service, after the dismissal, the band plays songs of yet another variety. For example, songs like Stan Getz' "Take Five" was the theme during the Sundays of Lent when the congregation was encouraged to take 5 minutes every day to pray and act with intention towards a specific task. The ability to use a variety of music genres to enhance relationships, engage the congregation, and to encourage intentional behavior is one of the many gifts Scott brings to St. Mike's.

**The Musical Artists:** The band and singers went from Scott's original guitar and vocals by himself, to a group of musicians made up of UCSB students, faculty, and friends. In addition to songs that coincide with the lessons on Sundays, music is used as a way to give the musicians a platform to share their individual gifts with the congregation. Every style and genre of music is shared with the congregation on Sundays throughout the year. Band members perform Opera, Jazz, Middle Eastern, Country, Rock, Pop and R&B, as well as *a cappella* performances from the UCSB Student group called The InterVals. While the members of St. Mike's Band come and go as students graduate, or faculty move out of town, as of this writing (2019) the

musicians are Ben Seilhamer on guitar and oud, Yuzheung Lin (who goes by the name Lin) on trumpet, Dennis Berger on saxophone and piano, Dave Paul on violin, Charlie Kernkamp on drums and cajon (box drum), Norm Nelson on bass guitar, Preston Towers on multi-instruments, Alexandra (Alex) Jackson on vocals and tambourine, Nydia Revuelta on vocals, Tristan Sommer on guitar and keyboard, and Scott Claassen on guitar, mandolin, piano, and keyboard as well as vocals. Previous band members over the years included Federico Llach on upright bass, Kathryn Carlson on cello, Nick Mazuk on trombone, Olivia Langner on French horn, Sayhee Yong on piano, Cynthia Vong on flute, David Nakazono on trumpet, and Sarah Thomas on vocals. Music at St. Mike's is intentional and timeless; there is something for everyone.

**An Intern Arrives:** Sarah Thomas came to St. Mike's as an Intern in the fall of 2016. Says Sarah, "I was there for 1 school year: Fall 2016 through May 2017. St. Mike's was my field education placement and I was there in the role of "seminarian" and Scott was my supervisor. I preached regularly, assisted in the worship services, helped with the music, co-led a Bible study for college students, followed Scott around and learned the reality of buildings & grounds, offered pastoral care to the community, and just basically learned by watching Scott

**A mentoring style--leading by example:** The congregation came to know Scott as a leader who encourages others to trust themselves, to actively participate in life (and in the church, and in the community, and on this planet). As mentor/teacher/collaborator, Scott brings out the best in people. Sarah remembers when Donald Trump was elected President in November 2016: "I specifically remember being slated to preach the Sunday after Trump got elected. I called Scott, freaking out. He said, 'you got this.' Another supervisor might have wanted to step into the pulpit at that time, but instead, Scott allowed me to do something challenging that showed me I could do hard things. I appreciated his trust in me."

**The UCSB Connection:** 2016-17 were years that sought new ways to invite UCSB students to St. Mike's, since the primary funding from the Diocese for St. Mike's was for Campus Ministry. Scott and Intern Sarah Thomas tried a variety of things that school year. Sarah recalls, "One day I showed up at the church and he (Scott) had pulled out a bike for me to use that was way

too big for me. I biked around campus, following him, but then whenever we stopped I totally crashed, trying to look cool. He'd bike with his mandolin slung over his shoulder and we'd perch ourselves outside the main community center on campus and he'd play the mandolin, we'd sing, and I'd pass out flyers for Compline. It was embarrassing and wonderful and fun." Recently Sarah told me, "I loved my time at St Mike's; it was a place of honesty, authentic worship, fun, real community with growing friendships, and a prophetic voice for justice in our world. "

**Focus on Justice in all its forms:** Another person showed up at St. Mike's in 2016 who would have an impact on "life" at St. Mike's. His name is Casey Jones and he is from Atlanta, Georgia, and has been an Episcopalian since 2014. He arrived at St. Mike's in the Fall 2016 with his wife, Amoni, who had been accepted to UCSB in Feminist Studies. Casey and Amoni took up residence in student housing, which is close to St. Mike's. Even at the age of 11, Casey always felt most at home in church. He was deeply committed to issues of justice. He saw the BLACK LIVES MATTER poster on the window at St. Mike's, and it resonated with him. Casey decided to talk with Scott about church and how he might get involved at St. Mike's. Scott invited Casey to join him and Sarah Thomas in a Bible Study at ON THE ALLEY restaurant in Camino Real Plaza. They called themselves "The Gospel Group": a group of three people who meet weekly to discuss the upcoming Gospel reading. Casey was not going to church every week, but did participate weekly in the Gospel Group. In 2016-17 the group was Scott, Casey, and Sarah. When Sarah Thomas completed her 1-year internship at St. Mike's, congregant Kathie Moore filled the spot in The Gospel Group.

**2017: Appointment of a Campus Missioner.** Casey received a grant from The Forum for Theological Exploration. The two goals were to look for different models of liturgy while discerning where and how Casey would fit in to any church structure and to seek a mentor to guide him through the discernment process. Casey was appointed to a new position at St. Mike's: Campus Missioner. The appointment filled the first goal, and Scott filled the second goal as Casey's mentor.

In late 2017 Casey had been helping organize liturgy and the services, when Scott appointed Casey to the position of "Campus Missioner"—a position that would allow him to do more ministry work while maintaining ongoing and

establishing new partnerships between St. Mike's and UCSB. With this position, he was now committed to attend church every Sunday. When asked specifically what keeps him at St. Mike's, Casey said, "It is the community--the people. Being African American can be isolating. The church community at St. Mike's grounds me in Isla Vista and UCSB." He is also a man who honors commitment, and said that he is committed to making contributions that not only help the community grow, but also allows him the opportunity for doing deeper ministry work.

**The Wooden Cross:** On Easter Sunday of 2017, the congregation was introduced to a new wooden cross hanging from the ceiling in the Chapel. It was placed (hung) there by Scott, Sarah, and Casey, which was no easy task, and would have been interesting to watch. But the journey of the wooden cross is even more interesting. One day, Scott found a water-logged piece of a wood from a sycamore tree while he was on Naples Beach. He carried the piece of wood across a muddy field to his car, and took it to the brother of a friend. Philip Lewis, with Scott's assistance, cut it, dried it, and fashioned the cross using only this one piece of wood. Every part of this creation was done with intention. It is a symbol about living into our interconnectedness and our specific place on the planet, and is yet another reminder of our interconnectedness with nature and with God.

**Landscaping:** In my conversation with Scott, he told me that when he arrived at St. Mike's, Father John Love from St. Mark's Catholic Church in Isla Vista called us "St. Mike's in the Trees." And indeed, according to Scott, the grounds were almost solid trees. He continued, "The church building had no street presence and the trash was overwhelming." However, Scott noticed the logo on a wooden sign on the grounds, which was designed by Leslie Sigler, and he liked it and believed it was not only important as a focal point on the grounds, but that it also accurately represented St. Michael's. (He would later use that logo as the "identifier" of St. Michael's University Church on a newly designed website, on business cards, on t-shirts, and on the Sunday Bulletins.) Scott's vision was to use all the visual space to build community. With that in mind, dead redwood trees were removed, bushes were trimmed, trash was cleaned up, and in the newly opened space was built the children's area. "It is interesting", said Scott, "that the children's area has brought many positive comments from parishioners and neighbors alike, saying that the children's area provides a welcoming atmosphere." While the

landscaping continued to evolve, many projects and ideas for land use evolved as well.

**Priscilla's Celebration Rose Garden:** In the spring of 2017, congregant Linda Nelson spoke with Scott about her mother's love of roses and proposed establishing a rose garden on the grounds of St. Michael's in memory of her mother, Priscilla Wong, who was a long-time friend of St. Michael's. With donations of time, talent and treasure of the congregation, plans began to take shape. In the spring of 2018, Linda and Norm Nelson, both Santa Barbara County-Certified Green Gardeners, led the way for the physical construction of the garden. The call for people to help remove weeds, take out overgrown bushes, cultivate and amend the soil, create raised beds, add drip lines, and dig holes for plants (roses, herbs, vegetables, fruits, and other plants to attract pollinators) was met by members of the congregation of all ages participating. Removal of the bushes in the area brought sunlight to the back of the chapel, and made the Labyrinth and Picasso Island Prayer Wheels and Bench area more visible from the street. Said Linda, "Almost immediately we noticed people walking, biking, or riding by on Camino Pescadero stopping to look at the garden and the St. Michael's chapel. Many people commented 'I never knew there was a church here!'" In addition to creating beauty on the grounds that was visible to passersby, the garden would serve as a memorial or celebration for any congregants who wanted to purchase a rose in honor of or memorial of a loved one. A plaque would be placed with the rose. As my husband, Bill Thomas, said to me when I purchased a special rose bush for the garden to honor his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, "I now feel fully grounded at St. Michael's." But this ministry did not end when the garden was fully planted. In fact, the work of maintaining this sacred spot is ongoing and required the hands of many: there are a dozen people on the garden mailing list. But it is the heart and hands of Linda and Norm Nelson who guide this ministry and are often seen in the garden doing the bulk of the work. It is through their love of gardens and love of St. Mike's that they inspire and encourage community.

**Adopting an Island:** In the spirit of community participation and building community relationships, St. Michael's adopted the island at the corner of Camino Pescadero and Picasso Road, and installed a bench, some succulents, and built prayer wheels. Sadly, a drunk driver destroyed the oak tree and half of the prayer wheels in September 2019. Thankfully, no one was injured.



**The Butterflies:** Scott's tenure as Vicar-Chaplain empowers the congregation to maintain and expand what exists on the grounds, as well as to generate new ideas to further the vision of building relationships. A **Monarch Migration Station** was installed on the grounds not only to provide a place for Monarch butterflies to stop on their yearly migration, but also to educate the people (especially the children) about the journey of these butterflies. And most importantly, this addition to the grounds provides yet another way for people and nature to interact, another opportunity to build relationships among ecosystems.

In that same vein of interconnectedness and building community relationships, St. Michael's established a partnership with a group called **UCSB Sustainability** (<https://sustainability.ucsb.edu/ucsb-sustainability>): an informal network of campus efforts under the direction of Mo Lovegreen. Katie Maynard is the Sustainability Coordinator, and is the advisor for the Edible Campus Program and the Internship Program. St. Mike's is a part of, and Casey Jones, Campus Missioner at St. Mike's, is St. Mike's representative with **The Edible Campus Program**. As explained to me by Casey in a recent interview, "UCSB Sustainability is a food security task force. Last year, in partnership with the Edible Campus Program, and in response to demands made by undocumented students to UCSB, we added and allocated beds in our community garden for garden education and growing free, fresh, organic produce for students. Furthermore, we brought in a garden intern, Arely Hernandez, to manage the new "Café Picasso" garden project through the Internship Program with funding from the UCSB Monarch Opportunity Scholarship. We are in the second year of this project with a new intern, Luis Mairena. (<http://food.ucsb.edu/gardens>). Katie Maynard spoke at St. Mike's in August 2019. She explained that every aspect of UCSB Sustainability and all its projects are about the "interconnection of ecosystems and reconnecting with the land in ways that address environmental and social justice concerns." Issues revolve around composting, growing food, sharing and distribution of food---all student led. Says Katie about composting, "We address issues like where and how to use compost to grow food for people who need it and how to make sure the compost and all the methods used are safe." She quickly added, "St. Michael's is a beacon to the community when it comes to composting." The

task is to build neighborhood relationships as it relates to food security in Isla Vista and beyond.

**Money, Funding Sources, and Gratitude:** As of this writing (2019) there is still no Mission Funding from the Diocese. It has now been several years since St. Michael's received Diocesan money from that fund. From the beginning, the Diocese had sought to have the Mission Fund devolve over time, with the idea that it would eventually no longer exist as a part of the funding for St. Michael's. So it was not a surprise that this particular funding ceased to exist. The challenging part was that St. Michael's is located in a college community with a demographic that simply is not able to provide a stable source of funding. But the second source of funding from the Diocese, called the Campus Ministry Fund (officially called Young Adults and Campus Ministry Fund), continues because St. Michael's is classified as a University/Campus Ministry. It is the Campus Ministry Fund that pays for the Vicar's salary. With that in mind, I had a conversation with Scott to find out how we are doing financially, and where our money comes from to pay the bills. He was very positive about our current financial status. We bring in money from a variety of sources:

- **Pledges and plate** income continues to be a robust source of income. The pledges and plate income doubled in 2018.
- **General Donations:** There are church Alumni and Friends who generously continue to support St. Michael's. Scott continues to grow that list, as well as maintaining contact with previous donors, by nurturing these relationships. Scott told me, "It is one of my greatest pleasures to continue these ongoing relationships with people who, like myself, love and appreciate the work and community at St. Michael's. And I am filled with gratitude for their generosity."
- **The Vicarage**, located at 644 Windsor Ave, Goleta, CA is rented out to UCSB Grad Students. It not only brings in an income to St. Mike's, but also provides affordable housing for our grad student population where, in our area, affordable housing is limited.
- **GIVE SALE**, a huge "backyard sale" at the end of each school year is a community project that brings money back into the Isla Vista Community, including St. Mike's. Since 1990, GIVE has accepted donations of unwanted and reusable clothing, books, furniture, household furnishings, kitchenware, canned and packaged foods, and

miscellaneous items during Isla Vista and UCSB's annual move-out time in June. The donations are sold at a giant sale and the proceeds benefit organizations and projects that improve the quality of life in Isla Vista. Each year over 150 volunteers (UCSB students and local community--including people from St. Mike's) receive, organize, and sort all donations in preparation for the GIVE sale. One hundred percent of the proceeds are distributed to Isla Vista non-profits and projects that benefit the Isla Vista community. St. Mike's works with and coordinates closely with Tony Luu on this activity. In 2019, St. Mike's received \$2000 from GIVE.

- **Election Poll workers** from area churches work at the St. Mike's election site and donate their stipends to St. Mike's.
- **Grants** from Trinity Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara are awarded to St. Mike's
- **Challenge Grants:** Two \$5,000 Challenge Grants brought in money in 2018-19.
- **Anonymous Donation:** In 2017 there was a \$100,000 donation to be used for renovations.

**Ongoing Ministries** include Yoga, Back to School barbeque, UCSB GIVE program, Mariachi Band, St. Brigid's (Showers of Blessings), Café Picasso, Community Garden, Fellowship Dinner for the Houseless, Mindfulness Classes in the Chapel (Mindful Mondays and Ocean Mist Sangha and Morning Mist Sangha), Election Polling Site for Santa Barbara County.

**Ongoing and New Partnerships and Ministries 2015-2019** include UCSB Intervals (music group who uses the chapel for rehearsals and performs during Sunday services a few times a year), Ash Wednesday Ecumenical Service with St. Mark's Catholic Church, Community Garden (raised beds on site used by community to grow food and flowers), Safe Parking Initiative for The Houseless via New Beginnings, Surfing and Spirituality, UCSB Sustainability, The Edible Campus Program, The Intern Program, Priscilla's Celebration Rose Garden, Monarch Butterfly Migration Station, Animal habitat in the children's area, and expanded Showers of Blessings (providing 8000 showers to the houseless in 2019).

**The Children:** The children participate in a variety of ways and places on the grounds: structured activities in The Little House, unstructured play in

the children's play area, and supervised participation in the sanctuary during the church service. As their parents often tell us on Sundays, the children feel loved and included. They learn liturgy by participating in the Eucharist with their parents. The liturgy informs their theology. As said to me by Stephanie Waeteraere about one of her daughters, "My six-year-old can almost totally recite much of the liturgy when she plays church at home." Sometimes the children play in church with the babies in the back of the chapel and no one reprimands them for making too much noise. Children have come to realize that they are welcomed into the church service at any time and in any way. I recall one Sunday when a young toddler was crawling near his parents at the back of the church. The little one came upon the "singing bowl" on the floor and proceeded to strike it. Not only did it bring a chuckle from the congregation (including Scott), but it also happened to occur at just the right moment in the sermon—emphasizing a point, perhaps? And then there is 4-year-old Sammy Lee who regularly joins the musicians on stage to play his own toy guitar. He puts his heart and soul into it, and does his best to imitate the musicians on stage. Every single person in the room, and every single musician sees the honesty, the love, and the openness of this little boy, and everyone reflects those same qualities right back to him. To quote Beth Schmid (2019 Bishop's Warden), "The children learn by *experiencing* love, not by being taught *about* love."

**The Bunnies:** Lucy and Ethel provided their own brand of service to St. Mike's. They were "rescue" bunnies that were adopted by St. Mike's from the BUNS organization ([www.bunssb.org](http://www.bunssb.org)). Student volunteers built their habitat on the grounds of St. Mike's. Yuzheung Lin, who plays the trumpet on Sundays with the band, began caring for the bunnies when a call went out for help. Lin found that while he helped the bunnies, they also helped him. He said, "I had a busy yet boring life and was in need of some kind of emotional support. The two rabbits brought me joy whenever I went to see them. Besides, I am a helpful person and was happy to do whatever I could to help." The bunnies died this year (2019) of natural causes. Yuzheung Lin, the children, and other congregants told me they were sad to lose our friends, Lucy and Ethel, who had been loved and cared for by children and adults alike. There will, of course, be other animals to replace the Beloved Bunnies. And other new relationships will begin.

**New Administrative Role:** In February of 2018, Casey took on an Administrative role (first as an intern to see if it would work to use a parishioner in the position instead of someone from outside St. Mike's, which had always been the practice). It worked out and Casey was offered the Administrative position as a permanent employee---while also maintaining his role as Campus Missioner. Partnerships with campus and other organizations continued to grow, and new people continued to join the congregation.

**In Solidarity:** St. Mike's relationship with the Lutheran Church in Isla Vista remains strong. And on Good Friday in 2018, St. Mike's walked in love and solidarity with our LGBTQ brothers and sisters in the Lutheran Church who were dealt a devastating policy announcement. I remember this particular Good Friday service where a small group gathered at the church. Scott was barefoot as he led the way on a walk around the church with the large wooden cross over his shoulder draped in a multicolor flag of the Pride Community and to honor and lift up our LGBTQ brothers and sisters in the Lutheran Church and beyond. Each person in attendance was handed something to read at various stages in the walk. Being outdoors, seeing a barefooted priest carrying the heavy cross while honoring and praying for those who feel left out or dismissed, was one of the most meaningful Good Friday services I had ever attended. I walked away with gratitude that I call St. Mike's my home.

## **WHO WE ARE NOW in 2019:**

The St. Mike's Website ([www.stmikesucsb.org](http://www.stmikesucsb.org)):

"Who we are is an intentionally inclusive and multigenerational congregation and campus ministry, an ever-changing pastiche of people seeking to know and love God, neighbor, and stranger. Better than who we are, is what we intend to be: people pursuing spiritual and social transformation, people trying to follow Jesus' loving example and commitment to justice and compassion. Whether student, faculty, staff or community member, we offer you a place where you can belong, where you can discern the meaning and purpose of your life, where others will care about you and you can show you care for others.... Our congregation is comprised of people from all sorts of religious traditions. We strive to create a space for people to explore their spiritual lives through a variety of practices including, but not limited to: traditional church services, yoga classes, small group conversations,



student retreats, community dinners, community gardening and leadership opportunities. Every Sunday, there is a one-hour Community Eucharist--a service with music, Bible readings, a sermon, dialogue, Communion, silence, singing and a 'Mustard Seed' --an encouragement by clergy for the congregation to complete some small practice inspired by the Gospel message we hear on Sunday."

**2015-2019: Reflecting the Past, Living the Present, Moving into the Future.** The best way to reflect on "what has gone before" and "what exists in the present" is to ask people who have experienced both at St. Michaels. Here are a few of the reflections as given to me in 2019.

Lillian Palermo, former Bishop's Committee Member, explains it this way: "With Scott came Maribeth, Henry and Jimmy and now there is Amos as well. The congregation, too, has grown but still retains its warmth, acceptance and intimate nature. The biggest change has been the music. With his musical gifts, Scott has attracted many musicians and the Sunday service resounds with music and enthusiasm. There have been changes to the physical structure and grounds as well. St. Mike's now has a restroom off of the Sacristy and a variety of wall decorations. I especially like the poetry that adorns the walls of The Little House restroom. There is a play area for children in the Little House and a playground area for children outside. The grounds include a memorial rose garden, a Monarch butterfly sanctuary and various other welcoming habitats."

Stephanie Waeteraere, current Bishop's Committee Member, said she and her husband Steeve actively searched for a church to call home, and it was daunting until they found St. Mikes. Says Stephanie, "Growing up, I attended church every week. When we moved back from France four years ago, however, we searched and searched and had a very hard time finding a church home. All we were certain of was that it needed to be in Goleta as we wanted to embrace our local community, and we needed to believe in their vision and leadership. We were also reading a lot about social justice and equality so we knew we needed a church that was as inclusive as possible. We thought it would easy to find a church, but it took us two years and 27 churches before we found Saint Michael's. We almost decided to take a break from church because it was getting exhausting.

"Politics in general is a big subject of conversation for us and I became amazed and infuriated by the silence of every church we visited and their unwillingness to discuss or even pray for current issues/events. Then we came to Saint Michael's. It was two summers ago and the rainbow flag and Black Lives Matter poster were honestly my first impression. It was Christ centered without being sentimental; it was intellectually honest; it was warm and welcoming. We were sold.

"We love Scott. He is thoughtful, passionate, talented and kind. Scott's sermons are well researched and we love the democratic format of listening to different congregants' reactions to scripture. We often continue the conversation from church all day long on Sundays. It leaves us wanting to read scripture more deeply, opening up more interpretations. And most importantly, the role of a priest is to represent God to the people, and my girls see Scott as playful, quick to laugh and approachable. Having them continue to see God that way throughout their lives is all I need from a church. "

Roberto Strongman, former Bishop Committee Member and Associate Professor in the Department of Black Studies at UCSB, said that what brought him to St. Mike's in the first place was its proximity to where he lived and worked. He had been attending Trinity Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara for nine years when he decided to visit St. Mike's in Isla Vista. He made the choice to stay at St. Mike's because of "the music, and the experimental quality of the liturgy. And while I love incense and vestments, that 'message' does not reach the student population—which is very important to me."

Kathleen (Kathie) Moore (St. Mike's congregant and UCSB Professor in the Department of Religious Studies) draws on her experience on the Bishop's Committee and in The Gospel Group: "There have been many changes since Scott Claassen became the Vicar. The biggest change is in the congregation. Only a few of us are holdovers from the previous eras - Toni, Sally, Madeline, Lillian, Joan, Domingo, John and Ali, Dave and Winnie. On any given Sunday, we have at least 40 worshippers, which is about a 500 percent increase since 2015, and the demographics have changed. I appreciate that we have the full range of ages, from small children to young parents and middle-aged to retired persons. What remains the same? : Our purpose as a campus chapel

(outreach to students). Café Picasso is an example of something that began, I believe, during Nicole's tenure and remains an aspect of our outreach today."

Madeline Blickley and The Rev. Toni Stuart (both longtime congregants of St. Mike's), recall a story from the earlier days at St. Mike's that reflects so beautifully how St. Michael's has always opened its doors in times of community need. Madeline wrote, "Before Nicole became priest, Toni was monitoring the office and got a call from a family member of a deceased student needing a place for his friends to meet. Toni agreed that St Mike's was available for them to use. She and I went to the church at the appointed time. We were amazed to see the church fill to overflowing with friends of the deceased. The meeting was informal and many neighbors, classmates, and friends got up and talked about the many kindnesses that this young man had exhibited to them. We were stunned that so many people had taken time from their day to attend this unadvertised event in his honor. There were hundreds of unsolicited accolades.

"Finally, the mother stood and said she needed to say something. Between her tears she said that the medical examiner had not provided a report to them yet, but that she knew the report was not going to be good. She pleaded with the group to remember how this fine young man had died, and asked them to please think very carefully each time they put something into their bodies so his death was not in vain. It was one of the most touching things I have ever seen. In this story, I recognized the impact of the 'voice of the stranger' when we open our hearts and our doors."

Frances Hahn, a longtime friend of St. Mike's who served on the Standing Committee and is the Trinity Episcopal Church liaison, wrote about St. Mike's: "Scott has brought new energy to campus ministry and has been successful in increasing student attendance on Sunday mornings and involvement in weekday activities. He has also increased the number of young families who participate in activities."

John W.I. Lee (whose wife, Ali, is currently The People's Warden on the BAC), writes this account; "I distinctly remember the first time I met Dave Paul and Winnie Cai. This must have been around 2010-2011. They said they were visiting churches and had been at Trinity the week before, and that

there were too many kids at Trinity, so they decided to try St. Mike's. Of course, here we are in 2019 with little kids running all over the place! That has been an enormous change over the past decade."

Sally Hall (whose late husband, Dr. George Hall, was the Interim Priest at St. Michael's in 1981-82), wrote, "There is much to be learned and grateful for in our series of rectors. The number of students attending is particularly great under Scott's time. I suspect that his youthful, enthusiastic, friendly manner makes it attractive to college students with whom he can start up a lively, friendly conversation on the campus. We currently have less opportunity to meet to discuss Bible quotes in scheduled class times, and I miss that. I think Scott would be an excellent teacher. He is very active and available on an individual basis. I miss the occasional hymn but understand the allure of "dancelike" music and love to join in. Norm Freeman was an excellent musician who played his instrument after the sermon that matched the sermon's theme. Our present band plays with contagious spirit. Our present congregation is almost always a good size and there is a real feeling of attention and camaraderie. I enjoy being a continuing part of this congregation."

David Boyd (a friend of St. Mike's from All-Saints), recalls his connections at St. Mike's over the years, "I worked with Norm Freeman beginning in the early 2000s and then with Nicole Janelle throughout her tenure and now with Scott Claassen as an All Saints contact with St. Mike's. When I think about St. Mike's, I recall working with young, talented, passionate-in-their-calling Episcopal priests who were dedicated to showing God's love for the diverse people of Isla Vista. They used their different talents to help them accomplish their ministries - Norm's virtuosity on the vibraphone, Nicole's activism in promoting social justice and Scott's connection with God's presence in the ocean and on mountain trails."

Roberto Strongman worked with both Scott and Nicole over the years. He writes, "Scott is EXTREMELY gifted at developing one-on-one relationships with parishioners. With Scott the church became filled with young families with children who feel mirrored by Scott's own family and nurtured by the rearranging of the space in a child-friendly way. While there is an emphasis on students and families, he makes everyone feel welcome. BOTH Nicole Janelle and Scott nurtured the yoga group at St. Mike's, and thus helped the

community become aware of 'the corporeal divine' and to understand the 'Body of Christ' in palpable ways."

**Thinking of the Future of St. Michael's** as she wrote the message below, Beth Schmid, our 2019 Bishop's Warden, thought of a line from Thomas Merton: "God speaks to us in three places: the scriptures, in our deepest selves, and in the voice of the stranger."

"Here we are, St. Mike's in 2019 reflecting back on who we have been and looking ahead to who we want to be. Our rich history speaks to the challenges and to our strengths as a church. Just as we can be proud of our rich history, we can be excited of what lies ahead.

"We are a University Church. The beauty of the church we share is that we are called to continually revisit who we are as a congregation and to determine who we are now, for this time, this place. Each semester we welcome new visitors and new members. With this new energy, we learn to explore new directions and new horizons. Along with that new energy we have the benefit of history, wisdom and experience that collaborates and blends with the new.

"Although we are small in numbers, our outreach and influence reach out into the community of Isla Vista, the University, and beyond. As a University Church we have a clear mission that calls us to be involved in our immediate community as well as the community outside our walls and geography. As a University Church we have a unique scope of influence that is fluid and open to new ideas and initiatives. We are a church that can impact each other's needs as well as the needs of the community. We are a community filled with energy, imagination, enthusiasm and dedication.

"We are a wonderful blend of ages and stages. We are the very young and the "getting-older" and everything in between. We are those who have grown up in the church and those for whom it is a new adventure. We are those who have many questions and those who have discovered answers they can share. We have much to learn from each other as we continue to write our history together."

**2019: And after 65 years** St. Michael's is still in Isla Vista and is still a Campus/ University Ministry. The history of this little church is filled with stories that remind us who we were, who we are, and where we might be going. These 65 years brought extremes of emotions, from moments of joy



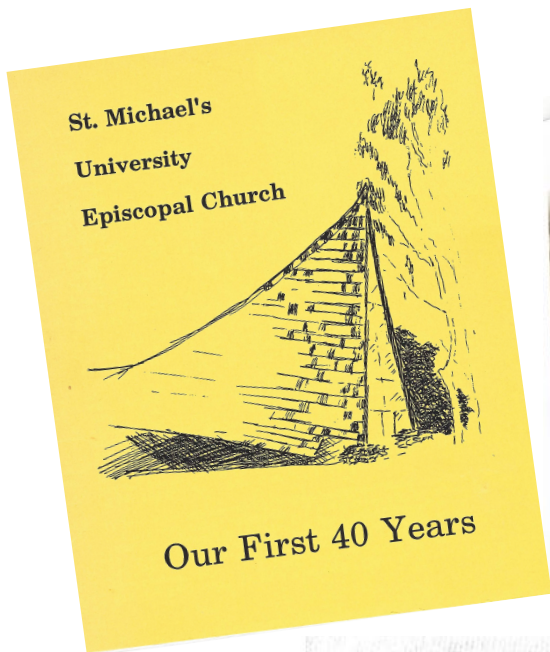
and peace to moments of terror, heartbreak and sadness---and everything in between. And through it all, St. Michael's has responded through the lens of God's Love, always asking the question, "How can we help you feel loved?"

**Concluding Thoughts from the author of this glimpse into St. Michael's history from 2000-2019:**

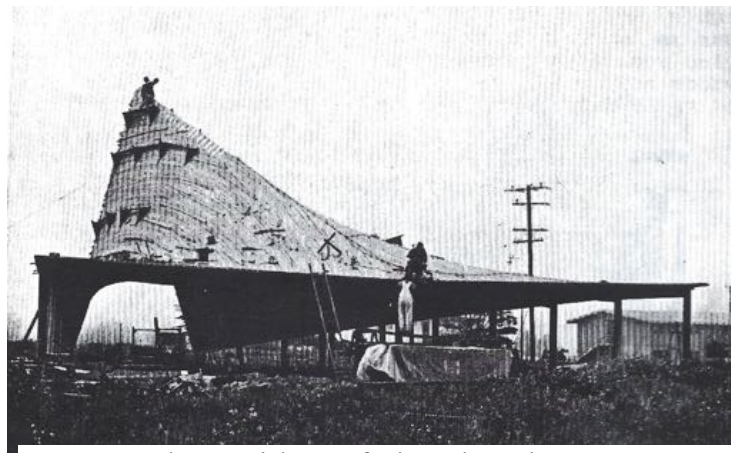
As I wrap up this little "labor of love", I find that, as with so many projects in my life, I learned a great deal. Not only did I learn about the history of St. Michael's, but I was also confronted with the importance of the lens through which any history is being written. I did my best to display on these pages, the essence of what it was like during the times of which I am writing. My love of this little church grew and grew with each sentence that found its way onto the page. In reviewing historical documents, talking to former and current congregants, observing and listening to others with intention, I found myself on my own little spiritual journey, deepening the layers within, reaching new understandings, new revelations, and certainly unleashing more love (in all its forms.) So, as I sat in church a few Sundays ago thinking about my conclusion to this project, I noticed a quotation on the back of our Sunday Bulletin from Jean Vanier, a Canadian Catholic philosopher, theologian, and humanitarian. "We are not called by God to do extraordinary things, but to do ordinary things with extraordinary love." In that moment, I realized who we are at St. Mike's: ordinary people doing the best we can at any given moment to be loving, inclusive, and welcoming.

—Diana Thomas, November 2019

Photo Gallery  
St. Michael's University Episcopal Church  
The first 40 Years

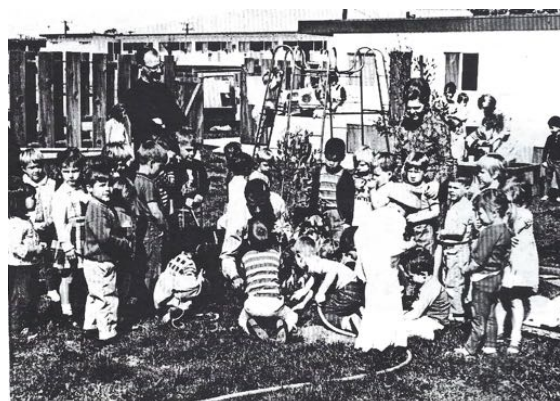


Dedication of the property in 1949

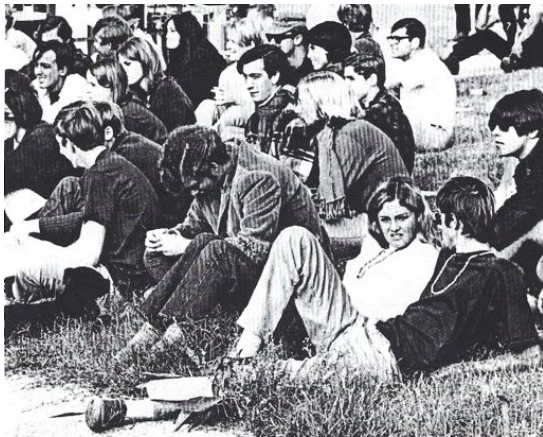


The Building of the Church in 1962

A Sunday Service in the New Church in the 1960s



Nursery School in the Early Days



Students listening to a  
concert in the 70s



Student Activities in the 1980s



A Nativity Pageant and  
an Outdoor Liturgy in  
the 1990s







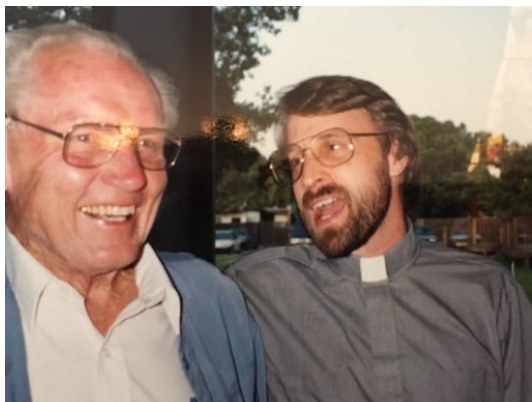
The Little White House



Andy Lief and Doug or Steve Moes



Brian Gifford, Holly Flemming, Whitney Watson (Wilson), Betsy Bosworth



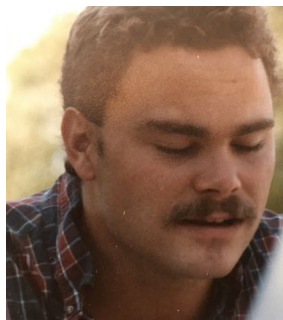
George Hall and Gary Cummins



Tim Vivian



Rick Kennedy



Josh Acton



Jay Donato



Lacy Moes, Frances Hickson,  
Randy Hahn



Church Picnic



# St. Michael's University Episcopal Church

## The first 40 Years

### I. Introduction

Mention St. Michael's University Episcopal Church to a variety of people and you will get many impressions. A person from one of the far reaches of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles might not even be able to say that she has heard of it. A long-time Santa Barbara resident possibly would say his now-grown son or daughter attended St. Michael's Nursery School. A senior warden at some parish might say she was a member at St. Michael's while a student at UCSB. A current undergraduate at the University of California, Santa Barbara, might know nothing of what goes on inside the church, but might say it is the off-looking building whose sloping roof he and his friends have slid down. A current member is likely to say that St. Michael's has been his spiritual community for anywhere between six weeks to 36 years.

This fall marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Michael's presence at UCSB and Isla Vista near the cliffs of the CA central coast. It is a remarkable milestone for several reasons. First, St. Michael's has succeeded in surviving as a rather rare hybrid of a small mission congregation and campus chaplaincy. (Most campus ministries either exist as an outreach program of community parishes or as ministries to universities by chaplaincies supported by dioceses. St. Michael's has both characteristics.) Second, it has survived in spite of serving in a territory often infertile for mission and has endured through identity crises, community upheaval and intra-parish turmoil. In fact, the congregation often has had a major impact upon the community it serves.

It has been a pleasure putting together this history. As the current vicar/chaplain, I have learned new pieces of "the St. Michael's puzzle." I have interviewed more than 30 people and pored over scores of newspaper clippings and historical archives. It has been a humbling experience, because I have realized that my part, like any one person's, is only a minute piece of St. Michael's history. Our story in one sense has only just started. Forty years is only a blip on the screen of history. I hope this narrative will

contribute not only to the sharing of fond memories but also to keeping alive the vision of St. Michael's ministry and the importance of ministry in higher education in the Episcopal Church.

I would like to thank a number of people who have generously offered their time in being interviewed: the Rev. Michael Bamberger, the Rt. Rev. George Barrett, Louise and Gordon Buck, the Rev. Henry Coke, the Rev. Gary and Karla Commins, The Rev. Mike Flynn, Col. David Gifford, Nancy Gilbert, the Rev. James Hacke, Jane Hahn, the Rev. Dr. George and Sally Hall, the Rev. George Hartung, Dr. Warren and Edith Hollister, Ann Jaqua, the Rev. John Keester, Dr. Rick and Sue Kennedy, Henry Larsen, the Rev. Donald Longenecker, Carolyn McCleskey, Lacy Moes, Gretchen Ostergren, Noreen and Paul Price, Lou Smitheram, Mary Ellen Solin, the Rev. Dr. Tim and Miriam Vivian, and the Rev. Harlan Weitzel. I would like especially to thank Sally Hall and my wife, Susan, for reading the manuscript in draft form and suggesting changes.

The Rev. Mark Gardner.

The Feast of St. Matthew, 1994.

## II. Beginnings

In the 1940s Santa Barbara was a city of approximately 15,000 people and a tourist mecca. Goleta was a small community of farms and groves, and Isla Vista, lying on a mesa between a lagoon and cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean, was populated by a tiny number of resort cottages. The Santa Barbara College of the University of California (which later became known as UCSB) was located on the Riviera near the Santa Barbara mission and was a small liberal arts college serving the central coast. At that time, the University of California consisted of two campuses, Berkeley and Los Angeles, along with some expanding sites in Davis, San Diego, and Santa Barbara. After World War II, the Santa Barbara campus was caught in the national demand for expanding higher education. According to the historian and former UCSB student Rick Kennedy,

The United States was economically thriving and Californians were fired by a whirlwind, boomtown

mentality that foretold on the growth and prosperity. College graduates were needed; the future was in an educated populace that would feed the first of an ever-growing economy. Thus, in the fifties and sixties, colleges and universities were springing up all over the country and California was not to be outdone.<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1940s students, many with the help of the G.I. Bill, began flooding the small campus in Santa Barbara next to the mission. As a result, the college began planning in 1948 to relocate the campus to Isla Vista, on 408 acres of property used during World War II as a Marine Air Base. The property was a gift of the U.S. War Assets Administration to the University. Trinity Parish in downtown Santa Barbara, which had been responsible for most of the student work at the college when it was on the Riviera, responded early to the opportunity for a new ministry at the new campus in Isla Vista. The Rev. Richard Flagg Ayres, rector of Trinity, challenged his congregation at its annual meeting in 1948 to take advantage of the opportunity. That they did, with a little ecumenical help from their friends, according to a statement by Ayres:

...The Rector...stated that the Episcopal Church had an opportunity to be early on the ground if we could find and procure property near the proposed campus. The next morning, the husband of one of the congregation, Mr. Leslie W. Dallis (himself a Methodist), came in and handed Fr. Ayres a check in the amount of \$5,000 to see what could be done with it.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after, three acres of undeveloped land was purchased for a little less than \$5,000. On December 11, 1949, Ayres and lay leaders of Trinity erected a sign amidst the grass and eucalyptus trees announcing the future plans for the property. The sign read: "On this site will be built the University Chapel of Trinity Episcopal Church, Santa Barbara." As the men,

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rick Kennedy, *Thirty Years in Isla Vista: St. Michael's University Episcopal Church, 1954-84* (unpublished article), p.1

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Richard F. Ayres, *St Michael and All Angels* (unpublished monograph, in 1984), p.1

dressed in business suits, ceremonially turned over shovelfuls of soil, Fr. Ayres, in biretta, purple stole, cassock and surplice, gave a blessing and made a solemn sign of the cross.

In the 1940s and 1950s, there was very little development in Isla Vista, except for a scattering of inexpensive vacation cottages. Streets were unpaved. The area had been subdivided in the 1920s as an envisioned resort community.<sup>3</sup> One of the subdivisions had been called "Isla Vista," in Spanish, literally "island view." The subdivisions included 20-foot lots on the coast. The resort community never took root. The population was estimated to be 500 people when the university moved to Isla Vista for the fall term in 1954.

Trinity diligently prepared for its new missionary thrust in Isla Vista. Gifts were solicited in the parish for construction of a university chapel and chaplain's residence on the property. The architectural firm of Soule and Murphy was hired to design it. In 1953, as the date approached for the actual ministry to begin, the parish realized that it could not handle construction and organization of the mission alone. In October of that year the Trinity vestry transferred the deed to the Isla Vista property to the Diocese of Los Angeles, and a gift of \$15,000 was made for construction of the building, to be matched by an equal amount by the diocese. Then bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Francis Eric Bloy, wrote a letter to Dr. Ayers spelling out his vision for the ministry:

I believe that the present thinking of the College Division is that a house should be erected, which would house the Chaplain and also furnish some place where students could go for meetings, discussions, consultations and the like.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Carmen Lodise & Friends, Isla Vista: A Citizen's History from an Indian Village to the 1990s (Isla Vista Ink, 1990), p.4

<sup>4</sup> Ayres, p.1

In September 1954, Trinity Parish called the Rev. James E. Hacke, Jr. to become the first chaplain of the mission of St. Michael and All Angels.<sup>5</sup> A former newspaperman and practicing physicist, Hacke, then 34 years of age, had served in campus ministry while at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in Tempe, Ariz. After pioneering the ministry at what is now Arizona State University, Hacke sought a break from the oppressive southwestern heat and found cooler climes on the west coast. When he first came to Santa Barbara, Hacke was expected to serve half-time as curate at Trinity and half-time as chaplain at St. Michael's. The diocese paid half of his salary; Trinity paid the other half. Soon after he arrived, it was clear that the new mission would require all of his energy. In 1955, he became the full-time priest at St. Michael's.

Later that month, the college moved to its new location. The science and library buildings were finished, and men's and women's residence halls were set up in what used to be military barracks. Interestingly, tuition in the college was free for resident students (not including a \$57 enrollment fee). Out-of-state residents paid the outrageous sum of \$150 per semester.<sup>6</sup> During the fall of 1954, Hacke made Trinity the center of his student work while waiting for the chapel to be built. The now-retired priest remembers driving out to the campus residence halls Wednesdays in his Willys station wagon and picking up students for a 7:30 a.m. service of Holy Eucharist and breakfast downtown. Most of the students at the time were women, and he recalls getting suspicious looks as he ferried the women from and to campus in the early mornings: "The campus police were not at all sure that they approved of that!" Hacke's mission field was a challenging one. The campus in the fall of 1954 actually was on three sites: the Riviera campus which was being moved to Isla Vista, the new Goleta Point campus, and an industrial arts campus on the Mesa. Except for 500 students living on the new Isla Vista campus, the remaining 2,000 or so students lived in Santa Barbara.

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<sup>5</sup> It is unclear exactly how the mission was named for its patron saint Michael the archangel. One theory is that Ayres named it St. Michael's after a parish he previously served before coming to Santa Barbara.

<sup>6</sup> That was certainly the golden era for middle-class high education. UCSB tuition now is more than \$5000 per year for resident students as of 1994.



...Father Hacke was faced with two major problems: how to serve the diverse student body; the other, how to minister to Isla Vista. These two problems were especially acute for Father Hacke, but have confronted all the subsequent vicars of St. Michael's.<sup>7</sup>

Yet the priest found ways to make contact with the students attending activities such as the "Frosh-Soph Mud Brawl" during registration week, and a "Spring Sing" whose winners went on to perform at the county courthouse, and homecoming week.

The new chaplain found there was even more to his job description than counseling members of the far-flung student body and being a vicar in Isla Vista. One of his first tasks when he arrived was to obtain a building permit from the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. The original plan called for the building to be started in the fall; however, due to the usual construction delays caused by rainy weather it was not actually begun until January 1955. In retrospect, Hacke wished that they had used the period of delay to alter the building plans:

If I had known we would not actually get to building until after the first of Jan., 1955, I would, for example, have put the vicarage at the other end of the property and turned it so that the glass walls didn't all face west.<sup>8</sup>

Anyone who has endured the glare of the late afternoon sun of what is now Canterbury lounge knows why the chaplain had second thoughts about the building layout. In addition, the county Health Department required the installation of two very large septic tanks on the property due to poor percolation in the soil. Six months after the church spent \$1,000 installing the abnormally large tanks, the county put in a sewerage system in the neighborhood, which rendered the septic tanks useless and required an additional outlay of \$1,000 to hook up to the new system. Another design

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<sup>7</sup> Kennedy, p.3.

<sup>8</sup> This quote comes from a conversation between Fr. Hacke and former St. Michael's parishioner Virginia and Ben Allen recorded in 1964.

problem to be discovered later in the building was a radiant heating system installed in the foundation of the house using copper tubing. The system, thought to be on the cutting edge of technology, failed early on resulting in flooding in the building on numerous occasions. The system was eventually abandoned.

In spite of delays and design problems, the contractor, Gust Bernhut of Santa Barbara, oversaw rapid construction of the red-brick building once it was started. The work was completed in two and on-half months. Hacke, his wife, and four children moved into the house and the new chapel was opened March 14, 1955. The Santa Barbara News-Press March 19, 1955, advertised the first scheduled Sunday services at St. Michael's. In the story, it was announced that Hack's first sermon was entitled "The Church Is Our House," playing no doubt on the double meaning of the church as the Christian's spiritual home and Hacke's actual place of habitation.

The first service, Holy Communion, was held in the 180 foot-by-32-foot chapel (also known as "The Big Room") on Palm Sunday, March 20. Thirty-three people attended. Bill Berger was Hacke's server, and there was an offering of \$11.13.

The chapel itself had spartan appointments. Seating consisted of 50 lawn chairs that were brought out and unfolded for the service, then folded back and neatly stacked away afterwards. Kneeler cushions were provided. The altar was a small plywood structure built and donated by the contractor. It was decorated with a thumb-tacked frontal, on which were a plain cross, vases for flowers, missal and stand. There was a small pulpit inside a chancel area set off by altar rails. When the service was over, the altar was stored inside an alcove at the end of the room, freeing up the space for other purposes. Mrs. Edna B. Brown accompanied the hymn singing on an upright Steinway piano. Many of the altar furnishings and vestments were second-hand gifts from the women's auxiliary of Trinity Parish. The building was truly multipurpose. In addition to hosting worship services and accommodating the Hacke family, there were community meetings in the Big Room as well: "We had vestry meetings in the dining area and had to stop meetings and let the kids in from the yard to go to the bathroom," Hacke said.

St. Michael's very quickly became a locus of community activity, being the only church in Isla Vista and one of the first public buildings off-campus. Hacke remembers Isla Vista as a "rural slum." Some of the residents had moved out to Isla Vista during the Depression. The dwellings were ramshackle. Many of the residents were poor retired people and day laborers. He remembers that a resident next door to St. Michael's didn't have running water. His plumbing consisted of a privy and the man often "borrowed" water from the new building. The Isla Vista Improvement Association began holding its meetings at St. Michael's. Hacke worked closely with the Improvement Association, which produced some of the zoning regulations governing the community and drew up plans for sewers, paved roads, sidewalks and street lights.

Those who belong [to the Improvement Association]...were the same ones who had come out there under economic pressures, squatted on the land, acquired it by tax sales, moved condemned buildings out there and in various ways had landed there by almost illegal means, but they wanted to improve the community.<sup>9</sup>

In the early days the population of Isla Vista was a mix of Anglos and Latinos. There was not very much for young people to do in the community, being three miles from Goleta and even farther from downtown Santa Barbara where they went to high school. Hacke remembers a great deal of racial tension in Isla Vista, and in order to counteract what could develop into "teen rumbles," St. Michael's inaugurated a program called "Teen Canteen." The program—for high school students, not undergraduates—turned the Big Room into a dance room, with a blaring record player, refreshments and sock-hopping from 9 p.m. to midnight. After the Saturday night dances, the youths swept and buffed the floor and set up the room for worship the next day. Police reported to Hacke that the program resulted in a 50-percent reduction in incidents of delinquency.

St. Michael's student ministry consisted of a Canterbury Club. Approximately 50 students were part of the group, which met on Sunday

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.3.

evenings for evening prayer, supper, and informal discussion. Usually about 20 to 30 students attended. Hacke remembers having a tough time making inroads into the campus community. The separation between church and state was very clear at the time. Religious groups were forbidden to post notices and advertisements of events, and clergy were discouraged from wearing clerical attire. In spite of influencing the lives of 50 or so students, Hacke felt it was difficult for him to make an impact on the intellectual life of the campus. His frustration finally became the reason for his leaving St. Michael's in 1957. (Since then he has been a "tentmaker priest," having returned to secular employment as a systems analyst and physicist before retirement.) After Hacke left, St. Michael's was without a vicar/chaplain for 13 months. During that time, a retired priest, the Rev. Perry Austin, served as supply priest. Austin was remembered by one former member as a cleric "who saw beyond the stuffed-shirtedness of the Church" of the time. For example, Austin once put on an Indian headdress and sold cigars at a diocesan convention.

The congregation of 50 persons was composed of about half students and half families. The non-student members consisted of transfers from Trinity and All Saints (many of whom were Goleta residents who found it more convenient to worship in Isla Vista) as well as families not allied with any church. Some of the families were connected with the university; others were not. Some of the students, like Bill Berger, started their families while at St. Michael's. Often Hacke would offer a children's homily at the 9 a.m. Holy Communion service. Then after communion the children would be dismissed to Sunday School, and the adults would hold an informal forum over coffee and rolls. The church's income the first year was approximately \$1,400. Out of that were paid all operating expenses of the chapel and the campus ministry, except for Hacke's salary.

Interestingly, a group of students of the Devereux School, a center for developmentally disabled people located nearby, began to attend the 11 a.m. Morning Prayer service. Approximately 30 Devereux students attended the service in a room that could accommodate 50 people, in effect making it a service dominated by the group. Said Hacke: "I felt at the time, and still do, that this was a ministry which was very valuable for those kids, so we just

gave them the service and concentrated on bringing families and college students to the 9 o'clock service."<sup>10</sup>

From the beginning, St. Michael's has been an important spiritual home for students. The Rev. Donald Longenecker was an undergraduate at the university from 1956-58, having served in the Marine Corps from 1953-56. Longenecker was the first St. Michaelite to go on to seminary and be ordained after he graduated from the university. When he arrived at St. Michael's he had already discerned a call to the priesthood. Longenecker served as an acolyte and lay reader in the mission. Another student during the Longenecker's time was Molly Young, who went on to become a sister in the "non-traditional" religious order. After Hacke moved on, the chaplains' residence was vacant for about four years, because the second vicar chose to live in Santa Barbara instead. During that time the building served as an Episcopal campus ministry center. Longenecker lived there with other students, keeping the building and grounds clean and well-groomed in exchange for free rent. The newly formed University Religious Conference had its first home in the building in 1957. Its first director, Sam Thomsen, also lived in the building. On March 19, 1956, the Southern California Conference of College Workers, a voluntary interdenominational association of campus ministers, recommended the location of a URC center in Isla Vista. The center was built several years later on Camino Pescadero, across the street from St. Michael's. On Sept. 28, 1958, "Welcome Day" the first all-URC event at the university, was held at St. Michael's.

David Gifford, later to become a colonel in the Marine Corps, was an undergraduate and member of St. Michael's at the same time from 1958-60. In fact, Longenecker was the Resident Assistant of Juniper Hall, where Gifford first lived at the university. Gifford remembers the new campus having the flavor of being on a marine base. At the time there were few permanent buildings; North Hall (then the classroom building), Santa Rosa Hall, the Physical Sciences building, and part of the library. The Juniper Hall dormitory was a former bachelor officers' quarters with housing for 25 men.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.4

Gifford's wife, Marcia, was confirmed at St. Michael's in 1960 by the Rt. Rev. Robert E. Campbell, a member of Holy Cross and missionary bishop of the Virgin Islands. Bishop Campbell, who lived at Mt. Calvary Retreat House, had an important pastoral ministry with students in the 1950s and 1960s.

Isla Vista was "quite wide open" in those days. There were a few apartment houses and fraternities and sororities. Several of the people from the early days remembered that the peace and quiet of Isla Vista was disturbed more than a few times by a nearby fraternity, Sigma Phi Epsilon, which lived up to its party animal reputation. Gifford remembers that one time several of the frat boys, who had too much to drink, stole a bulldozer from a construction site for a joy ride in the middle of the night.

Gifford also lived in the St. Michael's building with his friend Michael Flynn. They resided in the room which, ironically, is across from the room which was occupied by Gifford's son Brian, when Brian lived in Canterbury House in 1991 when it opened. The residence served as a kind of gathering place for students during his time at St. Michael's. Friends from the dorms would get together on Saturday nights because the dorm food service shut down on weekends. Some of the students were avid skin divers, and Gifford remembers some great shellfish feeds in those days. His enduring memory of student gatherings was of going down to Goleta Beach in the evenings with chipped beef sandwiches or frog legs brought by a student from the Biology Department after dissections and picnicking while watching the only scheduled airliner fly into the Santa Barbara airport. Ah, the days before cable TV!

The house also served as an office for the priest, and there was a room used for Christian education classes as well. Twelve-step groups began using the Big Room at that time also. The building served as a multipurpose facility in many ways, some unforeseen by the original designers. Gifford recalls negotiating an agreement with the Bishop's Committee to keep his brand-new Volkswagen in the garage (now the education classroom) on Mondays through Saturdays and move it on Sundays so that the Sunday School could meet there.



In a testimonial, Julie R. Rodgers, who graduated from UCSB in 1961, called St. Michael's "the primary source of religious education" for Episcopal students at the university:

In addition to offering a place for worship and a source of knowledge, St. Michael's gives preparation for assuming an active place in Christendom. It has given me an opportunity to serve as a Sunday School teacher, an officer in Canterbury and as an altar guild member...Through the Canterbury program I have participated with students of the entire diocese in annual conferences....The most enriching experience, and perhaps the turning point in my life, was granted to me through being able to work with the church in Puerto Rico this past summer.<sup>11</sup>

Clearly, in its first years of ministry St. Michael's had become a place where college students could experience life-changing formation as Christian leaders, both lay and ordained.

### III. New Directions in Ministry

The university's move to Goleta was not the only growth-inducing impact that came to the community. It was estimated that every additional student enrolled in the university brought five more people to the community. Research and development industries such as Raytheon and Aerophysics Research Corporation flooded Goleta, bringing thousands of new residents to live in the subdivisions springing up along the Highway 101 corridor. Between 1954 and 1961, St. Michael's tripled in membership. A dual mission of St. Michael's began to emerge: ministry to the campus and to the burgeoning community of Goleta. Over the church's history, this two-pronged approach at best has shown a congregation's willingness to stretch itself in serving the different pastoral needs of "town and gown." At worst it has bogged down in confusion of purpose and intra-church turmoil (more on this later). Col. David Gifford, who was a part of the congregation as a student in the late

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<sup>11</sup> from the Trinity Parish News, April 1961, p.3

1950s, remembers St. Michael's as a "chimera," an animal which had not yet decided on an identity. While students flocked to the church, families—some of whom were connected with the university, others not—also began to become members.

In August 1958, the Rev. Henry Coke became the second vicar-chaplain. Coke came from the diocese of Dallas and was called with the express purpose of concentrating on college work. Coke, whose salary was paid by the diocese's Department of College Work, soon experienced the tension of being pulled in the two directions of campus ministry and mission development. The congregation was officially organized as a mission of the diocese in 1960. At a meeting of persons interested in the development of the new mission on Feb. 14, 1961, the Rev. Canon Noble Owings, member of diocesan staff, reported that the current all-purpose building at St. Michael's was originally designed to be used jointly by the students and the mission congregation, "until the latter grew in numbers and financial strength to the point of being able to finance their own building program."

At that time, the mission would decide whether to stay on the present site or move into another part of town and leave the original property exclusively to the college program.<sup>12</sup>

It became clear at the meeting, however, that the mission congregation had already decided, because of rapid growth in the Goleta community, to build a permanent church at St. Michael's. Soon after Coke arrived, Bishop Bloy pressured him to develop the growing congregation. In a letter to the people of Trinity Parish, Bishop Bloy in 1961 said, "We see St. Michael and All Angels' Church as both a college religious center and also as a place of worship for the growing mission congregation. It is evident that we are ideally located for reaching the students and faculty, and we have been assured that the main growth of the town itself will take place near and around our property." The letter was part of the fund-raising drive begun by Trinity in 1957 to build a larger, more traditional worship space for St. Michael's.

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<sup>12</sup> from a report written by Owings Feb. 21, 1961

Fund-raising was taken up once again by Trinity Parish, through the legendary talents of Col. Henry T. Bull. Bull was a long-time senior warden at Trinity, and in fact served as a non-member senior warden of St. Michael's during Coke's ministry. Bull and his wife, Sally, were influential fixtures in Santa Barbara with dozens of contacts with people of means. Bull was a wizard at soliciting personal donations. In addition to raising nearly \$14,000 at Trinity, he also solicited nearly \$10,000 from members of All Saints Parish. Members of St. Michael's kicked in \$5,189, and the diocese put up \$15,000, totally more than \$45,000 for the new sanctuary.

In June 1960 the Bishops' Committee retained Carleton M. Winslow of Los Angeles to be the architect of the new plant. The architect was given a number of strict requirements for design of the worship space. The building had to accommodate 300 people as a medium-sized parish church. It must appeal to college students, and its cost must be no more than \$47,500, including architect's fee, stained glass, and furnishings. The Bishop's Committee seemingly asked the impossible of Winslow. They said the sanctuary should be "distinctly religious in feeling on the exterior and have a feeling of extended space on the interior (and)...should make use of the most common, inexpensive, and available materials." The result was "not a preconceived design imposed by the architect on the structure, but rather grew out of the special requirements and other restrictions imposed on the architect," according to Arts and Architecture magazine, which featured the design in its March 1963 issue. The building, meant to represent in modern design the simplicity of the Israelites' tent for the LORD God during their wilderness wanderings, was constructed of steel frames eight feet apart and covered by two-by-three-foot Douglas fir. Clear glass stands at the church's entrance, to symbolize openness to the university (which it faces). The building sweeps upward to a sharp vertical peak at the other end over the altar "expressive of the transcendence of the sacraments."<sup>13</sup> The design also called for an altar, altar rails, pulpit and lectern, all constructed of poured cement.

At the opposite end of the building, a stained-glass window interpreting the patronage of the archangel Michael was planned. Vern Swanson, curator of adult education at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, designed the window,

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<sup>13</sup> Kennedy, p.6.

which was assembled by the John Wallis Glass Studio of Los Angeles. Among the images of St. Michael combined in the abstract design are his jeweled crown, the trodden serpent, a pair of wings, a cross with a circle in the middle of it, and scales (Michael was to be the weigher of departed souls). The glass was produced by the Cathedral Glass People of Indiana.<sup>14</sup>

While the new worship space was being planned, a new vicar/chaplain came to St. Michael's. Coke, after assisting in the fund-raising drive for the new building, returned to his native Texas in the summer of 1961. The Rev. John C. Keester arrived in August. Keester had previously served as vicar of a small congregation and assistant at St. Jude's Episcopal Church in Burbank. Prior to coming to St. Michael's, he had been studying for a master's degree at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In January 1962, construction of the new building commenced. Gust Bernhult again was the general contractor. The building was completed six months later. Dedication of the building was held Sat., June 30, 1962 with the Rt. Rev. Ivol Ira Curtis, suffragan bishop, officiating. Construction was overseen by Dr. C. Warren Hollister, bishop's warden and member of the History Department at the university. Others on the Bishop's Committee in 1962 were Sidney Petertyl, clerk; Samuel S. Harris, treasurer; and Howard Homes, Maj. Robert B. Sylvester, Ret., and William R. Thomas, members-at-large,

Hollister and his wife, Edith, were important to the growth of the mission in its early days. In a statement made in the fund-raising campaign in 1961, Hollister reflected:

Our family began attending St. Michael's Church about two and a half years ago when I started teaching history at the University. I can remember vividly the tiny congregation that used to attend the Sunday service. On an average Sunday there would be perhaps ten or fifteen students and two adult couples, ourselves included. When the students were away on vacations or long holidays, the congregation

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<sup>14</sup> "Local Artist Designs Glass," Santa Barbara News-Press, date and page unknown.

might be reduced to five or six. Quite frankly, Mrs. Hollister and I were tempted to join the congregation of Trinity Church, where we would become a part of a large and well-organized parish and could worship in an atmosphere of beauty, dignity, and gothic majesty. St. Michael's surrounded by empty fields, was actually a house rather than a church structure. It was dusty, undeveloped, and a little forlorn. But we decided that it was, after all, our mission and in a sense our responsibility.<sup>15</sup>

The Hollisters today look back on their time at St. Michael's and remember a congregation that balanced "substantial parish and student ministries." Many students came to rely upon the friendship of families at St. Michael's, and the families enjoyed the stimulating presence of students.

Even as the congregation began to take on a more conventional image in the community, there were still signs that the unusual would continue to be part of St. Michael's story. On May 6, 1961, the congregation dedicated its "space bell" at an afternoon service. The bell actually was part of an Atlas missile titanium gas reservoir that received a slight dimensional imperfection during its manufacture by Arcturus Manufacturing Co. According to Sidney V. Petertyl, member of the Bishop's Committee and the person who arranged for St. Michael's to obtain the bell, one of the company's executives happened to give the missile part a "swift kick" as it was being loaded on a truck to be taken to the scrap metal heap. The kick revealed "its magnificent bell tone."<sup>16</sup>

The truck drove away empty, and Mr. McCormick (the executive) went home that night with a well-scuffed shoe and a determination to get some expert opinions as to whether his rejected missile forging would qualify for a church bell. He was directed to the famous stained-glass studio of Horace Judson in Los Angeles, and then, after a shoe-scuffing, first-bruising audition,

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<sup>15</sup> From the Trinity Parish News, April 1961, p.2.

<sup>16</sup> Episcopal Mission Slated to Dedicate 'Space Bell', Santa Barbara News-Press, May 6, 1991, p.A-6.

the rejected forging was enthusiastically promoted to being a church bell.<sup>17</sup>

The bell was christened "The Prophet Isaiah" during the dedication ceremony. The bell was seen as a modern-day sword-being-turned-into-plowshare story, especially appropriate because of the church's proximity to Vandenberg Air Force Base. The addition of the bell reflected the research and development industry's growing influence on St. Michael's. (Petertyl was an engineer with Servo-mechanisms in Goleta.)

With the new church building completed, the congregation could grow without hindrance. The building was actually only part of a master plan drawn up for St. Michael's. The plan included additional buildings for a social hall, mission office, and church school, but they were never built. It was originally hoped that the diocese would offer more financial support for the new mission development, but money was not forthcoming. In 1962, with the number of young families booming at St. Michael's, the idea of a Nursery School arose. Noreen Price was the sparkplug for the idea. Noreen, her husband, Paul, and children came to St. Michael's in 1961 from Trinity Parish when they moved to Goleta. Noreen, who had taught nursery school in Montecito, remembers teaching Sunday School in the early days in what was the garage, light provided by a single hanging light bulb. Though space was tight and money scarce, the church developed a Sunday School for 15-16 children. Teaching supplies were brought from home. Noreen taught the preschoolers, Cally Brennand and Mary Wolthausen taught the older children, and Ann Glenn the kindergarteners.

Noreen lobbied Keester about the Nursery School idea, and he enthusiastically supported it. The Bishop's Committee sent a delegation to the diocesan office to pitch the idea, including the Prices, Leo Blickley, the late Bill Jackson (Bishop's Warden), and Pete Cochrane. "Bishop Bloy said 'OK, but you're on your own,'" she remembers. The diocese made it clear that it would not pay for the nursery school building and would not be responsible for the school's finances. However, the diocese did grant an \$18,000 loan for a home in Goleta on Windsor Avenue to house the vicar and

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



his family. The purchase freed up the old living quarters to house the new Nursery School.

The school was opened in September 1963 on a shoestring, an all-out effort by the tiny congregation. Construction was done at cost by contractor and church member Herb Braun. Volunteers, skilled and not so skilled, put in hundreds of hours to get the school ready. The Price's son, Patrick, built the outside play equipment as did the father of Peg Dowd. Peg Dowd was the school's first secretary-treasurer. Painting and fences all were done by the congregation. A dentist, the late Jack Nelson, helped build the roof over the breezeway between the old garage (then converted into an office) and the main school building. The Bishop's Committee authorized a loan of \$700 or so for tables and chairs. The rest of the construction funds came from fund-raising by members of the congregation. Paul Price put up bulletin boards, and Jack Nelson and Paul took out the wall between the two bedrooms in the rear of the building (the wall has since been put back in). The bathtub in the bathroom in the hallway was covered up and replaced with a storage unit.

In the beginning the school's and the church's supporters were the same people. The school shared its facilities with the church's Sunday School. "There was a great deal of cooperation in those days," remember Noreen. The Nursery School opened as a non-denominational school for all children between the ages of two and one-half and five and one-half. The goals of the new school were

1. To help prepare children for school by teaching them first steps in communication, listening, following instructions and participating in group activities.
2. To provide new sensory experiences in science, music, arts and crafts, dramatic play and stories in an atmosphere of Christian nurture.
3. To provide opportunities for vigorous physical play and, above all, to help children learn to get along with other people.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "New Isla Vista nursery school," Santa Barbara News-Press, unknown date and page number.

Price was the first director-teacher. Other staff members were Cally Brennand, Barbara Lansing, Betty Duffey, Mrs. Hamilton Hauck, and Joan Johnson. Substitute teachers on call were Julia Greer and Jean Schuyler. In the beginning, the school was licensed for two-day-per-week and three-day-per-week classes. Tuition was \$40 per month. The school was designed for enrollment of 75 children. "The first registration was 68 boys-- for some strange reason not one girl. Fr. Keester said, 'Looks like it's going to be St. Michael's Academy.'" remembers Price. She and Keester were anxious as the start of the school approached. If the venture failed, there would be no institution to bail them out. Their worries were unfounded because the school was a great success, but its inaugural day had an unlucky break. On the first day of school, her own son Peter, 3, one of those enrolled, fell off the top of the playground equipment and fractured his arm. Price and Keester conferred. Both agreed that she could not leave the school because as director it was licensed in her name. The priest ended up accompanying the child to the hospital.

The school's operation was assisted by a board of directors. First officers of the board were Claudia Garrett, president, and Mrs. Doyne Basye, vice president. Later, other board members included current member of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Bill Wallace and pediatrician David Medina, M.D. Three parent-meetings per year were scheduled. The first took place in September. The speakers were Sarah Foote of Starr King Nursery School in Santa Barbara and Mary Ellen Solin, kindergarten teacher and member of St. Michael's. Their topic: "Will Nursery School Ruin Kindergarten for My Child?"

The preschool made a \$2 profit in its first year of operation— Price did not take a salary that year. Later, as the non-profit school became established, it provided rental income to its host church. Many of the children enrolled in the school belonged to families in transition. They were young families starting out in Isla Vista before being able to move into other parts of Goleta and Santa Barbara. Most of the people whose children were in the preschool were professionals and associated with the university.

Work parties were just some of the social occasions for the congregation. A group of men led by Paul Price poured the concrete sidewalks that led to the

sanctuary. Madeline Blickley and Price made red and white choir robes for the children. Others active in the congregation during the early years were the Joe Pummill family, the Dave Brown family, Charles Luckman, the Howard Cook family, Cynthia and Bill Thomas, Claudia and Tim Garrett, Mary and Larry Wolthausen, Bernice Joseph, Hugh and Ann Glenn, Pam and John Stoney, the late Ben Fancher, Bob and Ruth Profant, Dick and Peg Down, Bill and Flow Jackson, Jack and Betty Nelson, and William and Patrice Davidson.

Like many Episcopal churches in the 1950s and early 1960s, St. Michael's saw a rapid growth in Sunday attendance. Attendance at its peak was around 30 to 50 at the early service and often topped 200 for the 10 a.m. service. Sunday School attendance often was between 70-80 children. The numbers in attendance reflected the ethos of the time: the Goleta area was growing and baby-boom families routinely went to church on Sundays. Also, Keester was a very popular vicar. A News-Press announcement on Sept. 7, 1963, about St. Michael's read: "this is a family service with special welcome to UCSB students." The services were typical Episcopal fare: 1928 Prayer Book, no music at 8 a.m. There were about 12 people in the choir, which sang during the late service. New choir director Marilyn F. Somville started in November 1963. Families often got together socially and many attended family camp at Lake Cachuma every year. Keester especially remembered the day when John F. Kennedy was assassinated: "The church just filled up. People came and went throughout the day. It was very emotional."

In spite of the fact that the parish ministry mushroomed, the campus side of the mission did not suffer. Keester, who felt his primary ministry was to the university, did most of the work with the students, visiting them on campus, and participating in the URC. University restrictions on religious activity on campus lifted somewhat during the 1960s. The Religious Studies Department was founded at that time. St. Michael's sponsored the Rt. Rev. James Pike, controversial bishop of California, to come and speak on campus. "Pike talked about the fact that everyone has a religion, and a set of convictions-- he was trying to build bridges to people who did not consider themselves religious," Keester remembers. Warren Hollister and others from the university helped arrange faculty programs in the parish. The priest never felt any tension in the congregation between "town and gown." I never felt I got one job done, but I had a lot of different things to do, and it was a lot of fun," says Keester, who now lives in Bakersfield. "It was an

exciting, stimulating time. There was a lot of interaction between people, both town and student- folk." The campus upheaval that was to come later in the decade did not occur in Keester's time at St. Michael's. He remembers that a person with the Free Speech movement from Berkeley came in the early 1960s but struggled to get political action going on campus.

Keester moved on from St. Michael's in 1965 to become secretary for campus ministry for the Diocese of Los Angeles. When he left, there was a strong feeling that there needed to be two priests there, one for campus, one for parish.

Another person who was a student at St. Michael's and later ordained a priest is the Rev. Michael Flynn. Now the rector of St. Jude's Parish in Burbank, Flynn was at UCSB from 1958-1963. He lived in what is now Canterbury House in 1959-60, before the building became the Nursery School. Keester's appointment as vicar was a kind of reunion, because the two had been acquainted at St. Jude's when Keester was curate. Flynn remembers Isla Vista as empty field, fraternities and sororities springing up, and from life in old Marine barracks. A "solid 15 students" were regularly in attendance at St. Michael's. The Rev. Jerry Drino, now rector of multi-cultural St. Philip's Episcopal Church in San Jose, was part of the Canterbury group. (While Flynn was sponsored by St. Michael's for the priesthood, Drino was sponsored by a different parish.)

Flynn served as a Sunday School teacher and president of the URC. The interfaith organization brought speakers on campus for dorm lounge events. He remembers one program, "a Ban the Bomb" lecture by a physicist, which was attended by 50 to 60 students. There was a presentation of Christopher Fry's play Sleep of Prisoners on Sunday evening by the Bishop's Company of California, a group of Christian professional actors that performed all over the country. In 1959 he was one of a dozen students who attended a national Episcopal student gathering in Colorado Springs, Colo. Busloads of students from all over the country gathered there to hear such speakers as the Rev. George F. Titman of Berkeley and Bishop Daniel Corrigan. There was a series of interdenominational suppers in 1963 in which the students discussed the theology of Paul Tillich and ecumenicity and watched the film La Dolce Vita.

Keester had a profound impact upon Flynn's path to ordained ministry: "John had a way of disciplining people by letting them sidekick along side of him, going to the hospital, going around campus, interacting with people," remembers Flynn.

Flynn had one unforgettable experience at St. Michael's in which he stayed in the church all night praying after the birth of his son. The child, four days old, was experiencing trouble breathing and doctors were not sure the child would make it through the night: "I stomped up and down the aisles demanding and pleading with God. I woke up the next morning having slept on a pew. The phone rang. The hospital called and said he was OK."

As a student, interacting with families in the parish was very important to Flynn. One summer, while the Hollisters were away, the Flynn's and the Keesters lived together in the Hollister's home. There they had Cantebrury gatherings—"my first experience of living in Christian community."

In the idyllic 1950s and early 1960s, a kind of golden age for higher education, few people had any idea of the upheaval that was to come on college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s. The civil rights movement and the Vietnam War would bring storms of dissension, and the effects of such strife would be felt in the small but growing congregation of St. Michael's.

#### IV. Struggles

In the mid-1960s the American dream began to become unraveled for "the establishment." The disempowered—women, young people and minorities—however, began to get a glimpse of the hope that the dream of justice and equality would be theirs as well. For the Episcopal Church, the changes of the 1960s were as painful as they were liberating, because it was a church of the establishment. The national church began to lose members as its leadership struggled with the issue of racial justice. Funding for campus ministry began to compete with various social ministries. Congregations, like the rest of the country, were divided over the moral question of the war in Vietnam. Prayer Book revision, which put the liturgy into modern language at the expense of the beloved Elizabethan English of the 1928 Prayer Book, was too much for many traditionalists to bear. And women, empowered by a

national movement for equal rights, began to break down the walls separating them from ordained ministry.

These and other factors conspired to debilitate the burgeoning mission of St. Michael's in the 1960s and 1970s. While the issues of civil rights, the war in Southeast Asia, women's rights, and the revision of the Prayer Book did not cause monumental division in the congregation, the general decline of membership in the Episcopal Church was felt at St. Michael's. Attendance in the late 1960s dropped to half of its peak levels from earlier in the decade.

Another issue that proved problematic for St. Michael's was the decline of life in Isla Vista. Rapid, unbridled growth in the first two decades of the university's existence in Isla Vista resulted in "the most densely populated community west of the Mississippi"<sup>19</sup>

While campus development was based on a plan, Isla Vista growth was based on the "boom town" philosophies of the fast, easy money and benign neglect. The County of Santa Barbara...was responsible for building permits in the new community, and its Board of Supervisors encouraged a total lack of regard for sound planning practices by approving variances to almost every zoning requirement applicable to the area. UCSB administrators, by their silence, shunned their responsibility to see that the housing available to their students was safe and adequate for the long-term. As a result, the Isla Vista experiment developed as one of the most densely populated communities in the United States. If water supply had not become a factor in 1972, Isla Vista could have been built out to accommodate 44,000 people.<sup>20</sup>

More than 90 percent of the community's dwelling units were rentals, and Isla Vista increasingly became a transitional community. As political activism

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<sup>19</sup> Lodise, p.5.

<sup>20</sup> Isla Vista Enhancement Committee, Isla Vista Enhancement Report, (published by the Isla Vista Enhancement Committee, January 1992, p. I-1).



among students increased, as it did all over the country, Isla Vista became a hot bed of disturbance. Mary Ellen Solin, who began attending St. Michael's in 1959 (she currently has been an active member of the congregation longer than anyone else), says Isla Vista in the 1950s was an undeveloped area with ramshackle cottages. St. Michael's and the Isla Vista Market (with a porch on its front) were the only public buildings. Life was quiet in those days, except for a rowdy frat party or two. In contrast, Isla Vista in the late 1960s and early 1970s was raucous. Mary Ellen and her husband, Larry, owned and lived in an apartment building in the center of town. From their home they watched students turning over dumpsters and setting them on fire, police officers chasing them and setting off tear gas to disperse crowds, and National Guard trucks with soldiers carrying guns.

On Feb. 25, 1970, William Kunstler, attorney for the "Chicago Eight" and prominent civil rights activist, spoke to a crowd in Campus Stadium. The community was ripe for disturbance, because the day before some local activists were arrested on what were said to be trumped-up charges.<sup>21</sup> After Kunstler's speech, a number of police cars patrolled Isla Vista, and a student was arrested and beaten. In response rioters roamed the community setting police cars on fire and set the Bank of America ablaze. Then-Gov. Ronald Reagan sent in the National Guard to bring order. Two months later, during a demonstration at the re-opened bank, undergraduate Kevin Moran was shot and killed by a police officer. An inquest ruled the shooting was accidental. Riots and disturbances continued in the community with heavy-handed response by the police and National Guard.

Into this turbulence came the Rev. George Hartung, who became vicar/chaplain of St. Michael's in September 1965. He came to Isla Vista from St. Augustine's in Santa Monica, where he assisted then-rector Robert Rusack, who later came bishop of the diocese. Hartung's unusual pastoral style evoked a range of emotions and support from parishioners. His memories of the community include drug abuse, demonstrations against the Vietnam war, students enrolled to avoid the draft, angry students urinating against the ROTC building, activists coming in to politicize the university: "One guy drove into the stadium, just like Castro, high on drugs, in a jeep, and talked off the top of his head."

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<sup>21</sup> Lodise, p.6.

I always wore my collar on campus. They always used to razz me about wearing my clerical collar. I'd eat lunch over there. When the riots came and the National Guard showed up, the Guard had helicopters and big trucks roaming around the street telling (the students) they had to be in the rooms at 7:30 p.m. The students would be lined up at the Embarcadero circle. The National Guard was standing at attention by 7:15 at that area in the middle. And then across the street would be every kid on the campus. And they would just be waiting. The helicopters would start....a kid on drugs would throw something and then the confrontation would start. People would go and see what was happening.<sup>22</sup>

One evening a concerned Hartung watched from his office at St. Michael's as three students violated the curfew. At once came a National Guard truck. One of the students raced to a second-floor apartment, with one of the guards right behind him. The students slammed the door, and the soldier broke through the door. There he was with his gun facing the kid."

Nursery School Director Noreen Price remembers watching the children playing "ring around the rosie" in the play yard as the ABC, NBC, and CBS television news trucks followed the guard-versus-students action through the streets around St. Michael's. The school developed an evacuation plan in case of emergencies, and in spite of the turmoil, she contends the school did not lose any enrollment.

Hartung remembers the congregation as a diverse mix: well-dressed community families, students with tie-dye T-shirts and jeans, and elderly residents of Friendship Manor. The now-retired priest feels it was a "difficult mix." There was one student, he recalls, who came to church who sat in the back and whistled. One evening he entered the dark church sanctuary and heard a strange humming noise. When he turned on the lights, he discovered a group of Hare Krishnas meditating. The Krishnas later

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<sup>22</sup> from a conversation with Hartung, July 5, 1994.

asked to erect cement Indian sculptures on the grounds of St. Michael's. In exchange they said they would cut the grass. Hartung declined the offer. The priest feels that when the drug abuse problem in Isla Vista arose, many families decided not to come into Isla Vista for church. Vandalism of the church became a routine problem.

Another development that factored into the decline of St. Michael's as a mission to the larger community was the birth of a sister Episcopal Church in Goleta, Christ the King. Christ the King began as a small group of Episcopalians who wanted an alternative to the existing Episcopal churches in town. The new congregation, which first met in a Lutheran Church in Goleta and later moved to Bishop Diego School, drew not only from St. Michael's but also from Trinity, All Saints and non-Episcopalian Goletans who were attracted to the new congregation's charismatic, back-to-the-Bible identity.

Hartung and others felt the diocese let down the congregation of St. Michael's by allowing a second mission to be started in the community. However, from the diocese's perspective, a determined, faithful group of people at Christ the King involved in a promising new ministry, required the diocese's support. In addition, the diocese saw realistically that a number of families were shying away from the church in Isla Vista because of the turbulence. Ann Jaqua, a member of Christ the King in its early days, believes the diocese could have communicated more clearly with the leadership of St. Michael's about its change of mission strategy in Goleta. Though the diocese's decision sowed seeds for a possible intermission rivalry, the two congregations have co-existed amicably, while not having much to do with each other. (In 1976 St. Michael's hosted a joint Christmas service with Christ the King with 285 people in attendance.)

In spite of the struggles of the 1960s and 1970s, St. Michael's managed to maintain itself as a congregation of students and mostly university-related families with an interest in progressive issues and worship. On one memorable Easter Sunday in 1968, controversial Bishop James Pike came to St. Michael's, drawing 99 people at the early service and 489 at the main service. The congregation was so large that the doors had to be opened so that people outside could hear. Bishop Bloy had forbidden Pike to preach or celebrate the mass in the diocese because of his experimentation with the occult (Pike had been involved in a highly publicized séance in an attempt to

communicate with his late son.) Hartung called Bishop Robert Rusack and asked for advice as to how he could get permission for Pike to participate in the liturgy. Russack suggested the Hartung have Pike "do the announcement." Pike announced, "Today is Easter" proceeded to preach on the resurrection to the overflowing crowd.

Hartung, his wry sense of humor still intact today, waxed hot and cold in his interest in the University Religious Conference. Once he showed up at a URC meeting after a long absence and announced to his colleagues that he had "given up his boycott of the URC for Lent." Hartung did work closely with the Rev. Otto Bremer, pastor of Lutheran Campus Ministry, which began to hold services at St. Michael's at that time. One year the Episcopalians and Lutherans decided to celebrate Easter together. The first year the Episcopalians brought out the thurible for incense and a High Mass, something the Lutherans were not accustomed to. The Lutherans got even the next Easter at another joint service, according to Hartung. Before the service began Hartung was puzzled by the sound of popping outside the church. The noise was the Lutherans popping champagne bottles (communion wine) to "celebrate the resurrection.

As Isla Vista evolved into a student ghetto, St. Michael's reflected the changing complexion of the community. In the spring of 1968 Roberta King, a Baptist student, was the organist, and Rod Punt, also a student, was the choir director.<sup>23</sup> The Rev. Carl Winter, now a brother with the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, Mass., was also a student during that period. The Rev. Daniel H. Martins, now serving a church in Baton Rouge, La., was a student and organist during Hartung's time at St. Michael's. Louise Johnson was at St. Michael's from 1966 to 1970. She and her husband, Gordon Buck, were married there in 1970. The Bucks are now prominent leaders in St. David's Episcopal Parish in San Diego. Louise remembers St. Michael's as a community of people for whom a life of prayer and the sacraments were very important. "It was a very important place for me, an anchor," she says.

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<sup>23</sup>"Episcopalians and Lutherans Have Rites at St. Michael's," Santa Barbara News-Press, March 17, 1968, p.D-6.

While at St. Michael's I was coming out of an Anglo-Catholic thing. I was beginning to see spirituality as more than doing things the liturgically correct way. I used to put little hippie flower stickers in my Holy Cross breviary. That's a symbol of what St. Michael's did: take what is traditional and give it a little zip.<sup>24</sup>

St. Michael's featured a Homecoming Sunday on the feast of St. Michael every year to welcome returning students for the new academic year. Other students at the time were Mark Gabbart, who now teaches history at the University of Winnipeg in Canada, and Art Kassebaum and Verdery Doolittle, who were married at St. Michael's in 1968. (The Kassebaums are now leaders at Good Samaritan Episcopal Parish in San Diego.) The students benefited from the ministry of numerous monks from nearby Mt. Calvary Retreat House of the Order of Holy Cross, including Bishop Campbell, Br. Cyprian, Br. Coniface, Fr. John Wahlsted, Fr. Parsell, and Fr. Bonnell Spencer.

Even though students were the primary focus of ministry at St. Michael's in the 1960s and early 1970s, there remained a solid core of faithful non-students who kept St. Michael's alive. Nancy Gilbert, who was part of the congregation from 1973-79 (and briefly returned in 1992-3), remembers St. Michael's "as a very close congregation, a very strong feeling of community." There were social happenings every month, gatherings around a particular event. For example, on Aug. 25, 1974, to celebrate the burning of the mortgage, the congregation held a barbeque. (In fact, the mortgage was burned in the barbecue pit.) Rummage sales would be followed by potlucks. Nancy was involved in numerous ways at St. Michael's. She created the dramatic banner of St. Michael holding a jeweled chalice. (Gilbert used herself as model for the archangel, and the angel's pose comes from a mosaic in Gethsemane Chapel of Coventry Cathedral in England.) She also made the "sing" banner that hangs in the sanctuary and a dramatic crown of thorns altar frontal, and began The Messenger a monthly newsletter. Lectors in the 1970s included Kitty and Ken Evans, Bruce McIver, Ken Moes, Lonnie and Don Struble, Jerry Symer, Nancy, Deborah Aseltine (wife of Michael Bamberger, who went on to be ordained), Jessie Breytspraak and John Getchell. The Bishop's Committee one year included Henry Larson, treasurer,

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<sup>24</sup> From a conversation with Louise Buck, Sept. 19, 1994.

Robeson Chambers, bishop's warden (Chambers was a prominent campus architect); Bill McMoorean, junior warden, and Jan Bailey, clerk.

St. Michael's earned a reputation for being liturgically progressive. Gilbert remembers the congregation as being the only one in Santa Barbara which used "the green book," which contained the trial Prayer Book liturgies. Fr. Bonnell Spencer, who served as supply priest at St. Michael's after Hartung's departure, was chairman of the committee that revised the initiation rites for the new Prayer Book, and he taught at St. Michael's often about changes in the new liturgy. The Rt. Rev. George Barrett, retired bishop of the diocese of Rochester, became a member of St. Michael's in September 1972. He remembers Spence teaching the congregation about not needing the priestly blessing after communion: "You don't need a blessing after the Eucharist because you have already been blessed. But I'm not willing to go to the stake for that one."<sup>25</sup>

Barrett participated in the "irregular ordination" of four women in September 1975 in Washington, D.C., after he retired as bishop of Rochester. (The ordinations took place before the ordination of women was approved by General Convention in 1976.) This followed shortly after the late Bishop Daniel Corrigan, also of Santa Barbara, took part in irregular ordinations of 11 women in July 1974 in Philadelphia. Barrett preached and taught often at St. Michael's, as did Corrigan. Corrigan and Barrett came to St. Michael's and gave a forum after the Philadelphia ordinations to discuss their views on women's ordination. Barrett remembers that the people of St. Michael's were "quite receptive" to the idea of ordaining women, and a Roman Catholic official appeared to be implicitly sympathetic by attending the forum: The Rev. Basil Meeking, a friend of Corrigan and at that time an ecumenical officer in Rome. (Meeking later became a Catholic bishop in New Zealand.)

St. Michael's was a very open and welcoming congregation, and included both academics and people of Goleta. They were not conventional Episcopalians. There were people who were open to new things, open

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<sup>25</sup> From a conversation with Bishop Barrett, Sept. 17, 1994



on the liturgy, open to the idea of church being on the edge of new things.<sup>26</sup>

Even with the neighborhood in turmoil, St. Michael's Nursery School thrived as a highly rated school. (In the beginning, it was the only Episcopal school between San Francisco and Los Angeles.) The school was the primary outreach of the Bishop's Committee, and it gave birth to a secondary ministry called Operation Kids. Operation Kids started after a local pediatrician spoke to the teachers about supporting the growing number of single-mother households with children in Isla Vista. Single mothers moved to Isla Vista because of the relatively inexpensive rent. While the mothers worked, their children were often in need of quality care and attention. At first, the congregation responded with a tutoring program for children through Isla Vista School. Later, Operation Kids became a summer activity program for disadvantaged children. The program began with 150 children, offering camp activities, sewing, wood-working, crocheting, baking, bicycle repair, and swimming. The congregation "passed the hat" to finance the program, and the talents of people of the community were tapped for various program activities: "It seemed like every little old lady in Goleta was saving egg cartons, fabrics, and yarn for Operation Kids", remembers Ann Jaqua. Later, the program expanded to a site at St. Anthony's Seminary and served 500 children, including a week's camping for disadvantaged kids. The program was an all-out effort by members of the congregation, including Noreen Price, Ken Moes, the Rev. George Hartung, Rae Anne McClennon, Ann Jaqua, Mary Wolthausen (who was the program's registered nurse,) and John Stoney (swim coach at San Marcos High School who ran the swimming program). Boosters also included pastors from other churches and the URC, Elizabeth Ryan, head of St. Paul's Episcopal School in Ventura, and Lou Smitheram of Trinity Parish. The program raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over a seven-year period.

St. Michael's called a new vicar in 1976. Hartung, ready for a change, moved on to a parish assignment in Hawaii. In the summer of 1976, the Rev. Harlan Weitzell became the fifth vicar/chaplain of St. Michael's. It was the first time that the congregation was allowed to conduct its own search. Prior to Weitzel, all vicars had been appointed by the bishop.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Weitzel was a popular vicar among many of his parishioners and known for being an excellent preacher. In contrast with his predecessor, the new vicar focused on the mission to non-students, especially faculty. According to historian Rick Kennedy,

It is not surprising that during the student riots and disastrous developments in foreign policy and the domestic economy...the church retracted some from its original vision of missionary activities to the university and community and instead put its energies into supplying a stable church in the midst of the chaos.<sup>27</sup>

Weitzel for several years was assisted by a student intern, Michael Bamberger, who came to the university in 1974. Bamberger, now rector of Ascension Parish in Sierra Madre near Pasadena, said St. Michael's was a mix of families and students during his years there. There was a Sunday School for children. The vicar and Bamberger worked together on campus ministry, including a Bible study led by Weitzel and a student fellowship group organized by Bamberger. Weitzel worked closely with fellow campus ministers in the URC, including offering an ecumenical Good Friday service at St. Michael's.

In the late 1970s, Isla Vista was settling back down after the riots. Fraternities and sororities resurfaced after becoming scarce the decade before. Instead of political action, students focused on studying, partying, and perfecting their tans (not necessarily in that order). St. Michael's was an important place not only for Bamberger's Christian formation but for his personal life as well: "My wife, Debbie, and I met at a wild party in Isla Vista and saw each other again at church the next day." Bamberger remembers the non-student population patiently taking students like him under their wing. When he and Debbie left, the people of the congregation presented them with a quilt consisting of squares made by each family. "The students felt a real connection with the families, and families got a lot of energy from the students," he remembers.

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<sup>27</sup> Kennedy, p.7.

Bamberger related an interesting memory about how St. Michael's procured its current altar. The original concrete altar in the sanctuary was too distant for intimate mid-week services; so it was decided that a smaller altar be placed between what was then the sacristy in front of the stained-glass window and the big altar. When Bamberger was at Mt. Calvary one day, he noticed that the brothers were moving a lovely wooden table with marble top out of the chapel to make room for a Spanish-style table which now serves as the chapel's altar. Bamberger surreptitiously loaded the rejected altar into his truck and brought it to St. Michael's. No one at the monastery apparently missed the altar, and it continues to serve as the eucharistic symbol at St. Michael's to this day.

Weitzel remembers St. Michael's as a very friendly, caring and close-knit community. A number of couples went through the Marriage Encounter enrichment program and developed a social life through that. There was a good-sized Church School, and his sons Ben and Mark grew up in the congregation. (Though his father tried to dissuade him, Mark decided to seek Holy Orders and now is rector of St. Mark's Parish in Glendale.) He had a good relationship with the Nursery School, accompanying the teachers and children to the beach often for outings.

In 1981 the diocese made a comprehensive study of the mission of St. Michael's. The Rev. Peter Haynes, former chaplain at university of California, Berkeley, interviewed numerous members of the congregation, the URC, and campus community. The report found few students involved at St. Michael's and wondered if the Episcopal Church in Isla Vista was having an impact at all on the university. Haynes' report basically called for St. Michael's to renew its ministry to the university and undergraduates and suggested that the vicar eventually step aside so that a "younger" priest could take over. The report became the basis for the bishops' decision to ask Weitzel to resign in the summer of 1982, though a group of parishioners met with Rusack and pleaded with him to retain the vicar. Many in the congregation were upset with the bishop's decision and left. Some of the former members gathered on a regular basis with Weitzel and called themselves "the fallen angels." In retrospect, the bishop's decision was made with good intentions regarding the mission to the university and its students, which had been the original vision of St. Michael's. Nevertheless, the decision was implemented with little pastoral sensitivity to the former

vicar or the congregation. It resulted in bitter and long-lasting feelings on the part of a number of former members of St. Michael's and, unfortunately, emptied the church.

## V. Starting Over

In a sense, the mission at St. Michael's after the departure of the Rev. Harlan Weitzel was a story of starting over. Most of the congregation's membership had left, either for other Episcopal parishes or, sadly, not to become involved in any church again. The congregation's budget, which previously had relied on more than \$30,000 in pledges, became heavily subsidized by the diocese (around \$30,000 in 1983). In 1983 the mission was renamed "St. Michael's University Episcopal Church" to reflect its renewed mission.

The Rev. Dr. George Hall, for 32 years the rector of All Saints Parish in Santa Barbara before he retired and former chaplain at Stanford University, became the interim priest. Hall remembers that about five people---himself and his wife, Sally, included---attended the first service he took at St. Michael's as interim. The former rector tried to reach out to estranged members of the congregation, and some eventually returned. He also reached out to students. Before services one day he was seen lifting his robes and running after students calling out, "Why don't you join us?" One of the few students present when the Halls arrived was Tim Vivian, a graduate student in the History Department. Vivian had first attended St. Michael's in 1980 but had not become involved. At the time he felt that the congregation was not very friendly to students.

Vivian and Hall teamed up to create a student ministry. Vivian served as a lay assistant on the staff of St. Michael's, and his ministry was vital to the development of a solid core group of students. There was a "good freshmen crop" his first year, including, Connie Caldwell, Jay Donato, Susan Lewis and Gwen Vergeer. Hall and Vivian started a campus outreach program, including a mid-week service and discussion group. There was a pancake breakfast on Sunday mornings between the services. They also started "House Church," a summer program of informal suppers, fellowship, and eucharist in the homes of the members. The program, which still happens

every summer at St. Michael's, is a good venue for new students to get to know people in the congregation better.

Hall and Vivian, both self-identified as "musically challenged people," hired an organist-music director, Ann Rees, who was instrumental in getting students involved in choir. Choir members included, during the 1980s, Karla Commins, Gretchen Ostergren, Carolyn McClesky, Rosemary LaPuma, Jenny Martin, Susan Lewis, Susan Green, Mary Hardesty, David Linscott, Temmo Korisheli, Gwen Vergeer (flute), Dan Wentzel, Brenda Bradley, Julia Wiersma, and Miriam Vivian (nee Raub). In addition to the choir, there was guitar and flute playing on Sundays. Also, the annual Advent Service of Lessons and Carols was begun at that time. The service, which has been held now for 12 years, is a ecumenical gathering of students and others in the university at the end of the fall quarter for singing of Advent-Christmas music and hearing the stories of the coming of the Messiah. At times, more than 100 people have attended the service.

Other core people in the early days of St. Michael's new start were Rick and Sue Kennedy. Rick, a doctoral student in the History Department, had actually started attending St. Michael's during the time that Weitzel was leaving. The Kennedys, both of whom had come from evangelical backgrounds, felt at home in the new student community. Rick and Tim, with their contacts on campus, were student magnets. The Kennedys, who both had been undergraduates at UCSB, owned a house in Isla Vista and hosted many of the social functions in their back yard.

At the beginning of 1983 the capstone of the new start was put in place. The Rev. Gary Commins became vicar/chaplain. The bright, youthful Commins seemed ideal for the newly defined mission. His charm, sense of humor and informality appealed to students, and his spiritual depth and passion for social justice resonated with the concerns of many in the congregation. Commins had a gift of liturgical drama, and he, member Susan Potter, and Tim Vivian generated insightful, entertaining skits that translated the Gospel into new images and language. Some of the dramas served in place of the homily on Sundays. Other plays were full-blown productions. One Commins musical, "David and Bathsheba," featured three eunuchs, "Tom, Nick, and Harry," who told the story of King David while

they sunned themselves Isla Vista style. The musical was said to be good enough to "go on the road."

The creative use of the sanctuary necessitated radical changes. The concrete chancel, with its cold white tones, had been intended by the architect, in the early 1960s, to offset the warm feeling that the wooden walls and ceiling lent the sanctuary. However, the concrete (called by some "the bunker") inhibited the performance of drama and the multipurpose use of the space. It was decided to remove the old altar, pulpit, lectern, and altar rails, and replace them with movable ones. Rick Kennedy, an electrician before going to graduate school, was contractor for the demolition project. It took a week to remove the concrete. Once the jackhammering began, the workers, all- volunteer, discovered that the concrete was reinforced with rebar, the kind of ironwork used to hold skyscrapers together. The altar itself was demolished by two Presbyterian friends of Kennedy (which seemed sacramentally appropriate). It took weeks for the dust to settle, and the congregation had church outside the first week because of the mess. Kennedy rebuilt the chancel, building the floor up to hold new organ pipes. (The organ pipes came with a console from a mission in Los Angeles, Mt. Calvary on Slausen Avenue, which closed.) He also crafted the movable pulpit, lectern, altar rails, and baptismal font stand now in use.

Kennedy was very busy in those years. He also helped build the current sacristy, which freed up the old sacristy space to be used for the organ box. In addition, he installed theater lights in the sanctuary and a fence around Canterbury garden. The entire congregation became involved in sanding, re-staining and varnishing the pews.

It is clear from the level of activity in those days that students were in the forefront of the congregation's leadership. The congregation amended its bylaws so that at least three members of the Bishop's Committee each year are students. St. Michael's fellowship centered around potlucks, movies, retreats, participation in the intramural softball league, and other student-oriented events. The atmosphere at these events was fun and light. Commins turned the annual meeting into an entertaining slide show, and he often peppered his sermons with lines from his favorite comic Woody Allen. Commins recalls a student comment after a program on a religious sect in



which a speaker with a straight face said the sect's members in heaven enjoy eternal celestial sex: "Who thought of this religion, a 19-year-old guy?" Commins led basketball teams (complete with sarcastic feminist cheerleaders from St. Michael's on the sidelines) to two intramural titles. Retreats were not only a time for serious spiritual reflection, but they also featured the usual student high jinks. One evening at a retreat at Lake Cachuma, recalls Jane Hahn (nee Mealy), "the boys snuck into the girls' cabin and Josh Acton did a belly dance with the vicar shining a flashlight on him.

Hahn came to St. Michael's as a UCSB alumna and young adult in the 1980s. Her first impression of the church: "(Student) Connie Caldwell, the crucifer, tramping down the aisle wearing hi-tops under her cassock—it was real." She liked the new vicar's preaching, and she started helping out with the choir. She became choir director in the mid-1980s.

Karla Commins, wife of the vicar, remembers the delight of working with Jane and the students in drama and choir. A poignant moment for her came the first Sunday when Sally Hall gave the dismissal as a new chalice bearer: "After the years Sally was a rector's wife, I saw them (George and Sally) as equals when she did the dismissal. It brought tears to my eyes."

In the early 1980s, St. Michael's and the director and parents of the Nursery School began to disagree about the perceived goals of the school. Noreen Price, who had retired as director in 1980 after serving for 17 years, said that during her tenure the church and nursery school had had a good relationship: "The kids had grace with their snacks, were taught of God's love, and visited the church from time to time."

When George Hall became the interim, he suggested taking the children into the church once a week. The school's director, Ann Wood, was hesitant but allowed the priest to speak with the children. The new vicar, Commins, played guitar with the children. Over the next few years the Bishop's Committee and the school negotiated over the religious content of the education program. And, as the two groups continued to struggle to find some mutual ground, it became clear that the church and the school had gone in different directions. One of the reasons the school was apprehensive about including religion in its programming was that it included

student interns from the university. The school contended it needed to remain secular in order to pay for the interns. The Bishop's Committee finally decided to end its relationship with the school in 1986 and asked the school to find a new home, a decision that was a shock to the community because St. Michael's Nursery School was highly respected. Numerous parents protested the decision, and it caused some dissent in the congregation. Sue Kennedy was one of two people on the Bishop's Committee who voted against the decision. "Being a teacher, I had a vision of what it could be; it could do a lot of good in the community."

Asking the Nursery School to leave would free up precious space for other ministries, which were mushrooming at St. Michael's. Commins' leadership combined a strong sense of community and fun with a strong commitment to social issues. St. Michael's began a thrift store in 1985 in a garage in Isla Vista in order to raise money for various causes, including "Let Isla Vista Eat". The church would not secure governmental approval to run the thrift store at St. Michael's, and the rent charged at the existing site in Isla Vista was prohibitive. The thrift store idea eventually was abandoned, and the Isla Vista Material Assistance Program was begun. IVMAP, run in conjunction with Catholic Charities, secured low-cost food for the poor in Isla Vista. The program was staffed by Chuck Craner, whose tireless efforts kept the program going for several years. Craner's salary was paid by Catholic Charities.

Also, during Commins' ministry, the idea of establishing a place where homeless people could make the transition back to mainstream life was born. Those of the bishop's Committee at the time were Bishop's Warden and student Connie Caldwell, Tom Merrick, Jay Donato, Gretchen Ostergren, Susan Kennedy, Susan Rowland, Sally Hall and Josh Acton. Lacy Moes, long-time member of the congregation, had seen some small houses previously used as dwellings for oil workers being prepared for destruction on Atlantic-Richfield Co. property about three miles north of Winchester Canyon. Moes explored the possibility of obtaining the houses, and Commins began to seek financial support from the diocese for the venture. The original idea was to move the three houses to St. Michael's: one for the thrift store, one for the office of St. Michael's and one for student housing. It was thought that when the school moved out, the brick building would be renovated for use as Transition House in Isla Vista. Commins applied for a

diocesan grant of \$50,000 to move the houses, but St. Michael's received \$30,000, \$15,000 of it a loan. Commins remembers approaching a meeting with then-Bishop Oliver Garver about the request for the money with some trepidation. It turned out that they spoke about "UCLA football for 15 minutes and five minutes about the \$30,000 (both are UCLA alumni)." In the meantime, the county informed the Bishop's Committee that the property was not zoned for a thrift store, and the plan was scaled back for moving one house to the property.

St. Michael's paid \$4,000 for the house, and in February 1987 began the permit process for the move. The initial process took five months to complete. Then the Bishop's Committee found out that Caltrans would not approve of moving the house on the freeway because the house was too wide. "It was a simple project but the state of California made it difficult" says Paul Price, who oversaw the project. It took another four months to gain approval from Caltrans, which required that the house be cut in half before being moved. In the wee hours of one morning in 1987, the house was first moved along a frontage road and then part of the freeway. Commins remembers the house rumbling in two pieces along the streets of Isla Vista through the darkness and fog, hearing a student reacting to the strange vision, "Sh\_\_\_, where did that come from?" St. Michael's had to pay off-duty CHP officers to guard the closed freeway. The move itself took 40 minutes. Meanwhile during the delays, the Nursery School was moving slowly in finding a new home. The school did not actually vacate the premises until 1988, so Transition House had to be housed temporarily in the new "Little White House." In April 1988 the house was opened. The house building committee consisted of Paul Price, Rick Kennedy, Adele Skoda, Bob Smitheram of Trinity Parish, Dennis Flanagan of Transition House, Lacy Moes, Jim Ludwick, Carolyn McClesky and Gretchen Ostergren. The move and renovation ended up costing \$64,000, which included \$4,000 in donations plus a \$30,000 grant from the Santa Barbara Foundation secured by Transition House.

The Transition House ministry was a remarkable one. The Santa Barbara social agency and little St. Michael's teamed up to recruit volunteers to staff the house, which was designed to accommodate 10 clients. The people of St. Michael's spent a great deal of time as resident hosts preparing meals and as proctors spending the night. Additional volunteers were

recruited from the Greek system and churches in Isla Vista. Joyce St. Onge of Transition House served as the site administrator. The volunteers did a valiant job, but the venture proved to be too much for them. The small congregation was eventually overwhelmed by the ministry. But there was a great deal of learning for the people of St. Michael's about the complex problems of homelessness in our society.

"Gary had a clear vision of this being the mission for St. Michael's and I think he was able to inspire this tiny little band of soldiers to give an inordinate amount of time to make this happen."<sup>28</sup>

Another learning experience for Commins and the congregation had to do with Matthew Ellington, a homeless man and graduate of UCSB who began living on the property. A former UCSB athlete of the year who fell into a drinking problem and later became sober, Ellington was an eccentric person, a crusader who spoke in rhymes. He could be seen on the streets of Isla Vista driving the church's tractor-mower, adorned with signs making various social statements, and he often would come to Bishop's Committee meetings and lecture the group. He lived in the garden shed, mowed the church's grass and came to church almost every Sunday. In 1989 he died of lung cancer, and his death was a loss to the congregation.

Commins and the Bishop's Committee showed great compassion not only to Ellington but to a family that lived in a car in the parking lot for two years. The Deckley family had fallen on hard times. They had children who attended public school, but the parents had trouble finding jobs. Commins was glad to report that the Deckleys had gotten back on their feet, and Mr. Deckley had been admitted to graduate school a few years ago.

While students were the center of activity at St. Michael's, older adults came around to support the mission and to enjoy the energy of the young people. St. Michael's sponsored Evening Prayer services at Friendship Manor. Commins made contact with numerous faculty members through his Faith and Intellectual Life discussion program on campus. Students and non-students mingled during monthly work parties. Retired people like Mo Moseley and

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<sup>28</sup> from a conversation with Lacy Moes, July 11, 1994.

Ben Fancher joined the students faithfully to work on the grounds. Rick Kennedy lauded George and Sally Hall for their enduring support of St. Michael's:

The older folk, such as Friendship Manor residents, did not dominate. They contributed a lot. Certainly, the Halls adopted all of us. Sue and I stood up the Halls for dinner one time—we just forgot. They put up with a lot. They were like the grandparents of the church.<sup>29</sup>

One of the issues that emerged as St. Michael's continued into the late 1980s is how to sustain the kind of energy generated in the early years of the renewal of the mission. Tim and Miriam Vivian left in 1985 (Tim was ordained a priest in 1988 after attending Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Miriam now teaches at California State University, Bakersfield); Rick and Sue Kennedy left in 1987 (Rick now teaches at Indiana University); Josh Acton was ordained and now is Episcopal chaplain at Southern Methodist University—his brother Jaime is a postulant for Holy Orders and first-year student at the Episcopal seminary in Austin. As important leaders moved on from St. Michael's, the congregation awaited the arrival of new students. In the late 1980s, others like Scott Wilson and Andy Lief came along to take the mantle of leadership on the Bishop's Committee. One of the important achievements of Commins' era was diversification of financial support for St. Michael's. Commins secured support not only through pledges and the diocese, but also from the region, tenants such as a Korean congregation (and later the Live Oak Unitarian-Universalist congregation), and a growing alumni network.

The congregation received consistently strong support from the diocese, which was pleased that the bishop's vision of university ministry was being fulfilled. Remembers Kennedy,

One day it was in the middle of doing all this stuff we asked for a grant from the diocese for, I think, the sacristy and maybe a lot of little things. Sally Hall, Connie, Gretchen and I all got in the car to go to Los

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<sup>29</sup> from a conversation with Rick Kennedy, Aug. 20, 1994.

Angeles and got ready to pump this need for money. And when we got down there, they were going to give us the money anyway. All they wanted was to tell us we were wonderful. It was nice to be appreciated but it was a five-hour trip and I had other things to do.<sup>30</sup>

In 1989, The Bishop's Committee, consisting of Sally Hall, Lacy Moes, Jim Ludwick, Temmo Korisheli, Scott Wilson, Ken Moes and Andy Lief, organized a capital fund drive to raise \$25,000. In addition, the diocese agreed to put up a loan of \$20,000. The fund-raising campaign was designed to make significant improvements to the worship space and exterior appearance of St. Michael's. The list of improvements included choir and acolyte robes, a heating system, organ pipe expansion, a new chasuble, sprinkler system, and painting of the vicarage. The heating system was a top priority in the drive. As mentioned before, in the early days an in-the-foundation radiant heating system using copper pipes completely failed in the church. For years there was little or no heat in the sanctuary. The heating system turned out to be more expensive than originally envisioned, and its cost consumed much of the drive's revenues.

In 1990, Commins answered a call to become rector of a multi-racial parish in Inglewood.<sup>31</sup> As the new decade began, the mission of St. Michael's was clearly a student-oriented university ministry.

## VI. Epilogue

In February 1991, a month after I had been called to be the seventh vicar/chaplain of St. Michael's, I received a telephone call from Bishop's Warden Brian Gifford while my family and I were packing boxes in San Diego and preparing for the move to Santa Barbara. "You better sit down," Gifford said, "You remember the Transition House project we told you about? They moved out this week without giving notice. What do we do?"

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<sup>30</sup> From a conversation with Rick Kennedy, Aug. 30, 1994

<sup>31</sup> The Rev. Rob Voyle, a graduate student at Fuller Theological Seminary, served as interim after Commins left. Voyle's strong preaching and devoted pastoral service are well remembered by the congregation.

This was my welcome to St. Michael's. Conventional wisdom calls for new pastors to suggest no major changes in the mission of a congregation during their first six months of service, and I was prepared to follow it. Come to St. Michael's, get the lay of the land, so to speak, hear the people's stories, and learn the church' history: that was my agenda. Instead, the first six months involved a frenzy of decision-making and implementation of a new ministry. Transition House and St. Michael's, their situation in some ways similar to the impasse with the Nursery School, began to drift apart in their goals. The director of Transition House for Santa Barbara, Bill Cos, was reluctant to give up its location in the Little House to move to the old school building. The Bishop's Committee, however, was determined to follow through on the plan. Through the tireless efforts of Lacy Moes, St. Michael's received approval from the county for expanding the shelter. A \$15,000 grant from United Thank offering was approved for the expansion. Another factor in the closure of the shelter was that Transition House was dissatisfied with the clientele showing up at its Isla Vista site. Transition House was and is designed to help people make the transition from homelessness back to the mainstream of society. But many of the people coming to the Isla Vista shelter were the hard-to-assist homeless including the mentally ill and substance abusers. After all of the work that St. Michael's and others had put into the project, "It was terribly disappointing" (when the shelter closed), Moes reflects.

With two empty buildings to maintain, the Bishop's Committee and I had to make a decision. There was a great deal of interest in returning to an unfulfilled goal of an earlier Bishop's Committee, student housing, and I had a great deal of enthusiasm for the idea of having a residence where Episcopal students could live in community and experience spiritual formation. The Bishop's Committee, consisting of Gifford (bishop's warden), Ken Hahn (junior warden), Diana Kennett, Holly Fleming, Betsy Bosworth, Kathleen Jenson (treasurer), Whitney Wilson (nee Watson), Scott Wilson and Frances Hahn (nee Hickson), clerk rallied to open Canterbury House in the fall of 1991. We obtained permission from UTO to use the remaining \$10,000 of the Transition House grant for the project (\$5,000 had already been spent on permits) and we brought in an additional \$20,000 through various donations, a diocesan grant and fund-raisers. Members of the congregation put in hundreds of hours renovating the building for occupancy in September.



The students agreed to pay reduced rent for a single room (a luxury in Isla Vista) in exchange for participating in the Canterbury House program. The program called for them to pray Morning and Evening Prayer together once a week, to gather with the Episcopal student community for a weekly supper, worship service and discussion program, and to serve in a monthly outreach ministry. The first residents were Brian Gifford (whose father ironically lived in the house 30 years before when he was at St. Michael's), Jo Ellen Burholder, Shane Stowe and Patricia Vercruyssen. That fall Canterbury House got off to a great start. We had between 12 to 15 students every Wednesday night, with programs ranging from Bible study to watching Monty Python films.

The energy level of the students was incredible, and more than half of the Bishop's Committee consisted of undergraduates and graduate students. But I sensed a desire in the congregation to seek a balance between town and gown. When Susan and I arrived at St. Michael's with our four children, we doubled the potential church school. There was a great desire among people like Lacy Moes to begin a Church School for children again. The Church School has been supported by the gifts of many people in the congregation. (Last year, nearly 20 people volunteered at some point in the school year to help with Church School, quite a high level of commitment for such a small congregation.) We offered adult education on Sunday mornings that was mostly attended by non-students (by the end of the week students tended to be sated on learning). First we had bible study, and then the creative Terre Ouwehand and I began organizing a Sunday Adult Forum. In the forum we have tackled a number of issues, ranging from human sexuality and creation spirituality to gifts for ministry and the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas.

I have received a great deal of guidance and assistance from the Worship Committee in planning our liturgy.<sup>32</sup> I am thankful that there is a deep sense that worship calls for the participation of all the people, and that sense is reflected in the work of the committee. We began to put the entire liturgy into leaflet form in 1992 in order to make worship more "user friendly" to newcomers. We have consistently used inclusive language liturgies approved

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<sup>32</sup> Members of the Worship Committee have been Sally Hall, Jane Hahn, Terre Ouwehand, the Rev. Richard Shackell, Nancy Gilbert, and Mark Grotke.

for use by General Convention. In 1993, we entered into the uncertain, hazardous territory of moving church furniture. The Worship Committee and I agreed that locating the altar so far away from the people in our intimate worshipping community did not make sense. So we took out the altar rails and moved the altar closer to the people. We also took out some of the pews and reconfigured the remaining ones so that there was more a sense of gathering around altar and pulpit. We also made the pews movable so that we can accommodate many other uses of our worship space (such as a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration!). In 1993, with the help of Ken and Randy Hahn, I built a full-immersion baptismal font, and we have baptized two adults in it at the Easter Vigil during the past two years. Seeing an adult come up out of the water in the candle-lit darkness prior to the first eucharist of Easter is a rich and powerful symbol of the living Christ with us.

At the beginning of the school year in 1993, our Canterbury group and Lutheran Campus Ministry began to co-sponsor a student-oriented ecumenical worship service on Sunday evenings. Our working together reflects the growing cooperation and understanding between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and it has been a great delight serving with my faithful colleague the Rev. Darcy Jensen, Lutheran chaplain. The Lutheran students have been worshipping at St. Michael's since the 1960s.

Also, in 1993 we were joined by the energetic and cheerful ministry of Deacon Mikel Morrison. For the first time St. Michael's had a living icon of the servant ministry of all baptized people in the liturgy reading the Gospel, preaching, and preparing the table for eucharist. In her short time with us, Mikel has had a significant impact on the community. She began a women's support group, encouraged the beginning of the St. Michael's Fund (which provides financial assistance to members of the congregation in need), and assisted the Canterbury students in their outreach ministries.

St. Michael's has scaled back its frenetic social activism of the previous decade (the 80s), in large part because it burned itself out. The Bishop's Committee has spent a lot of energy on "inreach." The committee did inaugurate the "Feed My Sheep" program in 1992, which collects non-perishable foods and cash for low-cost staples for the hungry in Isla Vista. In addition, in my work with colleagues of the University Religious

Conference, we have instituted a Coffee House as a non-alcoholic alternative activity for students on weekends in Isla Vista. We have had to struggle to keep the Coffee House going, and I believe that because of the endemic substance abuse problems in the community, the program is vitally important.

Another significant part of our history in the 1990s is the attempt at St. Michael's to become more diverse. We have had a number of Asian-Americans and African-Americans involved in the congregation, and we have become a community that is welcoming and affirming of gay/lesbian people. On Sunday mornings, we invite "all people to gather at the table for the Lord's Supper, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey." In a mysterious way when we circle the table shoulder to shoulder—young, old, gay, straight, Anglo, Asian, African—we draw closer to the vision of shalom and oneness that Christ's reign of love and justice is bringing into the world. Sally Hall remembers a young Asian-American woman who was baptized in 1994 saying to her, "I came to St. Michael's feeling like a nobody and went away feeling like a somebody."

As I wind down this narrative, it occurs to me that St. Michael's is more than the sum total of the faithful service and offerings of its people and supporters (though I do not wish to downplay them). There is truly a heavenly presence guarding and guiding this congregation, when it shines and flourishes and even when it stalls and veers off course. The presence—the archangel, the Holy Spirit, she has many names—is continually bringing us back to who we are and who we are called to be. At a Bishop's Committee retreat this summer, we reflected on an appropriate metaphor for our life together as a community of prayer, and we returned to the image of the tent, which formed the basis for the architectural design of the church in the early 1960s. We concurred that we are a community that consists of a bunch of nomads who pitch their tent in Isla Vista for a while and then move on in their journeys. We are Bedouins. As desert wanderers we are called to be a people of generous hospitality, to be an oasis in the desert for the hungry and weary. As tent people our lives must be simple; but we envision a festival of life in our little desert place. By God's bountiful grace we are called to spread a lavish feast in the desert, not only for ourselves but for others who wander here. The story unfolds anew each time we unfold the tent and invite others in, and it is an amazing story, indeed !

Excerpts from

## HISTORIC RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT:

St. Michael's University Church  
6586 Picasso Road, Isla Vista, CA

APN 075-033-003

Prepared for:  
Reverend Scott Claassen  
St. Michael's University Church  
6586 Picasso Road  
Isla Vista, CA

Prepared by:  
Ronald L. Nye, Historian  
816 Cheltenham Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105  
805-682-1486 - [rlnye@cox.net](mailto:rlnye@cox.net)

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HISTORIC RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT:  
St. Michael's University Church

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St. Michael's University Church has been found to be eligible for listing as a County Landmark as well as for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources. It was found to be not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The church therefore qualifies to be recognized as a historic resource at the local and state levels, but not at the national level.

SITE INVENTORY

The study property contains St. Michael's University Church (St. Michael's), a Sculptural Style sanctuary that was designed by Carleton M. Winslow, Jr. and erected in 1962. It is characterized by its soaring, steeply-pitched roof whose centered ridge rises in a straight line from its flat 10.5-foot-high east elevation to its 37-foot- high pinnacle on its west elevation. Each of the enveloping roof's two slopes is hyperbolic paraboloidal in form with eaves that descend on a disjointed line from a high point on their east ends to a low point that nearly reaches the ground on their west ends. The long extended roof, then, dominates the church's north and south elevations, particularly on their west ends, while subsidiary exterior wood-clad walls below the eaves gradually rise in height as they reach their east ends. The roof is covered by composition shingle roofing. The triangle-shaped building is widest on its east elevation, which has an exposed support

system consisting of three steel I-shaped columns and two horizontal 34-foot steel I-shaped beams installed end to end. The entire elevation is enclosed by aluminum-framed glass fixtures: two sets of double French doors, each containing a wide and a narrow door; several rectangular fixed-sash plate glass windows; and four horizontal ribbons of narrow sliding-sash windows. The tall, narrow, and pointed west elevation is supported by two exposed 34-foot steel I-shaped columns that create an A-frame façade. A full-height stained glass window designed by Vern Swansen that portrays abstract images of St. Michael, the Biblical warrior angel who also weighed the souls of the departed, occupies the space between the columns. A single wood paneled door painted red is centered at ground level.<sup>33</sup>

Alterations and additions have modified the church's original design and materials. An angular sacristy room, which was added in 1983, extends from the south elevation at its east end. Narrow but lengthy extensions to the walls and roofs on north and south elevations were made in 1990 to accommodate the installation of heaters and ducts. These changes resulted in the elimination of the building's character-defining oblique angles, formed by the straight lines of the roof eaves and exposed concrete foundation, which converge on the west elevation. The angular roof and wall projections presently exhibit a jagged, not their original linear, form on the two elevations. The additions, which were sided with T1-11 paneling, also covered nearly all of the church's original redwood vertical board siding as well as its characteristic exposed and precisely-spaced, white I-beam steel columns on the two elevations. Another character-defining feature was lost in 2014 when the sanctuary's original wood-shingled roofing, which was composed of large, custom-made shingles, was replaced with standard composition shingle roofing. The original naturalistic wood surfacing of the massive swooping roof was a critically important attribute of Winslow's Sculptural Style

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<sup>33</sup> Vern Swansen (1916-1992) is not recognized as an artist who made significant contributions to local or regional culture or history. He was born in Oregon, educated at USC, and after initially working as an architect in Los Angeles, became a water color artist and teacher. He taught art at Santa Barbara City College and California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, and served as the Curator of Education at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (1961-1971). Source: Alpha Rho Chi, Daedalus Chapter, website.

church whose design blended contrasting materials, such as steel, glass, wood, and aluminum and geometric shapes to create a spiritually transcendent structure.<sup>34</sup>

## SITE HISTORY

### Community History

The written history of Isla Vista may be divided into three general eras: the Spanish Period (1769-1821), the Mexican Period (1821-1848) and the American Period (1848-1968). The present-day Isla Vista was part of the vast Rancho Los Dos Pueblos granted to the Santa Barbara Mission by the King of Spain. In 1842, near the end of the Mexican Period, the governor, by means of a land grant, conferred ownership of the rancho to Nicolas Den. The principal economic activity during the era of the Mexican land grants was cattle grazing. Several factors led to the gradual breakup of the land grants, including the Los Dos Pueblos, in the second half of the nineteenth century: the influx of land-hungry settlers brought about by the Gold Rush and statehood; legal challenges to titles to the vast tracts; and the drought of the 1860s which devastated the cattle industry.

In 1915 John and Pauline Ilharreguy purchased 157 acres of the former rancho, and in 1925 laid out a subdivision on part of it along the bluffs. It was composed of twenty-five-foot- wide lots and they called it Isla Vista. The following year, 1926, other investors laid out two more subdivisions, Ocean Terrace to the east and Orilla Del Mar to the west. The three side-by-side tracts ultimately came to be known collectively as Isla Vista. Aside from a few pioneering individuals, however, very few of Isla Vista's lots were sold during the next thirty years. For many years the streets, including Del Playa, Sabato Tarde, Trigo, Pasado, Embarcadero Del Mar and Embarcadero Del Norte, remained unpaved or paper streets only. During this era Isla Vista was the refuge of solitary beach lovers, small bean farmers and speculating oil companies. Everything changed when the former

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<sup>34</sup> See Wayne McCall, et al., *Santa Barbara Architecture*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2005, 248, wherein St. Michael's design is identified as a "Woodsy Building."; "Church by Carleton M. Winslow, [Jr.,] Architect," *Arts and Architecture*, March 1963, 24-25.



U. S. Marine Corps base on the eastern boundary of Isla Vista became the site of a University of California campus in 1948. The campus opened for classes in 1954, and by the early 1960s, the combined effects of student population growth and the availability of water from Cachuma Dam launched a furious building boom in Isla Vista.

Out-of-town investors converged on Isla Vista and successfully lobbied County officials for flexible zoning ordinances that would provide for the rapid development of dense student housing, but with little or no provision for off street parking, sidewalks, or open space. On the downtown loop, which had been designated for commercial development, businesses and other services were established to cater to resident needs. As a result, what began as a sparsely settled community of perhaps 50-100 residents in 1954, exploded to include about 4,000 students by 1963. Isla Vista reached its present density within a few years of the initial building boom and was characterized by multiple-story apartment buildings and a concentration of single-family dwellings in its western portion. The community grew to about 15,500 residents in 1978, which included 6,000 student apartments, and by the early 2000s its population was about 20,000, approximately one-third of which were non-students.<sup>35</sup>

### Property History

The study property may have been used for agricultural purposes prior to Isla Vista's Post-World War II development boom. An aerial photograph taken in 1944, however, shows no structures or obvious land-use activities on it. In 1948, the Trinity Episcopal Church of Santa Barbara began laying plans to establish a mission in Isla Vista to minister to the students of the planned Santa Barbara College of the University of California, slated to open in 1954. The following year, in 1949, the church acquired a vacant two-acre parcel which included the present-day study site.

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<sup>35</sup> Walker A. Tompkins, *Goleta the Good Land*, 1966, 30-37; Tompkins, "Isla Vista's Past Was Peaceful Enough," *Santa Barbara News-Press*, April 20, 1970; Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, "More Than Just Parks: The Isla Vista Recreation & Park District, 1972-1998," Isla Vista Recreation & Park District History Committee Report, October 22, 1998; Jennifer H. Strand, "Evolution of a Boom Town: Isla Vista, California, 1915-1968" (M.A. Thesis, UCSB), 1987; "Isla Vista: So Close to UCSB, So Far From Good," *Coastlines Online*, Winter 2014.

The parcel was bordered by Picasso Road on the south, Camino Pescadero on the west, El Greco Road on the north, and Embarcadero Del Mar on the east. The Santa Barbara parish began a fund-raising campaign to build a chapel and a chaplain's home on the property, but it soon realized that it needed outside assistance to reach its goals. An agreement was reached with the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles whereby ownership of the property was transferred to the diocese and the diocese, in turn, provided the necessary additional funding for the new buildings. The architectural firm of Carleton M. Winslow, Jr. and Kenneth N. Lind of Beverly Hills was retained as their designer. The combined chaplain's home and chapel structure and a separate garage were completed on the northeast corner of the property in 1955. Rev. James E. Hacke, Jr., the mission's first chaplain, and later its first full-time priest, initiated services in the modest chapel of the St. Michael's and All Angels Church the same year. As one of the first public buildings in Isla Vista the chapel soon became a center for community group meetings, including those of the Isla Vista Improvement Association.<sup>36</sup>

The parish quickly outgrew its original chapel and in the late 1950s it began fund-raising to build a larger sanctuary on the property. The parish Bishop's Committee in charge of planning and overseeing the project hired Winslow as architect of the new church in 1960. The committee stipulated to Winslow that the church must: hold 300 people; appeal to college students; and cost no more than \$47,500. It should also be "distinctly religious in feeling on the exterior and have a feeling of extended space on the interior," the committee continued. Finally, it directed, that the church's construction "should make use of the most common, inexpensive,

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<sup>36</sup> Mark Gardner, "St. Michael's University Episcopal Church: Our First 40 Years," 1994, 3-8, unpublished typescript, on file at the St. Michael's University Church; aerial photographs, Flight C-9113, Frame 6-42, November 27, 1944, and Flight HA-AN, Frame 1-18, February 17, 1956, as reproduced at Framefinder, UCSB website; Bob Barker, "St. Michael's Enjoys 40 Years of Service in I.V.," *Santa Barbara News-Press*, September 24, 1994; letter, August 11, 1954, and memorandum, September 15, 1954, regarding County Planning Commission approval of the erection of church buildings on the property, on file at the Santa Barbara Planning and Development Department (CPDD).

and available materials." Thus instructed, Winslow designed the existing Sculptural Style sanctuary with its triangular-shaped floor plan and severely-peaked roof, which was completed in 1962. According to a former church pastor, the simple tent-like form of the sanctuary was intended to symbolize the Biblical tent tabernacle erected by the Israelites during their wanderings in the desert. St. Michael's mission, he continued, was to provide a spiritual refuge for university students, faculty members, and families who were also semi-nomadic in lifestyle.<sup>37</sup>

The interior of the sanctuary was altered in the 1980s, when the original poured concrete alter, pulpit, and railings in the chancel were demolished and replaced by moveable wood counterparts. The exterior of the sanctuary was altered in 1983 when a small, angular sacristy room was added on the south elevation near the southeast corner of the building. The roof eaves were lowered and almost full-width, narrow additions were made on the north and south elevations in 1990 when new heaters and ducts were installed in the sanctuary. The original wood shingle roofing was replaced with composition shingle roofing in 2014.<sup>38</sup>

St. Michael's operated a nursery school in the original chaplain's quarters on-site during the years 1963-1988. The original chapel portion of the same building was apparently converted in 1971 to a residence and ministry center for Episcopal students known as Canterbury House. In 1988 the existing church office building, situated several yards to the east of the sanctuary, was relocated to the study property from an oil company property on the Gaviota Coast. The church and Transition House jointly-operated a homeless shelter in the former residence during the years, 1988-1989. The shelter was moved to the former chaplain's residence in 1989 and the shelter building was converted into the present-day church office. The Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese, Los Angeles, transferred the eastern .71 acres of St. Michael's two-acre property, which included the original chapel/chaplain's residence and garage, to the Los Angeles Hillel

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<sup>37</sup> Gardner, 17-19

<sup>38</sup> See the following documents on file at the CPDD: County of Santa Barbara staff report for Case 99-DP-32, September 15, 1999; technical drawings for heater installations, Case 90-CPD-296; and roofing permit, Case 14-CNP-00000-00218, March 13, 2014.

Council in 2000. The Hillel Council demolished the two older buildings and erected the existing Santa Barbara Hillel Jewish student center.<sup>39</sup>

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The study property is surrounded by post-1960-era residential and religious buildings. The adjacent property to the east contains the two-story Santa Barbara Hillel Jewish student center, erected in about 2002. To the west, across Camino Pescadero, is the two-story University Religious Center. Two-story multiple-tenant apartment buildings are located to the north, across El Greco Road, and to the south, across Picasso Road.

## PHASE 1 ASSESSMENT: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

As required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations, the historical significance of the property has been evaluated in terms of its eligibility as a County of Santa Barbara landmark or place of historic merit, and for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). CEQA defines a significant historical resource, for the purposes of review, as a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the CRHR, or included in, or be eligible for listing in, a local register of historic resources (Section 15064.5(a)). By definition, the CRHR also includes properties formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places, as well as selected State Historical Landmarks.

The study property is presently not listed on the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department's list of potentially significant properties.

### **County of Santa Barbara Significance Criteria**

**Integrity:** The church has retained its historic integrity because: it remains in its original *location* and has retained its *setting* consisting of

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<sup>39</sup> Gardner, 22, 44-49; Barber, "St. Michael's Enjoys 40 Years of Service in I.V."; various documents, Case 99-DP-32, on file at the CPDD.

multiple-unit apartment and religious buildings; despite alterations and additions, it has retained most of its characteristic *design* components and accurately reflects its original Sculptural Style; it continues to possess much of its original building *materials*, although some important elements have been removed; its original elements of *workmanship* as expressed in its form and detailing have been retained; and it retains its ability to evoke a *feeling* of a historic time and place dating to the 1960s as well as its *association* with the development of Isla Vista during the Post-World War II era. Age: The church meets this criterion because it is 56 years of age.

#### California Register of Historical Resources Criteria

The church meets the following CRHR criteria: A., for its association with the broad pattern of Post-World War II development of Isla Vista; and C., for its Sculptural Style and hyperbolic paraboloid roof type.

#### National Register of Historic Places Criteria

The church does not meet any of the NRHP criteria. Although the church qualifies for listing under County and State requirements for eligibility, its additions and alterations, although reversible, prevent it from rising above the threshold required for National significance.

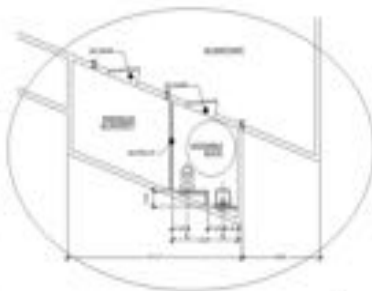
#### Summary of St. Michael's Significance Assessment

The St. Michael's University Church has been found to be eligible for listing as a County Landmark as well as for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources. It was found to be not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The church therefore qualifies to be recognized as a historic resource at the local and state levels, but not at the national level.

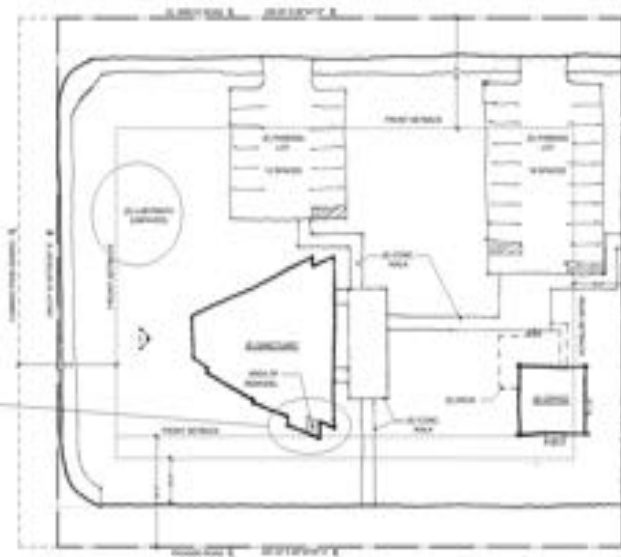
# ST. MICHAEL'S UNIVERSITY CHURCH



3 PROPOSED REPLACEMENT GLAZING  
2022-2023



2 REMODELED SACRISTY: NEW R.R.  
2022-2023



1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN  
2022-2023

## VICINITY MAP



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. The purpose of this project is to provide a new, modern, and functional church building for the St. Michael's University Church. The project includes the construction of a new church building, a parking lot, and a sacristy.

## PROJECT DIRECTORY

OWNER: ST. MICHAEL'S UNIVERSITY CHURCH  
ARCHITECT: [Firm Name]  
ENGINEER: [Firm Name]  
CONTRACTOR: [Firm Name]

## PROJECT DATA

PROJECT ADDRESS: [Address]  
CITY: [City]  
STATE: [State]  
ZIP: [ZIP]  
DATE: [Date]  
SCALE: [Scale]  
SHEET NO.: [Sheet No.]

## SHEET INDEX

1. PROPOSED SITE PLAN  
2. REMODELED SACRISTY: NEW R.R.  
3. PROPOSED REPLACEMENT GLAZING

Historical Photographs  
(Source: St. Michael's University Church)



St. Michael's, east elevation, looking west, c. 1962.





St. Michael's, west and south elevations, looking northeast, c. 1970.  
Site Photographs



East elevation, looking northwest.



North elevation, looking southwest.



North and west elevations, looking southeast.



West and south elevations, looking northeast.





Lower panels of stained glass wall, west elevation, looking east.



South elevation with sacristy at far right, looking northeast.