

# THE MESSENGER

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## THE LENTEN SEASON IS UPON US

If you're looking for ways to enrich your Lenten experience and engage with your Christian community, St. Michael's has a variety of offerings to nourish your soul and strengthen your connection with your faith:

- Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper: Start the Lenten season with a celebratory feast and fellowship.
- Ash Wednesday Services: Mark the beginning of Lent with reflection and repentance at one of the three Ash Wednesday services (7 am, noon, and 7 pm).
- Lenten Soup Suppers: Join your fellow parishioners for a simple meal and explore the history and meaning of the Nicene Creed with Don Compier.
- Experiencing God: Deepen your understanding of the Gospel of John through Thursday morning classes.
- Sunday School: Engage with scripture and connect with fellow learners at 9:00 am Adult Sunday School.

These Lenten offerings provide a rich tapestry of opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship, and community engagement. Whether you're seeking a deeper understanding of your faith, a stronger connection with your church community, or simply a space for quiet reflection, St. Michael's has something to offer you this Lenten season. (SEE the details on page 8)



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# IMMIGRATION MINISTRIES

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## A NEW BEGINNING FOR AN AFGHAN FAMILY

Imagine leaving everything you know behind – your home, your culture, your language – to start a new life in a completely foreign land. This is the reality for a family of ten from Afghanistan, who are now building a future in the USA with the support of our immigration ministry in collaboration with St. Thomas.

Pictured below are 7 of the children of the Afghani family whom we are helping (along with St. Thomas) in establishing their new lives in the USA through Immigration Ministries. The 6-month-old baby is not in the picture. A recent donation drive held at St. Michael's last month resulted in an outpouring of needed clothing for four of the children who are ages 6 months to 14 years. The clothing was gathered with the donations from St. Thomas for the other four children and separated into plastic storage containers, with one labeled for each child. They were most appreciative -- you can imagine their excitement opening their very own bin! In addition to the clothing, a bicycle, sewing machine, washer, and dryer have been donated to the family. Monetary donations for the ministry have also been received with gratitude.

The six school-aged children were enrolled in the KCMO public schools in late February. No one in the family has any formal education until now -- that includes the mother and father. This will be a huge adjustment for them; especially the older children. The father has recently acquired his drivers' license and is searching for a job. The ministry provides ongoing support for ELL, advocates in a variety of areas, and provides transportation for dental, medical, and other appointments.

**Opportunities for volunteering in the ministry continue to be needed.**

Contact Sara O'Connell  
email: [sarao720@yahoo.com](mailto:sarao720@yahoo.com)  
phone: 973-229-6049.

Monetary donations: checks  
can be made to  
St. Thomas Episcopal Church,  
with "Immigration Ministries"  
noted on memo line.



## NEW VESTRY MEMBERS

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*Hank Stratemeier*  
*2-year term*

I am blessed to be the husband of past vestry member Stephanie Stratemeier and proud dad of Henry and Jack, both part of the acolyte team. Stephanie and I are ushers and greeters and were married in St. Michael's nearly 25 years ago. Henry and Jack are both products of St. Michael's Day School. I work for Examinetics, an occupational health services company and have a background in technology and finance. We have been with the church a long time and consider it home.



*Mark Hunter*  
*3-year term*

My wife Molly and I have been parishioners at St. Michael's since 2010. Both of our children, Lainey (13) and Bobby (11) attended St. Michael's Day School where they learned to love learning from Ms. Charlie and Ms. Sue and love mac and cheese from Ms. Deb! This year, they have joined the ranks of the Saint Michael's acolytes and are

enjoying their first ministry. Molly and I had the pleasure of teaching the youngest parishioners at St. Michael's in the pre-k and kindergarten Sunday school class for several years, and I have also enjoyed serving as a convocation delegate for the last five years. Professionally, I work remotely as the Chief Distribution Officer at a division of Alliant Insurance Services in Omaha.

## NEW VESTRY MEMBERS

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*Kaylen Simpson-Porto*  
*3-year term*

Kaylen Simpson-Porto (she/her) is a native Houstonian who moved to Lenexa, Kansas with her husband, Chris, in October 2023. She brings a diverse professional background with her, having worked in a variety of roles that reflect her passion for serving others and seeking social justice.

Kaylen's primary training is as a chef, but over the years she has served in various other roles such as a children's director for two churches, executive chef and program director for an anti-trafficking non profit, events manager, barista, shop clerk, babysitter, and handy woman. Her current role is as a caregiver and private

chef for an elderly couple. Kaylen has joined the Good FaithNetwork and is working with the Eldercare Committee to make Johnson County a safe and equitable place for the aging.

When she's not busy working, Kaylen loves to play board games, get lost in craft projects, play volleyball, take a yoga class, or watch a good movie. You can often find her at a coffee shop, a good restaurant, or the Lenexa Rec Center. She's excited to put her vast array of random odd-job knowledge to work on the vestry.



*Maureen Weber*  
*3-year term*

My name is Maureen Weber. I'm a Kansas City girl, born, raised, never left. My husband Shawn, and our 2 boys, Cooper (10) and Gordy (6) have been attending St. Michael's since 2018. We fell in love with the-down-to-earth community of St. Michael's and its welcoming congregation. I have helped with Sunday School since 2019 and really value the focus on families and children. Outside of the church our family enjoys all things sports and just being outdoors.

## Could you be the next clerk?

**The Vestry of Saint Michaels and All Angels is in need of a clerk. Susan Wilcox has served admirably in this capacity for multiple years, and it is time to pass the baton.**

**The clerk records minutes of the vestry meetings at their monthly meetings (held in the evening). These minutes are approved by the vestry and kept in the permanent records of the parish. While not a member of the vestry, this is a great opportunity to learn about how a parish operates. Like all those who serve, the clerk is a volunteer.**

**If you feel called to serve Saint Michaels in this capacity, please reach out to Will Henderson, Senior Warden, or to Father Cox.**



## SUPER BOWL BRUNCH SUNDAY



## VESTRY DEVOTION

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### FEBRUARY 2025 VESTRY: LINDA BROWN

In her poem, “Sometimes” as printed in the book, *Red Bird* (Beacon Press, 2008), Mary Oliver pondered instructions for living a life:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

The Bible provides guidance on how to do these things—How to pay attention? Be astonished? Tell about it? Do it in love. The following verses are a place to begin:

#### **Proverbs 4:20-22**

My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart, for they are life to those who find them and health to one’s whole body (NIV).

#### **Habakkuk 1:5**

Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days—You would not believe if you were told (NASB).

#### **Luke 8:39**

Return home and tell how much God has done for you (NIV).

#### **Colossians 3:14-15**

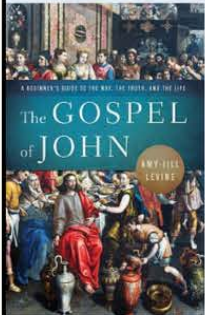
Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And, regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It’s your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. (MSG)

#### **The Message**

As we come together in prayer, may we be mindful of the prophets among us, of the visionaries who call us to live life fully and joyfully. The light of God’s revelation never ends. We glory in God’s presence in this world and ponder the meaning of the divine in human life. While all around us is changing, and dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless. In the midst of death, life persists. In the midst of untruth, truth persists. In the midst of darkness, light persists. May the Holy Spirit inspire us, that the light in us not become darkness, that we may light up the darkness with our presence. We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made to tell the world that there are not outsiders. We belong to this family, this human family, God’s family. Amen.

## LENTEN WEEKLY OFFERINGS

### You are Invited



Thursdays at 10:00 AM  
(March 6 - April 10) Bingham Room

The Experiencing God group will be discussing key stories in the **Gospel of John** using a video series created by distinguished Jewish and New Testament Studies Scholar Amy-Jill Levine.

Rabbi Levine introduces the world of the Gospel of John by unpacking the stories in their original context, along with examining how the text is read today. We will explore the prologue, the wedding at Cana, the Samaritan woman at the well and the woman caught in adultery, the healing of the man at the pool and the man born blind, foot washing, Mary Magdalene and Doubting Thomas, and the Lamb of God.

John's Gospel offers readers a new language that enhances how we understand the divine, how we experience the world, and how we participate in the mystery of faith.

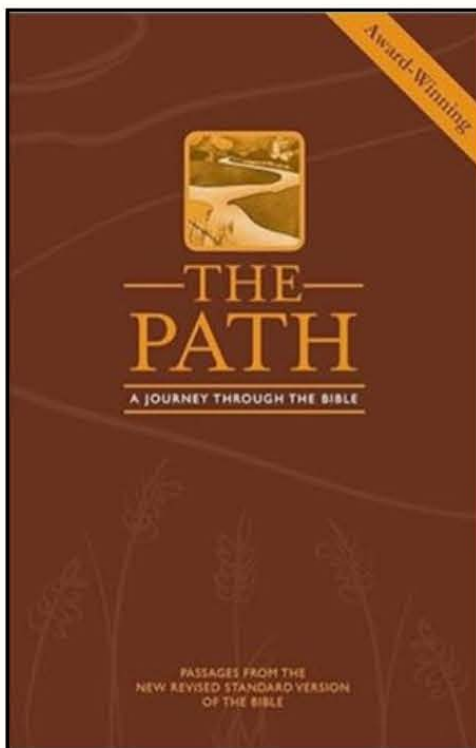


### Lenten Soup Suppers

Wednesdays in Lent (March 12- April 9)  
Potluck at 6PM Program at 6:30PM

Join **The Very Rev. Dr. Don H. Compier**, Dean Emeritus of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry, in exploring the history and meaning of **the Nicene Creed**, the statement of our faith.

This year we commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. We recite the creed that arose from that council every week as do many other denominations. Yet in our modern world its language is often incomprehensible or even offensive. It needs "translation" to permit a proper assessment. We will discuss the creed's composition in its historical context, then consider some key interpretations of its meaning by theological and spiritual writers.



### Adult Sunday School for Winter and Spring

Jan. 19 – June 1  
In the Bingham Room

#### THE PATH: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE

The Path takes readers through the entire Bible using representative selections of scripture. It allows readers to get a better feel for and a better understanding of the entire the Bible—its different time periods, different voices, different genres, and different themes.

### ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

7AM

NOON

7 PM

