



THE ST. MARK'S MESSAGE

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Britain

THE LION'S PAUSE with James Kiefer's Christian Biographies

VOLUME XCVII
ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2021
ISSUE

Michael and All Angels

29 September OT

On the Feast of Michael and all Angels, popularly called Michaelmas, we give thanks for the many ways in which God's loving care watches over us, both directly and indirectly, and we are reminded that the richness and variety of God's creation far exceeds our knowledge of it.

The Holy Scriptures often speak of created intelligences other than humans who worship God in heaven and act as His messengers and agents on earth. We are not told much about them, and it is not clear how much of what we are told is figurative. Jesus speaks of them as rejoicing over penitent sinners (Lk 15:10). Elsewhere, in a statement that has been variously understood (Mt 18:10), He warns against misleading a child, because their angels behold the face of God. (Acts 12:15 may refer to a related idea.)

In the Hebrew Scriptures, it is occasionally reported that someone saw a man who spoke to him with authority, and who he then realized was no mere man, but a messenger of God. Thus we have a belief in super-human rational created beings, either resembling men in appearance or taking human appearance when they are to communicate with us. They are referred to as "messengers of God," or simply as "messengers." The word for a messenger in Hebrew is MALACH, in Greek, ANGELOS, from which we get our word "angel" [**Digression:** ANGELION means "message, news" and EUANGELION means "good news = goodspell = gospel," from which we get our word "evangelist" used to mean a preacher of the Good News of salvation, and, more narrowly, one of the four Gospel-writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.]

By the time of Christ, Jewish popular belief included many specifics about angels, with names for many of them. There were thought to be four archangels, named Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel. An alternative tradition has seven archangels (see Tobit 12:15 and 1 Enoch 20). Sometimes each archangel is associated with one of the seven planets of the Ptolemaic system (the moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn). Michael is associated with Saturn and Uriel with the Sun. The other pairings I forget, but I believe that you will find a list in the long narrative poem called "The Golden Legend," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (I believe that a pairing is also offered in the opening chapters of the *Proof of The Apostolic Preaching*, by Irenaeus of Lyons, but I have not the work at hand.)

Michael (the name means "Who is like God?") is said to be the captain of the heavenly armies. He is mentioned in the Scriptures in Daniel 10:13,31; 12:1 (where he is said to be the prince of the people of Israel); in Jude 9 (where he is said to have disputed with the devil about the body of Moses); and in Revelation 12:7 (where he

Special points of interest:

- *The Lion's Pause - James Kiefer's Christian Biographies*
- *Episcopal Peace Fellowship - Sept. 5*
- *Parish Office Vacation News*
- *Safe Church Training Dates*
- *In-Person and Hybrid Services - Broadcast Instructions*
- *Presiding Bishop Michael Curry - Prayer for Afghanistan*
- *ADA Walk & Roll Photos*
- *Parish Clerk's Corner*
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is said to have led the heavenly armies against those of the great dragon). He is generally pictured in full armor, carrying a lance, and with his foot on the neck of a dragon. (Pictures of the Martyr George are often similar, but only Michael has wings.)

What is A Seraph?

Seraphim are mentioned in the Bible in Isaiah's vision of the heavenly throne-room (Is 6:1-7), where the LORD is seated between two seraphim. (In Hebrew, most masculine nouns form the plural by adding "-im".) Each has six wings, and with two he covers his face, and with two he covers his feet, and with two he flies. Later writers identify these functions with poverty, chastity, and obedience. Poverty, in that he veils his face, a sign of humility. Chastity, in that he covers his feet, a standard Hebrew idiom (or euphemism) for the lower body, including the crotch. Obedience, in that he flies to carry out whatever commission he receives from God. The word "seraph" comes from a root meaning "to burn", and the word is used in Nu 21:6,8; Dt 8:15; Is 14:29; 30:6; where it is translated "fiery serpent." Probably the Hebrews pictured a seraph as a kind of fiery winged serpent or reptile.

What is A Cherub?

Cherubim are first mentioned in the Bible in Gen 3:24, where Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden, and two cherubim are set at the gate to guard it, so that no one may enter. The Psalmist says of God:

He rode upon a cherub, and did fly;
he came flying on the wings of the wind. (18:10)
thou that dwellest between the cherubim (80:1)
he sitteth between the cherubim; let the earth quake (99:1)

From this we infer that they were pictured and thought of as winged creatures flanking or supporting the throne of God.

Ancient Middle Eastern art regularly shows the throne of a king or a god flanked by, or sometimes resting on, two creatures. Typically, each creature has the body of a lion or a bull (often the front quarters of a lion, with claws, and the hind quarters of a bull, with hooves, or vice versa), the head of a man, and the wings of an eagle. For a picture, see the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed., article on "Calah," vol 2, p 731. We see these creatures, not only flanking a throne, but also flanking the gate or doorway of a city or a temple. They appear to be standard figures, performing the function of honor guards or that of guard dogs.

In Ex 25f and 36f, the Israelites are to make a chest called the Ark of the Covenant, and place on the lid statues of two cherubim, with their wings arching over and meeting in the middle. Aside from the fact that they had wings, we are not told anything about their appearance. It was apparently taken for granted that the Israelites already knew what a cherub was supposed to look like. It is a reasonable guess that they looked like the guard figures already standard in Middle Eastern art, as noted above.

The Ark represented the presence of God, and presumably the Israelites thought of the cherubim as guarding or flanking or supporting an invisible throne. Thus, the Ark gave two complementary messages. On the one hand, it said, "The LORD cannot be represented by a picture or statue. He is spirit, He is invisible. He is transcendent. The whole universe cannot contain Him." On the other hand, it said, "Here is the place where the LORD chooses to reveal Himself. This is the place toward which you are to direct your homage, this is the focus of your worship."

The prophet Ezekiel records two visions (Ez 1 and 10) in which the LORD appears to him, enthroned above four figures identified as cherubs. Each is said to have four faces, one facing in each direction, the face of a man, a lion, a bull, and an eagle.

Prayer (contemporary language)

Everlasting God, who have ordained and constituted in a wonderful order the ministries of angels and mortals: Mercifully grant that, as your holy angels always serve and worship you in heaven, so by your appointment they may help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

To read more please go to Lectionarypage.net scroll down to "Other Helpful Resources" and click on James Kiefer's hagiographs.



Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF) Peacebuilding Online Project

First Sunday of the month beginning August 1

EPF will host a series of online 1-hr presentations the first Sunday of each month starting in August on different aspects of and approaches to peacebuilding, both with others and within ourselves. We will meet via Eventbrite/Zoom at 4 p.m. Eastern Time. Hear inspiring voices. Learn. Discover resources for going deeper.

Second offering, Sunday, September 5: Healing Trauma as a Way to Peace.

Explore all the options through January 2022 online.

Go to: <https://epfnational.org/peacebuilding-online-project/> to learn more.

The Parish Office will be closed September 1 through 15 while Cheryl is on vacation. Email and voicemail messages will be checked while she is away.

The Parish Office will return to its regular hours on September 16. Monday through Friday, from 8:30 to 2:30.

Safe Church Training

Training dates have been announced!

There are lots of dates and time from August 28 through November 14 posted.

If you need to re-certify or take the training for the first time, please go to:

www.episcopalct.org/Find-Resources/General-Parish-Operations/Safe-Church-Resources/

Wednesday evening, September 8, 2021, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Monday evening, September 13, 2021, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday morning, September 18, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Sunday afternoon, September 19, 2021, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday evening, September 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday morning, September 25, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Tuesday evening, September 28, 2021, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.



JOIN US FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES!

**If New Britain is red on the weekly Thursday (about 3 pm) Connecticut COVID-19 Data Tracker map, the Sunday service will held be on Zoom only.
For the map, please go to: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Data-Tracker>**

**Join us to worship in person every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in Cooper Hall.
Everyone is required to wear a mask and maintain a safe distance inside the buildings of South Church. We will have masks available if you need one. Thank you.**

Broadcast Instructions

You can enter the Zoom service via the parish Web link at <http://www.stmarksnewbritain.org>.

There is also a telephone number that can be used to join the Zoom service:

1-646-558-8656

(phone charges may apply for the telephone call if you do not have unlimited calling).

If you are using a telephone to dial into the service: dial the zoom phone number, and then wait to be prompted by the voice to enter the meeting number. Then, enter the meeting number, and as part of the meeting number, please add the "pound" sign (#) at the end of the meeting number (as the verbal instructions direct).

The Zoom broadcast opens at 9:45 am when remote participants can be admitted and will be greeted by the e-verger.

Remote participants are encouraged to stay connected after the service and greet and be greeted during the coffee hour.

Issues that have come to our attention:

Issue: "my screen goes back and forth between speakers."

Response: you may be in "speaker" view. If so, change to "gallery view".

Please contact Cheryl in the Parish Office if you have any questions.

From the Archivist at The Commons:

Dear Barbara,

Thank you so much for sending me the materials that St. Mark's has been developing in it's work documenting historic complicity in racism. The "Sleuthing" booklet is fantastic! Would it be alright to share this with other parish organizers working in the same vein?...perhaps sharing your contact info, too?

Again, this is impressive and forward thinking work! I will be sure to add it to our archive holdings!

In faith,
Greg

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry offers a prayer for the people of Afghanistan

Eternal God, hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. There is a profound humanitarian crisis. Countless people, mostly women and children, are now fleeing and vulnerable. The lives of many are now endangered. The hopes of many are forgone. Send your Spirit, Lord, to rally the resolve of the nations of the earth to find pathways to save human lives, protect human rights, and to resolve the hardships of those seeking refuge, asylum, and safety. Hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. This we pray as followers of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church

NOTE: For the many people who have asked how they can support The Episcopal Church's efforts to resettle and provide direct assistance to Afghans seeking special immigrant visas, please visit episcopalmigrationministries.org/give.

ADA WALK AND ROLL CELEBRATION! THE ST. MARK'S SCOOPERS!



Allison's Parish Clerk News Corner

July 2021

Greetings! I try to look on the bright side of things. After all, isn't that what we are here for --to spread the *Good News*? I was reading my June News Corner which was entirely upbeat with an encouraging drop in Covid rates and a calendar filled with activities - *in-person*! Unfortunately, the pandemic rages on and precautions are a high priority again. Covid rates are updated every Thursday in CT. We will check our tracker map, and if New Britain is in the red zone, our Sunday worship will be on Zoom only. We carry on.

News Bytes:


1. The United Chaplains' lender requested a 65-day extension to our 147 West Main Street purchase agreement and a list of major repairs to be completed by St. Mark's before the sale could move forward. We have rejected their request. We do have 2 interested parties who may make offers around our asking price.
2. St. Mark's had their traditional booth at New Britain's ADA Ability Walk & Roll event in July. Our free sundaes drew a crowd (3 1/2 4-gal tubs of vanilla ice cream!). Kudos to the scoopers—Sue & Norm Holland and Betty Barden. Justina Baptiste collected 45 prayer requests which she has collated for our Sunday prayers for the people.
3. New Britain is having a "Celebrate New Britain 150 Years Downtown Street Festival" the weekend of Sept 24th-26th. It is a huge event. There will be food and non-food (non-profit/civic groups/businesses) booths. It is a chance to make St. Mark's visible in the community. We are hoping to have a combined information booth showcasing 90 Main Street worship communities.
4. Autumn is around the corner. Plans are being made for our Stewardship campaign. Our Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for next year's vestry. Please consider serving as we create our vision for St. Mark's Future.
5. St. Mark's Future Committee will be meeting with our Diocesan Transition Minister, Amber Page Gehr, to find out what our options are when Father Shaw fully retires in February.
6. Special praise is given to Cheryl and Doug McDowell for doing an amazing job for the Altar Guild and Cooper Hall set-up so our in-person worship services run smoothly.

A prayer for guidance, faith and hope.....

Peace,

Allison Penick

September 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
The Parish office will be closed from September 1 through September 15 for Cheryl's Vacation.		In person services will be held as long as New Britain's positivity rate is NOT red.	1	2 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	3	4
5 Antecommunion/ Zoom Service 10 a.m. in Cooper Hall	6  Office Closed	7	8 5:45 p.m. Exec. Committee Mtg 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Mtg	9 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	10	11
12 Holy Eucharist/ Zoom Service 10 a.m. in Cooper Hall	13 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	14	15	16 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	17	18
19 Holy Eucharist/ Zoom Service 10 a.m. in Cooper Hall	20 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	21 9:30 a.m. Zoom Staff Meeting	22 Articles for October Message Due	23 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg	24	25
26 Holy Eucharist/ Zoom Service 10 a.m. in Cooper Hall	27 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry	28 9:30 a.m. Zoom Staff Meeting	29 October Message Mailed	30 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Thursday Night Group - Zoom mtg		

**St. Mark's Episcopal
Church, New Britain**

**PO Box 1538
90 Main Street
New Britain, CT 06051
The Rev. Dr. Shaw Mudge,
Priest In Charge**

**Phone: 860-225-7634
Email: parishoffice@stmarksnewbritain.org
Website: www.stmarksnewbritain.org**

**PRAYER CHAIN: to activate the chain call
Barbara Campbell 860-673-7607,
Campbellba24@gmail.com**

**If you or someone you know is hospitalized,
please inform the clergy or call the parish
office.**

***Open to God's Love -
Serving Our Neighbor***

**Due date for all articles for the September
Issue of the St. Mark's Message is
August 18, 2021**

LABEL

Parish Office Hours.

Monday through Thursday
from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Food Pantry

Monday: 9 - 12 & 12:30 - 2
Thursday: 9 - 12 & 12:30 - 2

**The Food Pantry will be closed on September 6
for the Labor Day Holiday.**

Weekly Parish Services:

**We are holding in person services along with
Zoom. To attend on Zoom, go to our website—
www.saintmarksnewbritain.org for
information on joining the service.**

Pledges and Offerings

Please remember to keep sending in your
pledges and offerings to the parish. Mail in our
P.O. Box is picked up several times a week. Your
pledge payments are compiled at least once a
month and deposited.

The parish ministries to the community and
worship services adapt and continue, even in
these most challenging times.

Mailing address: St. Mark's Episcopal Church
PO Box 1538 New Britain, CT 06050-1538 or to
electronically send checks to the Church via your
bank.

St. Marks keeps going in God's way, God's time,
and to God's glory.

SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, September 8 - 5:45 p.m. - Executive
Committee Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, September 14 - 6:45 p.m. - Vestry Meeting

St. Mark's Food Pantry

Monthly Statistics: July

June: Unduplicated households - 84

Children - 55

Adults - 135

Seniors - 32

Total Food Donated to St. Mark's - 955 lbs.

Total food from Food Share - 0 lbs.

(No order this month)

**Please give Cheryl a call in the parish
office if you can help us a few hours a
week.**