

The Blessing of the Reach
On the Feast Day of St. Michael and All Angels
(September 29, 2021 at 3 PM)



Welcome
David Lochtie

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that we are standing on the ancestral territory of the Wiyot people and pay respect to elders both past and present.

Long before Christ Episcopal Church was established, and before our many homes were built, and even before the Episcopal Church had a presence in California, this area was home to the Wiyot, who still have a presence today throughout Humboldt Bay.

We remember the Wiyot people who were killed in the Rogue River Indian War in 1852, after their lands were overrun during the Gold Rush. And we grieve for the hundreds of Wiyot elders, women, and children who were massacred on February 26, 1860 when they were in the middle of celebrating their world renewal ceremony.

Let us observe a moment of silence in respect and reverence for the Wiyot people, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations, while also not forgetting the violence and colonization of this land.

The Blessing of Water

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life. We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Now bless this water, we pray you, that it may be a sign to us of our Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Blessing of a Gathering Space

Antiphon

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when God's people live together in unity!

V. Above everything, love one another earnestly:

R. For love covers many sins.

Let us pray.

Give your blessing, Lord, to all who share this space, that they may be knit together in fellowship here on earth, and joined with the communion of your saints in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Blessing of the Home

Antiphon

The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness tranquility and trust for ever. My people will abide in secure dwellings and in quiet resting places.

V. Unless the Lord builds the house:

R. Their labor is in vain who build it.

Let us pray.

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live here with the gift of your love; and grant that they may manifest your love to all whose lives they touch. We invite you and your angels to use this space for art, creativity, joy, and healing. May all who live here and all who visit this home grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen them; and preserve them in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and for ever. **Amen.**



Opening Collects and Invocation

facing East, where the sun rises and the wind of the dawn breathes new life

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, grant to this home the grace of your presence, that you may be known to the inhabitants of this dwelling, and the defender of this household; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Everlasting God, you 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.

Amen.

Let the mighty power of the Holy God be present in this place to banish from it every unclean spirit, to cleanse it from every residue of evil, and to make it a secure habitation for those who dwell in it; in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Songs

Love, take a walk

Love, take a walk with me (3x)

Oh Spirit, guide my feet

Walking in the Light

We are walking in the Light of God (4x)

We are walking (2x)

Oh, we are walking in the Light of God

One in Foot in Front of the Other

You gotta put one foot in front of the other and lead with love
Oh, one in front of the other and lead with love (2x)

Don't give up hope / you're not alone
Don't you give up / keep moving on

Lift up your eyes / don't you despair
Look up ahead / the path is there

I know you're scared / and I'm scared too
But here I am / right next to you

Peace Before Us

Peace before us, peace behind us, peace under our feet
Peace within us, peace over us, let all around us be peace

Hermes Tree Blessing

Creator of life and Sustainer of seed and soil, of tree and flower, you have created this world and all that lives in it. We ask for your blessing upon this tree. May it remind us of St. Gabriel the Archangel of Communication, the Angel who announced the arrival of the Word Made Flesh, Christ the King and Healer and Pantocrator, the One Who Holds All Things Together in Love. We ask this in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**



First Reading

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (18:1 – 18)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the trees of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ² He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. ³ He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴ Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵ Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” ⁶ And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” ⁷ Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸ Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 112
Beatus vir

Hallelujah!

Happy are they who fear the Lord*
and have great delight in his commandments!

Their descendants will be mighty in the land;*
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

Wealth and riches will be in their house,*
and their righteousness will last for ever.

Light shines in the darkness for the upright;*
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.

It is good for them to be generous in lending*
and to manage their affairs with justice.

For they will never be shaken;*
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.

They will not be afraid of any evil rumors;*
their heart is right;
they put their trust in the Lord.

Second Reading

A Reading from the Third Epistle of John (3:2 – 6a, 11, 13 – 15)

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. ³I was overjoyed when some of the friends arrived and testified to your faithfulness to the truth, namely how you walk in the truth. ⁴I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth. ⁵Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the friends, even though they are strangers to you; ⁶they have testified to your love before the church.

¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

¹³ I have much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink; ¹⁴ instead I hope to see you soon, and we will talk together face to face. ¹⁵ Peace to you. The friends send you their greetings. Greet the friends there, each by name.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

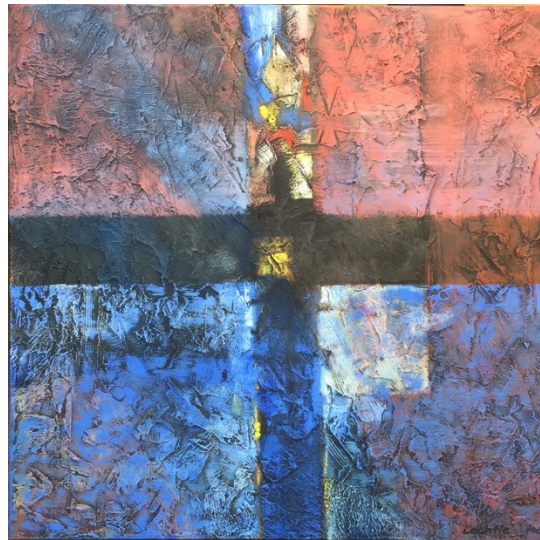
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The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, “Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

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Tree of Forgiveness Blessing

Creator of life and Sustainer of seed and soil, of tree and flower, you have created this world and all that lives in it. We ask for your blessing upon this Tree of Forgiveness. May it remind us of Lady Wisdom, the Christ Sophia, the Compassionate and Merciful One who forgives us all so that we may give forgive others. We ask this in the Name of the Lover, the Beloved, and the Love Overflowing. **Amen.**

Offertory

As we continue our saunter, you are invited to pick up a leaf or stone or whatever calls forth gratitude within you (a vision, image, thought, or idea, etc.) and present it at the altar as an offering.

Walk in love and Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Blessing of the Valley

facing South, where warm breezes gently heal the land

Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

Glory to God for ever and ever.

Almighty God of heaven and earth: By your grace pour out your healing love upon this valley, mend broken hearts, bind up the wounds of all those who have been hurt, and forgive those who have hurt others. May the warm breezes from the South gently heal this land and may St. Raphael the Archangel descend upon this valley and upon this home with his soothing and life-giving presence to bring wholeness and restoration; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever. Amen

Blessing of the Dance Floor and Musical Instruments

Blessed are you, Lord God, Sovereign of the universe,
who has granted us the gift of life, sustained us and brought us each to this moment.

Almighty God, on this day when our Jewish siblings celebrate *Simchat Torah* and give thanks to you for your commandments by dancing with Torah scrolls in seven spirals, we give you thanks for the gift of movement and music. Pour out your blessings upon this dance floor and all the musical instruments of this home that they may bring you glory and bring us closer to experiencing the perichoresis, the eternal circle dance of the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer. **Amen.**

Blessing towards the Ocean

facing West, where the sun sets and paints the sky

Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

Glory to God for ever and ever.

Gracious God, as we face the direction of the setting sun, we remember those who have passed on, especially Robert Moreland Lochtie and those whom we now name...

May light perpetual shine upon them.

Remind us every day that the moment will come when our sun will go down and we will fade into you. Give us beautiful colors and a great sky for setting, so that when the river of our life finally flows fully into you, we may enter your ocean of love with glory, guided and welcomed by the angels; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing of the Garden

facing North, where the cool winds call forth resilience in us and the plants and animals

Antiphon

As the earth puts forth its blossom, or bushes in a garden burst into flower, so shall the Lord God make righteousness and praise blossom before all the nations.

V. My boundaries enclose a pleasant land:

R. **Indeed, I have a goodly heritage.**

Let us pray.

Jesus, our good Companion, on many occasions you withdrew with your friends for quiet and refreshment: Be present with your servants in this place, to which they come for fellowship and recreation; and make of it, we pray, a place of serenity and peace. We dedicate all that grows on this land to you. May the land bring forth food for nourishment and sustenance and may it also yield a harvest of healing, restoration, and renewal. We ask this in the Name of Creator, the Redeemer, and Sustainer. **Amen.**

Offertory Circle of Sharing

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so this day we join with St. Michael and all the Angels and Archangels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation (+), the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael and all the angels and saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.
A period of silence is kept.*

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

How wonderful you are, O gracious God, in all your dealings with your people! We praise you now, and give you thanks, because in the blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ you have visited this home and hallowed it by your presence. Stay among us, we pray, to bind us together in your love and peace. May we serve you, and others in your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Dismissal

Alleluia. Go in peace to glorify God, follow Jesus Christ, and serve all people through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.



Reflection for the Blessing of the Reach on the Feast Day of St. Michael and All Angels

The reading from the Hebrew Scriptures assigned for the Blessing of a Home in “The [Episcopal] Book of Occasional Services” is a passage from Genesis 18 in which Abraham welcomes three mysterious visitors while he is sitting under the Trees of Mamre. After Abraham and his wife Sarah show them hospitality, the visitors reveal their identity as messengers of God sent to inform them of their future son, which is a preposterous idea considering Sarah’s age, so preposterous that Sarah laughs out loud. When this idea becomes a reality, Abraham and Sarah decide to name their son after laughter itself: Isaac, which means “the laughing one.”

These three visitors were divine messengers and the Greek word for messenger is *angelos*, which is where we get the word “angel.” On this feast day of St. Michael and All Angels (which also happens to be the Jewish holiday of *Simchat Torah*), we’re invited to see these three visitors the way many of the Jewish sages have seen them, as the three great Archangels: St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael.

St. Michael the Archangel is the great champion of justice, the protector of God’s people (especially the Jewish people), and a healer of the sick. He’s often pictured slaying the dragon of sin, sickness, injustice, and death.

St. Gabriel the Archangel is the great communicator who brings insight and wisdom, who appeared to Zacharias and to Mary and announced the arrival of the Christ child. The Bible’s first reference to Gabriel is in the book of Daniel, where he interprets Daniel’s visions and offers him insight as Daniel struggles with sickness and exhaustion.

Both Michael and Gabriel are archangels who bring healing in their own particular way, but the archangel who is most associated with healing is St. Raphael, whose name means “God heals”; and I believe St. Raphael would be a perfect patron saint for the Reach, this beautiful home that we are blessing today, which was created to promote healing and restoration. According to tradition, Raphael is the angel who stirred the healing waters at the Sheep pool in Jerusalem, described in John chapter 5. So, it is appropriate that we ask Raphael the Archangel to stir his healing power here on this sheep meadow in Eureka.

Just as Raphael and the other archangels appeared to Abraham when he was among the trees of Mamre, may we remain open to the presence of Raphael and all angels here among these trees, the Hermes Tree and this spectacular Tree of Forgiveness, among the birds and the lilies, symbols of God’s providence and care, as Christ taught.

May the loving hand of Raphael reach us all here, at the Reach. Amen.