



The Second Sunday in Lent
Sunday, February 25, 2024 • 8:00 AM Rite I

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev. Jesse Perkins, *Rector*

The Rev. Jim Swarhout,
Assistant Rector

The Rev. Tim Murray, *Deacon*

The Rev. Elizabeth (Betsy) Ward,
Retired Priest Associate

The Rev. Ralph Osborne,
Retired Priest Associate

The Rev. Judy Heinrich,
Retired Deacon

Theresa Halminiak, *Parish
Administrator*

Sara Torbeck, *Director of Music*

Jerry Egger, *Organist*

Kay Lewis, *Junior & Senior High
Youth Ministry*

Kim Curtis, *Facilities Manager &
Sunday School Director*

Carol Hebert, *Bookkeeper*

Caren Hunter, *Director of Little
Angels Christian Preschool*

VESTRY

Bill Ferry, *Senior Warden*

Liz Gabis, *Junior Warden*

2025
Marisa Boynton
Brant Deichmann
Ellen Lindeen

2026
Sam Adams-Lanham
Wes Kimes
Lynn Mayberry

2027
Paul Carrubba
Amy Hoff
Jeff Tolle

John Davis, *Treasurer*
Craig Anderson, *Clerk*



St. Michael's Welcomes You!

Whether you are visiting with us for the first time today or if St. Michael's is your home, we welcome you and are glad you are joining us for worship. Wherever you might be in your spiritual journey, we invite you to continue to explore a deeper relationship with God and a stronger spiritual life.

Saturday Worship

5:00 p.m. **Saturday Evening Holy Eucharist Spoken Service**

Sunday Worship and Education Schedule

8:00 a.m. **Holy Eucharist, Rite I**

9:00 a.m. **St. Michael's Jr. (LiFT) | Sturtz House** (*summer hours vary*)

10:00 a.m. **Holy Eucharist, Rite II**

10:00 a.m. **Sunday School | Visit** stmichaelsbarrington.org

6:30 p.m. **St. Michael's Sr. High (LiFT) | Sturtz House** (*as scheduled*)

Things to Remember

- When it is time for Holy Communion, walk up to the altar and stand or kneel at the altar rail.
- A digital version of this bulletin is available by visiting our website at stmichaelsbarrington.org.

We also live-stream all services to Facebook and the parish website. This provides a way for everyone to worship with us, even if they are not comfortable returning in person. If you come up for communion, you will likely be seen in our online video by those worshipping at home.

Please visit our website at stmichaelsbarrington.org for more information and announcements.

Contact Information

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The Holy Eucharist

The Second Sunday in Lent

Sunday, February 25, 2024 | 8:00 AM | Rite I

PRELUDE | Organ

A bell will sound three times, inviting the congregation to stand.

A Penitential Order

Process in Silence

OPENING HYMN | Hymn 607 O God of every nation, *Llangloffen*

OPENING ACCLAMATION | BCP 319

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins.

People: **His mercy endureth for ever.**

THE DECALOGUE | BCP 317

Kneeling or standing

God spoke these words, and said: I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Honor thy father and thy mother.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt do no murder.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not steal.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Thou shalt not covet.

Lord have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.

The Celebrant continues:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8,9

THE CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION | BCP 320

The Celebrant:

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

Said in unison.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved thee with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways, to the glory of thy Name. Amen.

The Celebrant Continues:

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

TRISAGION

Repeat three times:

Celebrant: Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One,

People: **Have mercy upon us.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Let us pray

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from thy ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of thy Word, Jesus Christ thy Son; who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING | Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Please be seated.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 22:22-30 | *Deus, Deus meus*

Read in unison.

- 22 Praise the LORD, you that fear him;
stand in awe of him, O offspring of Israel;
all you of Jacob's line, give glory.
- 23 For he does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;
neither does he hide his face from them;
but when they cry to him he hears them.
- 24 My praise is of him in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.
- 25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
and those who seek the LORD shall praise him:
"May your heart live for ever!"
- 26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 27 For kingship belongs to the LORD;
he rules over the nations.
- 28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust fall before him.
- 29 My soul shall live for him;
my descendants shall serve him;
they shall be known as the LORD'S for ever.
- 30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn
the saving deeds that he has done.

THE SECOND READING | Romans 4:13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL | Mark 8:31-38

Please stand as able.

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People: **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Jesus began to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

THE SERMON | The Rev. Jim Swarthout

THE NICENE CREED | BCP 326

Please stand. Said in unison.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Form I)

Intercessor:

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy."

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls. Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

We pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Paula, our Bishop; Joseph, Archbishop of the Upper Nile Province, and Simon, Bishop of the Diocese of Renk, South Sudan; for Jesse, Jim, Betsy, Ralph, Tim, and Judy, our clergy; and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our President, Joe, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this city, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For reasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries: Dennis Harms, Max Raynor, Damien Gabis, Christine Olson, Julia Yerger, Malakai Duncan, and Jan and Semmy Semerad, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who have requested our prayers: Pat, Lynda, Emma Rose, the Kean family, Zach and Jenny, Sophia and Penelope, Karen, Spencer, Meg and Charlie, Sarah and Evelyn, Amy and Matthew, Jeff, Richard, Nancy, Christine, Jeff, Sharon, Andy, Marilyn and Pat, Caden, Sadie, Dave, Phyllis, Cameron, Maribeth, Ruth, Brian, Barb and Steve, Patty, and Amy.

Are there others? [PAUSE].

For all whom we remember today, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, especially, David Larson, Katy Pepper, Bill Allen, Jean Clendinning, Mary Schwind, and Stacy Curtis, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of St. Michael and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To thee, O Lord our God.

Silence

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

All may greet one another from a distance.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please be seated.

The Holy Communion

THE OFFERTORY

Thank you for your gifts in support of the church's mission and ministries. The offering plates are in the rear at both doors or offerings may be made online at stmichaelsbarrington.org/give.

MUSIC AT THE OFFERTORY | Hymn 668 I to the hills will lift mine eyes, *Burford*

Sung by all.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Prayer II | BCP 340

Please stand as able

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People: **It is meet and right so to do.**

Celebrant: It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Celebrant and People:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The people stand or kneel.

Celebrant: All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Celebrant and People:

**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.

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

THE FRACTION ANTHEM | BCP 337

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People: **Have mercy upon us.**

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People: **Have mercy upon us.**

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People: **Grant us thy peace.**

THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS | BCP 337

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

All are welcome to come forward to the altar rail for Communion or a Blessing.

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Please come forward to receive Communion.

MUSIC AT COMMUNION | Burgundy Book 41, God be with you, *Ralph Vaughan Williams*

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Kneel or stand.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Said by the Celebrant & People

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Bow down before the Lord.

The people kneel and the Celebrant says the following prayer:

Keep this your family, Lord, with your never-failing mercy, that relying solely on the help of your heavenly grace, they may be upheld by your divine protection; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please stand as able.

CLOSING HYMN | Hymn 675 Take up your cross, *Bourbon*

DISMISSAL

Deacon: Let us Bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE | Organist



What's in the Sword this week?

CALENDAR AND EVENTS

- **February 14-25** | Uncaged Art Exhibit at St. Michael's Church, *please see Sword for dates and hours.*
- **February 21-March 20** | Stations of the Cross, weekly on Wednesday at 6pm
- **February 25** | Bread baking 11:15am
- **March 10** | Choral Evensong, 5pm
- **March 24** | Palm Sunday, 8am and 10am
- **March 28** | Maundy Thursday, 6:30pm
- **March 29** | Good Friday Services, more information coming soon.
- **March 30** | Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday Evening, 8pm
- **March 31** | Easter Sunday Services, 9am and 11am
- **March 31** | Easter Egg Hunt following the 11am service.

WEEKLY EVENTS

- **Sundays 10:00am** | In Person Sunday School
- **Sundays 9:10am** | Lent Adult Study with Deacon Tim in the Conference Room
- **Sundays 11:30am** | Lent Adult Forum with The Rev. Ralph Osborne in the Library
- **Tuesdays 9:30am – 11:00am** | Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study
- **Tuesdays 7:00-8:30pm** | Tuesday Evening Women's Bible Study via Zoom
- **Fridays at 6:00 AM** | Men's Fellowship meets in the Community Room

MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Last Tuesday of Every Month** | Prayer Shawl meets in the Library at 6pm
- **Third Wednesday of Every Month** | Book Club meets in the Library at 7pm

Those for whom prayers have been requested:

Pat, Lynda, Emma Rose, the Kean family, Zach and Jenny, Penelope and Sophia, Karen, Spencer, Meg and Charlie, Sarah and Evelyn, Nancy, Jeff, Richard, Amy and Matthew, Christine, Jeff, Sharon, Andy, Marilyn and Pat, Caden, Sadie, Dave, Phyllis, Cameron, Maribeth, Ruth, Brian, Barb and Steve, Patty, and Amy.

Birthdays

2/25 Dennis Harms
 2/26 Damien Gabis
 2/26 Max Raynor
 2/28 Christine Olson
 2/28 Julia Yerger
 3/1 Malakai Duncan

Anniversaries

3/2 Jan and Semmy
 Semerad

Remembrances

2/25 David Larson
 2/25 Katy Pepper
 2/25 Bill Allen
 2/27 Jean Clendinning
 2/27 Mary Schwind
 2/28 Stacy Curtis

AT TODAY'S WORSHIP

Preaching: The Rev. Jim Swarthout

Presiding: The Rev. Jesse Perkins

Deacon: The Rev. Tim Murray

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THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Wandering Heart: "Rescue me from danger"



Lift Off

by Nicolette Peñaranda

Inspired by Matthew 14:22-23

Acrylic, ink, paper collage, and mixed media on canvas

There are no street lights in the ocean. I think about that often. Rarely do we think about how dark and mysterious the night is, even for a veteran fisherman. Nor do we take into consideration the movement of the wind and its roar rumbling off of the waves.

Inside the wind tunnel in this piece, we see the West African symbol, *Adinkrahene*,¹ symbolizing leadership and charisma. Peter embodies all of that when he follows Jesus onto the

water. But the bottom of his foot holds the *Mako*.² *Mako* reminds us that not all peppers grow the same. As charismatic and eager to impress Jesus as Peter is, he does not necessarily embody the same level of development as Jesus. The hand of Jesus reaches through the image of *Asase Ye Duru*,³ reminding us that the earth has weight. Jesus, the divine, is greater than the limitations of the flesh, the fears we carry like the uncertainty of the water. What we also see around the hand of Christ is *Nyame Dua*,⁴ the sacred stump symbolizing God's presence and protection. The ever-present God protected Peter from drowning. All of this storytelling is set inside the symbol of *Mmusuyidee*,⁵ signifying prosperity and sanctity. We are invited to maintain a hopeful outlook and persevere.

I titled this piece *Lift Off* as a nod to the 2011 Jay Z and Kanye West (ft. Beyonce) song by the same title. There is something about the opening lines, "We gon' take it to the moon, take it to the stars, how many people you know can take it this far?" that lingers in my head. The emphasis on the night sky and the deep wonder of the stars definitely influences the correlation. However, I think it also pertains to how Peter must have felt walking on water toward Jesus. No one had ever done that before. Not only was he the first, but he must have felt like he was having a deeper experience with Jesus. Who else was flying this high right then? Who else had dropped everything to live vagrantly with Christ? Before stumbling in his ways, there was something otherworldly happening, which brings me back to the stars.

Living in a metropolitan area, I don't get the luxury of stars but I like to imagine a world where the skies told their own stories. In *Lift Off*, the elements are like main characters, inspiring whimsical fantasy. Cut-out layered clouds build into the horizon of the sea. The forceful wind tunnel blows over the sinking foot of a probably panicking Peter. This is a moving piece that is meant to tell a story in any direction it is turned. Like the theme of this series, the viewer should feel like they are on a journey with Peter. *Lift Off* is intentionally dark with beautiful highlights of color and sparkle. It is because of the darkness that the colors shine bright. These two things are complimentary, not contrasting. The fear that entered Peter with the wind was most likely heightened because it was dark out. Without knowing exactly what was around him, Peter became vulnerable, thus causing him to reach out. The wonder of darkness exposes us and invites us to seek connection. We see that in the reaching hand gently entering the dark sky. —Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda

1 Adinkra symbols originated from the Gyaman people of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Learn more about their meanings and significance here: adinkrasymbols.org. View the *Adinkrahene* symbol here: adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/adinkrahene/

2 This proverb warns the greater ones (the peppers that ripen quickly) to help the less fortunate. Learn more here: adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/mako/

3 *Asase Ye Duru* is a reminder of the earth's significance; humans should respect the earth and not harm it. adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/asase-ye-duru/

4 *Nyame Dua* means "tree or altar of God." adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/nyame-dua/

5 *Mmusuyidee* means "that which removes bad luck or evil." adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/krapa-musuyidee/