

**A Sermon for the 16th Sunday after Pentecost  
September 28, 2025**



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[Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – The Episcopal Church](#)

Genesis 28:10-17, Revelation 12:7-12, John 1:47-51

Welcome to the Feast Day of St. Michael and All Angels! Given the uncertainties in our society today, it is comforting to know that angels are all around us.

All three readings are full of angels and all of them have jobs, the main job being messengers from God. I love that our ancestor Jacob dreams of angels walking up and down between heaven and earth, connecting humans to the divine. Jesus speaks of this connection while talking with Nathanael, that Nathanael will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, a reference to Jesus himself being the connection between the earthly and heavenly.

In the hierarchy of angels, the top tier belongs to the Archangels, and yes, we will have a pop quiz on their names and duties during the Episcopal Minute. But let's review them right now, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel. You'll notice that all four have names that end in EL, which is one of the Hebrew names for God. ELOHIM, as if their names emphasize that they come from God. All four are named in the Bible. We are perhaps most familiar with Gabriel, who runs a highly efficient messenger service in the Nativity stories of Jesus. But today's reading from Revelation emphasizes Michael, the Protector, who is apparently the commander in chief of good angels who are battling the dragon Satan, and the bad angels. It is quite a thrilling account. Michael wins, of course, and Satan and his crew are thrown out of heaven, down to earth. I've noticed a lot of bad angels acting out recently, so I guess we are still dealing with the results of this epic battle. Abraham Lincoln commended to us our "better angels" as guides in our lives. Amen to that.

Do angels really exist? The majority of folks in our culture believe in angels, and seeing no real evidence to the contrary, I do too. I read a positive suggestion of angelic existence in a recent best-seller by novelist Dan Brown, in his book *The Secret of Secrets*, (2025, p 660, Doubleday New York). His book explores human consciousness and psychology and one character, called The Golem, retreats to the shady realm in between life and death, where he plans to remain and influence his alter ego, a character named Sasha. Dan Brown writes: "While the golem knew he had the power to leave Sasha entirely, to untether and return to the realm from which he had come, he sensed that a part of him would forever be with her ... a guardian angel. He would manifest quietly in the ways so many angels appear ... as an instinct, a hunch, a knowing ... a helpful nudge from a more experienced soul, streaming in from another world." I really like that idea, that those nudges to our psyches are just angels trying to get our attention. Angels are our intermediaries, showing us a better way to live.