



St. Michael Lutheran Church

Important Date: February 15

Why? On that Sunday, our potential new pastor (our primary candidate) will lead our worship service at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Following the 11 a.m. service, he and his wife will join us for a potluck lunch. All members and guests are invited to attend and bring a dish to share. Families/persons with last names

A-G please bring a favorite casserole

H-R please bring a salad or bread

S-Z please bring a desert or side dish

The Call Committee, with help from the Church Council, is coordinating the potluck meal. If you have any questions or suggestions, call Jennie Hodge (953-2225), Judy Clemens (951-1915) or Ben Crawford (961-5733).

Who is a Primary Candidate? The Call (search) Committee carefully and prayerfully looks at all potential pastoral candidates who are submitted through the Bishop's office. The committee uses the congregational survey and evaluation tools supplied by the Bishop. The committee may choose to interview some and a primary candidate may emerge. The candidate is then asked if he or she is willing to become the

primary candidate. If he or she says “yes”, then that person is “..NOT to be under consideration anywhere else until this possibility is resolved. Also, the Call Committee is to explore no other possibilities until this candidate’s call is either extended or fails to come before the church council or congregation for a vote.” “ ...Confidentiality is a **must**. The careers of pastors may be jeopardized if news of their consideration is prematurely divulged.” (quotes from *Handbook for the Call Process of the VA Synod*)

After you have met our Primary Candidate on Sunday, February 15, please let any member of the Call Committee know if you have any questions or comments. The committee is listed below.

Ben Crawford 961-5733
Bob Brown 552-8141
Judy Clemens 951-1915
Jennie Hodge 953-2225
Julia Landes 552-4775
Linda Naughton 381-1793
David Surface 552-3961

Seasons of the Church

According to home calendars, there are four seasons. The church has seasons, too, but there are six of them. Three seasons center around Jesus' birth. They are Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. The other three center around Jesus' resurrection. They are Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. When you put those six seasons of the church together, you have the "liturgical year." Just like spring, summer, winter, and fall, each season of the liturgical year has its own colors and things to do.

Ash Wednesday

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and continues for 40 days, ending on the eve of Easter. The exact date of Ash Wednesday is set according to the date of Easter, which changes every year.

Ash Wednesday is named for the practice of imposing ashes and emphasizes the confession of sins. We confess that our sin leads to death. Using ashes as a sign of repentance is an ancient practice that is mentioned often in the Bible. The early Christians adopted the use of ashes from the Jewish practice as an external mark of penitence (being sorry for sins).

Our predecessors were often so tortured for their faith that some

became apostates, ones who denied their beliefs. Later, when persecution subsided, these same apostates repented and wanted to rejoin the worshipping community. The church established public penance—including the wearing of sackcloth and ashes—as a condition for re-entry. This mild form of suffering reminded apostates that during their absence, the faithful had suffered profoundly. Some had even died. However, singling out apostates with ashes suggested that they were the only ones in need of forgiveness. Church leaders knew better and Lent was set aside as a time when all would examine their own sinfulness and ask God’s forgiveness.

The confession of sins and imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a season of penitence. We join in the observance of Ash Wednesday to remind ourselves that we, too, are sinners in need of God’s compassion and mercy. Ashes are applied with the minister’s thumb in the form of a small cross of the forehead with the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Ashes symbolize several aspects of our human existence.

- * Ashes remind us of God’s condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, “Dust you are and to dust you shall return.”
- * Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. Ashes were used in ancient times in the absence of soap. On Ash Wednesday, ashes are a penitential substitute for water as a reminder of our baptism.
- * Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, as is said when we are buried, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”
- * Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins and return to God.

The color for Ash Wednesday is purple, the color for penitence, or black for the color of ashes. The cross is also a symbol of Ash Wednesday.

Our Ash Wednesday service will be held on February 25 at 7 p.m. We will be observing the season of Lent at mid-week worship services with our friends of the New River Parish. .

Prayer List Procedure Change

Purpose: To improve the accuracy of the prayer list.

New procedure: The prayer list that is currently included in the church bulletin will be renewed and updated at the beginning of each church season, i.e., a name will be removed from the list unless a new request has been made.

If you would like to place a name (or have a name remain) on the prayer list, please fill out and submit a blue “for the bulletin” request form found on the shelf in the hallway. The forms can be placed in the secretary’s box in the workroom. Names can also be submitted

to Sandy Birch via e-mail (birch@stmlc.us). Thank you.

The power of our prayers is clearly visible in this picture of Ingrid and Matt. It wasn't so long ago that Ingrid Solberg, living with multiple sclerosis (MS), needed a walker to come to the communion table. Now she is climbing mountains.

As a community of believers guided by the Holy Spirit,
the mission of St. Michael Lutheran Church is:

*C are for God's people in need,
H ear of God's love through Word and Sacrament,
R espond to God's grace with thankful hearts,
I nvite others into Christ's community,
S erve God in our daily lives, and
T ell the story of God's love for all.*

add their names to any of the many
volunteer opportunities at any time
throughout the year.

3-D Meetings

Dessert - Devotions - Down to Business

The monthly 3-D meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be February 10 in the fellowship hall. We invite all members of the congregation to share their time and talents at these monthly "joint committee" meetings....and enjoy fine fellowship as well. If you have any questions, contact Sandy Birch at 951-3455.

And speaking of sharing our time and talents....the summary lists from the Time and Talent forms for 2004 are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. **All members are welcome to**

Reminder: Committee reports for 2003 are due no later than February 22.
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Happy-Go-Lucky

**February 12 – a Valentines Day
potluck for our members and
friends...anyone who just enjoys good
food and fellowship.**

**Bring a small item that we
can donate to Heritage Hall
for prizes at their Bingo
parties, e.g., bottle of perfume,
knick-knack, slipper-socks, small
stuffed animal (used OK).**

11:30 a.m. See you then.

Women of the ELCA

Please join us on **Thursday, February 19, at 7:00 p.m. at HERITAGE HALL –** Sunshine Room. We're bringing the meeting to Thelma Hylton, now a resident of the hall...and a long time and supportive member. Bring a small item for prizes for the Heritage Hall BINGO parties, e.g., perfume, make-up, slipper socks, small stuffed animal, knick-knack.

Our 2004 Schedule of Events is printed in this newsletter. We invite all women of the congregation to join us for all or any of our events. Questions can be directed to Alice Schneider at 552-6995.

For February, we invite the congregation to bring noodle and rice mixes for the Food Bank...though any non-perishable food item is welcome.

Over the past several months, empty dishes have gone unclaimed. If you're missing your favorite casserole dish or bowl, it just might be there. Dishes left after February 15 will be donated to charity.

Celebrating the service of special people: Wanda Pascoe

Wanda has served as our church custodian for over six years, joining us after working at Virginia Tech in a similar position. She and her husband James will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on February.17. Their daughter Stephanie is a junior at Baltimore International College and Wanda's mom, Carolene, is a frequent visitor at our Sunday worship. Originally from Floyd, Wanda enjoys sewing, embroidery, and growing rose bushes (which she generously shares with the neighborhood deer).

Thank you Wanda, for taking such good care of your St. Michael family...and Happy Anniversary!

We Remember.....

Our Christian sympathy and prayers are extended to the family and

friends of...

Al Hylton, who died on December 24. A funeral service for Al was held at St. Michael on December 28. Al was a life-long member of St. Michael, serving on the Church Council and as a Trustee.

Clairmont Clemens, who died on January 15. A funeral service for Clairmont was held at St. Michael on January 18. Clairmont will be remembered for her contributions to the music programs at St. Marks and St. Michael.

David Robinson, father of Randy and Richard Robinson, who died on January 12.

Rest eternal grant them, O God, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

In the community In the world.....

More details on all these activities/stories are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway.

We have been invited by Linda Mitchell, interim director of the Women's Center at Virginia Tech, to attend a **performance of the Grammy award-winning Sweet Honey in the Rock** at Virginia Tech. The concert will be Monday, February 16 at 8 p.m. in Burruss Hall Auditorium. Sweet Honey in the Rock, one of the world's premier a capella ensembles with deep musical roots in sacred gospel music and well as jazz and blues, join their powerful voices to address life's most critical human activities: education, economics, spirituality, and war. Tickets are on sale at the Squires Ticket Office or online at www.tickets.vt.edu and cost \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door for the general public.

YMCA "Mornings" meets weekly to bring International people and Americans together for friendship, fun, and support. The meetings are held on Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church.

Our St. Michael family "in the news" in January

In the *Roanoke Current* section in January, two of our members were recognized. **Ben**

Simmers was honored as one of the first ten members to be elected to the Blacksburg Rescue Squad Wall of Fame. Recognized for his many contributions to the Rescue Squad, Ben has served as treasurer of the squad for 30 years.

Matt Woods, who played tight end on the Blacksburg Bruins' football team, was recognized for his wrestling success. Following a victory at the Christiansburg Christmas Tournament in December, his record was 7-0.

If you wake up on Sunday morning and there is snow on the ground (or snow is forecast)...watch WDBJ 7 or check the church answering machine for church cancellations.

BIBLE STUDY BIBLE STUDY BIBLE STUDY

The Bishop Mauney is leading a Bible study on the book of Luke via e-mail. If you would like to participate, send mail to Worley@roanoke.edu and they will send the study to you twice a week as well as readings from the Lutheran Confessions on Wednesday.

Sharing Our Gifts: Time, Talents and Treasure

From the St. Francis Peace Prayer: “For it is in giving that we receive”

Justice and Mercy

In January , our fund was used to help a family with their trailer lot rental and a second family with their medical expenses. Your donations to the Justice and Mercy Fund are appreciated by our “neighbors”.

Sunday Servants needed for 2004

Please reserve your dates for altar care, altar flowers and fellowship/coffee hours. The sign-up sheets are on the bulletin boards in the hallway.

We’re still hoping to hear from a few more of our St. Michael family. Please add your name to the service lists posted in the hallway.

Thank you to some more “quiet” servants

To Stan Larsen for making the candle holders and bringing us “up to code” for our Christmas Eve candlelight service and to the Worship Committee and other volunteers for setting up and taking down our Christmas decorations; Karen Mayer for loaning us her Christmas tree.

To Ann and Dave Surface, Lynn Hickok and Barbara Corbett, and members of the Worship Committee for opening the church for the 9 a.m. services.

To Judy Clemens for cleaning our communion linens on a regular basis and to Jenny Akers for repairing one of the linens.

To Ray Howell for his many building repairs and he and his crew for recently painting the hallway, narthex, kitchen and men’s bathroom. Everything looks wonderful!

Current and maintenance fund envelopes available for 2004

Some good reasons to use an offering envelope...they help us

1. remember our gift of “treasures”;
2. catch up if we’ve missed a Sunday for vacations or a snow day (since the envelopes are dated);
3. remember to prepare our offering ahead of time instead of frantically writing the check while the ushers are nearing our pew.

Offering envelopes are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary.

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what He has first given us...our time, our talent and our possessions

February 24.....Shrove Tuesday.....PANCAKES!!!

Mardi Gras, also known as Shrove Tuesday or Carnival, is an annual festival marking the final day before the Christian fast of Lent, a 40-day period of self-denial and abstinence from merrymaking. Mardi Gras is the last opportunity for reveling and indulgence in food and drink. The term Mardi Gras is French for "Fat Tuesday".

At St. Michael, we indulge in PANCAKES....lots and lots of pancakes and all the trimmings. Please join us at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 24, for our annual Pancake Supper. Bring your friends and family for the celebration.

Kid's Night at St. Michael
February 4 and 18 6 – 7:30 p.m.

All children in grades K-6 are invited for supper, crafts, music and more....

We're getting closer to paving the parking lot.....

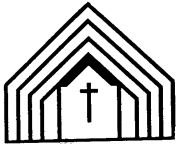
A little over \$17,000 has been promised by twenty six families (including a \$1,000 matching gift from Thrivent). We look forward to hearing from all members of the congregation by using the commitment card below. Only \$8,000 to go.....

Thank you for your support of this major and **critical** maintenance project.

St. Michael Parking Lot Repaving Commitment

Name _____
I/we intend to give \$ _____
to be paid _____ in one payment OR
_____ in installments of \$ _____ over a period ending July 31, 2004.

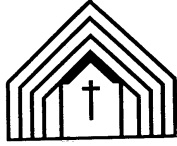
Please mail to the church (2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg) or place in the offering plate. Thank you!



March Servants

	March 7	March 14	March 21	March 28
<i>Acolytes</i>	Daniel Crowder	Scott McGuigan	Kelsey Trimble Abbie Penner	Isaac Nagle
<i>Altar Care</i>	Tammy Veit and Peggy Brown			
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Steve Mouras		Bob Brown	
<i>Coffee Hour</i>		Potluck lunch		Need a volunteer
<i>Greeters</i>	James and Wanda Pascoe			
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Steve Mouras	Dave Surface	Doug Veit	Jeff Birch
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	Cindy Dowdy Abbie Penner	Dean Trimble Kelsey Trimble	Sharon Robinson Lauren Robinson	Linda Naughton Chelsea Naughton
<i>Ushers</i>	Ray Howell Sam Akers James Pascoe Dickie Shepherd	Josh Mouras Steve Mouras Don Linkous Gary Worley	Ben Simmers Roscoe Turman Burn Gross Betty Gross	Ann Surface Dave Surface Peggy Brown Bob Brown

Church Office Phone Number: (540) 951-8951
 Church e-mail address: stmlc@earthlink.net



February Servants

	February 1	February 8	February 15	February 22	February 29
<i>Acolytes</i>	Kelsey Trimble Abbie Penner	Scott McGuigan	Daniel Crowder Sarah Crowder	Isaac Nagle Scott McGuigan	Kelsey Trimble
<i>Altar Care</i>	Lori Sheppard, Carol Crawford, Kitty Kirk				
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Sandy Birch		Dianne Krallman	Josh Mouras	(Doug Smiley will se serve on Ash Wed)
<i>Coffee Hour</i>		Kathy Albert		Janet Bryant Jane Lane	
<i>Greeters</i>	Hank and Alice Schneider				
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Sandy Birch	Cindy Dowdy	Dianne Krallman	Josh Mouras	John Krallman
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	David Burke Teresa Sebastian	Grace Simmers Kelsey Trimble	Karen Brown Jada Brown	Lorin Crowder Abbie Penner	Becci Nagle Isaac Nagle
<i>Ushers</i>	Ann Surface Dave Surface Peggy Brown Bob Brown	Ray Howell Sam Akers James Pascoe Dickie Shepherd	Josh Mouras Steve Mouras Don Linkas Gary Worley	Ben Simmers Roscoe Turman Burn Gross Betty Gross	Ann Surface Dave Surface Peggy Brown Bob Brown

