

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 on 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.

Reformation Day

Reformation Day is October 31, but the festival is celebrated in churches either on that day when it falls on a Sunday or on the last Sunday of October.

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, Germany. This list of statements was meant to start a discussion about changes in the Roman Catholic Church. Martin Luther did not know that his list would eventually lead to a division in the church or to the formation of the group known as "Lutherans." Reformation is a Lesser Festival of the church, which means that its celebration is optional, but it has become a very popular festival in the Protestant Church. The day focuses on the important teachings of the Reformation--salvation by God's grace and the priesthood of all believers.

The color for Reformation Day is red -- the color of fire, life, and blood. One symbol of Reformation Day is the oil lamp, a symbol for God's Word and for Christian knowledge. Another symbol is Luther's seal. While a professor at Wittenburg, Luther devised the seal, which he declared was meant to be "expressive of his theology." The following explanation of the seal is from a letter Luther wrote to a friend:

"The first thing expressed in my seal is a cross, black, within the heart, to put me in mind that faith in Christ crucified saves us. 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' Now, although the cross is black, mortified, and intended to cause pain, yet it does not change the color of the heart, does not destroy nature -- i.e., does not kill, but keeps alive. 'For the just shall live by faith,' -- by faith in the Savior. But this heart is fixed upon the center of a white rose, to show that faith causes joy, consolation and peace. The rose is white, not red, because white is the ideal color of all angels and blessed spirits.

This rose, moreover, is fixed in a sky-colored ground, to denote that such joy of faith in the spirit is but an earnest and beginning of heavenly joy to come, as anticipated and held by hope, though not yet revealed. And around this ground base is a golden ring, to signify that such bliss in heaven is endless, and more precious than all joys and treasures, since gold is the best and most precious metal. Christ, our dear Lord, He will give grace unto eternal life."

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In our planning session on September 12, 2004, nearly 30 people gathered to evaluate the ministries of St. Michael in 12 different categories ranging from Mission to Dynamic Worship to Space and Facilities. The evaluation process is designed to help the congregation identify and claim our strengths for ministry. With the help of Pastor John Wertz, Sr., the group chose three strengths of St. Michael to focus on in order to continue to grow the ministry of the congregation. The three strengths selected were *Dynamic Worship, Pastoral and Lay Visitation* and *Competent Programs and Activities*. As we grow stronger in each of these areas, we will be fulfilling the mission statement we have established for ourselves and growing in our mission and ministry in the community. This month, the council will consider the information from the planning session and suggest possible ways to move forward in these areas. Thank you for helping St. Michael plan for the future. Look for more ways that you can be involved in growing these strengths in the next few months.

THANK YOU!

Dear Sisters and Brothers on St. Michael Lutheran,

On behalf of the whole Synod Council, I want to thank you for your strong partnership this past year. Because of your commitment to meet your pledge in full, you have joined with many other congregations to enable us to share with you the good news of where we are financially as a synod in 2004.

Because of your leadership efforts and the partnership of many like-minded congregations, institutions, and individuals, we, as a partner synod, continue to give 50% to the wider church through the ELCA. We continue to meet our 100% assigned share as a partner synod to Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary! We continue to fund the mission restarts of Grace Lutheran in Massaponax, Rejoice Lutheran in Chesapeake, and St. Thomas in Bealeton, with hope-filled plans for a new mission start. We now have confidence that we can return to full support of Hungry Mother Camp and Conference Center, Caroline Furnace Camp and Conference Center, Lutheran Council of Tidewater, the Chaplain Services of Virginia's ministry to the prisons of Virginia, the Virginia Council of Churches, the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, Campus Ministries, the support of our Virginia Missions, and therefore, the staff salaries to their full level for the 2004 budget!

May we continue to move forward as a synod in our vision to be Ambassadors for Christ.

*Yours in Christ,
The Rev. James F. Mauney
Bishop*

BIBLE STUDY ON TUESDAYS

If you are interested in learning more about the scripture readings that are read each Sunday morning in worship, then Pastor John's new Bible Study is for you. The Bible Study groups meets each Tuesday in the Fellowship Hall at 11 AM and at 6 PM, so pick the time that works for you and come and learn more about Sunday's readings.

LUTHERANISM 101: BAPTIZED WE LIVE

Pastor John will be teaching, "Lutheranism 101: Baptized We Live" in the Adult Sunday School Class beginning on Sunday, October 10 at 9:50 AM. The class will be an opportunity to discuss Luther's teachings, the history of the Lutheran church and our call to ministry in today's world. Whether you have been a Lutheran for your whole life or are new to the Lutheran church, make plans to be a part of *Lutheranism 101*.

CHILD IN OUR HANDS

The Virginia Synod and St. John Lutheran Church in Roanoke are offering a two day conference entitled, *Child in Our Hands* on December 3 and 4. The conference is designed to inspire and equip congregations and families to nurture the faith of their children. If you are interested in joining Pastor John and attending the conference or if you want more information, registration forms are available in the front hallway.

CONFIRMATION MEETING ON OCTOBER 6

All unconfirmed 7th and 8th grade youth and their parents are invited to a meeting about Confirmation on Wednesday, October 6 at 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The meeting will be an opportunity to discuss plans for the upcoming year. If you have any questions about Confirmation, please call Pastor John.

BARBARA POND IS RECIPIENT OF ST. MICHAEL SCHOLARSHIP

Barbara Pond, an active member of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church and a Thrivent outreach volunteer, was the recipient of the 2004 St. Michael Scholarship. She is attending Gettysburg Seminary this fall as a second career student. As stated in her application letter, "God's tap on my shoulder surprised me and I actively fought the idea of a call for some time. I plan to allow the prompting of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct my life and ministry."

Dear Friends,

As a seminary we thank you for your thoughtfulness as you give support to Barbara Pond who is studying here at your Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. . . . Your gift will help her to go forth to serve our church and our Lord upon graduation with less debt than she might have had. . . . Thank you for your support for Barbara.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Christine E. Reimers

Vice President for Stewardship and Leadership Development

Sharing Our Gifts Time, Talents and Treasure

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what He has first given us--our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of His gracious love.

Thank you to some “quiet” servants

To Kriz Wertz for staffing the nursery during our recent funerals; Ray Howell for repainting the St. Michael sign on the front lawn; Betty Eggert for assisting with the preparation of the September bulletins and newsletter.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in September supported our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, salaries for our pastor, secretary, organist and custodian, donations to the Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program, Lutheran Campus Ministry, our facilities and the Christian Children’s Fund. The **Justice and Mercy Fund** provided groceries for three families, paid an electric bill for one family, and assisted another family new to the area with an electric bill, school supplies for the children, and food.

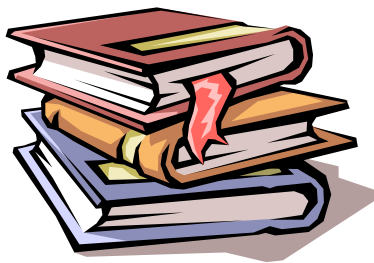
Thank you from the Women’s Resource Center

An excerpt: “On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley, thank you for your donation of food. Your support helps us provide services to victims of domestic and sexual violence throughout the New River Valley.”

Sincerely, Pat Brown, Executive Director

Books and (gently used) DVDs and CDs

This month, we are collecting all kinds of new and used books, CDs and DVDs for the Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley, with appropriate children’s books shared with the schools in Papua New Guinea. Collection boxes are in the hallway.



GREETINGS TO KNITTERS AND NON-KNITTERS

Come to church on October 16, from 10 a.m. to noon, to work on some prayer shawls to comfort others. Jenny Akers will bring donated yarn and extra needles. See you October 16!

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

October 21 meeting at the home of Kris Wertz

All women of St. Michael are members of the Women of the ELCA and are warmly welcome at our activities. The next meeting, hosted by Kris Wertz, will be on Thursday, October 21 at 6 p.m. The address of the Wertz home is 2013 Broken Oak Drive in the Woodbine subdivision in Blacksburg. Please join us for fellowship, Bible study, and friendship. A light supper will be provided.

Remember the Food Bank

This month let's "go Italian" and bring spaghetti sauce and pasta, though any nonperishable food items are welcome.

Women of the church make prayer bracelets

On September 16, nineteen women of the Women of the ELCA gathered at Divine Inspiration to learn about and create unique prayer bracelets and enjoy the company of our sisters in Christ.

New River Conference Fall Gathering is October 23 at St. Michael

On Saturday, October 23, we will host the annual Fall Gathering for the Women of the ELCA in the New River Conference. We will celebrate our theme, "We Are Called to Love One Another," through Bible study (led by Pastor John), music, an outreach project and fellowship with our sisters in Christ. The program begins with registration at 9:00 a.m., the program at 9:30 a.m., and ends with our potluck luncheon around noon. Child care will be provided. We look forward to a large gathering of sisters this fall—a time for fellowship, fun, and faith.

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY

The October meeting will be Thursday, October 14, at 11:30 a.m. beginning with a potluck lunch followed by "sharing time". Our guest will be the new coordinator for the SHARE program, an important outreach activity at St. Michael. Join us as we gather for fine food, fellowship...and friendship.

We will also be deciding how we're going to share the \$500 gift from Wal-Mart to benefit the elderly in the community.

We remember our dear friend, Stella Mae Price Keister, who died on September 3, 2004. Stella Mae was a life member of the Prices Fork Grange, a teacher at Long Shop Elementary School and Prices Fork Elementary, and an active member of the Happy-Go-Lucky group.



**KID'S NIGHT AT ST. MICHAEL
WEDNESDAY, October 13 and 27**

All children in grades K-5 are invited to Kid's Night from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. for dinner, crafts, music and more.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL AND FREE DONUTS

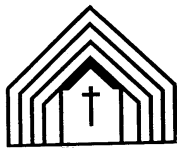
The Youth Sunday School class for youth 7th grade and older will begin on Sunday, October 10. Come and enjoy the conversation, fellowship and free donuts. For more information, please speak with Kris Wertz.

ALLELUIA! FESTIVAL ON OCTOBER 31

The Youth Sunday School class will sponsor an ALLELUIA! Festival on Sunday, October 31 from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. at the church. The Festival will have games, prizes and food for youth 5th grade and younger. Bring your friends, wear a costume and come enjoy the fun.

THE GREAT TUNA CHALLENGE

Girl Scout Troops 737 and 695 are collecting tuna for the Montgomery County Christmas Store. If you would like to help us meet our goal of 100 cans of tuna, please put cans in the Tuna Challenge Box in the fellowship hall. Last year, with the help of the congregation, we collected 67 cans of tuna.

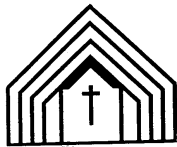


November Servants

	November 7	November 14	November 21	November 28
<i>Acolytes</i>	Kelsey Trimble Abbie Penner	Sarah Crowder	Dan Crowder Isaac Nagle	Scott McGuigan
<i>Altar Care</i>	Inga Solberg and Jennie Hodge			
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Bob Brown		Jody Smiley	
<i>Coffee Hour</i>		volunteers needed		
<i>Greeters</i>	Dave and Ann Surface			
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Hank Schneider	Amy Garst	Jay Nagle	Lori Sheppard
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	Leslie and Brian Simmers	Angela Peterson Leslie Bland	Grace Simmers Kelsey Trimble	Cindy Dowdy Chelsea Naughton
<i>Ushers</i>	Mickey McGuigan Scott McGuigan Tom Hodge Jay Nagle	Jeff Birch Jody Smiley George Naughton Linda Naughton	Ann Surface Dave Surface Bob Brown Peggy Brown	Ray Howell Sam Akers James Pascoe Dickie Shepherd

**St. Michael Lutheran Church
2308 Merrimac Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060**

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Permit No. 78**



October Servants

	October 3	October 10	October 17	October 24	October 31
<i>Acolytes</i>	Kelsey Trimble Dan Crowder	Abbie Penner	Dan Crowder Scott McGuigan	Isaac Nagle	Sarah Crowder
<i>Altar Care</i>	Linda Naughton and Sharon Robinson				
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Josh Mouras		Doug Smiley		Steve Mouras
<i>Coffee Hour</i>		Support Comm.		Birch family	
<i>Greeters</i>	Ben and Grace Simmers				
<i>Lay Readers</i>	John Krallman	Steve Mouras	Dave Surface	Doug Veit	Jeff Birch
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	Jada Brown Karen Brown	Sharon Robinson Lauren Robinson	Jane Lane Leslie Bland	Jody Smiley C. Naughton	Kris Wertz Abbie Penner
<i>Ushers</i>	Jeff Birch Jody Smiley Linda Naughton George Naughton	Ann Surface Dave Surface Peggy Brown Bob Brown	Ray Howell Sam Akers James Pascoe Dickie Shepherd	Josh Mouras Steve Mouras Don Linkous Gary Worley	Ben Simmers R. Turman Burn Gross Betty Gross

Lawn mowing: Sam Akers 10/2 Back; Jim Clemens 10/9 Front;
Jay Nagle 10/16 Back; Doug and Tim Smiley 10/23 Front; Sam Akers 10/30 Back