

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 Dave and Ann Surface for helping with the December newsletter mailing; Shirley Henderson and Janet Bryant for helping with the January mailing; Scott McGuigan who did extra acolyte duty in December; Dan Crowder for helping with children’s church; Mack and Jada Brown for putting up the Christmas tree; Jo Lynn Price for auditing our accounts; Mack Brown and Carol Bland for their duet during the service on December 11; to all who provided food for our two Advent worship suppers.

Thank you to our Christmas Eve servants

Thank you to the choir for its wonderful cantata, *A Family Christmas*, Carol Bland and John Krallman for their duets and solos, the children and teens who sang so sweetly, Jaid Moore and Sarah Crowder for their duet, Dean Trimble for setting up our sound system and Donita Moore for her beautiful music at both services. Thank you to Jaid Moore for playing his harp at the 11p.m. service and to all who purchased poinsettias. Your plants can be picked up after the January 2 and 9 services; those remaining will be donated to



others. And finally, thank you to Pastor John for leading us in two worship services. Note Pastor John wrapped as a “gift” to Jesus during the children’s sermon.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in December 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, food and supplies for Kid’s Nights, and Sunday School materials. The **Justice and Mercy Fund** paid an electric bill for one family, a water bill for a second family, rent for a third family and for heating oil for a fourth family. In addition, the fund provided field trip tickets for nine children at Kipps Elementary School who could not afford to participate in the skating trip. The fund also provided a number of Kroger gift certificates to needy families whose children attend Prices Fork Elementary School.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Planning meeting on January 20

Our January meeting will be on Thursday, January 20 at 7 p.m. at the home of Sandy Birch. We will be planning our activities and projects for 2005; please bring your wonderful ideas and enthusiasm. All women of St. Michael are Women of the ELCA and very welcome at all meetings.

Remember the Food Bank

Let's bring baby foods in Januarythough any donations of non-perishable food items are always welcome.

Thank you for sharing

In December, the congregation provided 21 sweat suits, 32 bottles of lotion, and four sets of slipper socks for the residents of Heritage Hall. In addition, the Happy Go Lucky group gave 15 wrapped gifts to individuals at Heritage Hall who may not have family close by.

MEN'S MINISTRY BEGINS

All men in the congregation and their friends are invited to breakfast on Saturday, January 8, at 9 a.m. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship and be a part of an exciting new ministry at St. Michael. Contact George Naughton for more information.

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY

The Happy-Go-Lucky group will not meet in January, but mark February 10 as our first meeting of the new year. Our February program will be "Healing Music for Body, Mind and Spirit".

KID'S NIGHT AT ST. MICHAEL WEDNESDAY, January 12 and 26



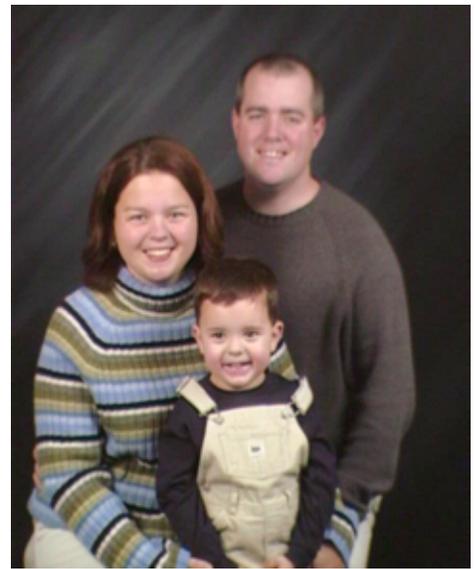
All children in grades K-5 are invited to Kid's Night from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. starting with a light supper, crafts, music and more.

Thank you to the children who performed in our Christmas Pageant, "The Not-So-Silent Night" on December 19. The story took place in a Bethlehem courtroom where three young shepherds were on trial for "disturbing the peace", joyfully shouting God's praises after visiting the baby Jesus.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Fred Spengler



Angela, Ted and
Zachary Peterson

The Peterson family recently moved to Radford where Ted is a recruiter for the US Air Force. Zachary, an active 3-year-old, loves to come to Sunday School. Angela is a stay-at-home mom.

Manfred (Fred) Spengler is a retired professor emeritus from the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at Virginia Tech. He also retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserves with the rank of major. Fred has two children, five grandchildren and lives in Christiansburg. He is an avid stamp collector.

Fred Spengler
80 Somerset St.
Christiansburg, VA 24073
382-0564

Ted, Angela and Zachary Peterson
14 Staff Village
Radford, VA 24141
639-9090 (atpeterson94@charter.net)

Congratulations to....

Inga and Todd Solberg on the birth of their first grandchild, Ingrid Elaine Solberg VanderZanden. Ingrid is the daughter of Kirsten Solberg and Mark VanderZanden.

Brian Birch who graduated from US Coast Guard Officer Candidate School. Brian and Dorothy are now living in Pensacola, FL where Brian is attending flight school.

Ben Crawford who was named the 2004 Outstanding Fundraising Executive in Virginia at the 22nd Annual National Philanthropy Day Awards Celebration in Roanoke.

Elizabeth Berg, daughter of Michele (Keister) and Mike Berg, who was featured in a *Roanoke Times Current* article about gifted children at Prices Fork Elementary School.

Our three Blacksburg High School football players, **Matt Woods, Jarred Walters and Stuart Worley** who were often pictured and quoted in the local papers. Stuart had his best night at the Salem-BHS game when he scored the team's only touchdown.

Our bowlers, **Stan and Margaret Larsen and Lauren Lee Robinson**, whose pictures were in recent issues of the *News Messenger*.

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

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January Servants

	January 2	January 9	January 16	January 23	January 30
<i>Acolytes</i>	Kelsey Trimble	Scott McGuigan	Dan Crowder	Sarah Crowder	Abbie Penner
<i>Altar Care</i>	Hank and Alice Schneider				
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Jane Lane		Jeff Birch		
<i>Fellowship Hour</i>		McGuigan family			
<i>Greeters</i>	Naughton family				
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Hank Schneider	Josh Mouras	Amy Garst	Sarah Bohn	Shannon Rigsbee
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	Kris Wertz Chelsea Naughton	Cindy Lang Kelsey Trimble	Karen Brown Jada Brown	Leslie and Brian Simmers	Sharon and Lauren Robinson
<i>Ushers</i>	Bob and Peggy Brown Ray Howell James Pascoe	Ann and Dave Surface Dickie Shepherd Sam Akers	Burn and Betty Gross Don Linkous Gary Worley	Mickey and Scott McGuigan Ben Simmers Jeff Birch	Josh and Steve Mouras Tom Hodge R. Turman

EPIPHANY FAITH NIGHT

Come and be a part of Epiphany Faith Night on Sunday, January 9, from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. Together we'll learn about the season of Epiphany, make an Epiphany craft and share in a light supper. Everyone is welcome. For more information, please speak to Pastor John (stmhc@earthlink.net).

ALTAR CARE, ALTAR FLOWERS AND FELLOWSHIP TIME

We invite the congregation to volunteer for altar care, altar flowers and host fellowship hours in 2005. The sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway. The flowers cost \$21 and you are billed directly by the florist. Most Sundays, you can take the flowers home with you after the 11 a.m. service. This year, the Caring and Sharing committee has recommended that we meet for a snacks, coffee and punch on the second Sunday of the month, with coffee and punch only served the other Sundays of the month.



SEMINARIAN PARTNERSHIP

Our Sunday School classes have been paired with a student, Rachael Dietz, from the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC (where Pastor John graduated). She will visit with, and correspond with our congregation during her schooling. A portion of our Sunday School offerings will be sent to Rachael to help her with her school expenses. We look forward to meeting and working with her and learning more about what it means to attend seminary. Rachael is a Virginia native, growing up in Richmond. She graduated from William and Mary with a public policy degree and worked as an analyst/buyer for Circuit City Stores before starting seminary.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

At the December 12 congregational meeting, Kathy Albert and Jennie Hodge were reelected to the council, and Ben Crawford was elected to his first three-year term. Thank you to Don Linkous for serving on the council during the past three years.

PULL TAB COLLECTION

The 5th and 6th grade Sunday School class will be collecting soda can pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in Roanoke through March. A container will be placed in the hallway. The Ronald McDonald House provides a "home-away-from-home" for families of seriously ill children who are receiving treatment at nearby hospitals.

THANK YOU

Thank you for all of the kind words, cards and prayers. All of your care has contributed to my successful surgery and speedy recovery. Doug Smiley

ELCA TO RELEASE SEXUALITY REPORT

The ELCA Taskforce which has been receiving responses from the Journey Together Faithfully study document and studying issues related to the potential blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of pastors in same-sex unions will be releasing its report on January 14. The report of the taskforce is just the beginning of a process that will require action by the ELCA National Assembly in August of 2005. Once the report is released, it will be reviewed by several groups with representation from the Virginia Synod, including the Conference of Bishops, the Board for the Division for Ministry, the Board for the Division for Church in Society and the Church Council of the ELCA. There will be gatherings prior to the Virginia Synod Assembly to discuss the report and the Synod will undoubtedly consider resolutions concerning the report at the Synod Assembly. Regardless of what may appear in the media over the next few weeks, the report of the Taskforce does not represent a new policy for the ELCA. The report is simply one part in a larger conversation leading up to the ELCA Assembly in August. A full copy of the report will be available at the church on January 14 if you are interested in reading it. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Pastor John at the church.

PLANNING FOR MINISTRY

Last September, the congregation gathered to identify the strengths of St. Michael's ministry and to focus in on three strengths to grow in order to strengthen our ministry together. The three areas selected were: Dynamic Worship, Pastoral and Lay Visitation and Programs. In response to the report of the planning group, the Congregational Council has decided to create four teams to examine the strengths we have selected and make recommendations about how each of these areas could be strengthened. The four teams are: the 9 AM Service Team, the 11 AM Service Team; the Visitation Team; and the Program Team. Each team will be made up of people who are interested in or involved in these areas of our ministry and would like to help these ministries grow. The groups will begin their work in January. If you are interested in serving on one of these teams, check the box on the "Welcome to St. Michael" form or talk with Pastor John.

INVITATION to a BACH FESTIVAL CONCERT at LUTHER MEMORIAL

On Sunday, January 23 at 2 p.m., Luther Memorial Lutheran Church will celebrate the music of Johann Sebastian Bach in a "Bach Festival Concert." Performers will include some of the finest vocalists and instrumentalists in the New River Valley, including members of the Audubon String Quartet, the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Tech faculty, and Blacksburg community members. Tickets will not be sold, but a free will donation will be taken to help underwrite the costs of the professional musicians. On Friday, January 21, from 12:20 to 1:10 p.m. in the Squires Recital Salon, we are also invited to a free lecture on the music of J.S. Bach given by Dr. James Sochinski, Professor of Music in the Department of Music at Virginia Tech. Everyone is invited to attend and learn more about the wonderful heritage and tradition of Lutheran church music.