

Discover Your Spiritual Gifts and Share Them

God has blessed each of us with unique gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. This year, the Support Committee would like to provide you with a quick and easy tool to identify your Spiritual gifts. The “Opening Your Spiritual Gifts” survey asks a series of questions to help you determine the gifts God has given you. “Opening Your Spiritual Gifts” is available to you either through a link on St. Michael’s website (www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org) or you can pick up a paper copy at the church. Once you have completed the survey you can use your results to help you fill out St. Michael’s yearly Time and Talent survey which will use the same categories as the Spiritual Gifts Survey.

The Time and Talent surveys will be distributed in April. Please take a few moments to identify ministries that you would like to use your gifts and talents to support in the coming year and then return the survey through the offering plate.

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 Shirley Linkous and Fran Gallimore for helping with the April newsletter mailing; to the choir and soloist Doug Smiley for their special music during the Lenten season; to all who provided food for the John Price family and Betty Gross, Julia Landes, Marguerite Olinger and Peggy Price for serving; to all who gave blood at the Good Friday Blood Drive, contributed food for the donors, and volunteered their time to staff the drive; to all who brought cookies, sandwiches and soup for our Lenten suppers; to Fran Shepherd for assembling our 2004 Annual Report and Pastor John for preparing our new Phone Directory; to Scott McGuigan and Sarah Crowder for serving extra acolyte duty in March; to Jada Brown and other Sunday Servants at the 11 a.m. Easter service.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in March supported our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, donations to the Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program, Lutheran Campus Ministry, our facilities, a new sign to invite the community to our Easter services, salaries for our pastor, secretary, organist and custodian, support for the visit of our seminary partner, Rachael Dietz.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In March, we helped with the rent for one family, contributed towards electric bills for four families, provided food cards for two families and purchased heating oil for one family. We encourage the congregation to continue their contributions to the fund and to refer friends and family to use the fund as you see need.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

April 21 dinner meeting at Jane Lane's home

The Women of the ELCA will meet at Jane's home on Thursday, April 21 at 6 p.m. to share a light supper and enjoy a program by Jody Smiley. For directions to Jane's house, you can call Jane at 552-3653. Come and be a part of the fellowship, friendship and service. Please note the calendar for the year's activities is printed in this newsletter.

Remember the Food Bank

Let's bring paper products in April paper towels, toilet paper, tissues, though any donations of non-perishable food items are always welcome.

(picture of WELCA)

Twenty-nine Easter baskets were prepared for children at the Women's Resource Center and for the Salvation Army. Thank you to all who contributed toys, candy and books for the baskets.

Fay, Betty, Jody, Alice, Kris and Wanda

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY



The Happy-Go-Lucky group will meet on April 17 at 11:30 a.m. Debby Hix will present a program entitled "Healing Music for Body, Mind, and Spirit". She'll talk about why music heals, share some of her own personal experiences, and play some beautiful harp selections for us.

Join us for fine food, fellowship and perhaps some healing.

MEN'S MINISTRY GROUP

The men's group will meet on Saturday, April 16 at 9 a.m. for breakfast and fellowship.



Seminary Partner Visit

We welcomed our seminary partner, Rachael Dietz, to Palm Sunday worship on March 20. Rachael, a 4th year seminary student at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC, also shared her experiences with the Sunday School classes. She will be graduating this May and will be called to a parish in the Northern Pennsylvania Synod. We send our love and support to Rachael as she begins her new adventures.

Rachael and Pastor John

April 15 Deadline for the St. Michael Scholarship

Applications are invited for the St. Michael Scholarship, a \$600 award for individuals to pursue studies in post-secondary education. The scholarship is available to members of Lutheran churches in Montgomery County. The application is available on the church bulletin board or from Sandy Birch, scholarship committee chair. She can be contacted at 951-3455 or at birch@vt.edu.



Softball Season begins soon

The “draft” is on...St. Michael is seeking men and women interested in playing church league (slow pitch) softball. Players must be 14 before August 1, 2005 and be a member of, or attend, St. Michael. Contact Jeff Birch (951-3455 or jbbirch@vt.edu) or Doug Smiley (961-2472) by Sunday, April 3, if you'd like to join the team for fun, fellowship and some healthy exercise. Practices are usually held on sunny Sunday afternoons; watch for announcements during church. Loud and supportive fans are welcome when the games begin in May. Go St. Michael!

Easter Lilies

Thank you to everyone who purchased a lily for our Easter worship. The lilies can be picked up after worship on April 3. Those remaining will be donated to area nursing homes or planted at the church. If you have not yet paid for your lily, please put the \$10/plant in the offering plate. Checks should be made payable to St. Michael with a notation “Easter lily”.

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

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April Servants

	April 3	April 10	April 17	April 24
<i>Acolytes</i>	Scott McGuigan	Sarah Crowder	Kelsey Trimble	Dan Crowder
<i>Altar Care</i>	Betty Gross and Jane Lane			
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Hank Schneider		Doug Smiley	
<i>Fellowship Hour</i>	Sandy Birch	Jane Lane Janet Bryant	Sandy Birch	Jennie Hodge
<i>Greeters</i>	Karen and Jada Brown			
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Sandy Birch	Shannon Rigsbee	Sara Bohn	Amy Garst
<i>Nursery Assts.</i>	Cindy Lang Abbi Penner	Sharon and Lauren Robinson	Grace Simmers Leslie Bland	Lorin Crowder Sarah Crowder
<i>Ushers</i>	Jeff Birch Ben Simmers Roscoe Turman Mickey McGuigan	Josh and Steve Mouras Tom Hodge Ray Howell	Bob and Peggy Brown Philip Isenhour James Pascoe	Dave and Ann Surface Dickie Shepherd Sam Akers

THANK YOU!

Dear Pastor John,

A note to you and the congregation of St. Michael to say Thanks for your gift given as an additional offering for churchwide mission and ministry support and for the opportunity to be with you to receive the gift and share words of thanks. Your gift will strengthen the mission we do together as the ELCA in the world, and will also equip the church to more effectively support the mission the Spirit has called you to in and through the life of your congregation. "Well done good and faithful servants."

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Chip Gunsten
Assistant to the Bishop, VA Synod, ELCA

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Virginia Synod,

The Synod Council enthusiastically expresses its gratitude for your strong response, partnership and stepping forward together as a synod over the past year. 127 of our congregations [including St. Michael] either met or exceeded their full [benevolence] commitment for this year.

We were able as the Virginia Synod to meet our full 50% commitment to the ELCA and to complete our full proportionate synodical share to the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary!

Looking at our 2005 commitments as a synod, we also want to thank those congregations that have enabled us as a synod to have [a spending plan] increase of nearly 4% and to step forward in our walk together seeking to go deeper in the faith, to be a church turned inside out for witness, and upside down for service as Ambassadors for Christ.

Thank You!

Yours in Christ,
The Rev. James F. Mauney
On behalf of the Synod Council of the Virginia Synod

UNITED LUTHERAN APPEAL ON MAY 1

The United Lutheran Appeal to support the various institutions of the Virginia Synod including the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and Carolina Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center will take place on Sunday, May 1. Appeal envelopes will be available that day in the bulletin. Please consider making a gift to support the ministries of the helping institutions. For more information on the United Lutheran Appeal, look for brochures around the church or check out www.vasynod.org/ula.

Video Library at St. Michael

St. Michael has a large collection of Veggie Tales and other children's movies on VHS and a couple of movies on DVD including, "The Luther Movie," which was a gift from Steve Ponds and Thrivent, and Mel Gibson's "The Passion." If you are interested in borrowing any of these movies from the Video Library, please speak with Pastor John.

2004 Annual Report and 2005 Church Directory Available

The 2004 St. Michael Annual Report and the 2005 Church Phone Directory are available in the hallway leading to the Sanctuary and on the table near the coat rack. Inside you will find information on the ministry of the congregation and the latest list of phone numbers, home addresses and email addresses.

Sunday School Goes International

You are invited to "Open a World of Possibilities". Beginning in April, the Sunday School Classes will be using the *Open a World of Possibilities: Nicaragua hunger education curriculum*. We will learn about the country and people of Nicaragua. We'll learn a little Spanish, do some crafts, and enjoy some Nicaraguan food. Youth and Adults are invited.



KID'S NIGHT AT ST. MICHAEL WEDNESDAY, April 6 and 20

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

