

# St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

2308 Merrimac Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060

540.951.8951

[stmlc@earthlink.net](mailto:stmlc@earthlink.net)

[www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org](http://www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org)

---

Volume 28, Number 12

December 1, 2005

## A WONDERFUL THING FOR THE COMMUNITY

My job during the Community Thanksgiving Dinner is to walk around, talk to people and to offer the blessing before the meal. This year as I stopped to talk to someone, she said to me, "This really is a wonderful thing you do for the community. Thank You!" We talked a little more and then she went back to enjoying her dinner. I wanted to share her heartfelt "Thank You" with each of you, so that you would know what an impact the Community Thanksgiving Meal makes on people's lives. Each year at Thanksgiving, your willingness to share your time, talents and treasures makes it possible for St. Michael to share God's love with people in our area, from residents Price's Fork to international students from China.

While the Community Thanksgiving Dinner is one of the most visible ways that St. Michael makes an impact in our area, it is by no means the only way we proclaim God's Word to those around us. Community Projects like the Angel Tree, the Lutheran Men in Mission's Food Bank repair project, the donations that come in weekly for the Food Bank and Women's Resource Center, the countless people helped with power bills through the Justice and Mercy Fund, the schools supplies to help with the start of school, the gift boxes for Native American Children and the breakfast for the teachers at Price's Fork Elementary are just a few of the ways that we reach out to the community around us and put God's love into action.

Thank you for answering God's call to service in the world. Thank you for being such a generous congregation and thank you for helping us to discover new projects and new ways that we can make Christ known in our area. Your generosity, kindness and response to God's love really is a wonderful thing for the community.

## 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 Barbara Corbett and Lynn Hickok for redecorating our hallway bulletin board; Judy Clemens for cleaning our communion linens; Fran Shepherd, Alice Schneider, Sandy Birch, and Jody Smiley for cleaning out a storage closet, the refrigerator, and straightening the nursery; everyone who contributed to the annual community Thanksgiving Dinner; all who brought Christmas Store gifts and provided gifts for our Salvation Army “angels”; Dan Bowen and Wal-Mart for a \$1,000 donation to the Justice and Mercy Fund.

### Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in November supported our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Christian Children’s Fund, our facilities, salaries for our pastor, secretary, organist and custodian, a new handicapped ramp and railing in the front of the church, rewiring of the storage cabinets, new chairs and tables for the fellowship hall, and choral supplies.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In November, we provided food cards, rent assistance for two families, and contributed to one electric bill. 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. Kroger Gift cards are still available; contact Sandy Birch. Five percent of our purchases are deposited to the fund.



### 2 to 1 Children’s Choir

The children’s choir will be singing the anthem on Sunday, December 11 during the 11 a.m. service. Practices will be held during Sunday School.

### Thank You 2 to 1 Teen Choir

We thank the teen choir for sharing their talents with us last month in worship. They did

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

Care for all God’s people in need,  
Hear of God’s love through Word and Sacrament  
Respond to God’s grace with thankful hearts,  
Invite others into Christ’s community,  
Serve God in our daily lives, and  
Tell the story of God’s love for all.

a wonderful job.

### You Are Invited to a Wedding

Jackie Lee Agee and Delores Hubbard Agee request the honor of your presence at the marriage of their daughter Sharon Maria to Darron Scott Oliver on Saturday, the tenth of December at seven o'clock at St. Michael Lutheran Church. A hors d'oeuvre reception will follow immediately in the fellowship hall.



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

<p><b>Non Profit Org.</b>  <b>U.S. Postage</b>  <b>PAID</b>  <b>Blacksburg, VA 24060</b>  <b>Permit No. 78</b></p>
--

### December Servants

	<b>December 4</b>	<b>December 11</b>	<b>December 18</b>	<b>December 24</b>	<b>December 25</b>
<i>Acolytes</i>	Sarah Crowder	Kelsey Trimble Steffen Bohn	Kelsey Trimble	Scott McGuigan Katy McGuigan	Sarah Crowder
<i>Altar Care</i>	Lorin Crowder, Sandy Birch				
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Karen Mayer		Randy Robinson	7: Bob Brown 11: D. Surface	
<i>Fellowship Hour</i>		Birch and McCauley			
<i>Greeters</i>	Julia Landes and friends				
<i>Lay Readers</i>	Mickie McGuigan	Dianne Krallman	Jeff Birch	7: Kris Wertz 11: L. Sheppard	Congregation members
<i>Ushers</i>	Dave and Ann Surface Philip Isenhour Don Linkous	Jeff Birch Dickie Shepherd J.D. Robinson Hank Schneider	Ray Howell Sam Akers Vickie and Steve Mouras	7: R. Turman M. McGuigan Brian Birch Jeff Birch 11: Surfaces	Gary Worley Ben and Grace Simmers James Pascoe

## Women of the ELCA

**The Christmas meeting** will be held at the home of Alice Schneider on Thursday, December 8 at 7 p.m. We will be preparing small gifts for our homebound members and enjoying a holiday program. Bring a snack to share. If you would like a ride, contact Sandy Birch at 951-3455.



**Remember the Food Bank:** December is dessert month, e.g., cake and cookie mixes, cooking oil, flour, sugar....though any kind of non-perishable food is always welcome.

**Remember the Womens Resource Center:** December is Cleaning Products Month....donations of dishwashing soap, laundry detergent, all-purpose cleaner, etc. will be appreciated.

**Thank you to all the hostesses for the annual Birthday Dinner:** Jody Smiley, Alice Schneider, Carol Crawford and Betty Gross, Peggy Brown and Tammy Veit, Shannon Rigsbee, Angela Peterson, Kris Wertz, Sandie Worley, Dianne Krallman and Thelma Hylton, Leona Criner, Kathy Albert and Sandy Birch. The tables were beautiful and the cakes were delicious! The free will offering will be sent to the Montgomery County Free Clinic.

### Community Thanksgiving Dinner a Great Success

St. Michael provided over 100 people with Thanksgiving meals at the Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner. Thank you to all the volunteers who set up – and cleaned up - the fellowship hall, decorated the tables, the Girl Scouts who made place mats, the great cooks, greeters, dishwashers, cake and pie bakers, jello and sweet potato casserole makers. It was a wonderful fellowship event. A special thank you goes to Carol Crawford, Fran Gallimore and the Caring and Sharing Committee for organizing the event and to Dan Bowen and Wal-Mart for providing eight cooked turkeys.

*Dan Bowen,  
Jeff Birch,  
John Krallman  
and Betty  
Gross carving  
the  
Thanksgiving  
turkeys.*





## Happy-Go-Lucky

The group is going to the Wohlfahrt Dinner Theater on Thursday, December 15, for a special matinee performance of "A Wohlfahrt Haus Christmas". Regular meetings will resume in February.

At the annual white elephant auction last month, over \$250 was donated for the Montgomery County Christmas Store. As always, there was a wonderful collection of "treasures" offered for sale. We thank Peggy Sullivan for serving as our auctioneer.



## Lutheran Men in Mission Breakfast

All the men of the congregation are invited to the Men's Breakfast on Saturday, December 10 at 8 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. After breakfast and fellowship time, we will go to the Christmas Store in Christiansburg to help shoppers and with clean-up. For more information, contact Jeff Birch at [jbbirch@vt.edu](mailto:jbbirch@vt.edu) or at 951-3455



## **Congregational Meeting on December 11**

A Congregational Meeting will be held following the 11 a.m. Service to approve the 2006 Spending Plan for Ministry, to elect new members to the Congregational Council and to approve an amendment to the constitution. Copies of the spending plan and amendment are in the newsletter and will be available in the front hallway.

## **IRS Rule Changes for Special Giving**

Recently, the Council has become aware of IRS rules regarding special giving for individuals in need. Unfortunately, the IRS no longer considers donations given through a church and designated for a specific individual or family to be recorded as a charitable donation on your church giving statement. To be considered a charitable gift, the donation must *not* be designated for a specific individual. For example, a \$100 gift to the Justice and Mercy Fund is considered a charitable gift and can be recorded on a giving statement, because that fund makes gifts to all people in need. In contrast, a \$100 gift for the “Joe Smith Fund” is not considered a charitable gift and can not be recorded on a giving statement.

Realizing that some people like to make gifts to help individuals anonymously and through the church, St. Michael will continue to receive gifts designated for individuals and distribute them to appropriate person, but after the first of the year, those gifts can no longer be recorded on a giving statement from St. Michael. If you have questions about our attempts to comply with these IRS rules, please talk to Pastor John.

## **St. Michael Email Policy**

With the cost of postage on the rise again this year, St. Michael is beginning to send occasional emails as a way of distributing information. If you have not been receiving emails from St. Michael and would like to be included on the email list, please include your email address on the *Welcome to St. Michael* form. If you have been receiving emails and would like to be removed from the list, simply respond to one of the emails with a request to be removed and your address will be removed from the list. For everyone’s privacy, St. Michael does not share email addresses with people outside the congregation. If you have any questions about emails from St. Michael, please talk to Pastor John, or email him at: [stmlc@earthlink.net](mailto:stmlc@earthlink.net).



## Kid's Nights on December 14



All children from kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to Kid's Night on Wednesday, December 14 during the Midweek Advent Service. Come and eat with your family and then enjoy a program during the service. For more information, contact Jody Smiley at [esmiley@vt.edu](mailto:esmiley@vt.edu) or at 961-2472.

## Christmas Program on Sunday, December 18

Come and be a part of this year's Youth Christmas Program for children of all ages at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 18. The youth of the congregation will be performing "Wee Three Kings". Practices for the Christmas Program will be on Sunday morning during Sunday School, on Saturday, December 3 at 10 a.m. and on Saturday, December, 17 at 9 a.m. For more information, please talk to Jody Smiley.



## Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 11



Everyone is invited to participate in St. Michael's annual Christmas caroling. We will share a light lunch following the 11 a.m. Service and Congregational meeting before going to sing to our St. Michael friends and family who are homebound.

## Advent Suppers and Services Wednesday, November 30 and December 7, 14, 21

St. Michael will join with Luther Memorial each Wednesday night to prepare for Christ's coming. A light meal will be served at 6:00 p.m. and worship, using Holden Evening Prayer, will begin at 6:45 p.m. The service will be held at Luther Memorial on December 7 and 21 and at St. Michael on November 30 and December 14. If you are interested in assisting with the meal or service, please speak with Donna Oliver or submit a "Welcome to St. Michael" form available in the Sunday church bulletins.

## Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 18

The Choir Christmas Cantata, *Christmas Seekers*, will be on Sunday, December 18 during the 11 a.m. Service. Make plans to come and enjoy the music.

**Christmas Eve Services**  
**Friday, December 24 – 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.**

St. Michael will have two services on Christmas Eve. The Family Christmas Eve Service will be at 7 p.m. and a Traditional Christmas Eve Service will be at 11 p.m.



**Christmas Drop-In at the Wertz's**  
**Friday, December 23**

The congregation is invited to a Christmas Drop-in at the Wertz's at 2013 Broken Oak Drive on Friday, December 23 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Directions are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Come and celebrate the season.



**Lessons and Carols - Sunday, December 25**

St. Michael's celebration of Christmas will continue on Sunday, December 25 with a Service of Lessons and Carols at both the 9 a.m. and the 11 a.m. services. Come and sing all your favorite Christmas carols and hear the scripture passages that proclaim Jesus' birth.

**Poinsettias**

Orders are now being taken for poinsettias for Christmas Eve. This year, the poinsettias will cost \$10.50. To place a poinsettia in the church, in honor of or in memory of a family member or friend, please use the order form on the table in the back of the sanctuary. The deadline for ordering a poinsettia is December 18.



**Invite A Friend To A Christmas Eve Service**

Share the joy of Christmas by inviting a friend to worship with you on Christmas Eve. Invitations to our services are available in the front hall. In fact, invite a friend or family to any or all of the activities listed above.



## Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Over the past year, the Congregational Council has been working on a proposed amendment to the Church Constitution which will make it easier to conduct the daily business of the church. The current constitution allows the council to spend up to \$500 more than a line item in the spending plan without congregational approval. The \$500 figure has not been adjusted since it was adopted when St. Michael was formed in 1970. In today's world where an emergency repair of a roof or heating system could easily exceed \$500, the existing cap creates potential problems for our ministry together. In addition, the current constitution makes no provision to limit the number of line items and thus actually allows an additional \$500 to be spent in each of our over 60 line items.

To correct this problem, the Congregational Council is proposing the following amendments which will create an overall spending limit, provide more flexibility for the council in dealing with emergencies and new ministry opportunities, and make it clear that these additional funds can only be spent if they have already been given. The council will be able to spend up to a total of 10% more than the approved spending plan without congregational approval. No individual expenditure within that 10%, however, may exceed 5% of the approved spending plan. This will allow for larger single expenditures than the current constitution, but will cap the total extra spending much sooner than the current constitution. Below you will see both the existing section of the constitution and the proposed amendment. If you have any questions about this proposal, please talk to any council member or Pastor John.

*Existing C12.05.c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$500 for items not included in the budget without the approval of the congregation.*

**Proposed C12.05.c** The Congregational Council may enter into individual contracts of up to five (5)% of the total approved current budget for items not included in the budget provided the expenditure does not require borrowing additional funds. The Congregational Council, with the approval of the congregation, may enter into contracts of more than five (5) % of the total approved current budget.

*Existing C12.05.d. The Congregational Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$500 in excess of the budgeted line item only after approval by a Congregational Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.*

**Proposed C12.05.d.** The Congregational Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur total obligations in excess of ten (10) % of the approved current budget only after approval by a Congregational Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.