

St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

2308 Merrimac Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060

540.951.8951

stmlc@earthlink.net

www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

Volume 30, Number 9

September 1, 2007

A Helpful Word from Paul

When I was in seminary, one of our assignments was to pick a model for our ministry. I chose a song - "Jesus Loves Me." The simple, direct expression of God's love seemed like a helpful way to envision ministry. Last Sunday, I celebrated the 10th Anniversary of my Ordination and I took a few moments to rethink that old assignment and I realized that "Jesus Loves Me" has been replaced by Paul's word in the 8th Chapter of Romans.

Paul's words have helped me discover the forgiveness, mercy and compassion of God in a very personal way. Paul's words have brought me comfort in times of personal pain and loss and given me insight into how I might bring comfort to others. Paul's assurance of God's presence has given me peace of mind when making decisions. Paul's absolute confidence in God has reminded me of God's unending love for us even despite our sinfulness. Paul's words have inspired me to reach out and share the story of Jesus, so that more and more people will know God's love in their lives. Paul's words have assured me that we are never alone. I give thanks for Paul's faithfulness and wisdom on a daily basis and while I know you have heard these words before, I share them with you again, because I think they are a powerful reminder both of who we are and of the hope we have thanks to Jesus Christ our Lord.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (*Roman 8:38-39*)

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.

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 Andrea Sharpe who organized the **Price’s Fork Teachers Breakfast** and all who brought food; to Cindy and Chris Dowdy who hosted the 10th anniversary celebration of Pastor John’s ordination; to all the volunteers at the **Price’s Fork Fair**.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in August provided music licenses, family and youth program supplies, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod and mission partner, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Christian Children’s Fund, our facilities, salaries for our pastor, secretary, organist, custodian, and nursery workers.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. 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.

Congratulations to...

Jody Smiley, who was elected President of the Virginia Synodical Women’s Organization (VSWO) of the Women of the ELCA at its July convention in Roanoke. As part of her duties, Jody will be visiting with groups around the state and sharing her creative ideas and enthusiasm with all our WELCA sisters.

Fred Spengler, who was recently honored as the recipient of the Lions Melvin Jones Fellow award. The award is given by the Lions Clubs International Foundation for dedicated humanitarian services and is the highest award that can be given to a Lion. Fred was voted for this honor, named for the founder of the organization, by the Blacksburg Breakfast Lions Club of which he has been a member for the past 28 years. Please contact Fred for the purchase of brooms and light bulbs, either made by or packaged by the blind. All proceeds are donated to the Lions sight conservation program.

Blood Drive at St. Michael on October 28

On Saturday, October 28, St. Michael will sponsor a community-wide blood drive with the American Red Cross. Circle the date on your calendars and watch the bulletin for opportunities to volunteer.

Welcome

We welcome our new nursery assistant, Lauren Harber, a student at Virginia Tech.

Nothing But Nets

In the poorest parts of the world, where effective window screens are lacking, insecticide-treated bed nets are arguably the most cost-effective way to prevent malaria transmission. One bed net costs just \$10 to buy and deliver to individuals in need. One bed net can safely last a family for about four years, thanks to a long-lasting insecticide woven into the net fabric. Last month, \$745 was generously contributed by the St. Michael family to the Nothing But Nets project sponsored by the United Nations Foundation. Thank you!



Pictured are Opal, Garnett, Pearl and Ruby, the four church gems, who, with the assistance of the St. Michael softball team, encouraged the congregation to contribute to the net project.

Overflowing with School Supplies

Thank you to everyone who brought school supplies for needy children. Your generosity provided 28 backpacks, 75 packages of pencils, 190 boxes of crayons, 24 packages of colored pencils, 16 packages of pens, 162 folders, 27 pairs of scissors, 91 packages of notebook paper, 24 ring binders, 166 bottles of glue and glue sticks, 192 spiral notebooks, and other assorted supplies. The supplies were delivered to very grateful teachers at Elliston-Lafayette and Price's Fork Elementary Schools. Thank you to Alice Schneider, Jennie, Olivia and David Hodge, and Corson and Parker Wertz who helped count, organize and deliver the supplies to the schools.



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

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

September Servants

	September 2	September 9	September 16	September 23	September 30
<i>Acolytes</i>	Katy McGuigan	Sarah Crowder	Matthew Pasier	Kelley Robinson	Elizabeth Berg
<i>Altar Care</i>	Hank and Alice Schnieder				
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Shannon Rigsbee		Dan Crowder		
<i>Christ's Kids</i>	Jody Smiley	Michele Berg	Kris Wertz	Andrea Sharpe	Tacey Apisa
<i>Youth Servant</i>	Andrew Bales	Katherine Berg	Michele Pasier	Will and Matt Sharpe	Corson and Parker Wertz
<i>9 AM Worship Asst.</i>	Fred Spengler	Shannon Rigsbee	Ted Peterson	Margaret Larsen	Lori Anne Kirk
<i>Greeters – 9 AM 11 AM</i>	Sandy Birch	Carla Schwertz and Charlene Harris Grace and Ben Simmers		Cliff and Shelane	
<i>Lay Reader</i>	Mickey McGuigan	Doug Smiley	Hank Schneider	Kelsey Trimble	Joanne Pascoe
<i>Ushers</i>	Sam Akers Jeff Birch Don Linkous Dickie Shepherd	Ray Howell Randy Robinson James Pascoe Jay Nagle	Bob and Peggy Brown Roscoe Turman Philip Isenhour	Dave and Ann Surface J.D. Robinson Hank Schneider	The McGuigans Burn and Betty Gross



Women of the ELCA

All women of St. Michael are invited to the first fall meeting on September 20 at 7 p.m. at the home of Betty Gross. Karen Mayer will present the program. Contact Alice Schneider at 552-6995 if you need a ride or directions to Betty's home.

The Fall Gathering of the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO) will be Sunday, October 21 at 1 p.m. at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church. Plan to attend this wonderful fellowship time with our sisters in the New River Conference.

Remember the Food Bank: September is **soup** month, though any kind of non-perishable food is always welcome.

Remember the Women's Resource Center: In September, we'll collect baby supplies, e.g., diapers and baby food. The collection basket is in the hallway.

In September and October, the WELCA members at St. Michael will be encouraging our congregation **to fill shoe boxes for Christmas for children in the Head Start program on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation** in South Dakota. The reservation is located in the poorest county in the United States, where family income averages \$3,700 and unemployment is 93%. Many families live in tents or old cars. Last year, we donated 32 Christmas boxes. Watch for announcements in future bulletins and on the bulletin board.



God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. 2 Cor. 9:8

Make a Joyful Noise



Anyone who likes to sing and would be willing to serve God through leading in worship is invited to be a member of the choir. This fall, the St. Michael Choir will rehearse on Mondays at 6:45 p.m. beginning on September 10. For more information about the Choir contact Donita at: moore@pathwayacademy.us.

Church Volleyball Team

St. Michael is starting an Adult Co-ed Volleyball team which will play in the Blacksburg Parks and Recreation League this fall. If you are interested in playing, please sign up on the "Welcome" sheet in the bulletin.

Presiding Bishop Hanson to Visit Blacksburg

In the wake of the April 16 tragedy on the campus of Virginia Tech, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Mark Hanson, will be making a pastoral visit to Blacksburg on September 19. Bishop Hanson will preach at a 7:00 p.m. Service of Healing and Remembrance co-hosted by Luther Memorial and St. Michael. The service will be at Luther Memorial with fellowship and refreshments to follow.

Receiving New Members

St. Michael will be receiving new members on Sunday, September 30 at both services. If you are interested in joining St. Michael, please speak with Pastor John.

St. Michael Day Homecoming Picnic on September 30

The St. Michael Day Homecoming Picnic will take place on September 30 immediately following the 11 a.m. Service. Everyone is invited to bring a friend and a dish to share as we celebrate the ministry and history of St. Michael.



Happy-Go-Lucky

The Happy-Go-Lucky group will meet on Thursday, September 13, at 11:30 a.m. for a potluck lunch and program. Bring a friend; the more, the merrier.



Our next trip is to the Swinging Bridge Restaurant on Thursday, October 18. This unique breakfast dining experience features southern “stick to your ribs cookin” with a Hillbilly gourmet flair in a rural setting in the Alleghany Mountains. The registration deadline is October 10 and the cost is \$12 (plus the cost of your breakfast). Registration forms are available in the hallway. There are only three trips left...join us!

Pictured are eight members of the St. Michael family on their way to the Hungry Mother State Park Arts & Crafts Festival in July.

Youth Night begins September 12



On Wednesday, September 12 at 6 p.m., St. Michael will have the first Youth Night with programs for youth from Kindergarten to Senior High. We will all gather for dinner at 6 p.m. and then we will split into three different groups.

Kid's Night will offer games, crafts and learning opportunities for Kindergarten through 5th grade. If you would like more information about Kid's Night, contact Jody at esmiley@vt.edu.

Confirmation for youth from 6th through 8th Grade will be taught by Pastor John and will offer a chance to have fun while learning more about what we believe as people of God. For more information about Confirmation, contact Pastor John at stmhc@earthlink.net.

The **Senior High Youth Group** for 9th through 12th Grade will be led by Carrie Mayer and will provide an opportunity for fun and service. If you would like more information about the Senior High Youth group, contact Carrie at cmayer@mail.mcps.org.

The **September to May Youth Night Schedule** (meeting every other Wednesday) is available through the on-line church calendar at: www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org.

New Sunday School Year Begins on September 9 at 9:50 a.m.

St. Michael will kick off the Sunday School year on September 9 at 9:50 a.m. in the Sanctuary with a time of songs and activities. On September 16, classes begin for youth from infants to Senior High and an Adult Class taught by Pastor John. Make plans to come and be a part of Sunday School at St. Michael as we seek to learn more about God's love for us.

Christian Questions, Lutheran Answers Adult Sunday School Class

This year, the Adult Sunday School class will be considering a series of common Christian questions using a book by Dr. Martin Marty entitled, *Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers: Exploring Christian Faith*. Each week will focus on a different question. In September the questions discussed will be:

Sept. 16 - What is the Basic Message of the Bible?

Sept. 23 - What Do we Mean when We Say the Bible Is A God=s Word@?

Sept. 30 - Are There Errors in the Bible?

Filling Your Toolbox: Four Key Faith Practices

The following suggestions for nurturing faith in families come from the Youth and Family Institute: www.tyfi.org. If you are looking for a new way to strengthen or share faith in your family, try adding one of the suggestions below to your life of faith.

Caring Conversations: Christian faith and values are passed on to the next generation through supportive conversation. Listening and responding to the daily concerns of our children is for them an experience of the love of God.

Devotions: Through devotions, we experience God by reflecting on the Christian story, personal faith and daily life. Reading the Bible and using devotion books helps us find ourselves in God's story and God in our stories.

Service: Children, youth and adults are most likely to be influenced by those who "walk the talk." There are many opportunities for service: some in the home, some in the congregation, some in the larger community. Whatever type of service you choose, it is best done with family members or other intergenerational groups.

Rituals and Traditions: Families identify themselves and tell their family stories through daily routines, celebrations and rituals. Whether it's hanging Christmas ornaments, or an informal liturgy before bedtime, these activities speak volumes about what the family values, believes, and how much the family values its faith.

Care of Creation Toolbox

Here are two more simple ways we can reduce our output of carbon dioxide and slow down global warming: adjust your thermostat and plant a tree. You will save up to 2000 pounds of carbon dioxide if you set your thermostat down 2 degrees in winter and up 2 degrees in the summer. One tree will remove at least 2000 pounds of carbon dioxide in its lifetime.

Christian Children's Fund (CCF)

The young woman sponsored by St. Michael, Pornnapa Kamsi, has graduated from the Mahasarakham Child Development Center. Our newest child's picture is posted on the CCF poster in the narthex. She is 6-year-old Anjali Korwar from Bangalore, India, who enjoys math and playing ball games at school. CCF reports that "St. Michael's sponsorship is a great blessing to [her] needy family." We will keep you updated on Anjali and her family as we get news from CCF, which provides for her education.

- Jennie Hodge and Abigail Penner