



# St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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November 1, 2007

## **Blessings and Opportunities**

I give thanks for the many ways that God has richly blessed the ministry of St. Michael. Over the last three years, our attendance in worship has increased by nearly 40 %. We have more youth involved in educational and fellowship activities than ever before and our outreach ministries, like the Justice and Mercy Fund, are providing meaningful assistance in our community. Thanks to your participation and generous support, we are truly ambassadors for Christ to each other and to the community.

In the weeks ahead, we will have multiple opportunities to share our blessings. The Christmas Shoebox project which provides gifts to children on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is nearing completion. Our Service of Prayer for Healing is scheduled for November 4 at both services. At the Birthday Dinner on November 11, we will enjoy a wonderful meal and celebrate everyone's birthday all at once. The Thanksgiving Meal for the Community is being planned and the Angel Tree Project to provide Christmas gifts for children in our area will begin soon.

We are also in the process of sharing the ideas for supporting our growing ministry developed by the Facilities Expansion Task Force. With the help of architect Tom Koontz, a proposed classroom addition and a long-term master plan for our facilities have been developed. If you have not been able to attend one of the small group meetings to share your thoughts and learn more about how you can support the project, I encourage you to attend the meeting at the church on Thursday, November 1 at 7 p.m.. If you have any questions about the meeting on November 1 or about the information in the Growing with Faith brochure, please let me know. Thank you again for being a blessing to the ministry of St. Michael.

## 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 Sue Dolph for organizing the Blood Drive and to everyone who supported the event on October 27, Linda Elliott, Suzanne Gay and Betty Eggert for helping with church mailings, Jennie Hodge, Angela Peterson, Jane McGuigan, and Michelle Berg for arranging food for Youth Nights, Barbara Corbett and Lynn Hickok for creating the building blocks for the Stewards Team.

### Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in October provided our benevolence to the Virginia Synod and mission partner, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Christian Children’s Fund, support of our facilities, and salaries for our pastor, secretary, organists, custodian, and nursery workers.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In October, we assisted seven families: three with electric service, two with rent, one with clothing for children, and a seventh family with child care expenses. 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.

### A Thank You Note

*Dear members of St. Michael: Your generous contribution of \$720 has been distributed entirely to the United Nations Foundation’s Nothing But Nets campaign. It is possible to prevent and control malaria through simple and effective tools including long lasting insecticide treated bed nets. The UN Foundation’s malaria efforts have helped increase the distribution of these lifesaving bed nets in African countries during countrywide measles vaccination campaigns. Thank you for your support – together, we can make a difference in the lives of those who need us most. With best wishes, Michael Madnick, Senior Vice President, UN Foundation*

### Congratulations to...

Linda Mitchell and Billy Motley who were married on October 13. Linda and Billy will reside in Big Stone Gap while Linda continues to serve as interim pastor at Redeemer Lutheran in Pearisburg.



Jeff (J.D.) and Andrea Robinson who were married at St. Michael on Saturday, October 20. Their children, Kelley, Will and Matt, share in the joy of the day.

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## *November Servants*

	<b>November 4</b>	<b>November 11</b>	<b>November 18</b>	<b>November 25</b>
<b>Acolytes</b>	Sarah Crowder	Olivia Hodge	Matthew Pasier	Will Sharpe
<b>Altar Care</b>	Peggy Brown and Tammy Veit			
<b>Comm. Assts.</b>	Bob Brown		Jay Nagle	
<b>Christ's Kids</b>	Kris Wertz	Andrea Robinson	Sandy Birch	Michele Berg
<b>Youth Servants</b>	Corson and Parker Wertz	Andrew Bales	Michelle Pasier	Katherine and Elizabeth Berg
<b>9 a.m. Greeters</b> <b>11 a.m. Greeters</b>	Fay and Cliff Walters		Ben and Carol Crawford	
	The Worley and Birch Families			
<b>Lay Reader</b>	John Krallman	Doug Veit	Jeff Birch	Fred Spengler
<b>9 a.m. Worship Asst.</b>	Lori Anne Kirk	Margaret Larsen	Sandy Birch	Ted Peterson
<b>Ushers</b>	Sam Akers Don Linkous Dickie Shepherd Randy Robinson	Hank Schneider James Pascoe Burn Gross M. McGuigan	Philip Isenhour Ray Howell Dave and Ann Surface	Roscoe Turman Brian Simmers Ben Simmers Jeff Birch



## Women of the ELCA

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

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

**The deadline for returning the Christmas shoe boxes is Sunday, November 4.** On November 7, the St. Michael youth will be decorating the boxes and then they will be packed for shipping to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Thank you for your generosity in providing these wonderful gifts for the head start youth on the reservation.

*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*

## Happy-Go-Lucky

The Happy-Go-Lucky group will meet on Thursday, November 8, at 11:30 a.m. for a potluck lunch and program. Bring a friend; the more, the merrier.



## Auction for the Montgomery County Christmas Store

The auction this year will be a silent one, i.e., we will bring in our white elephant items and the entire congregation will have the opportunity to bid on the items at the annual Birthday Dinner on Sunday, November 11. All proceeds from the auction will benefit the Montgomery County Christmas Store. The congregation is also invited to bring in white elephant items for the auction as well.

## Mom and dad gifts for the Montgomery County Christmas Store

The Christmas Store provides a children's Gift Store where children can shop for their parents. Often, these are the only gifts that the parents receive. The Happy-Go-Lucky group invites the congregation to donate unwrapped gift items through December 2. Appropriate gifts might include flashlights, tools, after shave lotion, hand cream, candles, kitchen towels...gifts that cost less than \$5. We might all have a few unopened or unused gifts around the house that we could share...some call it "regifting". Thank you.



**Happy Go Lucky  
on the Go!**

Our next trip is to the Hotel Roanoke for a Christmas lunch buffet in the Regency Dining Room on Wednesday, November 14. The registration deadline is November 6 and the cost is \$35. Registration forms are available in the hallway. There are only two trips left and spaces are filling up....join us! Our last trip of the year is to the Wohlfhart Haus Christmas Show Matinee and lunch on December 5. We've reserved the best seats in the house.

## Youth Night on November 7 and 28



On Wednesday, November 7 and 28 at 6 p.m., St. Michael will have Youth Night 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. The complete schedule is available online at: [www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org](http://www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org).

**Kid's Night** will offer games, crafts and learning opportunities for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. If you would like more information about Kid's Night, contact Jody at [esmiley@vt.edu](mailto:esmiley@vt.edu).

**Confirmation** for youth from 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> 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 [stmlc@earthlink.net](mailto:stmlc@earthlink.net).

The **Senior High Youth Group** for 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> 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 \[at\] mail.mcps.org](mailto:cmayer@mail.mcps.org).

On Sunday afternoon, November 4, the senior high youth will volunteer at the Christmas Store. Sign up with Carrie if you can help with decorating the Children's Gift Store and wrapping gifts that day.

### 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 November the questions discussed will be:

November 4	What Do Lutherans Believe about Saints?
November 11	Does God Heal Today?
November 18	Does God Answer Prayers?
November 25	Why Should We Worship?

Congratulations to  
Sarah Crowder and Michelle Pasier  
who were confirmed on Sunday, October 28.

## Filling Your Toolbox: The Mission of the Church

The Adult Sunday School class is exploring a series of questions from Martin Marty's book "Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers". In one chapter, Marty discusses the question, "What is the Mission of the Church?" The word mission carries a variety of meanings in the context of today's world, but for us as the church, the community of God's people, our mission is always to be sent out into the world to share the good news of God's love for us.

"The 'mission' of the church is to be 'sent out' to *be* and *become* God's presence in the worlds with which its people come into contact. . . . Lutherans join other Christians in responding to the word of Jesus at the end of Matthew's Gospel, where he sends them forth 'to all nations,' and to all the Gospel references to the task of healing, calling people to repentance, working for justice, showing compassion to the stranger and others in need, giving witness to the hope that is in them. Most Lutherans will tell you that the mission of the church, way down deep, is to address the hungry heart, to convince people of their sin and need for God, to bring about conversion and repentance, to announce the good news, and to celebrate the visible ways God meets people in baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the works of love." (Marty, pg. 96-97)

## Care of Creation Toolbox

Here are some more ways to reduce your output of carbon dioxide and slow down global warming. You can use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead (saves 350 pounds of carbon dioxide a year) and washing clothes in warm or cold water (saves 500 pounds of carbon dioxide). This will reduce your energy costs too.

## New Staff at St. Michael

We welcome Lauren Harber and Liz Goergen as our nursery assistants and Brandy Buckles as our new 9 a.m. pianist. Lauren, Liz and Brandy are all students at Virginia Tech. Welcome to St. Michael.



Lauren Harber



Liz Goergen



Brandy Buckles

## Party with a Purpose on November 7

On Wednesday, November 7, everyone is invited to a Party with a Purpose at 6 p.m. at church. We'll share a meal with the participants in Youth Night and then prepare all the Christmas boxes and other gifts for mailing to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. We need lots of "Santa's helpers." All in the congregation are welcome to help.



## Service of Prayer for Healing on November 4



On Sunday, November 4, St. Michael will have a Service of Prayer for Healing at both services. In the rite of healing, the church does not seek to replace the gifts of God that come through the scientific community nor does it promise a cure. Rather, the church offers and celebrates gifts such as these: God's presence with strength and comfort in time of suffering, God's promise of wholeness and peace and God's love embodied in the community of faith.

## Welcome New Members to the St. Michael Family

On September 30, St. Michael welcomed Judith Wolfe and Katie, Lance and Grace Lafon as its newest members. Judith came to Blacksburg 16 years ago when her husband Ken retired. She worked as an RN at Hospice for awhile. Ken and Judith have eight children and eight grandchildren, all of whom live in other states so they do not see them as often as they would like. Judith reports that she is very happy to be a member of St. Michael.



Katie and Lance recently welcomed Grace Elizabeth to their family. Katie works at Virginia Tech in the State 4-H Office as the State 4-H Event Coordinator. She grew up in Montgomery County, Maryland and attended Virginia Tech for both undergraduate and graduate work. Lance was born and raised in Blacksburg and when he isn't working as a mechanic for the Town of Blacksburg, he is working on the family beef farm. Katie enjoys swimming, reading and playing with the family dogs, Dolly and Bailey and Lance is an avid hunter. Grace is 2 months old and enjoys sleeping and eating!

## Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 20

The Thanksgiving Service will be on **Tuesday, November 20 at 7 p.m.** to give people who travel and people who are preparing for St. Michael's Thanksgiving Meal the opportunity to participate in the service. Come and give thanks to God for the many blessings in our lives.

## Community Thanksgiving Dinner - Thursday, November 22

Our annual community dinner will be held at 1 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, November 22. Donations of pies, gelatin salads, and money for the turkeys and fixings will be requested during the first Sundays in November. We will also need helpers in the kitchen, servers, and drivers. Let's all make a special effort to invite those in the community who may not have family in the area. Invitations will be available in the narthex for distribution and posting.....spread the word!



## Congregational Brunch and Meeting on December 9



### Congregational Brunch and Meeting

St. Michael will have a congregational brunch and meeting on Sunday, December 9 at 10 a.m. to approve the Spending Plan for 2008, elect new council members, and to consider any recommendations from the Facilities Expansion Task Force and Council. Bring a dish to share and come be a part of this congregational meeting.

## ELCA Study on Sexuality

The ELCA is currently conducting a study focused on broad and deep principles for Christian thinking about sexuality. The task force hopes that the study will offer a nurturing way for individuals to listen to the Holy Spirit, to Scripture and to one another in a quest for Christian wisdom about human sexuality. Study materials are available online at: [www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/study/](http://www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/study/). If you are interested in sharing your opinions with the task force, please work through the study and submit a response by December 15, 2007 using the form at the end of the study.