



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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Gifts for Ministry

I firmly believe that God blesses all of us with gifts for ministry. The key is to identify those gifts and put them to use in God's service. When I was interviewing to be the Pastor at St. Michael, someone mentioned to me that Sandy Birch would be my secretary, that she was pretty good at what she did, and that I would probably want to make sure that I kept her as a part of the team. In the years since, I have discovered that Sandy is not only pretty good at the secretarial tasks the church has asked of her, but I have observed in her a wonderful heart for ministry, the ability to organize and lead others and a sense of call to ministry. I believe that now is the time to put her gifts to use for ministry at St. Michael in a new way as an Associate in Ministry. If this new position is approved as a part of the proposed 2008 Spending Plan for Ministry, Sandy will focus on helping others use their gifts for ministry, welcoming new worshipers into the life of the congregation and expanding our Senior Adult Ministry. I believe that calling Sandy to be an Associate in Ministry will strengthen the overall ministry of St. Michael and allow her to use even more of her gifts in God's service.

Calling Sandy to be our Associate in Ministry, however, means finding a new member for our ministry team who has the gifts to serve in the expanded role of Administrative Assistant. This new team member will provide on-site ministry 12 hours a week to handle the tasks necessary to support a growing congregation of our size.

I am excited about these possibilities for expanding our ministry staff and I look forward to discovering the ways that we will be able to use our gifts in God's service at 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 our Birthday Dinner hostesses for their cakes: Jeanette Pasier, Alice Schneider, Lynn Hickok, Barbara Corbett, Jody Smiley, Tacey Apisa, Tammy Veit, Jennie Hodge, Peggy Brown, Becky Halvorsen, Dianne Krallman, Thelma Hylton, Betty Gross Kris Wertz, and Andrea Robinson; all who contributed to our outreach projects (Christmas gift shoeboxes, Christmas Store items, angel tree, Women’s Resource Center supplies, Food Bank); Jennie Hodge for serving as our Christian Children’s Fund liaison and all who participated in the Party with a Purpose.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in November provided funds for a supply pastor, Sunday School 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, organists, custodian, and nursery workers.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In November, we provided assistance for ten families: four with electric bills, one with a water bill, and rent for five families. We encourage the congregation to continue their contributions to Justice and Mercy and to refer friends and family to use the fund as you see need.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner a Great Success



St. Michael provided nearly 110 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, and those who donated

funds for the meal. 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 Wal-Mart for providing six cooked turkeys. Pictured (left to right) are Fran Gallimore, Andy Mayer, Carol Crawford, Betty Gross, Daniel Ehrich, and John Krallman. Additional pictures are posted on the bulletin board.

2008: New Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for 2008 are now available on the hallway shelf. Thank you for sharing your treasures.

Altar Flowers, Altar Care and Fellowship Hour for 2008

Sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board. Thank you for serving in these special ways. The opportunity to donate your altar flowers to the "Friends with Flowers" program for hospice patients and nursing homes will be available on the form.



Youth Night on December 5 and 19



All youth from kindergarten through Senior High are invited to Youth Night on Wednesday, December 5 and 19 during the Advent Midweek Service. For more information, contact Jody Smiley at esmiley@vt.edu or at 961-2472.

Christmas Program on Sunday, December 16

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 16. The youth of the congregation will be performing "Greetings from the Heart" Practices for the Christmas Program will be on Saturdays, December 1, 8, 15 at 10 a.m. For more information, please talk to Jody Smiley. The congregation is invited to bring Christmas snacks for a fellowship gathering after the program.



Advent Suppers and Services Wednesdays, December 5, 12, 19

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 St. Michael on December 5 and 19 and at Luther Memorial on December 12. 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.

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 act on four recommendations concerning the possible classroom expansion. The

following people have been nominated for Congregational Council: Ben Crawford, Cindy Dowdy, Rick Mayer, Andrea Robinson, and Tammy Veit. Bring a dish to share and come be a part of this congregational meeting. Child care will be provided. Copies of the 2008 Spending Plan are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary and on-line at www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org.

Poinsettias



Orders are now being taken for poinsettias for Christmas Eve. This year, the poinsettias will cost \$7. 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 or in the bulletin. The deadline for ordering a poinsettia is December 16.

Christian Children's Fund (CCF) Update

Recently, both of our foster children have sent letters and photos to St. Michael. Christa (14) and Anjali (6) report they are doing well in school. Christa especially enjoys swimming and hopes to be a police officer when she grows up. Anjali is in the first grade and likes her science class. Christa closes her note by writing "we thank you and always pray God bless your works." There are new pictures of both girls posted on the CCF poster in the narthex.

Adult Sunday School Discussion Topics for December

December 2	Why Don't Lutherans Have Altar Calls?
December 9	No Sunday School – Congregational Brunch and Meeting
December 16	Do Lutherans Believe in the Virgin Birth?
December 23	Why Did Jesus Come into the World?
December 30	No Sunday School

Peace Love JOY Peace Love JOY



Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 9

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

Dinner with Friends Christmas Gathering on December 8

The Dinner with Friends group for 20, 30 and 40 Somethings will be having a Christmas Gathering at the home of Chris and Cindy Dowdy on Saturday, December 8 at 6 PM. Child care will be provided at the church. Check the bulletin for more information.

Christmas Drop-In at the Wertz's on Sunday, December 23

The congregation is invited to a Christmas Drop-in at the Wertz's at 2013 Broken Oak Drive on Sunday, December 23 from 5 – 7 p.m. Directions are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Come and celebrate the season.

Christmas Eve Services Monday, 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. An informal fellowship time will follow the 7 p.m. service.

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.



Lessons and Carols - Sunday, December 30

St. Michael's celebration of Christmas will continue on Sunday, December 30 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.

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2308 Merrimac Road
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December Servants

	December 2	December 9	December 16	December 23	December 30
<i>Acolytes</i>	Sarah Crowder	Olivia Hodge	Matthew Pasier	Kelley Robinson	Elizabeth Berg
<i>Altar Care</i>	Tammy Veit		Linda Elliott		
<i>Comm. Assts.</i>	Hank Schneider		Karen Mayer		
<i>Christ's Kids</i>	Jody Smiley	Michelle Berg	Tacey Apisa	Andrea Robinson	
<i>Youth Servant</i>	Corson and Parker Wertz	Katherine and Elizabeth Berg	Michelle Pasier	Carlie and Lexi Simmers	Andrew Bales
<i>9 AM Worship Asst.</i>	Ted Peterson	Sandy Birch and Katie Garst	Fred Spengler	Margaret Larsen	Lori Anne Kirk
<i>Greeters – 9 AM 11 AM</i>	Doug and Jolynne Tschetter Jeff and Andrea Robinson		the Hodge family the Nagle family		
<i>Lay Reader</i>	Kris Wertz	Sunday School	Joanne Pascoe	Cindy Dowdy	congregation
<i>Ushers</i>	Sam Akers Randy Robinson Don Linkous Dickie Shepherd	Roscoe Turman and the 3-5 th grade Sunday School class	Bob and Peggy Brown Roscoe Turman Philip Isenhour	Dave and Ann Surface J.D. Robinson James Pascoe	Ray Howell Gross family Jay Nagle

Christmas Eve Servants – 7 PM: Roscoe Turman, Kris Wertz, Jody Smiley, Lorin Crowder, Sandy Birch, Sarah Crowder and Carol Bland.

Christmas Eve Servants – 11 PM: Dave and Ann Surface, Lori Anne Kirk

Women of the ELCA



The December meeting of the Women of the ELCA will be Thursday, December 13, at 6 p.m. at the home of Alice Schneider. We will share a light Christmas meal, enjoy a holiday program, and celebrate the fellowship of the season. If you need a ride, contact Sandy Birch at 951-3455. Directions to the Schneider's home are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. All are welcome to bring a Christmas Sweet Treat to share.

We mailed 131 Christmas shoe boxes and other gifts to the Head Start program at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The Christmas gift boxes, quilts, knitted hats and new clothing were donated by St. Michael, several other Lutheran churches in the New River Valley, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), and a Girl Scout troop. **Thank you to all who participated in this important ministry.**

Remember the Food Bank: December is spaghetti sauce and pasta month, though any non-perishable food is always welcome.

Remember the Women's Resource Center: Cleaning supplies will be collected during the next two months.



Lutheran Men in Mission

The Lutheran Men in Mission will volunteer at the Montgomery County Christmas Store on Saturday, December 8. We are planning to serve dinner at the Roanoke Rescue Mission on Sunday, January 27. For more information about mission projects, contact Jeff Birch at jbirch@vt.edu or at 951-3455.

Happy-Go-Lucky

Our Christmas potluck will be held Thursday, December 13, at 11:30 a.m. Bring a friend for fellowship, fine food and a fun time.



The Happy-Go-Lucky group is sponsoring a trip to the Wohlfahrt Dinner Theater on Wednesday, December 5, to see a special matinee performance of "Sander's Family Christmas." At the annual white elephant silent auction last month, \$248 was raised for the Montgomery County Christmas Store. In addition, members are also sponsoring a special collection of gifts for moms and dads for the Christmas Store. Donations will be accepted through December 2.