



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

2308 Merrimac Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060

540.951.8951

hope@stmhc.us

www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

Volume 32, Number 12

December 1, 2009

Come share the Joy of Christmas

Journey to Bethlehem - Sunday, December 13

- 5:00 PM Youth Christmas Program
- 6:00 PM Covered Dish Dinner
- 6:30 PM Family Craft Night



Sunday, December 20

9 AM and 11 AM - Christmas Cantata



Thursday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

- 4:00 PM Lessons and Carols
- 7:00 PM Family Christmas Service
- 11:00 PM Traditional Christmas Service

Sunday, December 29

9 AM and 11 AM - Service of Lessons and Carols

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 all who contributed to our outreach projects (Christmas gift shoeboxes, Christmas Store items, Angel Tree, Women’s Resource Center supplies, Food Bank); the Worley Family, Mack Brown and Dave Surface who set up the Christmon Tree; Anna Rossomando and Karen Brown who helped install the Gallery of Gifts; and all who participated in the Party with a Purpose,

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in November provided funds for Micah’s Backpack, the community Thanksgiving dinner, SHARE boxes for the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod and mission partners, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Christian Children’s Fund, our facilities and salaries for our ministerial staff.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In November, we provided assistance for **37 families**: three with a water bill, ten with electric bills, nine with rent, two with car expenses, and 13 thanksgiving baskets for families at Kipps Elementary School. 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.

2010: Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for 2010 are now available on the hallway shelf. Thank you for sharing your treasures. Members can also contribute on-line. See the St. Michael website (www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org/donations/) for details.

Altar Flowers and Altar Care

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 continue in 2010.



End-of-Year Giving Information

If you are planning to make a gift at the end of the year to support the ministry of St. Michael, remember that the IRS requires all gifts for 2009 to be received by the church or post-marked by December 31, 2009. You can make gifts to support the General Fund, which provides for the everyday ministry of the congregation, or to one of several special funds, including: Justice and Mercy, Facilities Expansion, Micah’s Backpack or Property Maintenance. You can find more information about these funds or donate online at: <http://www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org/donations/> . If you need assistance with tax advantageous gifts like gifts of stock or donations from an IRA, you can contact Pastor John or Pastor George Sims at the Virginia Synod Mission Office for Planned Giving, <http://www.plan2giv.org/>.

A Wonderful Birthday Celebration

“Varieties of gifts, varieties of services, varieties of activities, but the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God who activates all of them in everyone.”

At the recent birthday dinner, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 “came to life” for me. Some were the bakers (or buyers) of delicious cakes, pies and cookies: Suzanne Gay, Judith Wolfe, Pastor John, Lisa Moehling, Alice Schneider, Carol Crawford, Sandy Birch, Jeanette Pasier, Jody Smiley, Lynn Hickok, Mary Kate Law Jordan and Fran Gallimore. Anna Rossomando and Alice Schneider created delicious pasta, Parker Wertz helped his mom Kris, along with other members of WELCA, to set up and decorate the fellowship hall for the party. Others served as informal hosts of their birthday table and encouraged conversation. Many stayed after to help take down tables and chairs. Some shared their money, contributing \$120 to the Christmas Store as a free will offering. Judith Wolfe even took home the dirty pans to soak and scrub. The St. Michael family worked and played together and shared their gifts, with God’s blessing. A very happy birthday party.
Sandy Birch, Stewards Team



Clockwise: Tatiana and grandpa Mack share a November 11 birthday; Grace and Joyce share a November 9 birthday; chefs Alice and Anna in the kitchen; and the oldest member at the party, Dr. Burn, at 84 years old, with the youngest, Tatiana.

Adult Sunday School Class focuses on the Book of Revelation.

The Adult Sunday School class will be concluding the discussion of the Book of Revelation on December 20. We are using the book, “Come, Lord Jesus: A Study of Revelation” by Mark Braatan as our guide. Notes from each class will be posted weekly on the "Studying Scripture" page of the website.

O.K.s (Older Kids)

NEW DAY, NEW CHEF, SAME TIME

The Happy-Go-Lucky Catered Christmas Luncheon will be held **TUESDAY, December 15**, at noon with social time beginning at 11:30 a.m. Our guest chef is Daniel Ehrich, the Birch's godson, who is attending the Culinary Institute at Virginia Western in Roanoke. Daniel will also conduct a cooking demonstration for us. Come and bring a friend to this delicious culinary experience. A \$5 donation for groceries would be appreciated, though not required.



At the annual white elephant auction last month, \$210 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 6.

The AARP invites us to its Annual Holiday Dinner on December 8 at the Holiday Inn. Tickets at \$15 per person must be purchased before December 3. On Monday, December 7, join the AARP group for breakfast at 10 a.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center. More information is posted on the hallway bulletin board.



Lutheran Men in Mission

The Lutheran Men in Mission will volunteer at the Montgomery County Christmas Store on Saturday, December 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. or so. Please contact Jeff Birch at jbirch@vt.edu or at 951-3455 if you would like to participate.

Congregational Brunch and Meeting on December 13



Congregational Brunch and Meeting

St. Michael will have a congregational brunch and meeting on Sunday, December 13 at 10 a.m. to approve the Spending Plan for 2010 and elect new council members.

The following people have been nominated for Congregational Council:

Randy Robinson, Mickey McGuigan, Lori Ann Kirk, Maggie Maloney, and Michelle Pasier. Three will be elected to serve for a three-year term. Additional nominations may be made during the meeting.

Brunch will be provided by the Stewards Team to thank the St. Michael family for sharing their talents, time and treasures this past year. Child care will be provided.

Copies of the 2010 Spending Plan are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary and on-line at www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org.

Journey to Bethlehem on Sunday, December 13 - 5 PM to 7:30 PM

Journey to Bethlehem: Youth Christmas Program at 5 PM

Come and be a part of this year's Youth Christmas Program for children of all ages at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 13. **Practices for the Christmas Program** will continue on Saturday, December 5 and 12 – at 4 p.m. There will also be a “walk-through” during the congregational meeting on Sunday, December 13. For more information, please contact Jody Smiley. The congregation is invited to bring a dish for a potluck dinner gathering after the program.



Journey to Bethlehem: Potluck Dinner at 6 PM

Following the Christmas program, everyone is invited to a Potluck Dinner as we continue our Journey to Bethlehem with a meal.

Journey to Bethlehem: Family Craft Night at 6:30 PM

The Youth of St. Michael are sponsoring a Family Craft Night for all ages. Come and make ornaments, Christmas decorations, sing a few carols and continue your preparation for Christmas.

Winter Celebration: Senior High Youth Event January 29-30, 2010

Each year the Virginia Synod sponsors two events for High School students (9th through 12th Grade) called Winter Celebration. Winter Celebration is a gathering of several hundred youth and adults for large group and small group experiences with lots of worship, singing and faith sharing. If you are interested in attending, Lorin Crowder will be taking a group from St. Michael to the second weekend, January 29-31, 2010. Scholarship money is available to help with the cost of the weekend and you can download the registration information from our website. For more information, please talk to Pastor John.

Micah's Backpack: By the Numbers November 2009

Here are the results of the ministry of Micah's Backpack during the first three months of school.

- 5 Blacksburg Area Elementary Schools as Partners
- 48 Students Helped
- 217 Volunteer Hours Donated
- 418 Backpacks Delivered
- 2508 Meals Delivered
- 1699 Pounds of Donated Food
- 1123 Items of Donated Food

Thank You for your generous support of Micah's Backpack!

Advent Suppers and Services

Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16 at 6 PM

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 2 and 16 and at St. Michael on December 9. If you are interested in assisting with the meal or service, please sign up on the "Welcome to St. Michael" form available in the Sunday bulletin.

Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 20

St. Michael's Choir will share a Christmas Cantata entitled, "Silent Night Wondrous Night" during both the 9 a.m. and the 11 a.m. services on Sunday, December 20. Make plans to come and enjoy this beautiful gift of music. Beginning Sunday, November 29, the choir will practice the cantata music for a half hour following the 11 a.m. service for the convenience of those who cannot make the Thursday night practices (6:30 p.m.). Readers are also needed for the cantata. Contact Eric at ericyoung@stmhc.us if you can assist.

Christmas Drop-In at the Wertz's on Sunday, December 20

The congregation is invited to a Christmas Drop-in at the Wertz's at 2013 Broken Oak Drive on Sunday, December 20 from 2 – 4 p.m. Directions are available on the hallway shelf. Come and celebrate the season.

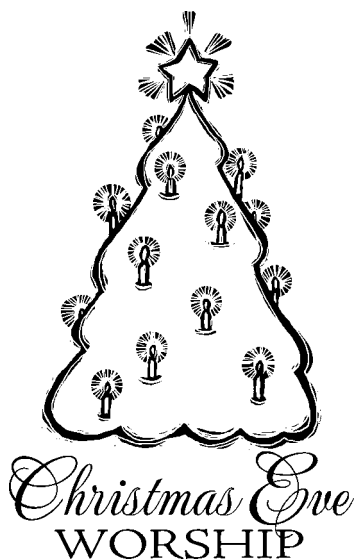
Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24 – 4 p.m., 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

St. Michael will have three services on Christmas Eve. The Lessons and Carols Service will be at 4 p.m. The Family Christmas Eve Service will be at 7 p.m. and a Traditional Christmas Eve Service will be at 11 p.m. We will celebrate Holy Communion at the 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. services. 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 27

St. Michael's celebration of Christmas will continue on Sunday, December 27 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.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner a Great Success

St. Michael served approximately 165 people and provided nearly 200 Thanksgiving meals through the annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner. Thank you to all the volunteers who set up and cleaned up the fellowship hall and decorated the tables. Thank you also to the great cooks, greeters, dishwashers, cake and pie bakers, jello and sweet potato casserole makers, and those who donated funds for the meal. It continues to be a wonderful fellowship event. A special thank you goes to Carol Crawford, Fran Gallimore, Betty Gross, Judith Wolfe and the Caring and Sharing Team for organizing the event and to Wal-Mart for providing six turkeys.



Christmas Gifts: Poinsettias, Backpacks and SHARE

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 13. A gift can also be designated to SHARE or Micah's Backpack in honor of or in memory of a family member or friend.



Gallery of Gifts

St. Michael's Gallery of Gifts was unveiled in the Classroom Addition on Thanksgiving Day. The Gallery will display artwork on a rotating basis as a way of highlighting artistic gifts in the St. Michael family and in the community. Currently, you will find work from Dorothy Birch, an environmental photographer and others. If you have ideas for future displays, please talk to Pastor John.

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December Servants

	December 6	December 13	December 20	December 27
Altar Care	Schneiders, Birches and others			
9 AM Service				
Greeters	Hodge family	Ben and Carol Crawford	Ben and Carol Crawford	Gary and Sandie Worley
Worship Asst.	Keith Gay	Jen Daskel	Fred Spengler Sandy Williams	congregation
11 AM Service				
Acolyte	Sarah Crowder	Andrew Bales	Matthew Pasier	Alex Moehling
Comm. Asst.	Bob Brown		Tacey Apisa	
Greeters	Randy and Sharon Robinson	Kris Wertz and sons	Kris Wertz and sons	Randy and Sharon Robinson
Lay Reader	Lori Anne Kirk	Dianne Krallman	Joanne Pascoe	congregation
Ushers	Dickie Shepherd Ray Howell David Hillis Cindy Lang	Jeff Birch James Pascoe Burn Gross R. Robinson	Ben/Grace Simmers Don Linkous M. McGuigan	Philip Isenhour Hank Schneider Dave/Ann Surface
Youth Servant	Jessica Brown	Delanie Veit	Bryce Apisa	Parker Wertz

Christmas Eve Servants – Please volunteer for the 4 PM, 7 PM, or 11 PM service on the St. Michael Welcome form on Sunday, December 6. Thank you.

Women of the ELCA



The December meeting of the Women of the ELCA will be Tuesday, December 8, at 7 p.m. at the home of Alice Schneider. We will share Christmas snacks, 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 home are available on the hallway shelf. All are welcome to bring a Christmas treat to share and participate in the “adoption” of a needy family at Prices Fork

Elementary School for the holidays.

We shipped 236 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 scarves were donated by St. Michael, several other Lutheran churches in the New River Valley and Richmond (Jane Lane’s home church) and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). We also sent 18 shoe boxes and other gifts to Rev. Karen Rupp, pastor of the Lutheran Retreat Center in Pine Ridge. Rev. Rupp oversees programs for the homeless on the reservation. In addition, SHARE food boxes were also purchased for families on the reservation. **Thank you to all who helped with the wonderful 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.

Invitations

Young persons between the ages of 14 and 20 are invited to join a St. Michael Venture Crew. Venturing is a new and exciting BSA program offered by St. Michael for young men and women to supplement, expand and enhance the activities of our Boy Scout Troop 158. Young people in Venturing learn leadership skills and participate in challenging outdoor activities. No prior background in Scouting is required. If interested, contact Ben Crawford at 961-5733 or ben.crawford@vt.edu or Jan Helge Bohn at 951-2080 or bohn@vt.edu.

Voices of the Blue Ridge is in need of volunteer readers for the blind/visually impaired. The task involves reading sections of the Roanoke Times over the phone through a toll free number. While you read your paper, you could read it aloud over the phone and then hundreds of folks who otherwise could not see the paper, “read” it with your help. If interested, contact Sherrie Oliver, coordinator of volunteers, at 540-985-8900 or voice@vobr.org. More information is available at www.vobr.org.