



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

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Thank You!

Thank You for an amazing year of ministry! Together we are living as God's heart and hands and voices. By my estimate, in 2010 the ministry of St. Michael has touched approximately 5,300 people with the good news of God's love which represents a 32% increase from 2009. Our 9 AM worship service grew by 12.2% and overall worship attendance grew by 4 %. Your generosity has allowed us to expand our ministry partnerships and explore new areas of ministry. Thank You!

Thank You for a joyous Christmas! From the musicians to the volunteers folding bulletins to those decorating the sanctuary, your willingness to share your time and talents helped St. Michael have a joyous and meaningful Christmas! The Advent Services with Luther Memorial gave us an opportunity to prepare for the coming of the Lord and the youth, leaders and choir did a fantastic job with the "Simple Christmas Pageant", covered dish and family craft night. On Christmas Eve, we shared the story of Christ's birth with a total of 310 people at three wonderful services. Thank You!

Thank You for your generous Christmas gift to our family! It is a pleasure and an honor to be the pastor at St. Michael. I give thanks to God for your call to me and for our St. Michael family. The extremely generous Christmas gift from the congregation and the personal notes and gifts we have received are greatly appreciated! Thank You!

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 the men who volunteered for parking lot duty at the Montgomery County Christmas Store; to Jay Nagle and New River Engraving for providing new directional signs for the church; to all who served during our Christmas Eve services; and to everyone who provided food for the Advent Suppers and gifts for our 25 Salvation Army Christmas Angels.

Because of your gifts

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In December, we assisted 16 families: seven with electric bills, one with a child's Christmas gifts, five with car expenses and three with rent payments. We encourage the congregation to continue their contributions to the fund and to refer friends and family to use the fund as you see the need.

For Year Round Service, We Thank You

At the December annual meeting, the Stewards Team said “gracias”, “merci”, “mahalo”...**thank you** in as many ways as possible for the sharing of time, talents and treasures at St. Michael. There is a group of folks we'd like to recognize at the beginning of the new year though who give of their time and talents consistently nearly every week – all year long. There's Linda Elliott and Bill Greer who fold our bulletins each week; Joyce Coupey who creates the bulletin covers; Shirley Linkous who organizes the 9 a.m. greeters; Jim and Judy Clemens who change the hymn board information; Ray Howell who rings the tower bell at the beginning and end of the service and who “neatens up” the pews after worship; Roscoe Turman, “first” usher at the 11 a.m. service; Judy Clemens who cleans the altar linens; Alice Schneider and Sandy Birch who prepare the altar flowers for hospice patients; Charlene Harris who orders the flowers; Pat Smith who takes the food to the Food Bank and the supplies to the Womens Resource Center; Judy Wunderlich who delivers our paper and plastic to the recycling center; and the offering counters – Jim Clemens, Cindy Dowdy, Ben Simmers - who are always the last to leave the church on Sunday morning. “Danke” “Spasibo” Thank you.

A Thank You from Pine Ridge

Thank you so much for continuing to support our ministry and gift giving to our young people. We'll find good homes for each item, you can count on that. Thank you to the St. Michael congregation for your ongoing support, prayers and words of encouragement. May you all have a Blessed Advent and Christmas season. God Bless you all. Pastor Karen (note: Pastor Karen Rupp is a Lutheran pastor who runs the homeless shelter on the Pine Ridge reservation. We sent several large boxes of gifts and quilts to her flock)

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January Servants

	January 2	January 9	January 16	January 23	January 30
Altar Care	Sandy Birch				
9 AM Service					
Greeters	Cliff & Shelane Walters	Steve and Amy Woods	Steve and Amy Woods	Judith Wolfe Sandy Williams	Judith Wolfe Sandy Williams
Worship Asst.	Keith Gay	Judith Wolfe	Lori Anne Kirk	Jacob Dennis	Matthew James
11 AM Service					
Acolyte	Sarah Crowder	Alex Moehling	Sarah Moehling	Corson Wertz	Seth Brewer
Comm. Asst.	Lorin Crowder		Jody Smiley		
Greeters	James and Wanda Pascoe	James and Wanda Pascoe	James and Wanda Pascoe	Randy & Sharon Robinson	Randy & Sharon Robinson
Lay Reader	Cindy Dowdy	Carrie Mayer	Jeff Birch	Jennie Brogan	Becca Perez
Ushers	Dickie Shepherd Ray Howell M. McGuigan Cindy Lang	R Robinson James Pascoe Burn Gross Rick Mayer	Ben and Grace Simmers Don Linkous Joanne Pascoe	Hank Schneider Philip Isenhour Sandy Birch Dickie Shepherd	David and Ann Surface Jay Nagle Don Linkous
Youth Servant	MaKayla Dowdy	Delanie Veit	Mazzy Price	Parker Wertz	Camden Brewer



Women of the ELCA

On Monday, January 10, the Women of the ELCA will meet for a Bible Study entitled “The People of God: Unity in the Midst of Diversity”. The study is led by Lori Anne Kirk, and held in the church fellowship hall at 6 p.m. A light supper will be served.

Many thanks to the Women of the ELCA for **providing Christmas gifts** for a needy family of through Prices Fork Elementary School.

Remember the Food Bank: January is cereal month, though any kind of non-perishable food is always welcome.

Remember the Women's Resource Center: In January, donations of toilet paper will be appreciated.

O.K.s (Older Kids)

The Happy-Go-Lucky Catered January Luncheon will be held **Tuesday, January 11**, at noon with social time beginning at 11:30 a.m. The theme is a mystery – which means that your coordinator hasn't a clue at this time of publication. We'll all be surprised ☺.



Abbey Lee Birch entertaining the Happy-Go-Lucky group with her rendition of Go Tell It On the Mountain at the December Luncheon.

Report on December Congregational Meeting

At the Congregational Meeting on December 12, the congregation approved the Investments in Ministry Plan for 2011 and elected four new members of the congregational council: Jim Clemens, Keith Gay, Rick Mayer, and Sheila McCartan.

The congregation acknowledges the service of retiring council members Ben Crawford, Mickey McGuigan and Andrea Robinson. Thank you for your many years of service.

A bountiful brunch provided by the Stewards Team was a “THANK YOU” to the congregation for sharing its time, talents and treasures during 2010.

2011 Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for 2011 are now available on the hallway shelf. The white envelopes are for our Core Ministry Fund which supports worship, shepherding, Sunday School and pastoral care; the beige envelopes are for giving to special funds such as Micah's Backpack and Justice and Mercy. Gifts to support the ministry of St. Michael can also be made on-line. See the St. Michael website (www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org/donations/) for details. Thank you for sharing God's gifts to you.

Micah's Backpack: By the Numbers December 2010

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

- 7 Partner Schools - Blacksburg Area Elementary Schools, Blacksburg Middle School, Blacksburg Head Start Preschool
- 108 Students Helped
- 414 Volunteer Hours Donated
- 1323 Backpacks Delivered
- 7,938 Meals Delivered

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

36 Christmas Backpacks Donated

Thank you to everyone who donated a backpack for Christmas! This year, 36 backpacks were donated which will help provide food for a weekend for hungry students in our area.

Souper Bowl Sunday, February 6

The Annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, February 6. St. Michael will join thousands of churches across the country by raising money to help fight hunger. Everyone is asked to bring \$1 to place in the Soup Pot and a can of food. The money will be donated to Micah's Backpack and all canned goods will be donated to the Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program.



Confirmation Retreat on January 30 at 3:30 PM

Our Confirmation Class for all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students will have a mini retreat on Sunday, January 30 from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. to discuss other Christian denominations and other faith groups.

Youth Nights on January 9 and 23

Youth Night for youth from Kindergarten to 5th grade will be on Sunday, January 9 and 23 at 5 p.m. Come enjoy the fun and learn a little more about God's love for you. If you would like more information, contact Pastor John at pastorjohn@stmhc.us.



The LYNX (Lutheran Youth iN Christ) youth group will also meet on January 9 and 23 at 5 p.m.

A Wonderful Simple Christmas Pageant



Thank you to all the students, angels, shepherds, wise men and stable animals who participated in the Christmas program on December 19. The cast of characters included Camden Brewer, Seth Brewer, Abby Brown, Jessica Brown, Maddie Brown, MaKayla Dowdy, Jack Graves, Emily Graves, David Hodge, Olivia Hodge, Delanie Veit, Corson Wertz, Parker Wertz and Fred Spengler as Father Christmas. Special thanks to Kris Wertz, director, and her helpers. A big thank you to the choir and Eric Young, director, for providing the beautiful music for "A Simple Christmas Pageant".

Winter Celebration - Virginia Synod Youth Event (9th - 12th grade)



Winter Celebration is a gathering of several hundred youth and adults from around the Virginia Synod for worship, singing, faith sharing and fun. All youth in 9th through 12th grade are invited to attend. The group from St. Michael will be going January 28-30, 2011. The registration deadline is January 9 and the cost is \$60. If you are interested in attending, please talk to Pastor John or Lorin Crowder.



Welcome

Hospitality Ministry in the First 3 Minutes

A new worshipper walks into St. Michael. The new worshipper has taken the first step – a giant step toward connecting with God through the ministry of St. Michael. They have overcome every barrier that might keep them away; fear, intimidation, social inertia, weekend distractions, preconceived notions and a million other reasons that might have kept them away until that moment.

Many people have said, “You only have one chance to make a first impression.” When it comes to churches, you might get two opportunities: the first three minutes after someone arrives at St. Michael and the first three minutes after the worship service is over. During those first and last three minutes, you have the opportunity to make someone feel welcome and connected to the people of God at St. Michael. You don’t have to be an official greeter. You don’t have to say something clever or scripted. Simply reaching out in Christian love, to say a word of welcome is a powerful ministry of hospitality. The next time you see someone you don’t recognize at worship, remember the words of the angels, “Be not afraid,” and take a moment to welcome them to God’s family of faith at St. Michael.



Sign-up sheets for Altar Flowers and Altar Care are posted on the hallway bulletin board. Please add your names to the list. Thank you for sharing and serving in these special ways. We will continue to donate our altar flowers to hospice programs, such as Good Samaritan Hospice.

We walked to Bethlehem and started the trip back...

We did it!! It only took 12 weeks to walk over 6,114 miles to Bethlehem. Thank you to everyone who participated and recorded their miles on the hallway charts. The most enthusiastic walkers were the O.K.s who logged 2,488 miles with the 20-30-40 somethings coming in second with 1,757 miles. Keep walking – it’s healthy and it’s fun. The ¼ mile course around the St. Michael parking lot is a good place to continue the journey. Keep walking....keep walking....



Receiving New Members in February

St. Michael will be receiving new members in February. If you are interested in membership, please talk to Pastor John.

Sunday School for All Ages Returns on January 9 at 9:50 AM



**Adult Sunday School Class to Build a
Toolbox for a Life of Proclamation**

The Adult Sunday School class is continuing to build a toolbox for a life of proclamation by focusing on learning the Bible, learning more about Lutheran teachings and learning about living out our faith in the modern world. On January 9th and 16th, we will finish our look at scripture by discussing the Book of Revelation and the witness of the Bible as a whole. Beginning on January 23, we will begin focusing of ideas emphasized by the Lutheran movement.

Sunday Bible Study on January 16

Pastor John will be leading the Bible Study about the Baptism of our Lord on Sunday, January 16 at 7 p.m. at the Wertz home. Everyone is welcome!

St. Michael Wish List

The Wish List consists of items which would enhance and strengthen ministries of the congregation. Gifts may be given for these items in thanksgiving for God's goodness or in memory/honor of a loved one, friend or occasion. If you have an interest in contributing toward one of the following items or if you have an idea for something that could be added to the wish list, please contact Pastor John.

- Choir Robes (6 needed) - \$100 each
- Christmas Tree Stand for 10 ft Christmas Tree - \$70
- ELW Hymnals (10 needed) - \$25 each

Congratulations to....

our five fall graduates: **Andrea Robinson** – Masters degree in Career and Technical Education from Virginia Tech; **Maggie Maloney** – Masters degree from Boston University in Art Education; **Becca Perez** – Masters degree in Statistics from Virginia Tech; **Brandy Baxter** – Bachelor’s degree in Music Education and **Stuart Worley** – Bachelor’s degree in Biology from Virginia Tech.



April and Daryn Cockram on the birth of their daughter Lakyn Dawn on July 19. Big brothers and sisters Dustin, Brittany, Jessica and Matt welcome their little sister.

Katherine Abrams, who along with her horse FDR, has earned the right to compete in the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) championships. Katherine, a sophomore at Virginia Tech, has won numerous competitions leading up to these prestigious events.



Matthew Pasier, who was named to the All-Timesland 2010-11 Cross Country Second Team. Matthew is a sophomore at Blacksburg High School.