



# St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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## Walking Together in Ministry

On a day to day basis, most of St. Michael's ministry is focused in our local community, but through our partnership with the Virginia Synod, St. Michael is sharing in ministry across the state and across the world. Through ministry partners like the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp, Virginia Lutheran Homes, National Lutheran Communities and Services, Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, Roanoke College, the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, and Lutheran World Relief, St. Michael reaches out to share God's Word in ways that would never be possible for any one congregation to do alone. We are all members of the body of Christ. We are all walking in ministry together and when each of us shares our gifts for the building up of the community, truly amazing and powerful ministry can be accomplished.

Your generous gifts help support ministry around the state of Virginia and around the country which:

- provide weekend retreats for hundreds of youth,
- share God's love each summer through camping ministries,
- advocate for those who can't speak for themselves,
- care for senior adults in their time of need,
- educate and love children with special needs,
- prepare pastors for ministry in congregations,
- proclaim the good news of Jesus around the world,
- and respond with long-term relief in times of crisis.

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 Nancy Young, Lynda Kinzey, Frances Edge, Margaret Larsen, Mildred Wall, Martie Saks and Charlie Saks for folding the January newsletter; to Lynda Kinzey for keeping the large print hymnals up to date; to the altar flower/Heritage Hall team of Alice Schneider, Barbara Corbett, Judith Wolfe, Martie Saks, and Sandy Birch; and to Pat Smith for regularly delivering our donations to the Food Bank and the Women's Resource Center.

### **Because of your gifts**

Your generous gifts in January supported our heat pump maintenance, pest control yearly contract, newsletter postage, Lutheran magazine subscriptions, lawn equipment maintenance, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, 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 January, we helped 18 families: 14 families with an electric bill, 3 families with a rent payment, and one with a water bill.

### **Time to Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars**

Each year Thrivent Financial for Lutherans makes money available for eligible members to direct to charitable causes of their choice. With the beginning of the new year, Thrivent members need to make decisions about where their donations should go. Even if you made a selection in a previous year directing your donations to Micah's Backpack, St. Michael or another organization, you are required to affirm that choice for 2015. Thrivent Choice dollars can be directed at: <https://www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice/> or by calling 1.800.847.4836. If you have questions, please contact your local agent.

### **Your Gifts, God's Grace: The United Lutheran Appeal**

On February 15, the Virginia Synod invites individuals to support several faith-based non-profit ministries. The eight mission partners included in the United Lutheran Appeal empowers believers to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. The partners supported include Virginia Lutheran Homes, Roanoke College, National Lutheran Communities and Services, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Lutheran Family Services, Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat Center, GraceInside Prison Ministry and Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center. You can learn more about these wonderful ministries at: <http://www.lutheranpartners.net/>.



## Micah's Backpack January Report



[www.micahsbackpack.org](http://www.micahsbackpack.org)

During January, volunteers shared over 300 hours helping prepare and deliver 1,104 bags of weekend food for 278 children and youth in our community. We received a \$3,000 grant from the Food Lion Charitable Foundation that will help us share over 3,600 meals plus snacks. Feel free to check out the copy of *Voices of Hunger* in the St. Michael library. Jennie wrote a chapter on the creation and outreach of Micah's Mobile Backpack in this newly published volume.

**Micah's Backpack will collect oatmeal in February.** We share over 1,200 envelopes of oatmeal every month. Thank you for sharing juice boxes in January.

## Micah's Garden

Volunteers, including Erik Bohn and his troop, have been hard at work finishing up the greenhouse project. For the upcoming growing season and for many to come, we will have a space to start our plants from seed. This will help volunteers grow fresh food more efficiently and will hopefully help us increase our production. If you'd like to rent a raised bed for the 2015 season, please let Jennie know.



## Micah's Soup for Seniors

In January, Soup for Seniors were able to pack and distribute 90 bags of food to seniors at Warm Hearth. The next packing and distribution date is Tuesday, February 24: pack at 5 p.m., leave for Warm Hearth at 5:45 p.m. and distribute at 6 p.m. Volunteers are always welcome. Soup for Seniors is very grateful for the generous donations to the program, including a recent grant from AARP. Contact Dianne Krallman at [dhkrallman@hubbell-Itg.com](mailto:dhkrallman@hubbell-Itg.com) or 552-1668 for additional information. **In February, we will collect green beans for Soup for Seniors.**



## Souper Bowl Sunday, February 1

The Annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, February 1. 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 food for Micah's Backpack and Soup for Seniors. Suggested items are: canned pasta or a pack of fruit cups. The money and canned goods will help relieve hunger in our community. Thank You!



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***February Servants***

	<b>February 1</b>	<b>February 8</b>	<b>February 15</b>	<b>February 22</b>
<b>Altar Care</b>	Sandy Birch			
<b>9 AM Service</b>				
<b>Greeters</b>	Sandra Hough Shirley Linkous	Sandra Hough Shirley Linkous	Gary and Sandie Worley	Gary and Sandie Worley
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Keith Gay	Betty Falta	Peggy Morgan	Matthew James
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>	Sandy Williams	Dean Rueschman	Sandie Worley	Jacob Dennis
<b>11 AM Service</b>				
<b>Acolyte</b>	Jessica Brown	Maddie Brown	Sarah Moehling	Camden Brewer
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>	Laura Gruss		Kris Wertz	
<b>Greeters</b>	James and Wanda Pascoe	A. Rossomando Judy Clemens	Moehling/Belue family	Brewer/McCartan family
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Laura Peery	Lorin Crowder	Marty Gordon	Seth Peery
<b>Ushers</b>	Dickie Shepherd Ray Howell	Josiah and Litha Tlou	Matt Belue Philip Isenhour	Randy Robinson Ben Simmers
<b>Youth Servant</b>	Lily Gruss		Noah Moehling	
<b>6:30 PM Service</b>				
<b>Greeters</b>	No service	Berg family	Deloris Raines	Saks family
<b>Lay Reader</b>		Mike Berg	Heather Pettus	Charlie Saks
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>		Michelle Berg	Katherine Berg	Martie Saks

## Women of the ELCA



In February and March, the congregation will be invited to **donate items for Easter baskets**, such as candy, books, and small toys. The Easter baskets are distributed to needy children at the Women's Resource Center and through the Salvation Army. Volunteers will assemble the baskets in March after an 11 a.m. service. All are welcome to help.



**The Women of the ELCA will meet for Lunch and Learn on Monday, February 16 at noon at the church.** Jody Smiley will be leading a Bible Study entitled, "Gathered by God". Please join the sisters for fine food and fellowship.

**Remember the Food Bank:** February is Italian month (spaghetti sauces, canned ravioli, etc.), though any kind of non-perishable food is always welcome.

**Remember the Women's Resource Center:** In February, donations of toilet paper would be appreciated. The Center can also use any kind of art supplies for children at any time.

## The O.K.s (Older Kids)

The Happy-Go-Lucky group will enjoy a catered luncheon on **Tuesday, February 10 at noon**, with a social time beginning at 11:30 a.m. A \$5 donation for the food is helpful, but not required. This month we will learn how to write our own obituary – who is better qualified? Our guests are members of the Funeral Consumer's Alliance.



### Another event of interest to O.K.s

The February 17 AARP chapter meeting will be held at the Blacksburg Community Center. A brown bag lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. with the program at noon. The January meeting focused on moving strategies, including the selling of one's home. Information is available on the bulletin board. The February meeting will feature Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley Planning District Commission. He will speak about attractions, activities and facilities for seniors in our area. AARP provides free tax preparation starting February 2. See Sandy Birch for details.

## Annual Meeting and Brunch, March 22 at 9:50 a.m.

On Sunday, March 22, St. Michael will have a Covered Dish Brunch and Annual Meeting at 9:50 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited to bring a dish to share. If the meeting is canceled due to inclement weather, it will be held on Sunday, March 29. At the Annual Meeting, we will receive the 2014 Annual Report and the 2015 Phone Directory, and complete our 2015 Time and Talent Surveys.



## Congratulations to... our New Congregational Council Officers

At the January 18 congregational council meeting, the following officers were elected: Jim Clemens, President; Keith Gay, Vice-President/Secretary; John Krallman, Financial Officer.



## Sunday Night Bible Study on February 15

Pastor John will be leading a Bible Study on the Season of Lent. The Bible Study will take place on Sunday, February 15 at 7:15 p.m. in the large classroom.

## Altar Care

Each month, a St. Michael servant (or two) prepares the communion wine and wafers for the 11 a.m. communion service and other special mid-week services. This loving task, which involves less than an hour of time on the preceding Saturdays, may also require changing the altar cloths for the season or celebration. Only a little training is required and anyone can serve. Those who provide altar care are not the “little old church ladies” we may envision in the traditional altar guild (though Opal and Pearl, the church “gems”, have been known to fill a communion cup or two). A sign-up sheet is posted on the hallway bulletin board. See Sandy Birch if you have any questions.



Thank you to everyone who shares their time in preparing our altar for communion services. You are a blessing.

## Congratulations to...

**Jessica Saville-Brown**, placing first in the Blacksburg Lions Club International Peace Poster Contest. Jessica's poster was also the winner of Lions District 24-E and will be judged again from Lions of Virginia.

**Burn Gross**, who celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday, January 17.



## Shrove Tuesday – February 17.....PANCAKES!!!

Shrove Tuesday is an annual celebration marking the final day before the season of Lent, a 40-day period which traditionally includes self-denial and reflection.



At St. Michael, we indulge in PANCAKES...lots and lots of pancakes and all the trimmings. Come and enjoy the wonderful food beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 17 at our annual Pancake Supper. Bring your friends and family for the celebration.

Ash Wednesday service will be February 18 at 7 p.m. with Wednesday Night Lenten Soup suppers and service beginning on February 25. Mark your calendars for an active and meaningful Season of Lent.

### Lenten Service Schedule

**Ash Wednesday Service - February 18 at 7 p.m.**

**Wednesday Night Lenten Soup Supper and Service**  
Supper at 6 p.m. and Holden Evening Prayer at 6:45 p.m.



Each week, St. Michael, along with our friends and family from Luther Memorial, Shiloh and New Mt. Zion, will gather for a time of fellowship and Holden Evening Prayer. Our midweek Lenten Sermon Series focuses on themes provided by Presiding Bishop Easton.

**February 25 at Luther Memorial - "We are Church"**

**March 4 at St. Michael - "We are Lutheran"**

**March 11 at Luther Memorial - "We are Church Together, Part 1"**

**March 18 at St. Michael - "We are Church Together, Part 2"**

**March 25 at Luther Memorial - "We are Church for the Sake of the World"**

If you'd like to help provide food for one of the two Lenten Midweek meals that St. Michael will be providing, you will have the opportunity to sign up on the back of the "Welcome" form in the weekly bulletin.

### Worship Changes During Lent

As we move through the seasons of the church year, the readings, music and elements of our worship services change to reflect the mood and emphasis of the season. Lent is a season of reflection and repentance, so you will notice that the style of music in worship becomes a little more somber and some of the celebrative elements of worship will be omitted until Easter. While none of these changes is major, hopefully each one will help set the mood for worship and heighten our awareness of God's presence in our midst.

## Micah's Closet

Micah's Closet began its service in the fall of 2013. In its first season, clothes were distributed to 18 students at Price's Fork Elementary School and 10 students through the New River Valley Community Service. We are excited to report that Micah's Closet was able to expand its distribution to 49 students at Prices Fork, 27 students with the New River Valley Community Service and 11 pre-school students who participate in the Head Start Program! A 211% increase in students reached! Thank you to our donors, shoppers and partners who make this special mission happen.



**Micah's Closet will be collecting pajamas for boys and girls in the month of February in sizes 4T to 12.** Thank you for your contributions of sweat shirts and pants in December and January. Shopping for the spring will begin in mid to late March for April distribution.

## Seventh Day: Synod Youth Retreat for 5th and 6th Graders on May 7-8



Seventh Day is our overnight retreat for youth in 5th and 6th grades and their adult advisors. Between 200 and 300 youth and adults gather at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg, VA for games, crafts, songs, skits, making new friends, tons of fun, and lots of faith conversation. It runs from about noon on Saturday to early afternoon on Sunday. The registration deadline is February 15 and the cost is \$60. If you are interested in attending, talk to Lilly Goldsmith (lillyg1@vt.edu) and fill out the registration forms at: <http://www.vasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/registration-form-7D2015.pdf>.

## Upcoming Confirmation Retreats - Feb. 8 and March 6-7

On Sunday, February 8 from 3 p.m. until 5:30 p.m., there will be a confirmation retreat for all 6th, 7th and 8th graders. The group will be discussing "Talking about Faith". The next overnight Confirmation Lock-in will be March 6-7 beginning at 7 p.m. on Friday night and finishing at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. The group will be discussing the 10 Commandments.

## Deadline for the St. Michael Scholarship - April 19

Applications are invited for the St. Michael Scholarship, a \$600 award for individuals to pursue studies in post-secondary education. Members of Lutheran churches in Montgomery County are eligible to apply. The application is available on the church bulletin board.

**Annual Reports** are due to Keith Gay by Sunday, February 15. Thank you!