



# St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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## Turning Space into Ministry!

### **St. Michael's Mission Statement**

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.

In 2007, when we began discussing the possibility of building a classroom addition, one of the questions that arose was "How would we turn this new space into ministry?" At the time, we could only dream about what might be possible, but today the classroom addition is used at least 6 days a week to put our faith into action. On Sundays, the space is used for Sunday School and the church nursery. Having the nursery in the classroom addition allowed us to convert the old nursery into the Micah's Backpack room which allowed Micah's Backpack to expand to serve 270 hungry students per week. In addition, the food for Micah's Soup for Seniors is stored in the large classroom.

Because we built our new space to preschool specifications, we now offer a wonderful Mother's Morning Out for six to eight children per day for five days per week. Having this space also allowed us to join in the Early Head Start Partnership which now serves seven infants and toddlers. To qualify for Early Head Start, there are many different criteria that families must meet including income, student status, and/or hours worked. The process is long, but new families enter the process almost every week hoping to qualify. At full enrollment, we will serve 16 students from six weeks to 3 years old.

One of the goals of our Early Head Start partnership is to address root causes of poverty which is why I was so excited to hear that Jessie, the mother of one of the Early Head Start toddlers, had successfully completed her General Equivalency Degree (GED), considered an equivalent to a high school diploma. About a week later, she landed her first job. Jessie is already working toward achieving her next goals: obtaining her driver's license and starting cosmetology school. All of this is possible because her daughter has access to full-time childcare through the Early Head Start Partnership between Rainbow Riders, St. Michael and Total Action for Progress (TAP). Thank you for making a difference in her life by sharing your gifts through the ministry of St. Michael.

Pastor John Wertz, Jr.  
pastorjohn@stmlc.us

## 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 Betty Falta, Wanda Pascoe, Joyce Coupey, Linda Elliott, Margaret Larsen, and Mildred Wall for folding the January newsletter; to the altar flower/Heritage Hall team of Alice Schneider, Barbara Corbett, Judith Wolfe, and Sandy Birch; and to Betty Wingate and Pat Smith for delivering our donations to the Food Bank and the Women's Resource Center.

### Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in January supported our property insurance, pest control yearly contract, newsletter postage and permit, 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 11 families: 4 families with an electric bill, 4 families with a rent payment, two with car expenses and one with medical expenses.

### 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 2016. 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.

### 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 towards one of the following items or if you have any ideas for something that could be added to the wish list, please contact Pastor John.

Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) Machine and Cabinet - \$1700

Elements of the Circle of Grace

Paths and Walkways	\$2,000 - \$4,000
Bench	\$ 75

Thank you to Sandy and Jeff Birch for their donation to the walkway in memory of Fred Spengler and Betty Gross.

## Micah's Backpack January Report



January was a difficult time for our Micah's Backpack participants. School holidays and snow days meant weekdays without meals and a weekend without the 6 meals and snacks we share. Thankfully teachers and staff from Harding Avenue and Gilbert Linkous Elementary Schools delivered Micah's Backpacks to their kids. Often snow days don't mean sledding and hot chocolate for students from low-resource families. We're looking forward to better weather when we can share weekend meals consistently! Please message Jennie if you'd like more information on ways to help out: [jennie@micahsbackpack.org](mailto:jennie@micahsbackpack.org).

**During February, Micah's Backpack will collect granola bars.** We send home more than 540 snacks every weekend. Thank you for sharing 65 food items in January!

## 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 23: 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-ltg.com](mailto:dhkrallman@hubbell-ltg.com) or 552-1668 for additional information. **In February, we will collect cans of tuna.**



## Souper Bowl Sunday, February 7

The Annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, February 7. 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 vegetables, fruit cups, Easy Mac, Tomato soup, vegetable soup, chicken noodle soup and ravioli. The money and canned goods will help relieve hunger in our community. Thank You!



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2308 Merrimac Road  
Blacksburg, VA 24060**

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***February Servants***

	<b>February 7</b>	<b>February 14</b>	<b>February 21</b>	<b>February 28</b>
<b>Altar Care</b>	Hank and Alice Schneider			
<b>9 AM Service</b>				
<b>Greeters</b>	John Kell, Erik & Jan Helge Bohn	Clifton and Fay Walters	Joe Garst Elaine Powers	Wendy and Doug Goldsmith
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Keith Gay	Gary Worley	Peggy Morgan	Mac McCloud
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>	William Allen	Sandie Worley	Joe Garst	Jacob Dennis
<b>11 AM Service</b>				
<b>Acolyte</b>	Camden Brewer			
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>	Corson Wertz		Laura Gruss	
<b>Greeters</b>	Mike and David Christle	Betty Wingate Wanda Pascoe	Gary and Becky Steck	Randy and Sharon Robinson
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Lori Anne Kirk	Mickey McGuigan	Marty Gordon	Kris Wertz
<b>Ushers</b>	Dickie Shepherd Ray Howell	Wanda and James Pascoe	Gary Steck Philip Isenhour	Randy Robinson Ben Simmers
<b>Youth Servant</b>	Bryce Dowdy		Lily Gruss	
<b>6:30 PM Service</b>				
<b>Greeters</b>	No service	Berg family	Berg family	Saks family
<b>Lay Reader</b>		Mike Berg	Heather Pettus	Charlie Saks
<b>Comm. Asst.</b>		Michelle Berg	Katherine Berg	Martie Saks

Unloading for Micah's Backpack: 2/3: Dickie Shepherd and Ron Brewer

## Women of the ELCA



Easter  
Baskets

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.



*Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

**The Women of the ELCA will meet for dinner for Ladies' Night Out on Monday, February 15 at 6 p.m. at Amelia's in Cambria (Christiansburg).** Please join the sisters for fine food and fellowship. The cost for a delicious Italian buffet, including beverage and gratuity is only \$12. Rides are available; contact Alice Schneider at 552-6995 or [aa\\_schneid@yahoo.com](mailto:aa_schneid@yahoo.com).

**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)

There are many opportunities to dine together in February:

- Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 9;
- Lenten Suppers on Wednesdays, February 17 and 24;
- Ladies Night Out on Monday, February 15.

If you need a ride to any of these events, contact Sandy at [birch@vt.edu](mailto:birch@vt.edu) or 230-8823. The next Happy-Go-Lucky luncheon will be Tuesday, March 22 . . . a traditional Easter meal.



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

The February 15 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 February meeting will feature Mode Johnson from the Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad who will discuss what the rescue squad does for the community, and in turn, what community members can do to help the rescue squad. AARP provides free tax preparation starting February 1. See the hallway bulletin board or Sandy Birch for details.

### Prayers and Sympathy

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Betty Gross who passed away on Thursday, January 21, 2016. If you would like to contact Betty's children – Robbie, Linda or Lisa, please speak to Sandy Birch who can provide you with their contact information.

## Annual Meeting and Brunch, March 13 at 9:50 a.m.

On Sunday, March 13, 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 20. At the Annual Meeting, we will receive the 2015 Annual Report and the 2016 Phone Directory, and complete our 2016 Time and Talent Surveys.



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

At the January 17 congregational council meeting, the following officers were elected: Jim Clemens, President; Keith Gay, Vice-President/Secretary; John Krallman, Financial Officer.



## Living in Hope: Sunday Night Bible Study on February 28

Pastor John will be leading a Bible Study on "Living in Hope". The Bible Study will take place on Sunday, February 28 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 or Sunday mornings, 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.

**Annual Reports** are due to Keith Gay by Friday, February 12. Thank you!



## Shrove Tuesday – February 9.....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 9, at our annual Pancake Supper. Bring your friends and family for the celebration.

Ash Wednesday service will be February 10 at 7 p.m. with Wednesday Night Lenten Soup suppers and service beginning on February 17. Mark your calendars for an active and meaningful Season of Lent.

### Lenten Service Schedule

**Ash Wednesday Service - February 10 at 7 p.m.**

**Wednesday Night Lenten 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 Shiloh and New Mt. Zion, will gather for a time of fellowship and Holden Evening Prayer. Our midweek Lenten Sermon Series focuses “Lutheran Trump Cards”: key elements of the Lutheran approach to following Jesus. “Lutheran Trump Cards” is a book written by Pastor Dave Daubert, a graduate of Virginia Tech who attended St. Michael while a student in the 80’s.

This year we are taking a different approach to our Lenten meals. The good news is for the first meals, we’ll be enjoying delicious specialties prepared by Kevin Long and his staff at the Cellar and no one has to cook! The suggested contribution for the catered meals will be \$5 for adults and \$3 for children and we ask that you sign up each week on the “Welcome” form or by emailing Sandy Birch: [birch@vt.edu](mailto:birch@vt.edu) so we can make sure we have enough food. Plan to come and enjoy fine fellowship, food and worship.

<b>February 17</b>	Lasagna, salad, garlic bread
<b>February 24</b>	Meatballs with ziti, steamed fresh vegetables, garlic bread
<b>March 2</b>	Chicken parmesan with pasta, salad, garlic bread

### 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.

## Seventh Day: Synod Youth Retreat for 5th & 6th Graders on March 5-6



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 14 and the cost is \$50. If you are interested in attending, talk to

Alec and fill out the registration forms at:

<http://www.vasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/registration-form-7D2016.pdf>

## Upcoming Confirmation Retreats - March 3 and April 8-9

On Sunday, March 3 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 "Worship and the Seasons of the Church Year". The next overnight Confirmation Lock-in will be April 8-9 beginning at 7 p.m. on Friday night and will be done in conjunction with other Lutheran Churches in the area and Lutheran Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech. The group will be discussing New Testament stories and living out our faith.

## Deadline for the St. Michael Scholarship - April 17

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.

## Congratulations to...

**Burn Gross**, who celebrated his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday on Sunday, January 17.

**Don Linkous**, who has retired from Brown Insurance Agency after 39 years and a total of 44 years in the insurance business.

**Mary and Zach Nagle** who welcomed their new daughter, Zoe, on January 14. Proud grandparents are Becci and Jay Nagle.



**Megan Christle and Alexa Mayer** who celebrated their first communion on January 17.