



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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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.

Thank You for Your Generosity!

Thank you for your generous supports God's ministry at St. Michael! Because of your gifts and talents during the Advent and Christmas seasons, we shared God's love through seasonal projects like the Christmas Shoe Boxes, the Angel Tree gifts and gifts for families at Price's Fork Elementary School. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we celebrated the joy of Jesus' birth with over 330 people. Through the Micah's Caring Initiative Ministries, hundreds of people each month are being touched by the power of God's love. Your willingness to share your gifts makes it possible for St. Michael to be God's heart and hands and voices in our community!

Thank you for your generous Christmas gift to our family! Kris, Corson, Parker and I appreciate your kindness and your partnership in ministry. Thank You!

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers who give their time to provide leadership for our congregation! We are blessed with a dedicated Congregational Council which does an excellent job of guiding the life for the congregation. We are blessed with talented support staff, musicians and ministry leaders who lead us in ministry and worship. We are blessed with wonderful volunteers who share generously share their time and their talents in a host of ways. Together, we all make God's ministry at St. Michael effective and powerful. Thank you!

Pastor John Wertz, Jr.
pastorjohn@stmclc.us

Sharing Our Gifts: Time, Talents and Treasure

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what He has first given us--ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of His gracious love.

Thank you to some “quiet” servants

To all who served as Christmas Eve servants; to everyone who provided food for the Advent Suppers (and to Suzanne Gay for organizing us) and To Our House; to the Chrismon tree decorators; to Patrice Yearwood, Matthew James, Kris Wertz, and Jody Smiley for providing leadership and music for the youth Christmas program; to the men who volunteered for parking lot and cart duty at the Montgomery County Christmas Store and to everyone who contributed gifts for the moms and dads who shopped at the Store; to Wanda Pascoe, Joyce Coupey, Judith Wolfe, Margaret Larsen, Mildred Wall and Lynda Kinzey for folding the December newsletter; to Wanda Pascoe for folding all the Christmas Eve bulletins; to Butch Akers for providing the Christmas Eve luminaries; to Ron Brewer, Pastor John, Anna Rossomando, Gary Worley and Sandie Worley for repairing and updating the candles used for the Christmas Eve services; and to Judy Clemens, Anna Rossomando and John Kell for helping with food, set up and clean up for the Peery visitation.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in December provided support for the Thank You brunch, monthly devotional materials, Communion wine, music supplies, sanctuary roof replacement, decorations for Christmas Eve, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod and mission partners, 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 December, we provided assistance for **24 families**: 18 with electric bills, 1 with a water bill, 4 with rent and one with car insurance. 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.

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 Heritage Hall will continue in 2017. Our weekly bouquets are very appreciated by the residents.

2017 Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for 2017 are now available on the hallway shelf. Thank you for sharing your treasures. 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.

Report on the December Congregational Meeting

On December 11, the congregation enjoyed a bountiful brunch provided by the Stewards Team. This was a “THANK YOU” to the congregation for sharing its time, talents, and treasures during 2016. At the meeting, the congregation approved the Investments in Ministry Plan for 2017 and elected three members of the congregational council: Butch Akers, Matthew James, and Fran Shepherd.



Butch Akers



Matthew James



Fran Shepherd

Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5

The Annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, February 5. 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 Micah's 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!



Sunday Night Bible Study on January 15

Pastor John will be leading a Bible study on “Epiphany” (originally scheduled for November) in the large Sunday School classroom on Sunday evening, January 15, at 7:15 p.m.

Faith Toolbox: Faith Formation for All Ages Returns on January 15 at 9:50 AM

Directory Update: We will be updating the church directory in January. If your address, phone number or email has changed, or if you'd like a new picture for the directory, please notify Suzanne at suzanneg@stmhc.us, call the church office, or make a note on the Welcome to St. Michael form.



Lutheran Men in Mission

Thank you to the Lutheran Men in Mission who volunteered at the Montgomery County Christmas Store on Saturday, December 10.



The Lutheran Men in Mission will continue to help with Micah's Backpack by unloading the food car and moving the food into the storage bins on the second Wednesday of each month, December through May. The next date is **January 11**.

“From Heaven Above” – a Christmas Celebration

The youth Christmas program was a big hit on Sunday, December 18. The congregation gathered for a reception following the program. Thank you to all the narrators, greeters, angels, shepherds, and stable animals who participated in the program and practices,



Celebrating Christmas at St. Michael



Micah's Backpack Sharing the Story



December was a wonderful month at Micah's Backpack. We had a great time on the last two packing nights of the year. Santa was there to bring good cheer as we filled up on cookies and hot chocolate while packing over 300 bags each week. Several groups including the Blacksburg Junior Women's Club and three fraternities/sororities on campus brought the donations from their food drives to fill the shelves. Also, huge thanks this month to Pat and Joe Garst who have started a monthly run to Feeding America in Salem where we can buy lots of food at very inexpensive prices. And the Men in Mission have agreed to be there when Joe and Pat return to help unload the boxes and boxes of food. It takes lots of volunteers to make MBP such a success.

We are so grateful to Joe Ivers and Connie Cummings for again sponsoring a matching grant opportunity. Folks in the community responded generously and we raised well over the matching number of \$1000. Such generous giving continues to overwhelm our hearts!



This month, we 167 volunteers packed and delivered 970 bags for hungry kids in our community. Thank you!

For **January**, please feel free to bring cans or packets of tuna to fill the MBP shelves.

Thank you for your generous support of Micah's Backpack with your time, talent, and treasure. If you have any questions about Micah's Backpack, email Susan Verbrugge at susan@stmhc.us

Micah's Soup for Seniors



Micah's Soup for Seniors is providing approximately 90 bags of food each month to senior adults in our community to help alleviate hunger. Thanks to the 25 to 30 volunteers who help each month. Our January distribution will take place on Tuesday, **January 24**. Packing will begin at 5 p.m. and we will deliver the food around 6 p.m. at Warm Hearth.

In January, we will collect individual cups of applesauce.



Changing the World One Backpack at a Time provides the history of Blacksburg's weekend feeding program for kids from low-resource families that engages a community to action. Told in the first person with real life anecdotes and illustrations the book aims to educate and inspire.

Jennie Hodge and Nancy Franz, among the founders of Micah's Backpack, joined forces to write a guide book that provides encouragement and inspiring information for community organizers looking to begin a helping program or improve their current outreach.

About Jennie and Nancy

Jennie grew up a well-fed child although she listened to her dad recall eating mayonnaise sandwiches and sometimes going hungry. Those stories and others led her to advocate for children's food programs. In 2011, she transitioned from a volunteer to the director of Micah's Backpack. In 2012, she started Micah's Garden, a community garden co-op. She went on to create Micah's Mobile Backpack, which broadened the scope of the food program. She recently relocated with her family to Summerfield, North Carolina.

Nancy loves nurturing community, organizational, and leadership development. She worked for 33 years with the Cooperative Extension System as a faculty member and administrator in adult and youth development. She enjoys volunteering, outdoor pursuits, gardening, reading, and consuming dark chocolate. She lives with her husband in Ames, Iowa.

For more information about Changing the World One Backpack at a Time please visit https://www.amazon.com/Changing-World-One-Backpack-Time/dp/1537372181/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1480109670&sr=8-1&keywords=changing+the+world+one+backpack+at+a+time or contact Jennie Hodge at 540-953-2225 A portion of all proceeds will be invested in Micah's Caring Initiative.



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January Servants

	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
Altar Care	Sandy Birch/Alice Schneider				
9 AM Service					
Greeters	Sign Up Sheet will be posted.	Wilma Pieper Butch Akers	Neil and Jackie Muir	Wendy and Doug Goldsmith	Sandy Williams Butch Akers
Lay Reader		Betty Falta	Jacob Dennis	John Krallman	Peggy Morgan
Comm. Asst.		Judith Wolfe	Matthew James	Dianne Krallman	Sandie Worley
11 AM Service					
Acolyte			Camden Brewer		
Comm. Asst.			Shelia McCartan		
Greeters		Ferrell Family	Brewer/McCartan Family	J.D. and Andrea Robinson	Jeff and Sandy Birch
Lay Reader		Kris Wertz	Doug Smiley	Anna Rossomando	Marty Gordon
Ushers		Daniel Ferrell Phillip Isenhour	Ron Brewer Marty Gordon	J.D. and Andrea Robinson	Jeff and Sandy Birch
Youth Servant			Lily Gruss		
6:30 PM Service	No Service				
Greeters		Graves Family	Donna Oliver	Saks Family	Berg Family
Lay Reader		Guille Yearwood	Tacey Apisa	Charlie Saks	Mike Berg
Comm. Asst.		Guille Yearwood	Tacey Apisa	Martie Saks	Michelle Berg

Women of the ELCA

As has become our tradition over the last few years the ladies will have dinner at a local restaurant in the New Year and enjoy a night off from their home kitchens! We will meet for Ladies' Night Out at Olive Garden on Monday, January 16th at 6:00 p.m. Bring your daughter, mom, friend or neighbor and join the St. Michael ladies for some delicious food and fellowship. Please sign up on the bulletin inserts so they can set enough places for us. If you need a ride or would like to car pool, please call Alice Schneider 552-6995.



Thanks to those who put together family fun Christmas baskets for Price's Fork Elementary School families. St. Michael joins others in the community who also helped with this yearly project to give some arts, crafts, snacks, puzzles, games to entertain families in our community with few resources to provide these extras for their family. They are also meant to encourage spending time together during the holidays which is so helpful for parents and children.

Another update on the shoe box project – we readied 235 shoeboxes from our NRV area at the Party with a Purpose November 13th. Pastor John's father's church also made 66 this year. Thanks to Ron Brewer who loaded up all the boxes Dec 1 and joined Rex Hartson from Blacksburg Episcopal, for the trip to Dublin to deliver the boxes to Fontaine for shipping, which they again donated. Rex reported we had 2,100 pounds of boxes and backpacks from our combined groups! That's over a ton – and a record!! What a wonderful way to delight those Head Start children with a gift but most of all to show them there are people who are thinking of them and sending blessings to them out in the very cold and snowy northern Midwest. A big thank you to every person who helped with each part of this wonderful project.

Remember the Food Bank: for January please bring in breakfast cereals – any variety, either cooked or dry cereals, though all donations of packaged and canned foods are greatly appreciated.

Remember the Women's Resource Center: Cleaning supplies will be collected during January.

Care of Creation

The congregation is invited to share the following items in our hallway Recycling Center:

Personal-sized toiletries are shared with the Women's Resource Center, the Montgomery County Christmas Store and used in our Easter baskets.

Cell phones and printer ink cartridges go to ThinkCycle, a company which exchanges them for donations to the Justice and Mercy Fund.

Batteries are sent to the Town of Blacksburg which safely disposes them.

Eye glasses are shared with the Lions Club.

Soda can pop tops are sent to the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) in Roanoke which converts them into cash for RMH programs.