



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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Greetings Body of Christ,

A very prominent image for the Church in the New Testament is that of "the body of Christ." This is especially true for Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 where Paul emphasizes the unity of the Church: we are many parts of one body. This image brings out the multifaceted diversity that seems so relevant for the Church in its present context. The many parts of the body are all different from each other, yet all are necessary. The hand cannot say to the foot, I do not need you.

The theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminds us that the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ is not a goal to be attained but a fact to be recognized. We do not have to "strive to become the body of Christ," we are the Body of Christ. We are all part of one Body, whether we realize it or not. What happens to one of us affects the whole body whether we realize it or not. The mission of the Church according to this image is not to achieve unity but to act as the unified entity that we are. This image also implies that the Church embodies Christ's continuing presence in the world and so acts as Christ in the world. The Church serves and suffers for the world as Christ served and suffered for the world. In many ways, the mission of the Church as the Body of Christ is simply to continue doing what Jesus did.

For this reason, the Bible often describes the work of the Church as simply bearing fruit. In Matthew, this metaphor implies a natural activity, something that one does simply because of what one is. In the gospel of John, Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." This is an excellent statement of what it means to "be Church" and of what the mission of the Church is. To "be Church" is to abide in Christ and the mission of the Church is to bear the fruit that Christ produces in us.

I am in awe of the various ways I see the body of Christ growing and producing fruit in the midst of this pandemic. In what might seem to be bleak circumstances, the Holy Spirit is still faithfully calling, gathering, enlightening and sanctifying the body of Christ. We don't have to look far to see the church's mission to care for 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 being brought to fruition in the community of believers.

Already this year we have had new people joining the church's mission, new council members installed, finances for Micah's Caring Initiative strengthened, a mini pantry become a reality, and Vicar Bryan Katz being ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, becoming Pastor Bryan Katz. This all came about because the Holy Spirit is at work within you. It is God's very spirit dwelling within us that brings about the body of Christ. I can't begin to tell you how blessed we are at St. Michael to see evidence of the Holy Spirit at work within our midst. To be made privy to what God is birthing forth should cause us to stop what we are doing and take notice. This should stir our souls and bring us to worship our God, who is indeed faithful when we are not. I know there is a pandemic that is causing suffering in our world, but rest assure God is still alive, acting on our behalf in ways we don't want to miss.

Blessed to be part of the body, Pastor Michelle

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 Keith Gay for helping fold the January newsletter; to John Stramiello, John Krallman, John Kell, Mickey McGuigan, Doug Smiley, Gary Worley and Jeff Birch for clearing out the Micah’s Backpack room and moving the items to the new space in the fellowship hall; to Doug & Jody Smiley and Dianne & John Krallman for cleaning and painting the old space to make it into a beautiful office space; to Philip Isenhour for getting the computers, phone, printer, and door speaker hooked up in the new office space; to John Krallman for his work throughout the year as our Financial Officer; and to John Kell for churchyard clean up.

Because of your gifts



Core

Ministry
Fund

Your generous gifts in January supported *Living Lutheran* magazine renewals for members, the yearly pest control contract, the bulk mail permit and postage for monthly newsletters, annual property insurance and Micah’s Mobile bus insurance, heat pump maintenance, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry & our mission partner, 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: **3** with rent assistance and **8** with electric bill expenses.

Living Lutheran Magazine

All members of St. Michael are welcome to enjoy the monthly ELCA magazine *Living Lutheran*. If you are not already receiving it and would like to, please email Suzanne at suzanneg@stmlc.us. If you no longer care to receive the magazine, please let Suzanne know and she will remove your name.

Committee Reports Due

The annual committee reports for the 2020 Annual Report are due February 15 to Lorin Crowder, VP/Secretary (lorinhcrowder@gmail.com).

Micah's Backpack February Report



There are new and exciting things happening with Micah's Backpack coming in 2021. One of those things is our move out of the Micah's Backpack room. We have reconfigured the fellowship hall and set up Suzanne's office in the MBP room. This has allowed MBP to be mobile because our shelving is on wheels. This has also expanded our fellowship hall to allow for more seating. Thank you to Jeff Birch and the Men in Mission team, Doug and Jody Smiley, Mickey McGuigan, John Krallman, John Kell, Gary Worley and Philip Isenhour for making this all possible. Thank you to Pastor Michelle and the church council for being open to this vision.

I am humbled and pleased to announce the advisory board of Micah's Initiative has invited me to continue in the position of director of Micah's Backpack Program. It is with great humility and passion for this ministry that I have accepted. Thank you to everyone for your support and assistance in continuing to serve our student community.

A big thank you to Pastor Michelle's suggestion on a Micah's Mini-Pantry. Please stay tuned for more information concerning this new ministry.

Last, but definitely not least, we have a final tally on the Ivers/Cummings Challenge for 2020. Our community matched the first \$1,000, and then matched the second \$1,000 put up by Connie and Joe. But that wasn't good enough for the caring people in our community because the final amount collected was **\$6,300!**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this community driven ministry!

Micah's Soup for Seniors

We are continuing to pack and distribute 100+ bags to the seniors at Warm Hearth. We are still packing the bags at the church with 4 volunteers and then the staff at Warm Hearth picks up the bags about 4-5 days later and distributes them to the seniors. At this time, we are packing generic bags and not offering our normal "menu" option as in the past. This seems to be working well and the bags contain quite a few of the basic items- tuna/ peanut butter/ soup / spaghetti / cereal / fruit cups and crackers.



We are excited we have found a way to still help out the low-income seniors at Warm Hearth and look forward to continuing our program in this manner. We appreciate everyone's support as we feed those in need. We will be collecting small cans of **tuna** in February/March. You may drop off those donations at the church.

Thanks to your donations and grants from Thrivent, we were able to supply slipper socks, lotions and also fresh fruit in our January delivery.

MICAH'S garden

Happy New Year from the garden. Although the garden is quietly awaiting spring, there is still activity buzzing. We have a new addition thanks to Scout Troop 158 and soon to be Eagle Scout Fitz Cooper. We had beautiful strawberry plants donated a few years ago that have been in much need of a raised bed. Fitz (with a little family help) made 3 separate beds for the garden and we will soon fill them with strawberry plants! In addition to this, we received a grant from New River Master Gardeners for \$640! We will use the money to add fresh topsoil to the garden. This small garden continues to amaze me by producing over 1,000 pounds of fresh produce annually. A little hard work, soil, sun, rain and faith seem to equal full baskets. Anyone wanting to volunteer some time to do a little outdoor fellowship work, please contact St. Michael as I'm sure there is a place we can use your help. Let's take another trip around the sun together.



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. Instead of bringing \$\$ to place in the Soup Pot at church the congregation is asked to contribute by mail or online via the church website. Food for Micah's Backpack and Micah's Soup for Seniors can be dropped off at the church. Suggested items: 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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Drive-in Service

Join St. Michael, Shiloh, New Mount Zion, Luther Memorial and Christ Lutheran for drive-in services this winter at the St. Michael parking lot. Services will include communion. Join us on Sunday, **February 28th at 10 A.M.** for the next service. If you aren't able to print the bulletin from the website (lmlc.org), we will have a limited number available the morning of the service. You can listen to the service on channel FM 88.9 on the radio.

Women of the ELCA

WELCA Wednesdays: Lunch and Learn: Wednesday **February 17th** by zoom, of course! All women are invited to join our zoom group beginning with some time to catch up a bit with each other, followed by a Bible study titled “Journeys with Angels – Turnaround Angels”. We will examine some of the Biblical stories of angels who accompany, confront or even push people in new directions. We will look at readings in Genesis, Exodus, Luke, and Matthew. If you have any questions, contact Jody Smiley at - jdsmiley29@comcast.net.



A very happy, especially healthy, New Year to all. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Congregational Council Officers

On Sunday, January 10, St. Michael Council met and the newly elected members Lorin Crowder, Keith Gay and Mickey McGuigan were installed. Council members also include Butch Akers, Margaret Christle, Jim Clemens, Fran Shepherd, Doug Smiley and Becky Steck. Contact any Council member if you have questions or comments. We are here to help keep the church activities going.

The following officers were elected:

President - Fran Shepherd
Vice President/ Secretary – Lorin Crowder
Financial Officer – John Krallman.

Capital Improvement

Since paying off the church addition mortgage, it has been suggested that you might consider funding the capital improvement fund. So what does that mean? We have two projects that are being explored to present to the congregation. One project is renovating the kitchen and the other one is connecting to town sewage. Both of these projects are in early planning stages and will be brought to the congregation when research is completed and estimates available. Offerings given to the capital improvement fund will put us in a better position to fund these projects.



Thank You Notes

St. Michael Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for your generous donation of 7 Thanksgiving Food Baskets for 2020. Our students and their families appreciate your generosity. This year we were able to help out every family that needed assistance for Thanksgiving. This is all thanks to you!

Thank you, Price's Fork Elementary School

Dear Members of St. Michael,

What a wonderful contribution of much needed food we received today. With COVID preventing many of our food drives, your donation is especially needed. Your church does so much for others.

Sally Bohland, Co-founder 1982 Montgomery County Christmas Store

On a personal note, Sandy Birch helps my department so much. She has volunteered for years in various ways.

Choir News

The St. Michael Choir has begun to sing together again to bring you music during our drive-in services. Due to COVID-19, singing is not highly recommended but can be done in a precautionary way. Thus, we are singing with fewer people in quartets, wearing masks and staying 8-10 feet apart in the sanctuary as we rehearse and record. All of this is being done after extensive research by the choral and singing community locally and nationwide.

Listen for the quartets at monthly drive-in services. We are so happy to be 'praising' God together again!

Reed Yearwood and I are eager to continue to bring you guitar and vocal music recorded from home.

Thanks for listening. We can't wait to see you again in person.

Patrice Yearwood, Music Director



Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17, 2021

Welcome to the St. Michael Family



A native of Independence, VA, **Daniel Taylor** relocated to the New River Valley in the Spring of 2018 after taking the position of organist at St. Michael. In addition to being an organist, Daniel is the audio-visual technician for the Blacksburg-Radford ELCA fellowship. He also works with Special Education students for Montgomery County Public Schools. In his spare time, Daniel enjoys hiking and reading.

Jennifer Wayne and **Forrest Sloan** moved to Blacksburg in 2019 after almost 30 years in Richmond. Forrest is a technical sales manager for a Japanese chemical company located in Charlotte and works mostly from home. He enjoys guitar, working in the yard and repairing old stuff. Jennifer is a department chair in the college of engineering at Virginia Tech. She enjoys crossword puzzles, creative cooking and art projects. They have two grown daughters, Nancy and Stephanie.



COVID-19 Vaccinations

The New River Health District is operating in Vaccine Phase 1b.

On Thursday January 14, Governor Northam authorized the New River Health District to expand COVID-19 vaccines to people age 65 or over and people age 16-64 with qualifying health conditions.

To get the vaccine, you must pre-register, and then you will be contacted to make an appointment. Pre-registration is not the same as making an appointment. Do not go to a vaccination site without an appointment.

See further information on the back of the calendar insert.

Vaccine Pre-Registration

(Updated January 26, 2021)

To receive a vaccine, you must first pre-register.

Please note: Pre-registering DOES NOT GUARANTEE AN APPOINTMENT OR A VACCINATION. As vaccines are available, VDH will contact pre-registered individuals to schedule an appointment at a local health department, pharmacy or other healthcare provider.

1. Pre-register by providing contact information.
2. Wait to receive an appointment. This may take several weeks.
3. Arrive at appointment on time with appropriate documentation.

Who Should Pre-register?

We are vaccinating people in Phase 1b, which includes

- frontline essential workers,
- people age 75 and over,
- people age 65-74, and
- people age 16-64 with underlying medical conditions.

We will schedule each category in that order.

We are currently scheduling people age 65-74, with appointments filled through the beginning of March. People age 65-74 or 16-64 with underlying medical conditions should pre-register.

If you are in Phase 1a or age 75 and over but have not yet had a vaccine appointment scheduled, call [\(540\) 838-8222](tel:5408388222) and explain your situation. We will prioritize you.

Please do NOT sign up if you are not in Phase 1b. Other phases may use different systems and signing up if you are not in Phase 1b may delay your vaccination. For more information about Phase 1b and which Phase includes you, visit our [COVID-19 Vaccinations](#) page.

How to Pre-register

INDIVIDUALS IN PHASE 1b should register for an appointment. Choose one:

- [Online form](http://www.nrvroadtowellness.com) (preferred method) found at **www.nrvroadtowellness.com**
- Phone: [\(540\) 838-8222](tel:5408388222)

Family members, caregivers and others may register on behalf of other persons.

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February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Watch the Sunday Service using Link found on LMLC.org 6:00 PM Sunday School - Zoom with Pastor Michelle	1 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	2 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	3 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lesson 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	4 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 4:30 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study via Zoom	5 10:00 AM Delivering Micah's Backpack Gifts of Food	6
7 Souper Bowl of Caring Watch the Sunday Service using Link found on LMLC.org 12:15 PM Congregational Church Council Meeting 6:00 PM Sunday School - Zoom with Pastor Michelle	8 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	9 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	10 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lesson 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	11 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 4:30 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study via Zoom	12 10:00 AM Delivering Micah's Backpack Gifts of Food	13
14 Transfiguration of Our Lord Watch the Sunday Service using Link found on LMLC.org 6:00 PM Sunday School - Zoom with Pastor Michelle	15 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	16 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	17 Ash Wednesday 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 10:00 AM No Touch Imposition of Ashes Drive-Through 12:00 PM WELCA Lunch and Learn via Zoom 3:00 PM Music Lesson 5:00 PM No Touch Imposition of Ashes Drive-Through 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service via Zoom	18 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 4:30 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study via Zoom	19 10:00 AM Delivering Micah's Backpack Gifts of Food	20
21 First Sunday in Lent Sunday School Will Resume April 11 Watch the Sunday Service using Link found on LMLC.org	22 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	23 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	24 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lesson 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Choir Quartet Rehearsal and Record 7:00 PM Mid-Week Lenten Service via Zoom	25 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 4:30 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study via Zoom	26 10:00 AM Delivering Micah's Backpack Gifts of Food	27
28 Second Sunday in Lent Sunday School Will Resume April 11 Watch the Sunday Service using Link found on LMLC.org 10:00 AM Drive-In Service at St. Michael	1 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	2 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	3 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lesson 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Mid-Week Lenten Service via Zoom	4 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 4:30 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study via Zoom	5 10:00 AM Delivering Micah's Backpack Gifts of Food	6

Updated Calendar Information is available online at: www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org