



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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January 1, 2022

Happy New Year good people of St. Michael!

Let me begin by saying thank you. Thank you for the faithful, inspired, life-changing work you have given yourself over to in 2021. You have been sharing in God's radical kingdom of love for the world in Christ and for the sake of each other. You have tended to the work of the Holy Spirit in ways that are wholly unanticipated and deeply challenging.

As our world gets faster and faster, taking time to contemplate and reflect upon our lives is becoming increasingly vital. New Year's is a great time to consider how we are living our lives, what our prayer life is like, how much Scripture we have read, and how much time are we investing into our church community, our family and our friends, the places that bring up abundant life.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Eccles. 3:1) Growing up I can remember my grandfather reflecting on life as he sat at the kitchen table looking out the window where his beloved birds and squirrels would dance and play around the freshly laid birdseed. He loved being out in nature or watching it from the kitchen window during inclement weather. It was at these times he always seemed glad, joyous even, to be alone in his thoughts. I can remember him mumbling things to himself like, "Today is a day like no other, it has never been and it will never come again." Looking back I would tell you that he used that quiet time and space to reflect on his life: to ponder the years past and how he might live differently into the time he had left.

Indeed, the words of the Teacher in Ecclesiastes offer a wonderful way in which to measure all that has transpired, and all that we desire to be, and all that we yearn for the world to be in the coming year. It is only through the passage of time that we can measure birthing and dying, planting, and harvesting. The new year affords us an opportunity to consider what needs to be killed perhaps within us or in our daily habits or routines, and what or who or which relationships are in need of reconciliation. As we read through the Teacher's list, we come to realize that he has left out none of life's transitions. He takes into account the many tears we have shed in pain and the many tears we have shed in joy.

So, what does it mean to be born to new life or to die to harmful ways of being within our family, among our friends and our community, or with coworkers?

What might it mean to plant or to harvest in the ordinary tasks we live out, within our home or at work? And how might we be more discerning about which is most important?

continued on next page

What does it mean in a time of mourning to remember that there will one day be dancing again?

What does it mean that when we are laughing, others are grieving to the point they can't seem to remember the sound of such joy anymore?

How much could we benefit from remembering that there is, in fact, a time to simply keep silent and that there are times when our voice of bravery and hope, that is found in Christ Jesus, is urgently needed?

How do we as God's children understand when a time for war is appropriate and what does that mean really? And what does the peace of God's Kingdom look like in our world?

And as we reflect, what does it mean for us to place our faith in the knowledge that God holds it, and all of us, with compassion and tender mercy? In fact, it is our trust in God's unfathomable love that allows us to ponder and to wonder about these essential questions in the first place. Otherwise, we might not have the moxie to risk wondering at all.

I encourage us to stop and take the time necessary to reflect on how the words of the Teacher might inform our coming year? Indeed, we all have branches that are in need of pruning in order for good fruit to grow.

Blessed New Year,
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 all who helped with the Advent season and the Christmas Eve service; to the Chrismon tree decorators; to Keith Gay, Margaret Larsen, Wanda Pascoe, Betty Wingate and Judith Wolfe for helping fold the December newsletter; to Butch Akers for providing the Christmas Eve luminaries; to Judy and Jim Clemens for counting the weekly offering; to Jody Smiley for writing the *Weekly News and Notes* emails; to Mary Nickle for her dedication and hard work for Micah's Garden; to John Kell for removing and cleaning up the tree that fell in the church front yard; and to Wanda Pascoe for shopping for paper and cleaning supplies.

Because of your gifts

Your generous gifts in December provided support for Thanksgiving Meal supplies, renewals for devotional subscriptions, altar supplies, office supplies, stamps, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod and mission partners, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry and salaries for our facilities and ministerial staff and Supply Pastors.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. In December, we provided assistance to **13 families**: **seven** with electric bills, **four** with rent, **one** with heating oil bill assistance and **one** with a water bill. 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.

2022 Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for 2022 are available and can be picked from the hallway shelf at church. Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of St. Michael. 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.

Congregational Meeting

At the December congregational meeting Jada Brown, Jim Clemens and Forrest Sloan were elected for 2022 – 2024 Church Council terms. They join current Council members Butch Akers, Margaret Christle, Lorin Crowder, Keith Gay, Mickey McGuigan and Fran Shepherd. Feel free to contact any of these individuals whenever you have any questions or concerns. They are elected to serve you.

Also at the meeting, the congregation approved the 2022 Core Ministry Investment Plan. The plan includes a significant increase to the housing component of the Pastoral Support section. The Virginia Synod updated the compensation calculation for 2022 to include consideration of the median price of homes where a church is located.

Many thanks to retiring Council members Becky Steck and Doug Smiley. Becky Steck has served on Council for three years. She has often shared her perspective on agenda topics and has been instrumental in the project to put the church on Blacksburg Town sewage. Becky had no previous experience with this type of project but has kept the Council updated monthly and followed through with the town's requests ensuring all documents are signed. Becky will continue to update the Council monthly until the project is completed. We appreciate her continuing service. Doug Smiley has served on Council for six years. He served as Vice President/ Secretary for Council for 4 years. Doug has also kept the Council updated on financial matters and has worked closely with John Krallman, the financial officer, to have the monthly reports for the meetings and explain them to Council. Doug has also been instrumental in preparing and presenting the Investment in Ministry Plan. He has taken the lead on the worship committee and advised us on COVID-19 precautions ensuring all members' safety. For me (Fran) Doug, has been a sounding board and support throughout the transitions of ministers and then with the pandemic. We appreciate his dedication to St. Michael.

Committee and Ministry Annual Reports Due by January 31

Committee chairs and ministry leaders, it's that time again. Please provide your annual report to Keith Gay (keith.w.gay@gmail.com) by January 31. He'll compile the congregation's annual report for presentation at the annual meeting.

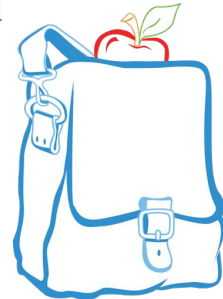
Directory Update: We will be updating the church directory in January. If your address, phone number or email has changed, or if you'd like a new picture for the directory, please notify Suzanne at suzanneg@stmlc.us or call the church office at 540-951-8951.

Congratulations to...

MaKayla Dowdy for making the Dean's list with a 4.0 GPA for her first semester at Emory & Henry College.

Micah's Backpack Sharing the Story

By the last week of the 2021 school year delivery MBP had packed 9,539 backpacks, 57,234 meals and 134,335 items of food. This was all done through more than 1,200 hours of volunteer work. We continue to work with Jersey Mike's Subs on the monthly Micah's Backpack Day. The total for 2021 is \$2,762. Connie Cummings and Joe Ivers pledged to match donations up to \$5,000 during 2021 and we are happy to report that the goal was met! Thank you!



We have been blessed with some new sponsors: Gillman Services, Inc., CharMarie Salon, Clay Corner Inn, Zaxby's, Blacksburg Boxing and Fitness, Next Door Bake Shop, Chicken Salad Chick and Bear Dance Market and Cafe. Please let them know our appreciation by patronizing their businesses.

Don't forget about our Amazon Wish List. You can find the link on Micah's Backpack website, Facebook and here: <https://a.co/iiMajxK> . Please feel free to share the link with friends and family.

Since we are supplying snacks to two school snack closets, we are still very much in need of snacks.

MBP would like to wish everyone a safe and Happy New Year!

For more information contact John J. Stramiello, 540-599-4682 or email hope@micahsbackpack.org _or stram@stmlc.us

Micah's Mini Pantry

Happy New Year from Micah's Mini Pantry! We thank you all for supporting this caring and giving ministry. As we begin a new year, let us remember the needs of others in our community. Your generous donations make our hearts happy. We are grateful to you!



As the colder months are ahead, please consider donations of non-perishable, non-expired foods such as peanut butter, jelly, canned pasta, boxes of cereal, cans of soup, canned beans, canned vegetables, snacks, hot chocolate, tea, popcorn, oatmeal, and other canned meats and proteins. There is continued need for personal care items: toothpaste, toothbrushes, floss, bar soaps, hair products, hygiene products like toilet paper, deodorant and feminine items, band-aids, sunscreen, anti-biotic creams, and even can openers.

Remember - **take what you need and leave what you can.** All donations are greatly appreciated! Please continue to donate at the in-person church services and on Mondays from 10 a.m. - noon. Thank you!

Peace, love, and many blessings for this New Year!

God's Work - Our Hands

Micah's Soup for Seniors



We are continuing to pack and distribute over 95 bags to the seniors at Warm Hearth. We are getting food from Feeding America, Food Lion and Kroger. We are back to our prior routine of packing the bags at the church with volunteers and then loading up the cars and delivering them to Warm Hearth. We are being asked at this time to leave the bags at the residents' doors. We are packing generic bags and are not following our normal menu options as in the past but this is working well. The bags contain quite a few of the basic items: tuna, peanut butter, soup, spaghetti, cereal, fruit cups and crackers along with any special items we may be able to get from Feeding America.

We will be packing and delivering the 4th Tuesday of each month. At this time, we are packing at 10 a.m. and then leaving immediately afterwards to deliver. Our schedule for the next two months will be **January 25th** and **February 22nd**. We are excited to be back delivering to the seniors at Warm Hearth and look forward to continuing our program in this manner. We will be collecting **tuna** in **January**. Thanks for all you do to help out Micah's Soup for Seniors.

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January Servants

	January 2	January 9	January 16	January 23	January 30
Altar Care	Doug Smiley and Sandy Birch				
10 AM Service					
Greeters/Ushers	Anna Rossomando Wilma Pieper	Sandie Worley Gary Worley	Jeff Birch Sandy Birch	Dickie Shepherd Fran Shepherd	Mark Pasier Jeanette Pasier
Lay Reader	Keith Gay	Jane Swing	Bert Kinzey	Jody Smiley	Sandy Birch

Please Note: Greeters/Ushers: please take the attendance, write down the number and place in the offering plate. Paper and pen are in the bookshelf drawer.

Women of the ELCA



WELCA Wednesday: Lunch and Learn: Lunch and Learn for January will be held on **Wednesday January 19th at noon.** All St. Michael ladies are invited. For now, our plan is to meet at church for fellowship, a light lunch and Bible study. We will socially distance and wear our masks when not eating. A zoom link will be provided for those who cannot attend in person. If our plans change, they will be noted in the *Weekly News and Notes* email. Our Bible study for the next few months will explore “The kingdom of God: What does it mean for God to be in charge?” In January, our study is titled “Beautiful feet: Announcing the reign of God” – The prophet Isaiah said, “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of one who announces, “Your God reigns!” No one has ever fit the description better than Jesus, who talked more about the reign of God than he did about anything else. We will ask, what would it mean for God to be in charge of our lives? And why would that be good news? If you have any questions and/or need the zoom link please contact Jody Smiley, jdsmiley29@comcast.net or Alice Schneider, aa_schneid@yahoo.com .

Thank you to all those who helped with the Empty Stocking program at Price’s Fork Elementary School in December. We filled 13 stockings. The program, with the help of other churches and individuals, filled over 120 stockings which helped over 70 families have a little merrier Christmas.

Winter Celebration 2022 Registration Open! **January 21-23, 2022**

Winter Celebration is our annual weekend faith-formation retreat for youth in 9th through 12th grades and adult leaders. This year we are gathering in-person (at Eagle Eyrie Retreat Center in Lynchburg) once again for Large Group experiences with lots of singing and skits and fun and Small Group experiences with lots of new friends, games, conversation, more games and faith sharing. There is also the option of attending the event via Zoom for those who are concerned about COVID safety or have other mobility limitations. The cost is \$35.

Online registration: <https://files.constantcontact.com/d1d6ff34801/d9b64160-3ce0-40fa-9369-19534c26bd2a.pdf>

If you prefer to register using a paper form instead of online, please contact Rev. Dave Delaney at delaney@vasynod.org or contact the Virginia Synod Office at 540-389-1000. Starting Jan. 14, 2022, also please call Rev. Dave Delaney to receive instructions before registering: 540-529-6893.

Thank You Note ...

Dear St. Michael Friends,

Thank you so much for all the support you have shown our family through cards, flowers, food and prayers. Your love and comfort have been a blessing to us.

The family of John Travis Krallman

Souper Bowl Sunday, February 13

The Annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, February 13. St. Michael will join thousands of churches across the country by raising money to help fight hunger. Please consider bringing a dollar to put in our “soup pot” to purchase food or bring a can or two of 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!



New River Health District-Montgomery County Office

As an agency, and as individuals, the New River Health District values hospitality, responsiveness, accountability, compassion, integrity, and cutting-edge expertise. The NRHD is committed to protecting all citizens in the New River Valley at all times, preventing disease, and promoting health and wellness.

If you believe you should be tested for COVID-19, are unsure if you should be tested, or have questions about the process, contact the New River Health District's COVID-19 public health call center at 540-267-8240. The NRHD will advise you on next steps. If testing is necessary, they offer free testing (call first to get current hours) or can advise you on other testing sites in the New River Valley.

Have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine? The NRHD has established a vaccine hotline. Call 540-838-8222 (VACC).

Website: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/new-river/>

**Be grateful for the
things and people you have
in your life. Things you take
for granted someone else
is praying for.**

-Marlan Rico Lee



December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10:00 AM Lessons and Carols Worship Service at St. Michael 10:00 AM Watch Virginia Synod Online Worship Service at peacehopeva.org	27 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	28 10:00 AM Packing and Delivering for Soup for Seniors	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day
2 10:00 AM Worship Service with Communion	3 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	4 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	5 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack	6 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Scout Troop Meeting	7	8
9 10:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 11:15 AM Congregational Church Council Meeting 4:00 PM Families of Faith	10 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	11 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons	12 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Choir Practice	13 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 12:00 PM Gathering of the Ministerium at St. Michael 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Scout Troop Meeting	14	15
16 9:00 AM Sunday School for Adults and Children 10:00 AM Installation of Church Council Members 10:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 11:00 AM Safety and Security Committee Meeting	17 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	18 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons 5:00 PM Winter Recital for Patrice's Classes in Sanctuary 6:00 PM Recital Reception in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Price Family Historical Society	19 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 12:00 PM WELCA Lunch and Learn 3:00 PM Music Lessons 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Choir Practice	20 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Scout Troop Meeting	21	22
23 9:00 AM Sunday School for Adults and Children 10:00 AM Worship Service with Communion	24 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	25 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 10:00 AM Packing and Delivering for Soup for Seniors 3:00 PM Music Lessons	26 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Choir Practice	27 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Scout Troop Meeting	28	29
30 9:00 AM Sunday School for Adults and Children 10:00 AM Worship Service with Communion	31 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out	1 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons 5:30 PM Quilting Party in the Fellowship Hall	2 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 3:00 PM Music Lessons 6:00 PM Packing for Micah's Backpack 7:00 PM Choir Practice	3 8:45 AM Mother's Morning Out 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Scout Troop Meeting	4	5