



St. Michael Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church

2308 Merrimac Road

Blacksburg, VA 24060

540.951.8951

hope@stmlc.us

www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

Volume 46, Number 7

July 1, 2022

Welcome to the Summer Solstice

As we settle into the long hot days of summer, as people embark upon summer travel, and the church settles into the summer Sunday doldrums, I find myself obsessing with the question of where God is leading us in regard to COVID, inflation and loss of members. All this can feel overwhelming and personal at times when I reflect on the advent of my arrival. I love the church and its people, but more than that, I Love God and I long to see God's glory revealed through the church: the kind of glorious display that would make us fall on our knees in praise and worship; the kind of glory that is undeniably God; the kind that would awake me, awake us, from summers hypnotic heat and fill us to the point that the church would be bursting at the seams.

Where is God leading us in the still quiet of summer? In all my questioning I have become keenly aware of the reality that God is the Creator, I am not. God is great, we are not. I wonder if this reality chafes us or relieves us? How we answer that question will determine who we are as a community. In our social media-crazed culture everyone is a star. There is a sense of overly exaggerated self importance looming in our society and a sense of smallness has become unacceptable. The entire Internet sends out daily reminders that we are not successful unless everyone knows us and is talking about us over dinner. The church has always wrestled with desiring greatness, hence why there are a staggering number of 200 plus denominations in the US, but few generations have faced the draw of aggrandizement as this one.

It's impossible to continually behold and be dazzled by our own achievements and power while attributing all greatness and glory to God. The two cannot coexist in the same heart. We either become motivated by our sense of self-promotion or we are shaped by our understanding of God's preeminence. Even King David recognized his smallness, not of value, but of power compared to God's power.

O LORD, what are humans that you regard them, or mortals that you think of them? They are like a breath; their days are like a passing shadow.

Psalm 144:3-4

Our relative smallness is not a declaration of worth or value, nor does it determine God's attentiveness to our needs as the church. In the very next Psalm David writes about the responsiveness of God to his people.

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.

Psalm 145:18-19

Smallness is the posture of the heart. Rather than stressing out to stake our claim or secure our place of greatness, we can be confident in the knowledge that God's glory is already there. The church's position of humility in the shadow of God's great power is one that offers us relief and freedom because God is near, fulfilling, hearing, and saving God's beloved church. In order for the church to behold God's glory we need to better understand God's greatness in and through our smallness. In weakness God is strong.

My hope is in God,
Pastor Michelle

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 Margaret Larsen, Lynda Kinzey, Wanda Pascoe, Betty Wingate and Judith Wolfe for folding the June newsletter; to everyone who helped with VBS; to Jay and Becci Nagle for offering support over the years through their business by donating things like plaques and signs to our church; to John Kell for working in the church yard and for removing a tree limb that had fallen; to Keith Gay for trimming the front bushes; to Butch Akers for scheduling the Sunday Servants each month.

Because of your gifts

Core
Ministry
Fund



Your continued generous gifts support the purchase of first communion supplies, Vacation Bible School supplies, communion bread ingredients, an annual music license, special light bulbs, door stops, a new lawnmower and gasoline for mowers, heat pump repair, paper goods for fellowship, dinner for Families of Faith, our benevolence to the Virginia Synod, donations to MCEAP, Lutheran Campus Ministry, support for the Peace and Hope Ministry and salaries for our ministry staff.

The **Justice and Mercy Fund** continues to assist our neighbors in the community and the world. Funds can be used to help with rent assistance or to help pay water and electric bills. In June, we provided assistance for **19** families: **two** with water bills, **four** with rent assistance and **thirteen** with electric bills. We encourage the congregation to continue their contributions to the fund and to refer friends and family to use the fund as you see need.

Coffee and cookies (and lemonade) are back



We'll gather together for some fellowship time after the worship service on Sunday, July 10 and Sunday, July 24. If you would like to provide a plate of cookies or brownies, please contact Sandy Birch.

Communion Can Be Taken at Altar Rail

Communion taken at altar rail has resumed. All communion assistants will use alcohol sanitizers before serving. The individual wafer and wine cups will continue to be available for those who would prefer to commune from their pew. Contact Doug Smiley (smileydc@vt.edu or 540-357-5364) if you have questions.

Micah's Caring Initiative



Micah's Garden is in full swing! A big thank you to the volunteers who have braved some cool spring days getting the garden planted. The beans, peas, squash, peppers, cukes, and potatoes are up and thriving.

Our first crop of strawberries in the raised bed (thanks to Troop 158) was amazing, and just look at the blueberries! Micah's Garden has fertile soil indeed. Gardening is good for the spirit within.

Celebrating the Fourth of July and all of the recent donations from you! Thank you for your thoughtful kindness and generosity. We are grateful!

As the summer pushes on, we foresee the need for more food and personal care items. Any donations make our hearts happy. ☺

Warmer weather has arrived but serving healthy meals is still necessary. The need for snacks and simple meal additions is nice when the days are full of activity. Please consider contributing donations including 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 continues to be a need for personal care items. They include: toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss, bar soaps, hair products, hygiene products like toilet paper, deodorant and feminine items, band-aids, sunscreen, antibiotic 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 10am - noon. Thank you! Peace, love, and many blessings

God's Work - Our Hands





We have begun our Micah's Mobile Backpack Summer Program for 2022. The first week we delivered 128 bags of food and some fresh peas from Micah's Garden.

The numbers are in for the REMAX 8/Keller Williams Realty Food Drive Challenge for the month of May. Due to the efforts of these caring people Micah's was the recipient of 13,252 items of food, 7,000 of which were snacks. This is just one of many reasons why we at Micah's love our community!

On July 17, Enzo Anthony from the VT football team will be hosting a golf tournament to benefit Micah's Backpack Program. Please visit Micah's Facebook and Website (www.micahsbackpack.org) for more information along with forms to sign up for the tournament. I am seeking up to 8 volunteers to greet the golfers during the tournament. If you are interested, please email, text or call me.

MBP has been gifted with magnetic signs for the Micah's Caring Initiative van. Thank you, Butch Akers, for bringing my vision to life, and thank you Jay and Becci Nagle for making it a reality!

Please stay tuned for more exciting events for Micah's Backpack Program and Micah's Caring Initiative. For more information contact John J. Stramiello, 540-599-4682, email: hope@micahsbackpack.org or stram@stmlc.us



We are continuing to pack and distribute 90 bags to the seniors at Warm Hearth. We have made changes to the menu by adding smaller canned items and we have received excellent response to the changes. We are also adding some personal care items to the bags. It has been several years since the menu has changed and we are excited about those changes. We are adding more items that are single serve portions, such as small cans of vegetables, small microwavable rice and potatoes, beanie weenies, small boxes of cereal and small cans of beef stew. Since most of our seniors live alone, receiving single serve portions will help eliminate waste when preparing meals. Also, every other month, we will add some personal care items. This change and our decision to change the menu came about after some conversations with the Seniors on what items they needed. We will be asking for donations from the congregation on those personal care items and will use Thrivent Grants to make up the difference.

We are excited about the changes and look forward to our continued support of Micah's Soup for Seniors program at Warm Hearth. We invite anyone interested in packing and distributing the bags to join us the 4th Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m.

Next packing dates: July 26th - August 23rd - September 27th

Personal items to donate: August – brushes and combs; October - tissues (small) and hand lotions; December - slipper socks

Food items to donate: Chicken noodle soup / Tomato soup / Tuna

**St. Michael Lutheran Church
2308 Merrimac Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060**

<p>Non Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Blacksburg, VA 24060 Permit No. 78</p>
--

July Sunday Servants

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24	July 31
Altar Care	Sandy Birch	Dianne Krallman	Doug Smiley	Jane Swing	Jody Smiley
10:00 AM					
Greeters/Ushers	Gary Steck Becky Steck	Gary Worley Sandie Worley	Dave Surface Wilma Pieper	Forrest Sloan Jennifer Wayne	Jenny Kellinger Dianne Krallman
Lay Reader	John Stramiello	Forrest Sloan	Jane Swing	Mickey McGuigan	Jim Grealish
Communion Assistant	Butch Akers	Sandy Birch	Doug Smiley	Dianne Krallman	Butch Akers
Acolyte	Tatiana Villegas-Brown	Lilia Villegas-Brown	Tatiana Villegas-Brown	Ada Peery	Lilia Villegas-Brown

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.

Mowing Schedule

Front and back:
7/11 Jay Nagle
7/25 Dickie Shepherd

Masks Optional for Worship

For those who are not able to attend our worship service in person, please check the online option to participate in a service each week. Go to www.peacehopeva.org at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. each Sunday. Pastor Bryan Katz is organizing this new ministry.



Women of the ELCA



The Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO): The VSWO convention will be held on August 12th-13th, 2022 at the Hotel 24 South (previously the Stonewall Jackson) in Staunton. The theme is “Shining God’s Light in the Darkness”, and the related scripture verse is John 1:5, “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it”. There will be worship,

convention business, and three amazing awareness sessions. On Friday evening part of the entertainment will be a talent show! You may recognize one of the MCs. The VSWO will be celebrating coming together in person for the first time in over two years. This is a great venue, and the town of Staunton is a wonderful place to explore. Please plan to come and join in the fun and fellowship. **There are funds available from St. Michael and the VSWO to help with the costs to attend.** If you are interested in attending or have any questions please contact Jody Smiley, jdsmiley29@comcast.net or visit vswow.org.

St. Michael exceeds the VSWO In-Kind Donation Challenge!

The in-kind donation for this year’s VSWO convention was to donate socks to assist folks in our local communities. They challenged each congregational unit to donate 200 pairs of socks. Through our Micah’s Closet spring initiative, we purchased and donated 590 pairs of socks to children at Price’s Fork Elementary School. As always thank you for your generosity.



44 years ago . . .

Jeff and I walked into St. Michael Lutheran Church for the first time with two young sons in tow. As many folks do when new in a place, we had “tried out” several churches in town, but in the days before websites and Facebook we hadn’t heard about or driven by this church “out in the country”. When we finally found the church on Merrimac Road one Sunday morning, we were greeted by Clarabelle Harmon who made us feel like we’d been attending St. Michael since its beginning just 10 years before. We immediately felt like family and St. Michael was home. We’ve never forgotten that first impression or Clarabelle’s grey felt hat (of course, she always wore a hat). Since that Sunday in 1978, Brad and Brian completed confirmation and participated in wonderful youth activities with their leader Fran. We enjoyed delicious meals and coffee hours prepared by Thelma and Betty, mourned the passing of wonderful members and mentors, celebrated the births, baptisms and weddings of our St. Michael children and grandchildren, and participated in the work of the church both inside the building and beyond in the community and world. There is so much joy and love in this home, St. Michael Lutheran Church. And to think it all started with a dear lady named Clarabelle in her grey felt hat. We all need to challenge ourselves to be “Clarabelles” although the hat is optional.

-Sandy Birch

Youth News



LAUNCH at Roanoke College July 10-14, 2022

LAUNCH is an event for youth who have just graduated from high school. Its purpose is to give you a chance to take stock of where your faith life has led you so far and also to provide an opportunity to engage in discussion on matters of faith and life that are likely to face you as you move on the next stage in

your life.

Theology 4 Teens at Roanoke College July 24-29, 2022, Registration now open.

This is for rising 10th-12th graders and is being held at Roanoke College. You can ask the big questions, live on campus for the week and learn with professors and students.





The Serving Boldly Award

Virginia Synod, ELCA

*That Others May Follow
Christ's Light*

The Virginia Synod selected our very own Doug Smiley as this year's winner of the Serving Boldly Award for the Appalachia Partnership (New River and Highlands). The award is given to lay leaders who embody and demonstrate a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ in their congregation and/or community. Doug does just that by sharing his time and talents freely, both in our congregation and community. He chairs our Worship Committee and is active in the choir. He co-led the congregation through the disruptive transitions caused by the pandemic, and played a key role on the Blacksburg-Radford leadership team. He's also one of two people who pick up food for both of our Micah's Caring Initiative feeding ministries. Congratulations, Doug!

Thank You Notes

To all you wonderful people at St. Michael!

I am writing on behalf of the Blacksburg Breakfast Lion's Club. We wish to thank you for your generous contribution of glasses. We will take them to Roanoke, clean them, analyze the prescription on each, organize and categorize them. Then they are shipped to various poor clinics in South America and will be distributed to someone who literally could not see before. I love the idea that nothing is wasted. All that you give is put to great use. Thank you for being such a generous part of our mission. God bless you all.

Sincerely, Therese B. Lundburg

and

Thank you very much for your donation to MCEAP. Your generous gift makes it possible for MCEAP to serve the needs of the people of Montgomery County, while creating a community of caring and sharing.

Sincerely, Vicki Kitts

**St. Michael supports MCEAP with a monthly donation of \$133.*

July 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10:00am Worship Service with Communion	27 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 7:00pm Cub Scout Meeting	28 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 10:00am Packing and Delivering for Soup for Seniors 10:00am Patrice's Music Lessons 6:30pm "Growing Young" Book Study	29 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 6:00pm Packing for Micah's Backpack	30 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	1 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack	2
3 10:00am Worship Service with Communion 11:00am Safety and Security Committee Meeting	4 Independence Day	5 10:00am Patrice's Music Lessons 5:30pm Quilting Party in the Fellowship Hall	6	7 7:30am Men's Bible Study and Breakfast at St. Michael 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	8	9
10 10:00am Worship Service with Communion 11:00am Coffee Hour Fellowship 11:15am Church Council Meeting	11 8:45am Mother's Morning Out	12 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 10:00am Patrice's Music Lessons	13 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 6:00pm Packing for Micah's Backpack	14 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	15 Synod Gathering 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack	16 Synod Gathering
17 10:00am Worship Service with Communion 4:00pm Families of Faith	18 8:45am Mother's Morning Out	19 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 7:00pm Price Family Historical Society	20 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 6:00pm Packing for Micah's Backpack	21 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	22 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack	23
24 10:00am Worship Service with Communion 11:00am Coffee Hour Fellowship	25 8:45am Mother's Morning Out	26 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 10:00am Packing and Delivering for Soup for Seniors	27 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 6:00pm Packing for Micah's Backpack	28 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	29 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack	30 Micah's Backpack Fundraising Event at Jersey Mike's in Blacksburg
31 10:00am Worship Service with Communion 4:30pm Fellowship Event - Hymn Sing and Picnic at Shiloh Lutheran Church	1 8:45am Mother's Morning Out	2 8:45am Mother's Morning Out	3 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 6:00pm Packing for Micah's Backpack	4 7:30am Men's Bible Study and Breakfast at St. Michael 8:45am Mother's Morning Out 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack 7:00pm Scout Troop Meeting	5 9:30am Delivering Micah's Backpack	6