THE MIGHTY MESSENGER

September 2017 Volume 57, No. 9

"Our Five Year Plan, After Two Years In"

How does your garden grow? If you've got one, now is the time that you're gratefully harvesting lots of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, corn, and giant zucchini (gad zukes!). But, as you know, it's been a rather dry summer so unless you've been out there watering through the droughts your harvest is probably pretty meager at best. So if you're successfully picking the fruits of your spring time labor, it's because you nurtured your plants along throughout the dry months of the summer. Back in June, in a letter to donors, you may have seen this as a metaphor for our ministry here at St. Michael as an appeal to you to contribute faithfully during the summer so that we would have what we need in the fall. Many of you rose to this occasion so that our financial picture as we enter into September is looking fairly positive. With faith in our Lord's gracious provision, we're anticipating finishing our fiscal year at the end of October in the black. But as we are now preparing a budget for the new fiscal year that will begin November 1, we are working hard to create a balanced budget that is informed by the previous year's giving, but is also sufficient for the new year's ministry challenges we envisioned in the five year plan that we established back in 2015. That plan was laid out in four areas to address.

Staffing

There are a couple of significant staffing changes that we are anticipating going into 2018 in keeping with our long-range plan. The biggest change will be the retirement of Jan Jett. When Jan began working for the congregation full-time as our Director of Ministry Operations (DMO) in August of 2008, by her own gracious offer to us, her compensation was hardly equal to part-time wages. So finding a sufficient replacement for her is going to cost at least twice as much as it currently does. Anticipating the transition, we have also been evaluating the DMO job description and have determined that it was unrealistic to have included the volunteer ministry coordinator responsibilities in with the financial and business management responsibilities of the position. While Jan did as fine a job as anyone could have with what we asked of her, going forward we feel it would be wise to pare the position down to simply a "Business and Finance Manager" without the additional responsibility of the oversight of volunteerism.

We also learned something about putting too much in a job description when we called Andi Lynch a little over two years ago. Having discovered over the years that it was unrealistic to include adult education into a position that also includes children and youth ministry, we deliberately called Andi as "Director of Children and Youth Ministry" without responsibility for adult discipleship. But that left a significant vacancy that added responsibility to the Senior Pastor. So last spring the Voters Assembly approved a change in responsibility of our Assistant Pastor, Jason Toman. Lamplight responsibilities were given to the Senior Pastor while Jason took on oversight of Sunday morning adult Bible studies, and our CELLS group ministry (now called Small Group Ministry). As an engineer for Stryker, Pastor Toman continues as a "worker-priest" devoting just about twelve hours a week to the ministry here. But in the budgeting process we are working toward additional hours for him (eventually as many as twenty a week), while considering the possibility of giving him such responsibilities as new member integration and volunteerism.

Construction

The most obvious project in our five year plan has been the addition of an infant/toddler/waddler program to Christ for Kids Childcare Center, and all of the remodeling of our historic wing to accommodate this. As parents in the community are now "bringing babies to Jesus" (Luke 18:15) in what was the church office and Room 212, we have thoroughly renovated the Christ for Kids preschool area. We have also created a new church office complex on the west end of the building, including a new conference room that reflects the look of the old chancel that our congregation built for worship in 1963. In addition to this renovation within the existing footprint, we added considerable square footage to the east of the Communication's Center between it and the gym. This "Connector Building," as it has come to be called, includes a new music room for both church and

school (that also serves as a nice adult Bible study room on Sunday morning), a prayer room, a meeting room (that will accommodate our quilters), and two locker rooms. Then finally, we've capped it all off with a new steel roof that's receiving its finishing touches at this moment. We're hoping to dedicate all these new facilities to the glory of God on September 24 after the early service and just before the Learning Hour (about 9:30 am).

Culture

Every organization, including churches, has a kind of intangible quality and character about it that has come to be called it's organizational or corporate culture. It is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs which influences how people think and act, and how they tend to treat one another. We have not begun to work on this aspect of our long range plan very much but preliminary discussions have largely centered around trying to understand what our current culture is. We will surely find that we have one, and we may be a bit surprised by what it is because when you're so close to it (or responsible for it) you don't always see it. We can be very proud of some aspects of our culture and will be determined never to change. But if we are honest about our assessments, we may find some aspects of our culture that will concern us deeply to the point where we will want to do what we can to change the culture for the better. In doing this we reflect what Scripture calls us to do and more effectively represent the Church of Jesus Christ to a world that so desperately needs Him. As we further our work on discovering and defining our culture, you will have an opportunity to complete a survey or be interviewed in a focus group. We will be seeking your help in order to get a handle on our culture and work toward whatever improvements we need to make.

Governance

Improving our administrative structure may be the most daunting project in our five year plan, even more so than the construction that we've been engaged in of late. We will be up against strong tradition as we have had the same basic form of church governance here at St. Michael for many decades. Our way of doing things is deeply ingrained in all of us. But many churches and Christian organizations have come to see that there are serious problems inherent in the current system and have opted to change for the better. Our current administrative structure involves staffing, supporting, and coordinating nine administrative boards that are all separately funded and have the authority to act autonomously from one another in what has come to be derogatorily termed, "silos." They each are supposed to have a director and assistant director elected by the congregation, and in the case of the Board of Lay Ministry, about a dozen men all elected by the congregation. We also elect a president, vice president, and treasurer, for a grand total of about 40 elected officers, and a lot of potential turn over every two to four years. The reality is that a number of these positions are currently vacant because people say, "I'm willing to help but don't want to be in charge." We're finding that most people nowadays would much rather be actively engaged in a short-term hands-on ministry project rather than sit on an administrative board that has monthly evening meetings and has to concern itself with agendas, minutes, reports, old business, new business, and budgets. As with culture, not much has been done yet beyond beginning to identify the problems with the status quo. But as time goes on, we will be exploring new models of governance, including those that involve a single board. Whatever is proposed will put a high premium on accountability, and will continue to provide many volunteer ministry opportunities in every aspect of the work the Lord has given us.

It would be understandable if this and other possible changes raise a host of questions, and some fears. Rest assured that good communication and group process will always be a very high value for your paid staff and volunteer leaders. We welcome your input and ideas, and certainly your prayers. We join you in thanking and praising God for all that He has accomplished in the first two years of our current long-range plan, and we look forward with faith and excitement to the good gifts that by His grace He will give us going forward.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Paul Naumann
Senior Pastor

Mr. Rob Kuhlman
President

School Days Begin

Monday, August 28 marked the start of the 2017-2018 school year for St. Michael Lutheran School. Teachers and staff attended trainings and professional development sessions the week prior, as well as prepared their classrooms to receive our new students. It is a very busy and exciting time as we look forward to another year of Christ-centered education. The preschool program begins classes on Tuesday, September 5, and Christ for Kids Childcare Center has been going strong with healthy enrollment all summer long.

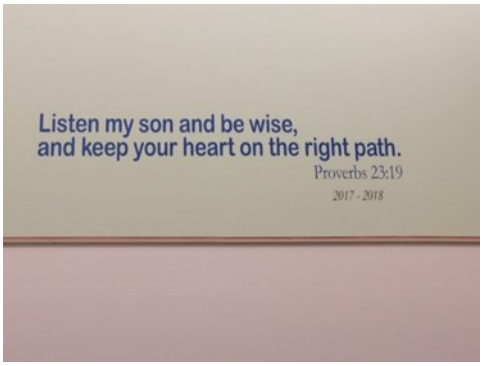
As has been tradition for the last 12 years, the staff selected a Bible verse that will be the theme verse for the school year. This verse adorns not only the main school hallway (as seen below) along with all the other verses from past school years, but it is also displayed in every classroom as well. It typically becomes the first memory verse of the school year for our students who will be coming home to practice and recite it to parents.

Not counting the many new kindergarten students we will be receiving, we also have seven new students joining our 1-8 program for the new school year. We are excited to welcome these new families and look forward to serving them not only this year, but for many years to come.

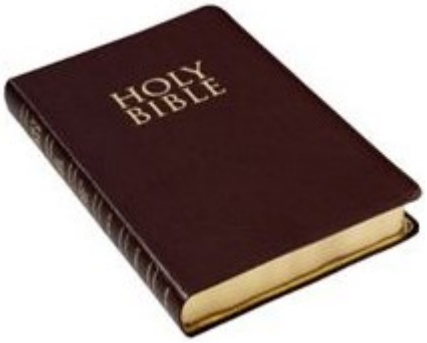
We desire to provide an outstanding education for all of our students, but also to play a key role in their faith formation. In order to be successful in our endeavors, it is necessary that we have your support and prayers. Please commit to praying for the St. Michael School ministry this school year. The financial support the school ministry receives from the St. Michael congregation is outstanding and enables our staff to provide excellent education, share the love of Jesus, and minister to hurting families. Over 200 people have come into membership with St. Michael Lutheran Church through the school, preschool or childcare ministries. May we continue to faithfully carry out our mission here in Portage as a vibrant ministry of St. Michael Lutheran Church.

In His Service,

Greg Johnson
Principal



Small Group Ministry Update



Have you heard about Small Groups at St. Michael? Formerly known as CELLS groups, Small Groups are small, caring communities of people meeting together to be formed by God's Word and to grow in relationships of mutual support. Groups meet on a variety of days and times with each group having a unique demographic composition or topical focus. Small Groups are places where members encounter Jesus through study, prayer, service, and care.

Some of you have been a part of such a group for years and already know all this. If so, please send a message to me or to Jan Chilcott (the very thoughtful and hard-working head of our Small Groups board) with a testimony of how God has used a Small Group (a.k.a. CELLS group, Bible study group) in a powerful way in your life. We could use your endorsement to show others what God is doing in Small Groups.

But what about those who are not currently in a group? Sure, all this sounds good on paper, you say. I would join a small group if I could, but my schedule just won't allow it, you say! Well, as your pastor let me say to you that you just might be right! Though the Bible does command Christians not to neglect meeting together for worship and encouragement (Hebrews 10), God doesn't mandate that you do so through your congregation's small group ministry. And some brothers and sisters in Christ have family situations or other commitments that make it difficult to commit to Small Groups.

That said, I believe that there are a number of Mighty Messengers who would be greatly blessed if they could join or form a group at St. Michael this year. Small Groups give us a place to meditate on God's word (Psalm 119) with friends, to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2), and to grow up in the knowledge of Son of God (Ephesians 4:13) to prepare us to give a loving defense for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15). These benefits just might outweigh the related sacrifice in your schedule!

Looking back on our early years of marriage, Serina and I can say with joy that joining a small group bible study was one of the best choices we made. When our first child was born, our small group friends brought us meals. We had never heard of that. We read the book of Acts together and labored over the tough questions. God formed our faith through His Word. We got to know each other's kids. We prayed for one another and gave a listening ear to those who were struggling. The group eventually split up with people moving and schedules changing. But we still make it a point to get together for reunion parties, with our two-dozen-plus kids completely overrunning whatever gym or park we happen to use. That original small group is a cherished part of our family's spiritual history.

And if I were to tell about our experience with small groups at St. Michael, the story would likewise be one of great joy, friendship, mutual service, engaging scripture study, and fervent prayer. I know that Pastor and Dana Naumann place a very high value on small groups, having worked hard to see this ministry grow and be a blessing to many in the congregation. Serina and I share their excitement about Small Groups, and we hope you will give one a try! Look in the narthex in the beginning of September for specific information on all the various groups you can join. Sign up for the group you are interested in, and the leader will contact you. Or call the church office at 269-327-7832.

If you want to know more about leading a group, contact me or Jan Chilcott, and we can help you get started. There are many great resources in our church library, and we would also enjoy giving you whatever support you would need.

May the LORD meet you and strengthen with His great gifts in the coming year!

-Pastor Jason Toman

Lac Brochet Mission Trip

We had a wonderful mission trip to Lac Brochet, Manitoba, Canada again this year. It was eventful in the sense that the Lord provided many opportunities to meet new people and to bless the community (both young and old). But it was uneventful in the sense that all the travel went smoothly and on time and there were no serious incidents (at least nothing that a little Benadryl and ibuprofen couldn't handle). Of course, it was really the Lord who got us through whatever challenges presented themselves (e.g., bug bites, bruises, and boisterous kids) and who enabled us to do all things through Christ who gave us strength. Thank you for your prayers and may the Lord continue to bless the Dene community who have once again received the love of Jesus in word and deed thanks to your partnership in the Gospel.

In Christ.

Paul Naumann

Fun Crafts at Bible School.

LAMP team joins the Health Center to put on a community cook-out.

St. Michael LAMP Team on our final flight of four to Lac Brochet, Manitoba. We were the only passengers!

Oh no! Mariah had an unexpected swim.

Pastor made a new friend—Walter.

Dana caught the mist rising off the lake one morning.

This puppy was much loved by the kids and our team.

Hanging out with the girls, often calling: SARAH . . . MARIAH!!!!

Khris was our official Broadcaster on Lac Brochet radio. Publicizing all of our activities.

Both men's and women's Bible Studies this year...only difference... the women forget to take a picture.

Teen Night—Mark and Pastor against the youth.

Friday Night Potluck—a friend of our in Lac calls it our tradition.

Seeing us off before our trip to the airport and back on the plane.

Evangelism Notes

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

Colonial Acres VBS

During the week of August 14, we put on the Armor of God with the kids at Colonial Acres! The children ranged in ages from 3 to 11, and they kept us hopping! We had fantastic weather—Praise God!!—and anywhere from 8 to 15 children each day. They love to make crafts! If they weren't there at the start, kids would suddenly appear out of nowhere when it was craft time. Each day we also sang songs, had a Bible lesson, played games, devoured snacks, and ended by praying together.

It is always a challenge to keep kids engaged and focused—and that becomes especially demanding when there are no walls to keep them from running off—especially when there is a playground several feet away! But, we consistently interacted with the same kids throughout the week, and were blessed to be able to give away Bible verses and small tokens to remind them to put on their armor each day! They delight in giving hugs, and the younger children literally demand to be be held, so... many of us were walking around with little ones in our arms throughout the week, which—if you think about it—is probably one of the most tangible ways we can share the love of Jesus!!

One day, as I was holding little Hailey, she told me that she liked my earrings. I asked her if she knew what they were, and she said, “Yes, crosses!” and then without missing a beat she said, “Jesus died on the cross for our sins!”

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14

Our prayer, Father, is that you would water the seeds that we have sown and that you would produce a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown (Matt 3:18). In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Thanks so much to everyone who helped to make our time at Colonial Acres a success! Thank you... to the families who purchased prizes, supplies, and snacks; to the setup/tear down team; to everyone who planned for and helped at VBS; and thank you to the families who provided for the family in need! You are the hands and feet of Christ!!

Wendy Johnson

Evangelism Notes

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

Adult Learning Hour Classes for the Fall Semester

It's back to school time! But unlike for the kids, the Learning Hour does NOT mean getting up earlier than we want to and spending all day in class. Instead, I think you will find we have some great classes lined up for the fall semester. In fact, as you read the following descriptions you might have a hard time deciding which class to attend! We will start off on September 10 all together in the gym with donuts, an overview of the fall classes and an update of what is going on with our small groups. We will pause for a Town Hall meeting on October 8, and will also not have class the Sunday of Thanksgiving Weekend.

Exploring Our Faith, led by Pastor Naumann, in the Allan Hall hallway classroom (9/17-12/10)

What does it mean to have Christian faith? What do Lutherans believe? How is this similar and/or different from the doctrines taught by other denominations and religions? You may be asking yourself these questions, especially if you are new to the Lutheran church. What makes Saint Michael Lutheran Church special? How do we care for one another and become involved in what God is doing among us? These and other questions may be yours if you are thinking about joining our congregation, even by transfer from another LCMS church. Or perhaps you have these questions despite being a long time member! This course will address these questions and, if you are a prospective member, prepare you to join. In this course you will find that our faith is Bible based, and you will get to know some of the existing ministry leaders in our congregation. All in all, it will help prepare you to be an active communicant member of St. Michael Lutheran Church.

Journey of Discovery, led by Pastor Toman, in Allan Hall (9/17-10/22)

Christians of all ages have asked, "what shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?" quoting Psalm 116. The Journey of Discovery course, developed by Church Extension Fund, helps believers to consider their own journey of financial giving by comparing that process with world travel. The five-week course takes participants through the Bible to answer questions like: "What are my personal reasons to give and are they biblical? What bible passages could help me understand the topic better? What are my 'next steps' in this journey?" The goal of the class is not to produce guilt but rather to openly explore the topic of stewardship together and lift one another up as we all grow in this area.

A Man Named Martin - Part 3: The Movement, led by Jesse Hogue, in the Music Room (9/17-10/22)

In these last five sessions of the A Man Named Martin series that we enjoyed over the summer, we will see how the Reformation accelerated the transformation of a world already in flux. While armed conflicts, theological disputes, and heated controversies marked segments of society throughout medieval Europe, the march of the Reformation left its imprint on the face of culture and citizen alike. Everything from education, politics, science, theology, marriage, and the family-and even extending to one's view of vocation and his relationship to God-came under the shaping and seminal influence of the Reformation.

College-Age Group, led by Evan Semrau, in the 4th Grade Classroom (9/17-12/17)

Have you ever asked, “Does God allow bad things to happen for a good reason?” For the entire fall semester, we will find the answer in the prophet Jeremiah's book and the history of the Israelites. The study will reveal that God is, was, and will be the same loving Father that He is.

The Five Solas of the Reformation, led by Pastor Toman, in the Music Room (Reformation Sunday)

On this 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we take one Sunday to look at the five solas, or five “alones” of the Reformation. Sola scriptura. Sola fide. Sola gratia. Solus Christus. Soli Deo Gloria. These five terms are derived from scripture and represent the basic principles that are central to our doctrine of salvation. We base our teaching on scripture alone. We are saved by grace alone, through faith in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone!

Being a Disciple: Definition of a Mighty Messenger, led by Pastor Toman, in the Music Room (11/5-12/10)

What does it mean to be a disciple? Is it the same as being a Christian? To be a disciple means to be a student of Jesus, and His curriculum involves your whole life. In this class, we will open up the scriptures to look at some key passages that describe the life of discipleship. We’ll keep the Gospel at the center as we explore what it means to be propelled by the Gospel to live lives of study, service, and evangelism. In our journey of discipleship, each Mighty Messenger can trust that God “is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.” (Ephesians 3:20)

We the Church: The Priesthood of All Believers (History of the LCMS), led by Jesse Hogue, in the Music Room (12/17)

From immigrant communities of German Christians to a mainline denomination of more than 6,000 congregations, We the Church: The Priesthood of All Believers focuses on the origin and development of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) and how the early LCMS met the outreach challenges of its new "American" setting. Beyond the historical context, this video resource examines how early church leaders viewed the role of laity inside and outside of the church. It also challenges today's church members to embrace their rich heritage as disciples by sharing the message of hope we have in Christ Jesus.

Confirmation Recap, led by Andi Lynch, in either the Cry Room or the 7th/8th Grade Classroom

For confirmation students and parents who miss confirmation class, Miss Andi will provide time and space to listen to and learn the materials that were covered the previous Wednesday. She will announce the final decision on which room we will use at Parent Night on September 6th.

We hope you will join us for at least one of these classes, you will certainly be blessed through them! Something else to keep in mind, with the new classroom availability we have this fall we will be able to keep the library open and available between services. There are a ton of excellent resources in the library, I encourage you to check them out! Looking forward to the winter/spring classes, we hope to offer the next Ray VanderLaan series and we may also re-visit some sessions from A Man Named Martin to allow further discussion. If you have ideas for a class, or especially if you would be interested in leading a class, please see Jesse Hogue, Dave Groll or Pastor Toman!

Stephen Ministry Workshop Equips Church Members to Care for Others

By Kalamazoo Gazette Staff

PORTAGE – "Loving and caring for people isn't just the pastor's job – all Christians are called to minister to one another," said Pastor Paul Naumann at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Portage.

"A Stephen Ministry Workshop on November 4 at the church, 7211 Oakland Drive, will help participants become more aware of this calling," Naumann said.

Active listening and reaching out to others in a Christian way will be a focus of the program at the church from 9am to 1pm, with registration beginning at 8am. Refreshments will be served.

The half-day workshop consists of three sessions designed to enhance participants' caregiving skills and to help congregations explore ways to expand their caring ministry.

The workshop is sponsored by Stephen Ministries, a St.Louis-based Christian training organization that has been providing congregations with training and resources for Christian caregiving for more than 30 years.

First Session

In the first session of the workshop, "Ministering to Those Experiencing Grief," participants will learn about the grief process – the stages of grief and how to minister to people in each of those stages. The goal of this part of the training is to gain the skills and confidence to better care for individuals who are grieving.

Second Session

The second session will provide an introduction to the Stephen Series, a system of lay ministry through which congregation leaders can equip members to provide one-on-one Christian care to people in need.

Third Session

The final session of the workshop will explain "How to Care in a Distinctively Christian Way." Participants learn what makes Christian caregiving unique and how they can use resources such as prayer, blessings and Scripture in their caring for others.

Need is Great

"The needs for care in our congregation and community were much more than the pastors could handle alone," said Naumann, one of five Stephen Leaders who oversee that ministry at St. Michal. "So, we enrolled in the Stephen Series and are now equipping our members to provide quality one-on-one Christian care."

Over the past five years, several members of St. Michael have undertaken 50 hours of training to become Stephen Ministers; 18 of them now are caregivers.

Each of them meets weekly with someone who is experiencing a life crisis or challenge, such as a death of a loved one, divorce, hospitalization, the loss of a job, loneliness, or relocation.

Testimonial

"Being a Stephen minister has been a blessing to me," said Stephen minister Virginia Hetrick. "I have grown so much spiritually through the experience of seeing God work through me to touch the life of my care receiver."

"I encourage people to attend," Naumann said. "Participants will go home with practical ministry skills and an excellent understanding of how they can organize the members of their congregation for caring ministry through the Stephen Series."

WANT TO LEARN TO CARE FOR HURTING PEOPLE in a distinctively Christian way?

Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop
Saturday, November 4, 2017
9:00 am to 1:00 pm
(St. Michael hosting)

This half-day workshop is designed both to enhance your caregiving skills and to help congregations explore ways to expand their caring ministry. Registration begins at 8:00 am and refreshments will be served. One reason we're so excited about helping other congregations learn about Stephen Ministry is that it is making a significant difference in the life of our own congregation. Since we began Stephen Ministry back in 2005, several dozen of our members have experienced the 50 hours of training in learn to provide quality one-to-one Christian care to hurting people. If you think you might be interested in being a Stephen Minister, attending the workshop is a great way to learn more about Stephen Ministry. As a member of our church you are invited to attend free of charge.

To register: Contact the church office at 327-7832 or email naumann@mightymessengers.org.

Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity for personal growth and to learn more about this vital caring ministry.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Discipleship Corner with Pastor Toman

I've heard it said that you can test your understanding of something by trying to explain it to a kindergartener. Told another way: If you can't explain what you do at work every day to a small child in a minute or less (with them understanding you!), then just how much do you understand what you are doing? May God have mercy on us all. Especially people who work in Information Technology!

This leads to my point—defining "discipleship." As far as I know, I am the first to have the title Pastor of Adult Discipleship at St. Michael, though certainly discipleship has been happening here since the first worship service in 1960. But just what is "discipleship"?

When I worked in campus ministry, the word "discipleship" was seemingly a part of half of our ministry discussions. Wanting Christian students to grow in trusting God and living holy lives, we would look for ways to *disciple* them. (Yes, we used *disciple* as a verb.) Often this meant having the student meet regularly with a mentor who would teach them, pray with them, and model for them what a disciple of Jesus lived like. God used these mentor-student relationships in very powerful ways. But this brand of disciple formation is just one aspect of the much broader concept of discipleship. I say again: what is discipleship?

Perhaps I'm not ambitious enough to put forth a kindergartener targeted definition of "discipleship" just yet. So her is an honest attempt, aimed at a high school reading level:

For a person who has been given a new identity in Christ by grade and through faith in Him, ***discipleship is the lifelong process in which a Christian is molded by the Master's teaching to be able to better live as a disciple of Jesus should, fully trusting God and obeying Him in our actions of love and service.***

Well, I do think that this definition needs a little simplification. But, I still hope the message is clear, and that the Lutheran emphasis on salvation by grace is clear. Discipleship is happening for all of us as we Christians are being formed to think the way God wants us to think and act the way he want us to act. And while we so often fail and must turn to God in repentance, each believer's status as His beloved student—for that is what "disciple" means—is not based on the performance of all the right holy actions but on the saving death and resurrection of Jesus.

I will say more about discipleship in months to come, discussing our vision and strategy for discipleship at St. Michael, where we seek to be "Making Mighty Messengers for Christ." For now, let me close with a list of . . .

A FEW WAYS TO GROW AS A DISCIPLE THIS FALL

1. **Join the congregation for worship** every weekend that you can. You can even listen to the sermons on www.mightymessengers.org if you miss a week. **And be an active listener, especially to the readings and the sermon!** Whether you take notes physically or mentally, ask yourself questions like these: *What biblical truth am I hearing that challenges the way I think or act? Is the message pointing out things that I should repent of, and what can I do to make a change? How is God impacting my perspective as I consider His grace and His promises? What questions does this message stir up in me, and where can I go for answers?* While at worship, **participate regularly in The Lord's Supper and in Confession and Absolution.** What a blessing it is to gather together and freely receive the whole-life, full-orbed, taste-and-feel-it forgiveness and grace of the Master who has made us His disciples.

2. Read the Bible on your own. Or start a devotion time with your family or housemates, with a time or song and scripture each day. There are many reading plans and devotional resources available online (or ask a pastor or friend for recommendations).

3. Come to one of the classes being offered during the Learning Hour between Sunday services. See Jesse Hogue's great article in this issue of the newsletter for more details.

4. Devote time to your Small Group, or join one if you don't already attend one. Or join a prayer group, where you will also be strengthened and encouraged as you meet together to call on God for the sake of others.

5. Find a neighbor or anyone who might be in need, and find a way to serve them. Whether you provide them with your time, your money, your strength, your encouragement, or any other gift, remember that you are giving freely because your Lord gave himself so freely for you!

6. Volunteer to help with a ministry at church.

7. Whatever you do, stay close to the Master so you can listen to His healing voice.

Your fellow disciple,

Pastor Toman

Coming Soon: What does it mean to make "Mighty Messengers?"

ANNUAL ALTAR GUILD BRUNCH

Saturday, September 30 @ 10am in Allan Hall

We will have a brief meeting and sign-up for 2018. If you are interested in knowing more about the duties of the Guild, please come. Guild members serve for worship services during one month at a time, usually twice per year. Please RSVP as soon as possible to Kristi Rudowske 269 532-5043 or kspitz2001@yahoo.com.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Women's Fellowship Needs the Input of all St. Michael Ladies

As we work on plans for this coming year, we are fretting over whether we should change the day and or time of our meetings. For years we have been meeting on the third Monday of the month at 7pm. But over the years we have noticed a decline in attendance. Last year we noticed that the Christmas Party on a Sunday afternoon, the Lenten brunch/craft on a Saturday morning and the Tea and Travel to China also on a Sunday afternoon drew a lot more people than the Monday night time slot. Since Women's Fellowship is for all ladies of St. Michael we would like your input. Please email your thoughts to cchadderdon@charter.net or call any board member, or see us after services.

If anyone has a suggestion for a speaker, mission project, craft or activity, or would like to join the Board, please let us know.

Connie Chadderdon 327-7220
Sandy Maya 330-9100
Diane Goetz 323-7667
Arla Mayhew 327-4643
June Kucks 649-4529
Rika Noggle 327-4702

LUTHERAN WOMEN MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Compassion In-gathering Items to bring to the retreat

Birth to Age 10

Backpack or small rolling suitcase
Diapers
Training pants
Onesie
Wet ones
Soap
Washcloths/small towels
Toothbrushes/toothpaste
Coloring book
Crayons
Solid color t-shirts/no graphics
Flashlight/batteries

Age 11-18
(Battle Creek zone's preference)

Backpack or small rolling suitcase
Gift cards
Deodorant
Paper notebooks/pens & pencils
Solid color t-shirts/no graphics
Maxi-pads
Disposable razors
Soap
Washcloths/small towels
Flashlight/batteries

LUTHERAN WOMEN MISSIONARY LEAGUE

You're invited to a

Dual Zone LWML

Fall Retreat

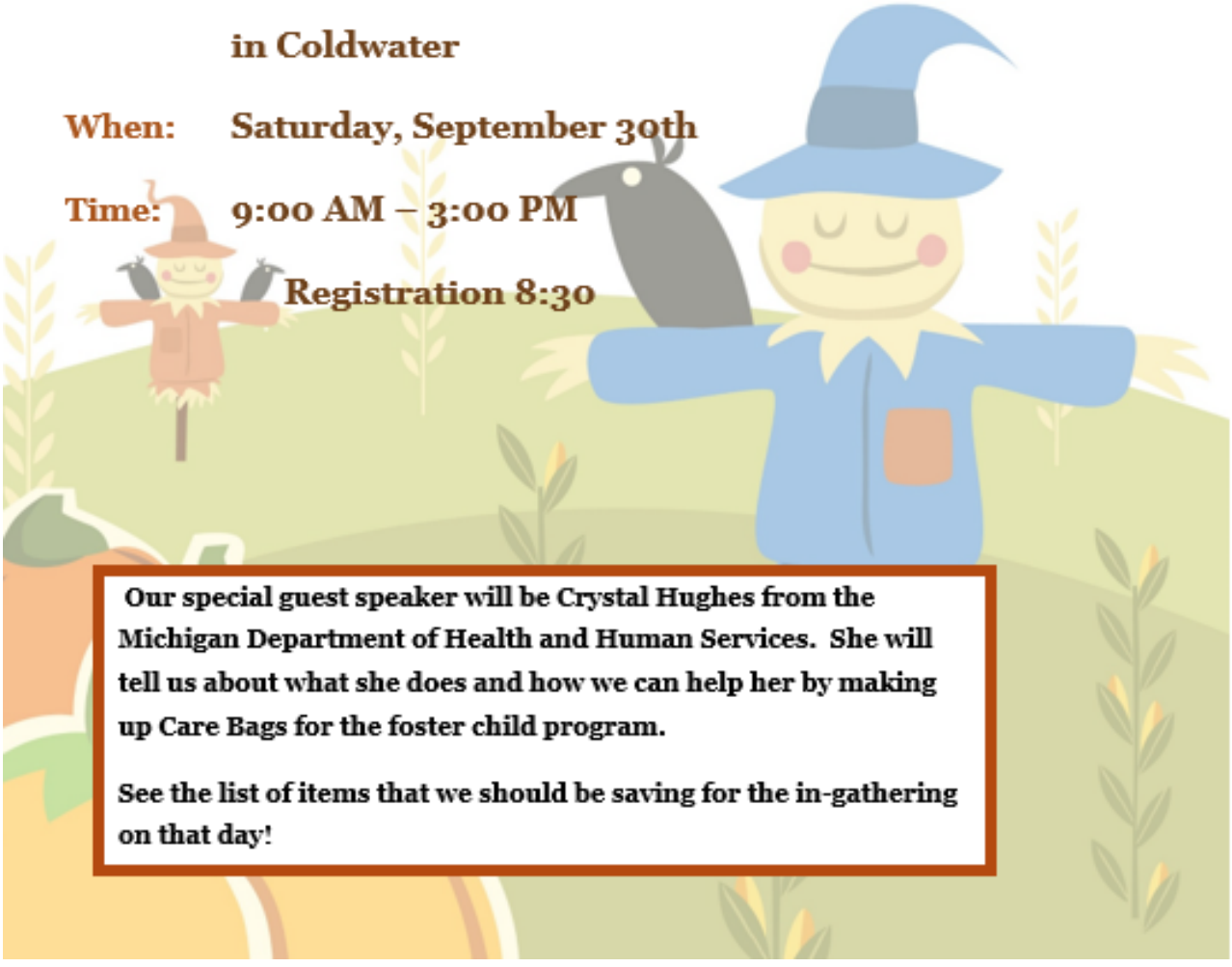
Please join us for a Spirit-filled day of worship, food and fellowship with your LWML sisters from the Gateway and Battle Creek zones.

Where: St. Paul Lutheran Church in Coldwater

When: Saturday, September 30th

Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Registration 8:30



Our special guest speaker will be Crystal Hughes from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. She will tell us about what she does and how we can help her by making up Care Bags for the foster child program.

See the list of items that we should be saving for the in-gathering on that day!

St. Michael Youth Activities

Back into the swing of things . . .

September for me is a bittersweet time. I get so excited about new things, new back packs, pencils, friends, a new start. However, it is hard to let go of the freedom and calm that summer has. When I was in high school I would be worried, that I would not be accepted by my peers and have to eat all alone at the lunch table. My mother in her wisdom got me involved in volleyball early and my freshman year I already had a good friend named Emma. I remember being elated as we compared schedules and saw that we had some classes together. I still had some worry (enough to make me quiet for the first week) but I had a friend, a support system, in case everything failed. God is our support system, like a friend when He reveals Himself to us (in His Word, through other people etc.), and we get comfort, understanding, love, and acceptance. As September comes feel free to share this scripture with your family and friends.

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise— in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" (Psalm 56:3-4)

Andi Lynch
Director of Youth Ministry

Sr. High Welcome Cookout
September 10 from 2—6pm

Hosted by Rich & Carol Conklin
The Cottage @ 743 Beechwood Dr., Delton 49046

We can carpool!

Parents welcome!

RSVP Lorraine Dudash
269 352-2032

Welcome back to a new year. Bring a friend and enjoy a cookout together with us. We will have some food, games, and fellowship with each other. It will be a splash on the lake!

Operation Christmas Child Shopping Spree
September 17 from 6-8pm

Sr. High—Meet at the church main entrance to carpool

You may have heard of Christmas in July. Well, we are getting ready for Christmas in September. We are giving youth money to shop for items for Operation Christmas Child. Bring a friend as we buy items for a great cause. Prizes will be given to the boxes with the most creative item, best theme, and most items in their box.

Jr and Sr High Parents . . .

Youth Families Meeting

September 10, 2017
9:30-10:30am (between services)
Meet in the Youth Room

The Youth Board would like to have a short meeting to inform families about the coming year. We will be giving out the yearly calendar and talking about communication to parents and youth. Families that come can enter their youth's name in a drawing to win $20 for their youth account!

Jr. High Confirmation

Welcome Meeting:
September 6, 2017
5:45-7pm

Confirmation Camp:
September 15-17, 2017
(We will leave St. Michael at 6:30pm)

Jr. High Welcome Cookout

September 10, 2017
1:30—4:30pm
Hosted by Jeff and Beth Burnett
8209 Brookwood Drive, Portage, MI 49024

We can carpool!
Parents welcome!

RSVP Lorraine Dudash 269 352-2032

Welcome back to a new year. Bring a friend and enjoy a cookout together with us. We will have some food, games, and fellowship with each other. Bring your favorite yard game. The will be available depending on temperatures and the weather!

Jr/Sr High Bike Ride
September 24, 6-8pm

We are going to ride our bikes from church through the Celery Flats to Bicentennial Park, and back to Ritters for ice cream.

Bring a friend!
Parents, ride with us!

September 27- November 5

40 DAYS FOR LIFE™

HELP SAVE LIVES IN KALAMAZOO!

You can protect mothers and children by joining this worldwide mobilization!

Through prayer and fasting, peaceful vigils and community outreach, 40 Days for Life has inspired 750,000 volunteers!

With God's help, here are the proven results in 20 coordinated campaigns:

- **13,305 babies** saved from abortion
- **154 abortion** workers converted
- **86 abortion** centers closed

Here's how to take part:

- **Vigil location:** Outside Planned Parenthood (4201 W. Michigan Ave. in Kalamazoo – park at Alternatives)
- **Vigil hours:** (7 am to 7 pm daily)
- **Local contact:** Mary Jeske 269-459-1234 or email 40dayskalamazoo@gmail.com
- **Learn more** and get involved by visiting our campaign at the address below!

The 40 Days for Life campaign is coming September 27 through November 5, 2017. People of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, let us come together to pray and show our solidarity in the desire to stop abortions, particularly in Kalamazoo. There are no words that can adequately describe the evil that is being done every time an unborn child of God is destroyed through abortion. Dorothy Day stated that "the reason for our existence is to praise God, to love him, and to serve him, and we can do this only by loving our brothers. All men are brothers. This is the great truth that makes us realize God. Love is the reason for our existence. It is what we all live for." One way to serve God, and to show him our love, is to come together during the 40 Days for Life campaign to pray for an end to the senseless killing of unborn children of God. Please sign up for 1 hour during this campaign to pray on the sidewalk in front of Planned Parenthood at 4201 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. Many women have changed their minds of having an abortion just by seeing people outside of Planned Parenthood standing in all forms of weather and praying. If you can, consistently praying 1 hour each week during the campaign shows commitment to God and the desire to end abortion. However, any time you have to give would be greatly appreciated; God knows what is in your heart. Make a difference and stand with us in this peaceful demonstration of care for the unborn. To sign up, go to www.40daysforlife.com/kalamazoo or, call Mary Jeske at 269-459-1234 and she would be happy to sign you up for the time you can give. Thank You!

Grieving takes time and work

G.R.O.W. Groups — Fall 2017 Schedule

Grief Recovery Outreach to Wholeness

If you have experienced the death of a loved one, friend, or co-worker, you may have some questions about the feelings and thoughts you are having at this time. You may feel, "out of balance"... "can't seem to let go"... "I cry a lot"... "I blame myself"... "I'm angry" ... "I feel so alone" ... "I'm exhausted!" ... "Sleep? There is to much or too little" ... "I think I'm going crazy!"

Daytime Group— Wednesday Mornings

6 Session group 10:30am —11:30am

August 23, 30; September 6, 13, 20 & 27

Kalamazoo Senior Services, Inc.

918 Jasper Street; Kalamazoo

No Fee for Any Session

Evening Group—Wednesday Evenings

6 Session group 6:30pm —7:30pm

August 23, 30; September 6, 13, 20 & 27

Portage Public Schools, Administration Building

8107 Mustang Drive; Portage

Topics covered in the six week sessions:

1. **Introduction to the Grief Process, Your Story...**
2. **Loneliness vs. Being Alone...with options**
3. **Tears are healing/Total Body Health Responses**
4. **Anger, Guilt, Stress in the Grief Process**
5. **Grief Management— Setting Realistic Expectations**
6. **Coping With Reminders, The Holidays, Anniversaries & How Do I Know I Am Getting Better?**

Dana Naumann, MSW
Bereavement Care Coordinator
Group Facilitator
call or email to register or for more information

See www.Langelands.com
Grief and Healing pages for more grief support

Langeland Family Funeral Homes
Kalamazoo, Portage, Climax, Comstock, Galesburg, & Westside.

622 South Burdick Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Phone: 269-343-1508
E-mail: dana@langelands.com

A "By the Numbers" look at the ***Here We Stand*** Campaign (through August 3, 2017)

Here We Stand

$4,680,225.64	Total campaign gifts, pledges, and goals
$2,774,522.60	Cash received
$ 200,000.00	CEF Matching Funds
$1,334,403.04	Outstanding commitments (pledges)
618	Total Contributors
534	Individual Contributors
84	Congregations Contributing
22.6%	% of Michigan District Congregations currently participating
4,843	Participants in the "Crafted By Truth" Bible Reading Program
$ 910,222.34	Total given/pledged for Professional Church Worker Scholarships
$1,615,691.81	Total given/pledged for Innovative Missional Ministry
$ 681,003.37	Total given/pledged for Michigan District Endowment
$1,102,008.12	Total given/pledged for International Ministries

Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod | 3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-3098
Phone: 734.665.3791 | Toll Free: 888.225.2111 | Fax: 734.665.0255 | michigandistrict.org | facebook.com/milcms | twitter.com/milcms

People of Hope... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

Mark Your Calendar!

"But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect …" (1 Peter 3:15).

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Ft. Wayne:

- **Rev. Michael Salemink –** "Standing Out in the Field" – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- **Rev. Scott Licht –** "Hope Amidst the Lies – A Christian Perspective on Physician-Assisted Suicide"
- **Dr. Christina Francis –** "Yes, Abortion Pill Reversal Will Work"
- **Rev. Dr. Matthew Rueger –** "We've Been This Way Before" – Christians often feel thrust into a hopeless battle previous generations didn't have to fight, especially in the culture wars raging over sexual ethics and life issues.
- **Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer –** "The Loss of Life and Liberty in the Pursuit of Happiness"

For additional information, including registration, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: **www.lutheransforlife.org/conference**.

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at vflo@lutheransforlife.org.

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

September 8 and 9, 2017

Lighthouse Community Church

4321 South 11 Street
Kalamazoo MI 49009

lighthouseon11th.org

Apologetics Conference: A program of the Library of Historical Apologetics, in partnership with Defenders Media, The Deeper Roots Conference exists to deepen faith through understanding, equip believers to share that faith, and connect believers to one another.

Conference Keynotes: J. Warner Wallace and Tim McGrew

Friday, September 8—7pm to 9pm (doors open at 6pm)
Worship: David McGrew

Saturday, September 9—8:30am to 3:30pm (doors open at 7:30am)
Other Speakers: Lydia McGrew, Rob Bowman, Tom Gilson, David McGrew, and Kurt Jaros
Worship: David McGrew

Early Registration—$39.
On-site lunch option—$9.99
Late/On-site Registration (after August 25) —$49.
Student Conference Registration - $20.
Groups of 5+ Rates—$29.

Dear Congregation Members,

As you may remember, the 2016-2017 school year was the last year we would be collecting Campbell soup labels and UPC symbols from Campbell products. They recently discontinued supporting schools in this way, not only here in Michigan, but across the nation. Thank you to all of you who have faithfully supported the school by taking the time to bring in these labels.

This change with Campbell's labels will not affect our continued collection of ***Box Tops for Education***. In fact, this will make the Box Top program more important to our school as we seek to replace those potential funds lost from Campbell labels and replace them with Box Tops for Education dollars. Please re-double your efforts to bring in Box Tops so that we can continue to receive "free" funding through this program. In the past, we have been able to earn as much as $1200 annually through the Box Tops and Campbell labels. Your help is much appreciated and still needed!

Thank you!

Greg Johnson
Principal
St. Michael Lutheran School

BAKING & BAKEWARE
HORNEADO Y PRODUCTOS PARA HORNEAR

- Annie's® Baking Mixes
- Fiber One™ Mixes
- Reynolds® Genuine Parchment Paper
- Reynolds® Non-Stick Baking Pans
- Reynolds® Staybright Baking Cups

CEREAL CEREALES

- Annie's®
- Batman™ Chocolate Strawberry
- Basic 4™
- Cascadian Farm™
- Cascadian Farm™ Farm Stand Harvest Granola
- Cheerios™
- Chex™
- Cinnamon Toast Crunch™
- Cocoa Puffs™
- Cookie Crisp™
- Fiber One™
- French Toast Crunch™
- Girl Scouts Thin Mint® Cereal
- Girl Scouts Caramel Crunch® Cereal
- Golden Grahams™
- Kix™
- Lucky Charms™
- Nature Valley™ Oat Cereals
- Nature Valley™ Protein Crunchy Granola
- Oatmeal Crisp™
- Raisin Nut Bran
- Reese's Puffs®
- Tiny Toast™
- Total™
- Trix™
- Wheaties™

FOOD STORAGE
CONTENEDORES PARA ALIMENTOS

- Ziploc® brand Big Bags XL (4 ct.)
- Ziploc® brand Freezer Bags
- Ziploc® brand Smart Snap Containers
- Ziploc® brand Storage Bags
- Ziploc® brand Twist 'n Loc® Containers
- Ziploc® brand VersaGlass® Containers
- Ziploc® brand Vacuum Freezer System
- Ziploc® brand Zip 'n Steam™ Bags

FROZEN CONGELADOS

- Annie's® Frozen Snacks
- Green Giant™ Vegetables
- Totino's® Party Pizza® & Pizza Rolls® Snacks

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING
LIMPIEZA DEL HOGAR

- Finish® Dishwashing Detergent
- Lysol® Bathroom Cleaners
- Lysol® Disinfectant Spray & Wipes

MEALS & SIDES
COMIDAS Y GUARNICIONES

- Annie's® Mac & Cheese
- Annie's® Microwaveable Mac & Cheese Cups
- Annie's® Soups
- Betty Crocker™ Specialty Potatoes & Potato Buds
- Betty Crocker™ Suddenly Salad
- Green Giant™ Canned Vegetables
- Green Giant™ Veggie Blend-Ins
- Hamburger Helper™ select flavors
- Old El Paso™ Bold Stand n' Stuff Shells
- Old El Paso™ Dinner Kits
- Old El Paso™ Rice & Beans
- Old El Paso™ Shells & Seasonings
- Old El Paso™ Soft Tortilla Taco Boats
- Old El Paso™ Stand n' Stuff Shells
- Progresso™ Soup
- Progresso™ Broths

PAPER PRODUCTS PRODUCTOS DE PAPEL

- Select Kleenex® Tissue bundles
- Scott® Bath Tissue
- Scott ® Paper Towels
- Scott Naturals™ Flushable Cleansing Cloths

PRODUCE FRUTAS Y VERDURAS

- Green Giant™ Fresh Herbs
- Green Giant™ Fresh Vegetables

REFRIGERATED & DAIRY
REFRIGERADOS Y LÁCTEOS

- Annie's® Refrigerated Dough
- Annie's® Yogurt Tubes
- Go-Gurt® Multipacks
- Land O'Lakes® Cheese Products
- Land O'Lakes® Fresh Buttery Taste® Spread (Sticks and Tubs)
- Land O'Lakes® Margarine (Sticks and Tubs)
- Land O'Lakes® Sauté Express® Sauté Starter
- Land O'Lakes® Stick Butter or Spreadable Butter Products
- Yoplait® Original and Yoplait® Light Fridge Packs

SCHOOL & OFFICE SUPPLIES
ARTÍCULOS PARA ESCUELA Y OFICINA

- Boise POLARIS® Premium Paper
- Boise® FIREWORX® Premium Colored Paper

SNACKS BOCADILLOS

- Annie's® Cookies
- Annie's® Crackers
- Annie's® Fruit Snacks
- Annie's® Granola Bars
- Annie's® Snack Mix
- Betty Crocker™ Fruit Flavored Snacks
- Bugles™
- Cascadian Farm™ Granola Bars
- Cereal Treat Bars
- Chex Mix™
- Fiber One™ Bars, Brownies, Cookies, and Streusel
- Food Should Taste Good™ Snacks
- Gardetto's™ Snacks
- LARABAR™ (multipacks)
- Larabar™ RENOLA Grain Free Granola
- Mott's® Medleys Fruit Flavored Snacks
- Nature Valley™ Backpacker Chewy Oatmeal Bites
- Nature Valley™ Baked Oat Bites
- Nature Valley™ Bars
- Nature Valley™ Clusters
- Nature Valley™ Granola Bites
- Nature Valley™ Granola Cups
- Nature Valley™ Protein Soft Baked Granola Bites

TABLEWARE MANTELERÍA

- Hefty® Deluxe™ Plates and Platters
- Hefty® Easy Grip® Cups
- Hefty® Everyday™ Cups
- Hefty® Everyday™ Soak Proof Plates and Bowls
- Hefty® Printed Cups
- Hefty® Style Plates
- Kleenex® Dinner Napkins (50 ct.)

WASTE BAGS BOLSAS DE BASURA

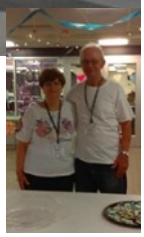
- Hefty® Blackout Tall Kitchen Drawstring Bags
- Hefty® Cinch Sak Large Trash Bags and Lawn & Leaf Bags
- Hefty® Easy Flaps® Tall Kitchen Bags and Large Trash Bags
- Hefty® OdorBlock® Tall Kitchen Drawstring Bags
- Hefty® Renew® Tall Kitchen Bags and Trash Bags
- Hefty® SteelSak® Trash Bags
- Hefty® Twist Tie Tall Kitchen Bags and Trash and Lawn & Leaf Bags
- Hefty® Ultimate
- Hefty® Ultra Flex® Trash Bags

A Weekend of Discovery... A Lifetime of Love

Lutheran Marriage Encounter

Marriage Encounter – A Fresh Start

It's hard to believe it's fall already, and time for the start of school. While many kids dread back-to-school time, many others look forward to the fresh start of a new year. Perhaps some had a rocky year academically the previous year, while others may be heading off to a new school and opportunities to make new friends! In a way, Marriage Encounter can provide a fresh start for married adults, too. Not in terms of a new spouse, of course! Rather, Marriage Encounter provides great tools for husbands and wives to freshen up their marriage and re-engage with each other. Marriage Encounter Experiences are for married couples who value their relationship and desire a richer, fuller life together, providing the right communication tools to help your relationship be all that it can be. If you are interested in a fresh start for your marriage, we have a Marriage Encounter Experience coming up right down the road from us in Battle Creek from September 29 to October 1, 2017! I encourage you to check out the Marriage Encounter display on the counter behind the coat racks in Communication Central, come talk to us, or check out the **GodLovesMarriage.org** website for more information. I hope you will join us!



We had a great time in Niagara at the ILME Family Reunion in July. Four couples from our Journey Group attended, which was awesome!

For those of you who have already been blessed by a Marriage Encounter experience, we have some fun and enriching opportunities coming up this fall. Our first Journey Group meeting of the fall will be held on Sunday, September 17th, from 4-6 in the afternoon. We will be going over recent business, planning for the Battle Creek Weekend, and doing some "hands-on" tasks. The meeting will be held in Allan Hall. Please bring your notebooks and a snack to pass. Beverages will be provided. Later this fall, we hope you will join us for our 28th annual Veteran's Renewal weekend at **The Shack** November 3-5. This year should be especially fun as the plan is for a "best of" weekend and, of course, there are always banana splits! You can call The Shack directly (231-924-6683) to reserve a spot. Please also let Brian and Donna Zelner know if you register (226-4703 or **dwzsearch@gmail.com**) so they can keep you in the loop for any updates.

Jesse and Shannon Hogue

St. Michael Lutheran School

"Mighty Angels" Annual Golf Outing

Karl Mueller Scholarship

Angels Crossing Golf Club

3600 East W Ave
Vicksburg, Michigan

September 23, 2017
9:00 AM (Shotgun)
Co-ed Team Scramble

Event Sponsor

$900 EAGLE SPONSOR: Includes a golf foursome, golfer sponsor, sponsor signage at the tee, special recognition in the program, and an award presentation at the dinner ceremonies.

$500 BIRDIE SPONSOR: Includes a Golfer sponsor, sponsor signage at the tee, special recognition in the program, and an award presentation at the dinner ceremonies.

$100 HOLE SPONSOR: Your business or individual name will be prominently displayed on a sign at a tee and also listed in the program.

GOLFER SPONSOR: Sponsor the $100 registration fee for a participant to golf in the event.

PROGRAM ADVERTISING:
PRINTED ADVERTISING IS AVAILABLE IN THE GOLF OUTING PROGRAM AS FOLLOWS:
Full Page Ad (5 1/2 in. x 8 in.) $50.00
Half Page Ad (5 1/2 in. x 4 in.) $25.00

Registration

Name
_____

Phone
_____

List Team Below (if applicable):
_____
_____
_____

Make check to
St. Michael Lutheran School

_____	$900	Eagle Sponsor
_____	$500	Birdie Sponsor
_____	$100	Per golfer with cookout
_____	$15	Cookout only
_____	$50 $25	Program Advertising
_____		Total

Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc.

5 Martin Luther Drive ^ Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996

"Worship for Shut-Ins"

<u>September 3, 2017 – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 17)</u>
Psalm: 26; **Old Testament:** Romans 12:9-21; **Gospel:** Matthew 16:21-28
"Taking Up a Cross" - Sermon Text: Matthew 16:21-28 - *Rev. Dr. Daniel J. Brege*

Jesus here states His goal as the Christ: He must die and then rise from the dead. In this work we have an exchange for our souls. As His saved people, we are now empowered to take up our cross and follow Him.

<u>September 10, 2017 – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 18)</u>
Psalm: 32; **Epistle:** Romans 13:1-10; **Gospel:** Matthew 18:1-20
"God's Economics of Grace" - Sermon Text: Matthew 18:1-20 - *Rev. William E. Mueller*

Forgiveness is a wonderful thing. Yet it can be very hard to practice. Why should we be so ready to forgive each other? It's because of what our God has done for us. God's economics of grace begins at the cross of Jesus!

<u>September 17, 2017 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 19)</u>
Psalm: 103:1-12; **Old Testament:** Genesis 50:15-21; **Gospel:** Matthew 18:21-35
"Forgive" - Sermon Text: Matthew 18:21-35 - *Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III*

When someone wrongs us, the world says, "Get revenge!" But Christ tells us to respond in a different way: to forgive. We can actually do this, motivated by the Gospel.

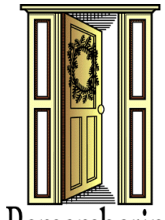
<u>September 24, 2017 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 20)</u>
Psalm: 116:12-13, 15-16; **Old Testament:** Isaiah 55:6-9; **Gospel:** Matthew 20:1-16
"First and Last" - Sermon Text: Matthew 20:1-16 - *Rev. James L. Elsner*

Waiting your turn was tough when you were a child . And it may not be any easier now! Who wants to be "last"? We'd rather be "first." Jesus show us the difference.

TV MINISTRY YOU CAN TRUST!

Charter Cable Channel 189
AT&T U-Verse Channel 99
Sunday and Wednesday at 3:30pm
<u>Access for Kalamazoo and Portage</u>

- 30-Minute Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod worship service
- Produced by Lutherans for the homebound, hospitalized…
- Includes the Gospel, Epistle, and Sermon by LCMS pastors
- Music by choirs, soloists, and small groups



Rev. Roland Barkow
Caroline Barkow
Mary Bryer
Loren Bryer
Audrey Frank
Audrey Glover
Bruce Glover
Betty McCoy
Ruth Newland
Burnie Trimner

EDNA'S CORNER

Dear Mrs. Fry and St. Michael Lutheran Church,

Excuse the sloppy handwriting! Thank you so much for the goodies. May God continue to bless you all for your support!

Sincerely,

SPC Carlton

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan

Dear Edna Fry,

On behalf of the Combine Joint Special Operations Air Component here at Bagram Airfield and our brothers and sisters scattered throughout Afghanistan, I would like to thank you for the incredibly generous care package and letter we recently received. After 16 years of conflict, it is always heartwarming to know that our support network back home remains resolute.

The great spread of goodies you provided us exponentially lifts our spirit in this beautiful, but deadly part of the world. I'm reminded of a haiku about the sunsets here: "Last gasp of sunlight; the darkness engulfs the sky; time always watching."

A little back story on our mission here in Afghanistan includes, but are not limited to: fighting the enemy, watching the enemy's pattern of life and predict attacks, countering weapons of mass destruction, preventing terrorist attacks, teaching local citizens to protect themselves from our common enemy, teaching the Afghanistan government to protect their country and citizens, performing hostage rescue and recovery, preventing civil wars, supporting humanitarian assistance, influencing civil behaviors, and helping to setting up a government. The people of this country need our help and it doesn't always mean that we just "kill the bad guys". If you empathize with these people, you can understand that war is horrible on all levels, especially if it were in your neighborhood.

Your thoughts, feelings and gift of support were a much welcomed and needed reminder of home. I just ask that you continue to keep us in your heart and prayers and we in turn will keep upholding the basic liberties every human being should have.

Thank you for the support!

Sean Finley

A Very Special "Thank You!"

Dear Pastor Paul and St. Michael -

Now that the dust has settled a bit (and the seeds have been planted) I just wanted to thank you again for all the tremendous support St. Michaels' gives to Jesus Loves Kzoo! In particular, thank you for the practical and much appreciated gift of lending use of tables and chairs (and the button maker, too). This support is absolutely invaluable, and we treasure St. Michael's as an integral partner in the movement!

Many prayers and blessings,

Julie Kieser

Pastor Naumann and Friends of
St. Michael Mighty Messengers,

Thank you for your generous offering of $500.00 to POBLO International Ministries. We truly appreciate your continued support and the help our Lord extends to us through you in this way.

We are always striving to find new ways and better formats to inform, educate and keep up with the challenges of our Lord's mission to seek and save the lost. In this regard, be sure to look on our website HTTP://WWW.POBLO.ORG to order our latest publication and messaging tool, "Unequally Yoked."

May the Lord richly bless the Mighty Messengers of St. Michael Lutheran, Portage.

Rev. Richard P. Laeder, Emeritus

THANKS TO TELECARE WORKERS

Over the past seven years our Telecare workers have done an excellent job of making contact with every family in the congregation. However, with the rise of telemarketing, people have begun to dislike receiving phone calls. Telephoning is no longer a preferred means of making contact with many members of our congregation.

Accordingly, the Board of Lay Ministry has decided to replace the telecare program with a more focused effort. If you enjoy receiving a monthly call, please let your telecare caller know, or put a note, including your name and phone number, in John Engelmann's mail box #230. Finally, the board of lay ministers would like to thank all the telecare workers, both present and past, for their efforts, which made the telecare program a success.

WE LOVINGLY SERVE!

THANK YOU to our **Lectors!** Every week these dedicated servants of God put their reading skills to use during worship services. They receive the scripture readings to be read prior to the upcoming weekend and practice reading them out loud in order to clearly share the Word of God. If you would like to participate by serving in this way, contact Meg Bess at 269-324-9817.

St. Michael Needs:

- Lectors
- Board of Properties Members
- Board of Youth Members
- Board of Education Members
- Sunday School Teachers/Facilitators

Contact Jan Jett at the church office at 327-7832.

July Financials

9 months

	11/1/16-7/31/17
Church Revenue	$ 568,996
School Revenue	$ 573,360
Total Revenue	$1,142,356
Total Expenses	$1,160,884
Net Surplus (deficit)	$ (18,529)
Expense Budget	$1,185,196
Under/(Over) Budget	$ 24,312
Working Cash Balance	$ (12,722)
Mortgage Balance	$ 841,975

July Average Attendance 325
August Average Attendance . . . 292
Avg. 2017 Attendance. 345

Designated Fund Balances

Trust Fund	$205,201
Building Contingency	$ 30,586
Technology Refresh	$ 5,948
AV Fund	$ 4,430
Sunday School	$ 329
Youth Donations	$ 12,802
Youth Accounts	$ 12,664
Good Samaritan	$ 483
Memorials	$ 203
L.A.M.P. Mission Trip	$ 1,271
Quilting	$ 118
Church Worker Scholarship	$ 925
School Improvements	$ 7,922
Tuition Assistance	$ 31,730
School Music	$ 85

BACK TO SCHOOL WISH LIST

Lutheran World Relief

As you start shopping for the upcoming school year, please consider helping by donating 70-80 page spiral notebooks (8x10-1/2" size) 24 count crayons, 12" rulers, unsharpened pencils, safety tip scissors, black or navy ball point pens, finger nail clippers, infant socks. Place items In the cedar chest in the Communication Center. *Contact Michele Ryan at (269) 649-1387 with questions.*

Saint Michael Lutheran Church and School

Staff Members, Board Directors, and Other Leaders

*Paid Positions

Senior Pastor * . . . . . Rev. Dr. Paul R. Naumann
Office Hours: Tues-Fri. 9 am -12 noon
E-mail Address: naumann@mightymessengers.org
Director of Children & Youth Ministry *. . . . . Andi Lynch
Office Hours: Monday 1—3:30pm, Tues-Thur 8:30am-3:30pm, Fri—off
Assistant Pastor *. . . . . Rev. Jason Toman
Office Hours: Tues. 9:00 am—Noon
Church Secretary * . . . . . Kendra Muller, Marianne Wiersma
Director of Ministry Operations * . . . . . Jan Jett
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 am-3:00 pm
School Principal/Teacher * . . . . . Greg Johnson
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Kindergarten Teacher * . . . . . Brenda Heintz
Saint Michael Lutheran School - First Grade Teacher * . . . . . Barbara Schubert
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Second Grade Teacher * . . . . . Annie Hecht
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Third Grade Teacher * . . . . . Roxanne Topham
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Fourth/Fifth Grade Teacher *. . . . . Emily Lauterbach
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Sixth Grade Teacher *. . . . . Julie Prentice
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Seventh/Eighth Grade Teacher * . . . . . Lisa Lam
Saint Michael Lutheran School - Secretary * . . . . . Sharon Robinson
Christ for Kids Childcare Director * . . . . . Emily Ritchie
Parish Nurse . . . . . Jean Minger
Technology Coordinator * . . . . . Vacant
Sextons* . . . . . Brian Chapman, Bud Hetrick
Stephen Ministry Leaders. . . . . Mike Frank, Pastor & Dana Naumann, and Virginia Hetrick
Stephen Ministers . . . . . Zoe Miller, Beth Burnett, Lynne Wendzel, Nonie Knight, Bud Hetrick, Kelley McNees, Mara Price, Jean Minger, Linda Handy, Kelly Sauck
President . . . . . Rob Kuhlman
Vice President . . . . . Jack Spenner
Board of Lay Ministry Director . (See table below for list of individual lay ministers) . . . . . Mark Hough
Worship Media Specialist * . . . . . Lorraine Dudash
Prayer Ministry Coordinator . . . . . Vacant
Recording Secretary . . . . . Carol Conklin
Treasurer . . . . . Sandi Champion
Financial Secretary . . . . . Brad Hunter
Newsletter/Bulletin Publications * . . . . . Marianne Wiersma
Board of Parish Education Director . . . . . Vacant
Sunday School . . . . . Vacant
Adult Education . . . . . Jesse Hogue
Vacation Bible School . . . . . Vacant
Board of Early Childhood & School Ministries Director . . . . . Jenn Pangburn
Board of Evangelism and Missions Director . . . . . Vacant
Cradle Roll . . . . . Peggy Makowski
Board of Parish Fellowship Director . . . . . Vacant
Women's Fellowship Chair . . . . . June Kucks
LWML . . . . . Sandy Maya
Board of Church Properties Director . . . . . Mark Pangburn
Board of CELL Group Ministry . . . . . Jan Chilcott
Board of Stewardship Director . . . . . Mark Chilcott
Volunteer Ministry Committee Chair . . . . . Vacant
Board of Youth & Young Adult Ministry Director . . . . . Roxanne Topham
Senior High Youth Group Leaders . . . . . Jerry Kuss, Roxanne Topham, Jeff Burnett, Alison Van Orman
Junior High Youth Group Leaders . . . . . Andi Lynch
Altar Guild . . . . . Kristi Rudowske, Linda Fry, Mary Wietzke

Shepherd Group Assignments

Lay Minister	Family Names Start with	Family Names Start with & include
Geoff Bohren	A	Boelman
(Open)	Bohren	Champion
Dan Bryer	Chilcott	D
Mel Schroeder	E	Freeman
Mark Hough	Frommann	G
John Engelmann	H	June
(Open)	Jurhs	Larsen
Ernie VanOrman	Lausman	Meewes
Eric VanOrman	Meesing	Newkirk
Jeff Burnett	Newland	P
Andy Allan	Q	Shook
Greg Wedel	Sible	Stolsky
(Open)	Sullivan	T
Arlan Wendzel	U	Z

St Michael Lutheran Church
7211 Oakland Drive
Portage, MI 49024-4151

Church Phone: 269-327-7832
School Phone: 269-327-0512
Fax: 269-327-3148
website: www.mightymessengers.org
E-mail: stmike@mightymessengers.org

DATED MATERIAL

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Mission at St. Michael Lutheran Church is to make disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ by building up one another in the faith and reaching out to others with the Gospel.

We call this ***"Making Mighty Messengers for Christ."***

SEPTEMBER 2017

SEPT 4 — LABOR DAY

SEPT 10 — EDUCATION SUNDAY
- SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS, 9:45AM
- LEARNING HOUR FALL KICK-OFF, 9:45AM

SEPT 17 — LAMP SUNDAY

SEPT 23 — SCHOLARSHIP GOLF OUTING @ ANGELS CROSSING, 9:00AM

SEPT 24 — ST MICHAEL SUNDAY