



THE MIGHTY MESSENGER

April 2021

Volume 61, Number 4

“Early on the first day of the week...”

(John 20:1)

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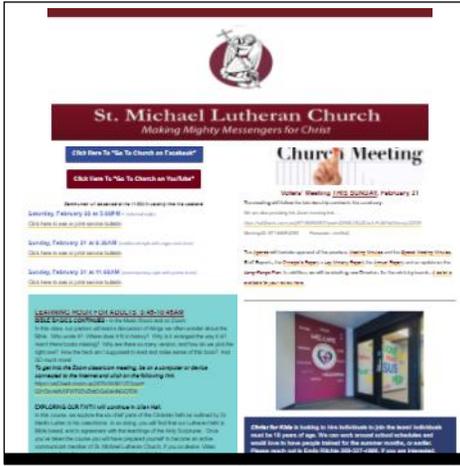
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CONNECT WITH OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILY AT MIGHTYMESSENGERS.ORG, ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

WE ARE CALLED

to make disciples of *Jesus*

STAY CONNECTED



Email Updates

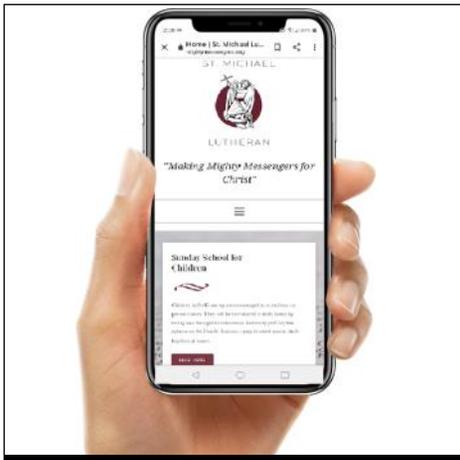
Sign up for regular email updates from St. Michael. We try to send something mid-day on Friday and when special services and events are happening.

Office Contacts:

Church + 269-327-7832
 School + 269-327-0512
 Christ For Kids + 269-327-4889

mightymessengers.org

St. Michael's website is full of helpful information. We are excited about the new design and support



The vision of St. Michael Lutheran is to be a growing congregation within our local community that is "Making Mighty Messengers for Christ" by helping people:

DEVELOP, by the power of the Holy Spirit working through His Word and Sacraments, a more vibrant and personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ that expresses itself in consistent prayer and worship; and to

GAIN practical, relevant, biblical insights for faithful Christian living both through personal Bible study and through our various Christian educational offerings such as Sunday School, Bible class, St. Michael Lutheran School; and to

BELONG to a loving and caring family of faith with a solid doctrinal heritage through active membership, ministry involvement, and Small Group participation; and to

GIVE of ourselves to others in loving Christian service and evangelistic witness within the congregation and beyond it to our local community and world.

Plan to join us for
Holy Week Services!

Maundy Thursday
 April 1 at 7:00PM

Good Friday
 April 2 at 7:00PM

Easter Vigil
 April 3 at 5:00PM

Easter Sunrise
 April 4 at 7:30AM

Easter Morning Song
 April 4 at 11:00AM

Facebook and YouTube icons are present in the bottom right corner.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturdays at 5:00pm - *Informal Worship*
 Sundays at 8:30am - *with the organ and Lutheran Service Book hymnal*
 Sundays at 11:00am - *Contemporary Worship*
Holy Communion: The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered at Lamplight the Saturday before a second or fourth Sunday; at 8:30am on second and fourth (and fifth) Sundays; at 11:00am on first and third (and fifth) Sundays
Supervised child care is provided throughout Sunday morning worship services and Sunday School is available for kids PS-High School during Bible Classes.

And we VALUE...

“EASTER: THE GREAT COMEBACK”

As April of 2021 begins, I can't help but think back to a year ago when on account of the pandemic, we were sadly not able to have people worshipping from the pews for Holy Week. We didn't offer the Lord's Supper to our members even on Maundy Thursday (I'm sure that's never happened before), and we couldn't gather in the sanctuary for Easter services either. Thankfully, we were able to bring God's Word to you and thousands others through our Facebook Live broadcasts (which was truly amazing), but it was still very sad not to be able to gather face-to-face.

We were so grateful to be able to open up the sanctuary for worship in June of 2020, but the number of people in the pews for worship on a given weekend continues to be only about half of what we used to enjoy before the pandemic hit. So we're back, but not all the way back. We still have a long ways to go before we've got herd immunity, and we're still looking forward to the day when our new normal is a bit more like our old normal. At the same time, we recognize that many things will always be different, and that might not be all bad. We've learned so many new things in this past year that are here to stay – that hopefully our new normal will be a new and improved normal, in which our ministry can be even better than it was before.

One of my favorite contemporary Christian singers, Danny Gokey, recorded a song in 2017 that is very fitting at this time in 2021 too. It's entitled “The Comeback” and it goes like this. . .

1) *After a season of night falls and push backs, After the heartache of wrong turns and sidetracks, just when they think they've got you, game, set, match, here comes the comeback.*

2) *Just cause you lay low, got up slow, unsteady don't mean you blacked out, or bought out, you're ready. Just when they think there's nothing left, running on empty here comes the comeback.*

Chorus: This is your time, your moment. The fire, the fight, you're golden. You've come so far, keep going! Oh, here comes the comeback!

3) *You feel the lightning, the thunder, you're soul shakes Under the roar of the heaven, the tide breaks, And from the ashes you will take your place. Here comes the comeback. (Chorus)*

Bridge: There is no mountain you can't face. There is no giant you can't take. All of your tears were not a waste. Your one step away.

While the song doesn't explicitly reference Jesus, it has a kind of resurrection spirit in the song that is fitting for us as God's Easter people. As a much older song puts it, “we serve a risen Savior,” whom not even death could hold down. He has won a spectacular victory over all that would have defeated us, and so our attitude in the midst of life's setbacks and suffering (even in death) can be positive and hopeful. We can be optimistic about the future because we've read the end of “The Book” and we know it has the most happy ending ever! Like St. Paul said to the Thessalonians, “*since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with Him the believers who have died. . . (and so we can) encourage each other with these words*” (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18).

I pray that this Easter season, and all the seasons ahead, will be characterized as a great comeback for our congregation. May you and your family rejoice in a return to better days, and in a great rebound in your active lifestyle. But may you and I also benefit from what we've learned, and yes from all that we have suffered, confident that through Christ Jesus, our Risen Savior, God can, has, and will work all things for the good of those who love Him and are called to belong to His forever family.



P.S. If you want watch the music video of the song performed live it's quite thrilling - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfhFWjaOfJs&ab_channel=DannyGokeyVEVO

As an added bonus, watch this one too - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcLwbzHvsNY&ab_channel=CareyGoin

WORSHIP

Gathering around God's Word and Sacraments to receive His gifts & give Him glory.

We value worship, as we gather around God's Word and Sacraments, that is meaningful and uplifting, including clear, relevant preaching. We appreciate both traditional liturgy and hymns as well as contemporary music and desire variety and quality in all our worship services so that we might have a meaningful experience of praising and glorifying God with the best that we have.

Colossians 3:16-17

Romans 6:3-5 -- "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

+++

Baptism is such a precious gift from God, and a miracle that connects us to Jesus' own death and resurrection! When you were baptized, the "old you" died and the new creation rose to eternal life. That's right, you are living your new, eternal life right now!

To "remember your baptism" simply means to remember who you are and WHOSE you are, especially since you live in a world surrounded by sin. Satan would love for you to forget about your baptism, and to dwell on your own sins. Instead, you can defiantly and joyfully stand in your baptismal identity, knowing your sins have been washed away and you belong to Jesus.

No matter what happens to you in this life, even if you should die, you belong to Jesus and "nothing can snatch you out of His hand" (John 10:28). You and I have eternal life now, and we know that JUST as Jesus is physically risen from the dead, we will physically rise too. Live confidently in Jesus' love and promise TODAY!

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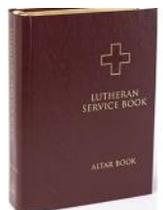
*God's own child, I gladly say it:
I am baptized into Christ!
He, because I could not pay it,
Gave my full redemption price.
Do I need earth's treasures many?
I have one worth more than any
That brought me salvation free
Lasting to eternity!*

(LSB #596 Text: Paul Gerhardt)



Pastor Maske

At the start of the pandemic, all printed materials were removed from the pews, not knowing how the virus was spreading. The liturgy, Bible readings, and songs were displayed on the screens in the sanctuary and shown in our broadcasts. As a first step back to normal, we have returned the hymn books to the pews for those who would like to use them. The pews and chairs are disinfected with an electrostatic sprayer after each worship service. This will now also include the hymn books that are in the pew racks.



MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

Great news! St. Michael's traditional 8:30 AM service will now be posted to the Spiritual TV Channel, according to this schedule.



Monday	6AM
Tuesday	10:30 PM
Wednesday	5PM
Thursday	Midnight & 8AM
Friday	5AM & 1PM
Saturday	7AM & 8:30PM
Sunday	3:30 & 11:30 AM, 2PM

Charter Spectrum Channel 189

Same Program
New Name



Worship Anew is the
new name for Worship
for Shut-Ins.

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS & SERMON SUMMARIES

April 4, 2021 – Easter Sunday Psalm 16; Isaiah 25:6-9; Mark 16:1-8
“Life on The Mountain” - Sermon Text: **Isaiah 25:6-9** - Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia! Let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation on this glorious Easter! He takes us from the valley of the shadow of death and gives us *Life on The Mountain* where death is swallowed up forever and tears are wiped away from all faces.

April 11, 2021 – Second Sunday of Easter Psalm 148:1-2, 11-14; 1 John 2:1-2; John 20:19-31 “That You May Believe” - Sermon Text: John 20:30-31 - Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

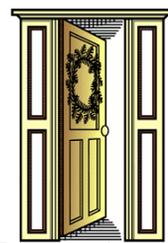
The Apostle John wrote his Gospel for this purpose: that you may believe. Two questions arise. Believe what? Why believe?

April 18, 2021 – Third Sunday of Easter Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36-49 “The Job of the Church” - Sermon Text: Luke 24:47 - Rev. Thomas Eggold

Because of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. This is why Jesus came, and sharing this message is precisely the job He has given to His church.

April 25, 2021 – Fourth Sunday of Easter Psalm 23; Acts 4:1-12; John 10:11-18 “The Good Shepherd” - Sermon Text: John 10:11 - Rev. Shayne Jonker

“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” The Good Shepherd, Jesus, has gone ahead of you through suffering and death to resurrection, life, and glory. Your Shepherd lives, and in Him, you live too. The grave couldn't hold Him, and it can't hold you either.



Remembering Our Shut-ins

Caroline Barkow
Lotte Christoph
Shirley Cosgrove
Ginny Evans
Dorothy Ferguson
Nola Geissel
Audrey Glover
Virgil Harrison
Nancy Heath
Norma Holst*
Bob Johnson
Flo Kangas*
Carol McCarty*
Ardean Monck
Marilyn Sible
*non-members

TV MINISTRY YOU CAN TRUST!

Spiritual Channel 189
AT&T U-Verse Channel 99
Access for
Kalamazoo and Portage
WJPG-LD 26 (TCT)

Sunday 6 AM
12 Noon, 6PM
12 Midnight

Repeats on Wednesdays

- 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

DISCIPLESHIP

Christian education is vital to our Spiritual health and growth.

We value discipleship through the Christian education of children and adults of all ages as essential and vital to our spiritual health and growth. While we highly value people of every age, we are especially excited about our population of young families, many of whom come into our congregation through our Christian education programs for children.

Luke 18:15-17

Vacation Bible School 2021



During BOLT Vacation Bible School, there will be virtual experiences ... to incorporate live-action fun, music and interactivity. You can bring VBS right into your home, or reach out into the neighborhood. We have streamlined VBS 2021 to 3 days that illustrate what it means to listen to, focus on, and follow Jesus.

We will offer a basket of goodies for all that register. *More information will come soon!*

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

Classes are meeting in person with a mask!

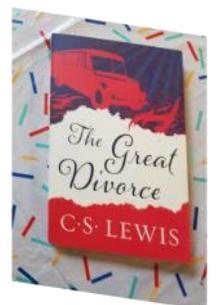
Meeting in the Gym together for a brief lesson starter, and then will divide for smaller group activities.

- ◆ **3rd-7th Grades** in Room 119 (hallway on north side of gym) Tammy Songer and Aaron Allen
- ◆ **PreK-2nd Grades** in the Gymnasium with Mary Wright

We are looking for teaching assistants: Please consider serving the Lord in a way that teaches the children! It would be great to have someone join us that has musical skills.

The Wednesday Bible study, that meets during confirmation, will be doing "The Great Divorce" by C.S. Lewis. Both men and women are welcome. Join us beginning April 7 from 6-7:00 PM!

"The writer finds himself in Hell boarding a bus bound for Heaven. The amazing opportunity is that anyone who wants can stay in Heaven, can"...what happens may surprise you!!



MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

LEARNING HOUR FOR ADULTS 9:45-10:45AM SUNDAYS

To get into the Zoom classroom meeting, be on a computer or device connected to the internet and open the following link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87649486125?pwd=Q21Dcm9lV0FWT0ZnZltdOGx6aHNGQT09>

Thank, Praise, Serve, and Obey

Recover the Joys of Piety

WILLIAM WEEDON

Join us for a new book study!

BEGINNING SUNDAY, APRIL 11

9:45AM | MUSIC ROOM & ZOOM

Video and Discussion Facilitated by Mel Schroeder

Piety has fallen on hard times.

Some associate it with its evil twin, pietism, and reject piety based on the incorrect assumption that the two are one and the same. Piety turns our attention from ourselves out toward God and His promises and toward our neighbor in love and care.

Piety is simply the cultivation of godly habits. Let's work towards becoming more godly together.



OUR VISION for making mighty messengers for Christ, involves helping people develop a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. To that end, we offer at least twice per year a ten week Bible study course on the basics of the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective called "Exploring Our Faith." At the conclusion of this course, those who would like to become communicant members of our congregation might do so. Upon the completion of this course, one might also wonder what's next. Developing a personal relationship with God happens as the Holy Spirit works on us through His means of grace, that is, His Word and Sacraments. We engage with God's Word and Sacraments in worship and communion, and we respond to them in service, fasting, giving, witnessing, and other Spiritual disciplines of Christian piety. The new CPH course "Thank, Praise, Serve, and Obey" can help us explore these things and put them into practice. The book's title is derived from Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Creed, and was written by the former chaplain to the LCMS headquarters, Rev. William Weedon. The course features him in video lectures, but leaves plenty of time for discussion too. Participants in the class are encouraged to read a chapter of the book in advance of the class session, and then come with their comments and questions for a lively class discussion on this important and very practical topic.



MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



Summer 2021

Listen to, focus on, and Follow Jesus

Christ for Kids summer theme for 2021 is **BOLT!** Summer session begins June 21st. Registration forms required for children 3 years and up. First-Come, First Served Basis.



We will learn what it means to listen to, focus on, and follow Jesus. In addition to our study of God's word, the students will participate in a wide variety of fun and engaging activities. Mondays we will have chapel outside in our outdoor worship area. Tuesdays and Thursdays is water day!! Most Fridays we will have a surprise special event or visitor come in depending on COVID restrictions.

Soccer Shots coming to Christ for Kids

We are excited to offer this here at Christ for Kids this summer. Soccer Shots is an engaging children's soccer program with a focus on character development.

For ages 3-5 years old, Soccer Shots utilizes creative and imaginative games to focus on basic soccer skills like dribbling, passing and shooting. We also highlight a positive character trait each session such as respect teamwork, and appreciation.

For ages 6-8 years old, soccer shots focuses on individual skill, fitness, and sportsmanship, providing an opportunity for children to be challenged through fun games and team interaction. Children will also be introduced to competition in a developmentally appropriate manner.

The class will meet once a week while the children are here. It will go for 7 weeks once it starts. You will sign up through Soccer Shots and pay through them as well. It is not required that you participate. More information will be coming about this as soon as we receive it from Soccer Shots.



*CFK will be closed July 5th in observance of Independence Day.

*CFK will be closed on August 11th for a whole center wide training with the Michigan District for Early Childhood centers.

*Christ for Kids will be closed the week of August 23-August 27 for staff training and cleaning of the center.

*Christ for Kids will be closed on September 6th for the Labor Day Holiday.

Christ for Kids is looking to hire individuals to join the team! Individuals must be 18 years of age. We can work around school schedules and would love to have people trained for the summer months, or earlier. Please reach out to Emily Ritchie 269-327-4889, if you are interested.

Daily Activities:

- Monday: Chapel Day
- Tuesday: Water Day for all ages
- Wednesday: make our own lunch Day (no need to pack a lunch on Wednesdays)
- Thursday: WATER DAY for all ages
- Friday: Fun Friday!

MEALS and SNACKS

Christ for Kids will provide a healthy mid-morning and afternoon snack including a serving of milk or juice. Students will need to bring a sack lunch, and if desired, a breakfast from home. Milk will be provided for both breakfast and lunch. On Wednesdays, we will be making lunch here for everyone. You will not need to bring a lunch on Wednesdays.



EVANGELISM

Reaching out with the saving Gospel and proclaiming His truth to all people.

We value evangelism and believe that the good news of the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the main message of the church. We care about meeting all human needs but recognize that the most important need people have is for a love relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and so we reach out with this saving Gospel and proclaim the truth of God's Word to all people without compromise. Acts 1:8



EASTER OUTREACH AT COLONIAL ACRES

After the cancellation of the planned egg hunt by CA's management due to Covid regulations, our team met to determine plan B.

We made and distributed Easter bags for all kids and teens who have ever been involved with either the Good News Crew or City Life Clubs in the past. Delivery of the bags was accomplished by volunteers visiting family's homes. This provided a great opportunity to reconnect with those who haven't yet returned to club meetings.

There were two types of bags: for elementary students and another for teen students. Both bags included Easter eggs/candy, school items, fun items, and an activity that creatively communicates the Easter story of our Lord, Jesus.

- ⇒ 100 Elementary bags were assembled by the Docsa family on behalf of St. Michael. Kelly is the Evangelism Board point person for the Colonial Acres activities.
- ⇒ 25 Teen bags were assembled by Lynda Haskins of Renovation Church.
- ⇒ Pam DeGoffau added stuffed eggs to the bags at The Bridge Church.
- ⇒ Teen bags were distributed on Tuesday night, March 30, by Youth For Christ leader, Tyler Gjeltema.
- ⇒ Elementary bags were distributed on Wednesday night, March 31, by leaders and other volunteers.

The Portage church partners of the Jesus Loves Kalamazoo Coalition that does outreach to the Colonial Acres by is thankful for all prayers and volunteers, when events such as this take place. As new activities develop in the coming months, we encourage St. Michael families to serve and volunteer together.

OUR MISSIONARIES

“Making Mighty Messengers for Christ” Around the World - Matthew 28:19-10

Rev. James and Deaconess Christel Neuendorf serve the Lord in Puerto Rico.

Both have served as missionaries in this region

since 2008, based in Panama and then in the Dominican Republic. James serves as a church planter and pastor in the city of Ponce, Puerto Rico. His focus is to establish a strong Lutheran presence in this city, which will boldly proclaim the Gospel and meet the physical and spiritual needs of a community that is hungry for the Gospel and for hope. James engages daily with Ponce community members to share in their lives and to bring them into the life-giving presence of Jesus in Word and Sacrament. He is also working to create a generation of local leaders and well-grounded laity and future pastors who will be able to continue to spread the Gospel throughout Puerto Rico, around the Latin America region, and the world. Christel is involved in the long-term disaster relief efforts at the mission's various Casa de Amparo y Respuesta al Desastre (House of Refuge and Disaster Response) mercy houses. From these places, LCMS missionaries and Puerto Rican Lutherans offer food, water and other basic necessities to community members affected. She is also engaged in assessing needs in the community and coordinating efforts to meet those needs as a congregation and mission.

James and Christel both grew up in Michigan. James, as a pastor's son, he attended Concordia University and met Christel. He earned his Master of Divinity at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN. Christel also graduated from Concordia University, Ann Arbor, MI, with a degree in business and received her deaconess certificate from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Pray for the Neuendorfs as they serve. Ask God for their safety and for wisdom as they navigate the challenges of church planting in the midst of disaster recovery.

- BIRTHDAYS: James – Nov. 6, Christel – Feb. 8 • ANNIVERSARY: Aug. 8
- Visit lcms.org/neuendorf



Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann serve the Lord in the Dominican Republic.

As the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regional chaplain, Jonathan provides pastoral care to LCMS missionaries and their families in over 10 countries. He also teaches future Latin American pastors at the seminaries in this region.

Cheryl administers the Dominican Republic Mercy Center, teaching women to share the Gospel and to carry out acts of mercy with their neighbors. She also assists in mission congregations and facilitates the Spanish translation and distribution of Lutheran biblical resources to missionaries, mission churches and partner churches in this region.

Jonathan received a bachelor's degree from Concordia University, Ann Arbor, MI, and his Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN. He earned his Ph.D. from Glasgow University, Scotland. Jonathan served as a missionary pastor for over two decades in East Kilbride, Scotland and Ruislip, England, and then as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Oakmont, Pa. Cheryl received a bachelor's degree from Valparaiso University, and was consecrated as a Lutheran deaconess that same day. She earned a master's degree in theology and church history from Glasgow University, Scotland. Cheryl has served as a deaconess at Lutheran Home for the Aged, Kendallville, IN, and by her husband's side at congregations in Scotland, England and Pennsylvania. Over the years, Cheryl has worked as a freelance writer and editor and has taught deaconess students in the U.S., Latin America and Africa. Jonathan and Cheryl have six adult children and 20 grandchildren.

Pray for Jonathan and Cheryl as they serve. Ask God to protect them as they travel and do the work He has created for them to do.

- BIRTHDAYS: Jonathan – March 19, Cheryl – June 23
- ANNIVERSARY: June 4 • Visit lcms.org/jonathan.naumann



Rev. Dr. Edward and Monica Naumann serve the Lord in South Asia.

In his role as a theological educator, Edward works with local church leaders to train new pastors, to provide opportunities for ongoing theological education and to produce Christian educational publications. Through the relationships formed, Edward and Monica share the Gospel with the people in the communities in which they serve and live.

Edward was born in Bellshill, Scotland and grew up in Middlesex, England. He received a master's degree in Classics from The University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He received his Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN. He also earned a master's degree and a doctorate of philosophy in Greek and Latin from The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. Before serving in South Asia, Edward served as an assistant pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Oakmont, PA. Monica received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Valparaiso University and a master's in nursing from The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. Before serving in South Asia, Monica was a Family Nurse Practitioner. Edward and Monica have six children - Martin, William, Charles, Robert, Emily and Alfred - who join them on the mission field.

Pray for the Naumanns as they live and work in South Asia and continue to learn the new culture and language. Pray for God's provision of a good education for their children. Pray that the Word of God bears abundant fruit as Edward proclaims it through his teaching and the publications he works on. Let us give thanks to God that this family is serving His children in this part of the world.

- BIRTHDAYS: Edward – Nov. 23, Monica – Nov. 26, Martin – Sept. 21, William – June 5, Charles – July 8, Robert – Sept. 8, Emily – Aug. 12, Alfred – Oct. 4
- ANNIVERSARY: June 22 • Visit lcms.org/naumann



FELLOWSHIP

Reconciled through Christ, actively loving and caring for one another.

We value fellowship and want a friendly church that is like a loving family that actively cares for one another in times of need. When inevitable conflicts arise among us, we desire to be reconciled to one another, to communicate honestly and lovingly with each other, and to worship, work, and play together in peace and harmony.

Acts 2:42-47



Deuteronomy 7:6 and 14:2 – "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession."

Chosen

8th Grade - High School Sunday School morning classes in the Youth Room and Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings.



Questions?
Contact Us at Info@GodLovesMarriage.org

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with Your Spouse
in a Whole New Way!**

April 23-25, 2021

on a
**Lutheran Marriage Encounter
Virtual Experience**

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GodLovesMarriage.org

**GodLoves
MARRIAGE**

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

NEED HELP? IT'S BIBLICAL

It's hard to ask for help, isn't it? And in today's world, where a pandemic lingers – prompting many to take health measures that only increase their isolation – asking for help is *harder still*.

These days there must be countless people, hidden behind their masks and their doors, who are toughing it out on their own, even though they could benefit from a fellow Christian who would listen and care for them. Do you know someone like that? Might it even describe you?

The truth is, God did not create us to be independent. We were created to be interdependent. The Bible is clear on this. The New Testament includes more than 50 verses that contain the words “one another.” A few are listed here. *QUIZ: Can you match them to their Bible verse?*

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. ____ Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. | |
| 2. ____ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. | A. 2 Cor. 1:3-4 |
| 3. ____ Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. | B. 1 Peter 4:8-9 |
| 4. ____ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. | C. Romans 12:10 |
| 5. ____ Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. | D. Hebrews 10:24-25 |
| 6. ____ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. | E. 1 Thess. 5:11 |
| | F. Galatians 6:2 |

As verses like these indicate, God does not intend for us to suffer alone. Jesus promises, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). We can receive this promised rest when we turn to one another for comfort and help. That's why we have Stephen Ministers. They are equipped, ready, and waiting to provide the comfort and care God very much desires you to have.



ARE YOU GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME?

A Stephen Minister can meet with you - privately and confidentially - to listen, support, and remind you of Christ's presence in your life.

If you want to learn more about Stephen Ministry for yourself, or someone else you know, contact:

Heather Crampton
hcrampton@gmail.com
269-743-9595

Rev. Paul Naumann
naumann@mightymessengers.org
269-491-7832

Dana Naumann
dana.naumann@gmail.com
269-808-7832

Has the COVID-19 crisis made it difficult to pay your bills?

Like the first Christians who “shared with anyone who was in need” (Acts 2:45), so also we at St. Michael want to provide financial assistance for those among us who have need of it. Please send Pastor Naumann an email at: naumann@mightymessengers.org describing your situation and, keeping everything in confidence, we will do what we can to help you.

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



Maxine June
turned 90 years young on
Sunday, March 28th.

A card shower with light refreshments was held in the Library between services.



Thank you to Rachel Semrau, the Parish Fellowship Director, for organizing this celebration and the Semrau family for supporting. Also to Maxine's cousin, Beverly Snow and family for making it a special day. A 100-year-old crank handle music box was serenading everyone in the reception line. Sunday School children brought flowers to the "Flower Fairy."

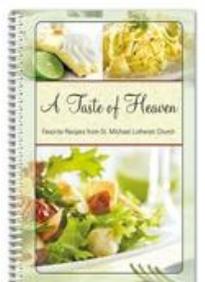


T-Shirt Drive

The LWR committee is collecting t-shirts in an effort to reduce the expenses associated with preparing layette kits. Gently used adult t-shirts size medium to XXL will be made into diapers. The t-shirts can be any color and can be printed or plain. Hundreds are needed, so please clean out your extras and place them in the cedar chest in the Communication Center. If you have questions or would like to help with this project, contact Michele Ryan at 269 649-1387.

COOKBOOKS MAKE GREAT GIFTS!!

90 Recipes were collected from members and a nice spiral-bound book is ready for purchase. They would make great gifts for teachers, friends and neighbors. \$9.00 each while the supply lasts. Available in the Church Office.



LUTHERAN MEN'S GOLF LEAGUE will start the 2021 season on the last Thursday evening in April with a social mixer. Rounds of play will begin the first Thursday of May at Pineview Golf Club in Three Rivers. Fee for the league is \$25, plus weekly green fees. [\$13 week (\$260) to walk, or \$380 with cart.] *There is a discount if you pre-pay for the season.* Anyone interested, can call or e-mail Andy Allan, aallan@arvco.com 269-370-7052 for more details.

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

FIND HOPE IN YOUR VALUE

Expressed Value

Do you feel valued? Too many people don't.

God (*not others*) defines your value, and he says:

- ◆ **You are seen.**
- ◆ **You are not alone.**
- ◆ **You have purpose.**
- ◆ **You have value.**

Psalms 139 especially stands out as God telling us how much he values us.

Valued by God (Psalm 139)

God perceives you (vv. 1-6). In other words, he is aware of, identifies, recognizes, discerns, envisions, and understands you. You are not invisible to him. He sees you. In modern vernacular, God "gets" you and does not take you for granted.

God also gives you his presence (vv. 7-12). He is always in the immediate vicinity. You are never alone, no matter what you've done or how often others make you feel alone. God is always nearby waiting for you to reach out to him.

Not only does God perceive you and give you his presence, but *he also planned you* (vv. 13-16). God arranged and organized for your existence. You were not an accident. Only something of great value gets the type of planning God gave you. Yes, the creator of the universe planned you and knows you intimately, better than you know yourself.

Never forget that *you are precious to God* (vv. 17-18). You have great value to him. You are not worthless. After all, Jesus paid for your salvation with his life. You are dear and beloved to him.

Living Valued

Why do we feel invisible, alone, or worthless when we know how God feels about us?

- ◆ Because we take our focus off what God thinks of us and put it on what others think.
- ◆ Because others don't meet our expectations, and we don't think we meet theirs.
- ◆ Because our sins and failures make us feel unworthy.
- ◆ Because others treat us like they don't value us.
- ◆ Because Satan lies to us.

We cannot control what others say and do. We can only control what we say and do, and even that we struggle to do with consistency at times.

Not only that, but too often we don't express how much we value others well enough nor do we let others show they value us. Yet, we must remember that we are often God's conduits for expressing value

Where to start?

Shouldn't the value God places on us impact how we live our lives? This value can be evident as you:

Focus on what God says about you. Remember how much he values you.

Know that he feels the same way about other people. Let this impact how you treat others.

Express God's value to other people. Let what God thinks of them be your motivation. *Accept* God's value through other people. Let others show they value you. Accept it, and thank God for it.

Thank God for your value. Be grateful that he perceives you, gives you his presence, has a plan for you, and considers you precious.

As we let God's value define us and impact how we live our lives, we also find hope in what is to come. After all, don't you feel more hopeful when you are valued?

God expresses our value many times in the Bible.

[Matthew 10:30-31](#) – Our hairs are numbered, and we are more valuable than the many sparrows he provides for.

[Matthew 12:12](#) – We are more valuable than a single sheep, yet the shepherd leaves the many to save the one.

[John 3:16](#) and [Romans 5:8](#) – Our eternal life was bought with the blood of Jesus while we were still sinners.

[1 Corinthians 10:13](#) – God provides a way out of temptations.

[Ephesians 2:4-10](#) – You are God's masterpiece and were created for good works.

Finding Hope

Notice that toward the end of [Psalm 139](#) (vv. 18-22), David expresses himself to God with some pretty strong emotions. David has done this in other Psalms, too, and it shows us that we can express any and all feelings to God. After all, he knows them anyway.

Notice also how the beginning and the end of the Psalm use some of the same words: *Search me and know me*. They remind us that God knows what we need, and we can trust him to lead us. It is on this basis that David knows he can express himself so intimately to God.



This article was written by Kari Scare – Virginia Hetrick's Daughter

SERVICE

Good stewardship of time, talents and treasure for the work of ministry.

We value service and good stewardship of our time, talents, and treasure within our congregation and community. We put a high premium on the volunteer ministry of our members, believing that the primary role of our professional church workers is not to do all the ministry themselves but to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

Ephesians 4:12

Romans 12:4-8



OBITUARY NOTICE:

Roger Lee Mailand of Seward, Nebraska was born on January 2, 1941 in Seward to Martin Charles and Martha Marie (Crossett) Mailand. He attended Seward High School, graduating in 1958. On June 30, 1963, Roger was united in marriage to Sharon Marie Nokes at St. John Lutheran Church in Seward, Nebraska. Roger served for 33 years in parish ministry as a Lutheran School teacher and youth director at Zion Lutheran Church and School in Auburn, Michigan, St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Farmington Hills, Michigan, and at St. Michael Lutheran Church (where he served as Minister of Christian Education and Youth for 22 years). While in Portage, one year Roger and Pastor Ken Allan received the LEA Pastor/DCE Team Award. Also while in Portage, Roger served on The Croft Retreat Center Board as treasurer, and volunteered at the Portage Community Outreach Center

From St. Michael, Roger was then called to be the Executive Director of Youth and Family Life in the Missouri District where he served for 14 years until retirement. Upon his retirement from the Missouri District, he and his wife, Sharon, retired to Seward, Nebraska, his birthplace. Roger became an active member of St. John Lutheran Church there, serving on the Task Force Committee and also on the Evangelism Board for several years.

In his free time he was very active in the local Noon Club of Kiwanis and also sang with the Kitones, the Kiwanis singing group. He also enjoyed taking family vacations at several National Parks.

Roger passed away on March 12, 2021 in Seward, Nebraska at the age of 80 years, 2 months and 10 days. He is survived by his wife, Sharon Mailand, Seward, NE; sons, Michael (Diane) Mailand, Kalamazoo, Michigan, Joel (Rebecca) Mailand, Yakima, Washington; grandchildren, Micah Joel Mailand and Ethan Matthew Mailand; brother, Richard (Charleen) Mailand, Seward, Nebraska.

Condolence notes can be sent to Sharon at:
123 Struthers Place, Seward, NE 68434

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

Don't Widen the Plate

John Scolinos, long time baseball coach at Pepperdine and Cal Poly, was a featured speaker at the 1996 convention of the American Baseball Coaches Association.

The numerous attendees were excited to absorb some of his wisdom from his many years of coaching.

Coach Scolinos walked on the stage with a necklace made of a full sized, stark white home plate dangling from his neck. He spoke for almost 30 minutes before addressing the prominent prop around his neck. He was now ready to share what he had learned about home plate in his 78 years.

John asked how many Little League coaches were in the crowd, followed by the question, do you know how wide home plate is in Little League? After some hesitation, someone offered, "seventeen inches". That was correct. He proceeded to ask the same question of high school, college, minor league and even Major League coaches. The answer was the same for each, seventeen inches.

Coach then asked what they did with a pitcher who couldn't throw the ball over the plate. Do you widen the plate to twenty or twenty-five inches to improve his chances of throwing a strike? Of course not! What do you do if your best player shows up late for practice or breaks a team rule? Do you change the rules for them? Do you widen the plate? He then asked about their personal lives. What do you do with your marriage, your children, and your work? Do you hold your family accountable? Are there consequences for failing to meet the standards, not following the rules or do you widen the plate? Are the same things happening in school? And what about in church? Are you following the established rules or making accommodations to avoid conflict?

1 Corinthians 16:13 says: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong". You read the Bible. You attend church. Your beliefs are right and true. You know the things you should do. But what happens when these are put to the test? Are you strong enough to stand firm, even though criticism may come? Often it takes the strength of just one person to embolden the courage of others to stand up and do what they know is right.

Prayerfully turn to God to give you the strength to stand firm, be courageous and be the example to your family, your church and your community. As Coach Scolinos stated clearly in his message- don't widen the plate.

We at CEF look forward to coming along side your congregation to help build God's Kingdom



Church Extension Fund



**IF YOU HAVE A
CHURCH KEY,
GIVEN AT SOME POINT WHEN
LEADING A GROUP OR
SERVING IN LEADERSHIP, AND
IT
IS NOT BEING USED
AT THIS TIME,
PLEASE RETURN IT
TO JAY KOSKI IN THE CHURCH
OFFICE.**

If you would like to hold a meeting within the St. Michael building, please be sure to contact the Church Office and schedule the event in advance. This helps to identify what areas need the most immediate attention for cleaning, and to avoid multiple groups expecting to use the same space. It also, gives us some idea of who would be in the building, if by chance there were to be an emergency. Thank you for your cooperation!

GENERAL INFORMATION

SHEPHERD GROUPS

Lay Minister	Family Names Start with	Family Names & include
Geoff Bohren 231-679-4927	A	Boelman
Rich Conklin 269-625-5827	Bohren	Chenevare
Dan Bryer 269-323-7416	Chilcott	D
Mel Schroeder 734-646-9651	E	Franzen
Mark Gady 616-250-3730	Frommann	G
John Engelmann 269-544-1542	H	June
Cory Luma 269-365-8282	Jung	Lapekas
Ernie VanOrman 269-548-5714	Lausman	McNees
Eric VanOrman 269-249-7915	Messing	Nelson
Jeff Burnett 269-806-2683	Nieto	P
Andy Allan 269-501-3763	Q	Shook
Greg Wedel 312-961-4636	Sible	Stolsky
Matt Heintz 269-372-7053	Sullivan	T
Arlan Wendzel 269-279-9196	U	Z

We, as a church, are all better together.

If someone is in need, please reach out to your assigned Lay Minister for assistance.

PANDEMIC PROTOCOL

Masks and appropriate social-distancing allows us to continue to be together!

Live broadcasts, will continue to be available, if you are concerned about your health risk, or the possibility of risking the health of others.



FAITH FORMATION

CHILDREN - Classes are available during the 9:45 AM learning hour on Sunday mornings; Life Skills are being taught on Wednesday evenings at 5:00 PM

TEENS - Classes are available during the 9:45 AM learning hour on Sunday mornings; Confirmation studies for 6-8th grade are on Wednesday evenings at 5:45 PM; Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings at 6:00 PM

ADULTS - Topical studies are available during the 9:45 AM learning hour on Sunday mornings; various Bible study groups, prayer groups, and activity groups meet during the week. Exploring Our Faith is for those that are interested in learning more about being Lutheran, and especially being a member of St. Michael.

NURSERY

Childcare is available for infants up to 4 years old on Sunday mornings during classes and worship times in Room #205 located off the Communication Center.

BAPTISM

Anyone desiring baptism should visit with a pastor who will set up a meeting and schedule an appropriate time.

WEDDINGS

We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). A Wedding in the church is an act of worship. The purpose of a church wedding is to thank and praise God and to petition His blessings upon the couple who solemnize their marriage before Him.

ENEWS DEADLINE

Please consider items you might need to submit to the Church Office for the next email newsletter, as you read the current one. Items need to be submitted by 4PM on Thursdays.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

To insure a quality product is available for the membership, please consider items you might need to submit to the Church Office for the next monthly newsletter, as you read the current one. Deadline is the 20th of each month.

CHANGE OF NAME / ADDRESS / PHONE / EMAIL

You can always call the Church Office or use the form on the website to reach out and share a message with us!
<https://www.mightymessengers.org/contact-us/>

MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

Endowment Fund Distributions

It is the committee's pleasure to tell you that by God's grace and blessings the St. Michael Lutheran Church & School Endowment Fund will help support the following ministries during 2021:

Geri Wheeler School Tuition Assistance = \$3,052.58

School Staff Salary Support = \$4,575.39

General Fund – Used for various ministries depending on request of members

- ♦ **Quilting Group** = \$1,200 for supplies.
- ♦ **Lutheran World Relief Kit Ministry** = \$1,000. To purchase some items that are not donated, so each kit will be complete.
- ♦ **Youth for Christ** = \$3,000. YFC had a \$3M capital campaign for a new eastside ministry building. It just opened. They have raised about \$2.5M.
- ♦ **Flower Fund** – \$500 to the general flower fund, in recognition and thank you to Maxine June for creating the Flower Endowment Fund. More information about the newly created Maxine M June Flower Endowment Fund to come in the May newsletter.

The amount distributed from the General Endowment Fund for the four areas listed above totals - \$5,700. Thus, the overall donation to various ministries was over \$13,000. There remains some funds that could be designated for use during 2021, should the need arise. Please contact committee members or Jay Koski, if you would like to discuss.

Todd Foster (Chairperson) for the Endowment Committee Members
(Dave Johnson, Brad Hunter, Rick Jacobs, John Engelmann)

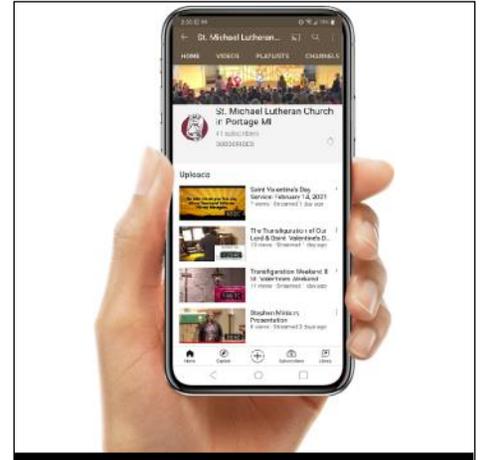
FEBRUARY FINANCIALS 4 months

11/1/2020-2/28/2021

Church Revenue	\$ 327,692
School Revenue	\$ <u>335,810</u>
Total Revenue	\$ 663,502
Total Expenses	\$ 583,066
Net Surplus (deficit)	\$ 80,436
Expense Budget	\$ 593,548
Under/(Over) Budget	\$ 69,954
Working Cash Balance	\$ 134,082
Mortgage Balance	\$ 798,083

Designated Fund Balances

Endowment Fund	\$ 473,433
Building Contingency	\$ 39,794
Technology Refresh	\$ 11,921
Sunday School	\$ 1,042
Youth Donations	\$ 11,062
Youth Accounts	\$ 11,062
Good Samaritan	\$ 4,832
Memorials	\$ 5,177
L.A.M.P. Mission Trip	\$ 6,942
Quilting	\$ 154
Church Worker Scholarship	\$ 235
School Improvements	\$ 28,174
Tuition Assistance	\$ 43,817
School Music	\$ 580
Flower Fund	\$ 427
CFK Grant Fund	\$ 30,163
Women's Fellowship/LWML	\$ 3,743



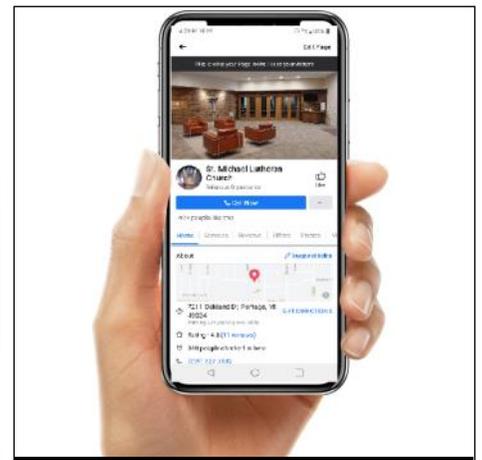
STAY CONNECTED

YouTube

On the St. Michael  YouTube page, You can find sermon videos, Bible classes, guest speakers, children's devotions and Vacation Bible School lessons.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLGVSDNVzjBcEyBthV7_NOg

Facebook

Find worship service videos, devotions, special event announcements and more at 
<https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelLutheranChurchPortageMI>



Welcome!

We believe that the more you study the Bible and encounter God in prayer, the more you learn to trust Him with all you have. Carve out time in your day to nurture your relationship with God and spend time encouraging others.

We believe the best way to follow Jesus is through forming community and sharing our faith with a heart of generosity, not just with money and time, but with our love, appreciation, praise and encouragement.



STAFF:

SENIOR PASTOR

Rev. Dr. Paul R. Naumann
naumann@mightymessengers.org

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Daniel Maske
dmaske@mightymessengers.org

ASSISTANT PASTOR

Rev. Jason Toman
jtoman@mightymessengers.org

BUSINESS & FINANCE MANAGER

Jay Koski
jkoski@mightymessengers.org

CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Tammy Songer
tsonger@mightymessengers.org

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Greg Johnson
gjohnson@mightymessengers.org

SCHOOL SECRETARY

Sharon Robinson

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Brenda Heintz

FIRST GRADE TEACHER

Maralyse Worm

SECOND GRADE TEACHER

Annie Hecht

THIRD GRADE TEACHER

Kim Ruesch

FOURTH GRADE TEACHER

Emily Lauterbach

FIFTH GRADE TEACHER

Julie Prentice

SIXTH/SEVENTH/EIGHTH GRADE TEACHER

Lisa Lam

CHRIST FOR KIDS CHILDCARE DIRECTOR

Emily Ritchie
eritchie@mightymessengers.org

PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

Becky Mohler
Cheryl Julian
Jessica Lonc

WORSHIP MEDIA SPECIALIST

Lorraine Dudash

CHOIR DIRECTOR

Carolyn Bertrand

ORGANIST

Keith Eiser

MORNING SONG DIRECTOR

Jane Connon

SEXTONS

Brian Chapman
Matthew Wright

VOLUNTEERS:

PRESIDENT

Jack Spenner

VICE PRESIDENT

Peter Robert

RECORDING SECRETARY

Tammy Songer

TREASURER

Jan Jett

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Peter Robert, Assistant Director

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& SCHOOL DIRECTOR
Mike Grotelueschen

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Matt Heintz, Director
Greg Wedel, Assistant Director

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Kristi Rudowske, Linda Fry

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Meg Bess, Jan Chilcott

PRAYER MINISTRY COORDINATORS

Barbara Schubert, Virginia Hetrick

USHERS

Mike Minger - Early Service
Jesse Hogue - Late Service

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS

Pastor & Dana Naumann
Heather Crampton, Lynda Rae

STEPHEN MINISTERS

Zoe Miller, Kelley McNees, Ann Gribbin
Linda Rae, Peter Robert, Jackie Michels

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Matt Quardokus, Assistant Director

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LWML

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Chad Doublestein, Assistant Director

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Ryan & Heather Bigelow