

# THE MIGHTY MESSENGER



May 2021  
Volume 61, Number 5

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BIBLE SCHOOL  
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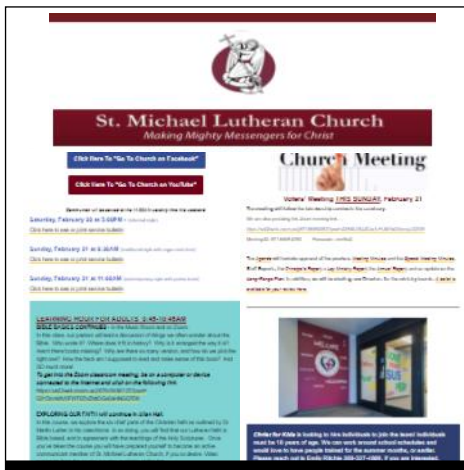
CONNECT WITH OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILY AT [MIGHTYMESSENGERS.ORG](http://MIGHTYMESSENGERS.ORG), ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE



# 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:

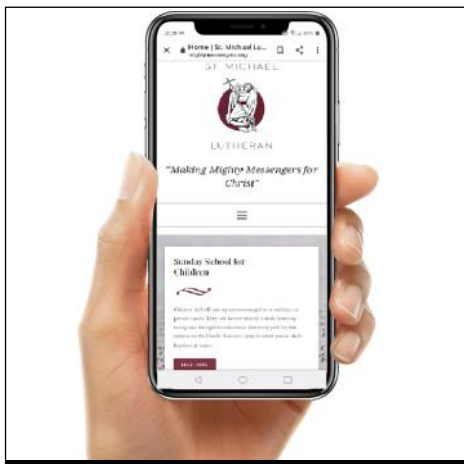
Church + 269-327-7832

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.

## 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.*

*During the Learning Hour (9:45AM-10:45AM) Sunday School is available for kids Preschool to High School, and Adults too!*

## As we strive to reach a new normal - **EVERYONE COUNTS!**



**NEW! Pew Cards and Electronic "touch-free" method for registering your In-Person attendance and taking Communion at Worship Services**  
(You may want to download a QR Reader app to your smartphone to post information.)

**For those watching online:** Please continue to comment and interact with friends, but also go to the "see more..." download your worship format and click the link that allows you to complete the attendance form, letting us know you were a viewer.

# And we VALUE...

## “THINGS ARE LOOKING UP!”

While we had to endure some late April snow, for the most part it's been a great spring. If we dare reflect back on last April, not only were we in the hunker down of sheltering in place, with most everything closed to the public (including worship in the church building), we had a lot of cold and shoveable snow to boot. So in comparison to a year ago, we can certainly say that things are looking up. Whereas we couldn't be in the pews for Easter of 2020 at all, this year it was a great joy to worship in the sanctuary for Easter Sunday with as many as 135 masked worshipers at once, safely distanced

in every other pew. As we continue to enjoy gathering together with our family of faith at St. Michael this Easter season, we do so with a renewed optimism for the future, saying with a certain sigh of relief that things are starting to look up.

In some respects, we're finding that our new normal is better than our old normal. This is especially true when it comes to gathering worship attendance information. Now, guests coming through the front door for worship have an opportunity to sign the guest book and receive a welcome packet from a greeter. Once in the pew, guests and members alike have an attendance card in the pew rack that can be completed "touch-less" by scanning the QR code with their smartphone which will then take them to an electronic attendance form. Furthermore, now those worshipping with us via our livestream on Facebook or YouTube can also register their attendance through an online form.

The online attendance data can then be added to the attendance of those in the pews to give us a true total of how many worshiped with us at any given worship service, even telling us who they are (like in the good old days!).

And speaking of looking up, May 13 is the day in which the Church celebrates "The Ascension of Our Lord." Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, Acts 1 tells us that Jesus rose still higher as He literally floated up into heaven as the disciples stared up in wonder at the clouds. Then two angels appeared and promised them that Jesus would return again someday in the same way in which He left. So ever since then, the Church has been looking up, lifting up our heads for our redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:28). It is this promise of Christ's return that keeps us looking up

no matter how bad things might get here below. We really have no reason to be down in the mouth, and down in the dumps, even when there's much to get us down in this fallen world. We can keep on looking up because we have "been raised with Christ." By His enabling power we can "seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." The Holy Spirit who lives within us helps us set our minds on things above and assures us that when Christ who is our life appears we "also will appear with Him in glory" (see Colossians 3:1-4).

May this heavenly perspective cheer us and fill us with hope no matter what comes our way. May we keep on looking up, no matter what we might hear on the news or read on the internet. May we keep on "looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right

hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). Let us look up to Him in prayer, look up to Him in worship, and then look out to our neighbor and for our neighbor with His love.



Handwritten signature of Paul Gummert.

# 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*

When we gather together for worship here in our sanctuary at St. Michael, or at home online, there is one focal point that always grabs my attention: **the red eternal flame** suspended at the south end of the sanctuary behind the altar. It's a small, red flame that may very well go unnoticed, and yet it is always burning. It never goes out!

This eternal flame can remind us of a few things:

- One: Jesus Christ is the light of the world; the light no darkness can overcome. I love coming to our sanctuary when it is full of people and music and song! But I also enjoy coming to our sanctuary when it is dark and quiet... because no matter how dark and quiet it is, that eternal flame is always burning. One point of light in the middle of a dark space... and that reminds me that;
- Two: Even before we enter the sanctuary, our Lord is already present. This is HIS church, and He lovingly invites us to enter and receive His eternal gifts. This perhaps may be even more special to those who are unable to attend physically at this time. Our Lord has promised that He will be with us always, even to the end of the age. And this is true no matter where we gather together!
- Three: There are times when our own fervor may seem to sputter out... but the love of Jesus will never dwindle. We all have times when our faith and trust in God seems to grow dim. Thank God for His faithfulness and love! Jesus OFTEN came to people who were at the end of their rope, and He continues to do so today!

God bless you all as you continue to receive God's free gifts, and when your own flame of faith seems to be running low, remember that God's love for you will never fade away. The next time you are in our sanctuary (or see it online), take a few moments to reflect upon that red flame, and remember how Jesus has promised you that He will never leave or forsake you. God's love for **you** has been sealed and delivered to you by His grace through Jesus Christ.



Pastor Maske





# MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



**May 2, 2021 – Fifth Sunday of Easter - Psalm 150; 1John 4:1-11; John 15:1-8**  
 “Connected to the Vine” - Text: John 15:1-8 - Rev. Paul Shoemaker

A dormant vineyard looks so bleak, so lifeless. But at the harvest, it is lush and green and filled with ripe grapes. Just as the grapes receive their nourishment from the vine, we Christians receive our spiritual life and nourishment from the Vine, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**May 9, 2021 – Sixth Sunday of Easter - Psalm 98; Acts 10:34-48; John 15:9-17**  
 “Jesus is for You!” - Text: Acts 10:34-48 - Rev. William Mueller

We often struggle with issues of favoritism or partiality. Is one group of people better than another? Is one nation favored more by God? In an eye-opening, opinion-changing, and heart-rendering account in Acts 10, we discover the powerful, eternal truth of “God shows no partiality.”

**May 16, 2021 – The Ascension - Psalm 47; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53**  
 “Jesus Reigns Through Us” - Ephesians 1:22-23 - Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

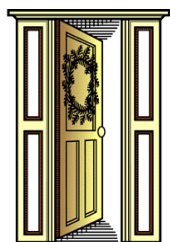
Jesus Christ’s ascension is nicknamed “the forgotten festival.” And yet, we experience it daily. Where is Jesus now? What is He up to? God be praised, Jesus reigns through us!

**May 23, 2021 – Pentecost - Psalm 139:1-10; Acts 2:1-18; John 16:5-15**  
 “The Almighty Spirit” - Text: Acts 2:1-18 - Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

The Holy Spirit is almighty God. The Spirit has acted on your behalf in the past, the Spirit does so now, and will continue to work for your benefit in the future. Why? The Spirit loves you and wants your salvation.

**May 30, 2021 – The Holy Trinity - Psalm 29; Isaiah 6:1-8; John 3:1-17**  
 “WHO WILL GO?” - TEXT: ISAIAH 6:8 - REV. THOMAS EGGOLD

Standing on our own, the sight of the Lord is a terrifying vision of judgment, but in the purifying blood of Christ, we can sing, “Holy, Holy, Holy.” Through the blood of Christ we can speak the good news of the Gospel, and along with Isaiah, through the purifying and atoning blood of Christ we can stand in the presence of the Lord and say with a clean heart and clean lips, “Here am I, Lord. Send me.”



Remembering  
Our Shut-ins

Caroline Barkow  
 Lotte Christoph  
 Shirley Cosgrove  
 Ethel Dahms\*  
 Ellie Deibler  
 Ginny Evans  
 Jack & Vi Evans\*  
 Dorothy Ferguson  
 Nola Geissel  
 Audrey Glover

Virgil Harrison  
 Nancy Heath  
 Norma Holst\*  
 Bob Johnson  
 Flo Kangas\*  
 Phyllis Kurlowicz  
 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



## 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**

# 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*

## GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP TAKES PRACTICE

Children naturally engage in the practices of discipleship as they learn to follow Jesus—they make friends, learn the stories of scripture, and enjoy being in community.

The practices are just that — experiences we repeat, so we can grow from being novices to becoming skilled practitioners. Imagine a little girl practicing the piano for the first time. Her fingers may be small and awkward at first, but her spirit is strong. That curious spirit and determination to make music is what moves her forward. After years of practice, she is gliding across the keyboard—challenging herself with new songs, teaching others, or sharing her gifts with thousands in a concert hall.

*As Children of God, we could all use a little practice!*

## LEARNING HOUR FOR ADULTS

**9:45-10:45AM SUNDAYS**

Being led by Mel Schroeder In the Music Room

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=Q21Dcm9lV0FWOTZnZldtOGx6aHNGQT09>

SANCTIFYING YOUR VOCATIONS WITH THE WORD OF GOD...

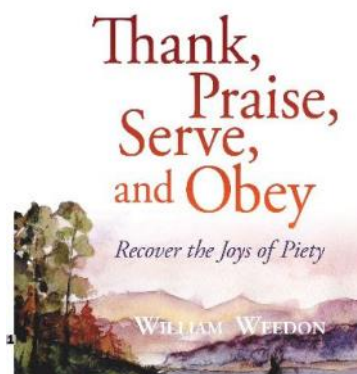


**Issues, Etc.**  
Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

Issues, Etc. is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. You can listen at your convenience at [issuesetc.org](http://issuesetc.org), the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider. When you open the link, [issuesetc.org](http://issuesetc.org), on your computer you can;

1. Listen to talk radio
2. Listen to Sacred Music – they like to say their play list is 2000 years old.
3. Listen to the daily chapel at the seminary. It's like another 30 min church service.
4. Will Weedon has a daily 15 min Bible study called the Word of the Lord Endures – this is on the side of the page about half way down. He is going through the Bible “chewing “ on each little bit.
5. They is so much more if you just explore the web page.

You can also see archives of past shows and discussions. You can put it on your phone for free.



**Wednesday Evening Bible Study Group** will continue with *The Great Divorce* for May until confirmation ends, 6-7:00PM in Room #230.

**Mama Bear Study Group** meets the 2nd & 4th Mondays from 7:30 to 9pm in the Music room. We will not have Mama Bear during June, July, or August, but will start again in September.

# We Invite you to **SAY YES TO VBS!**

**...It's the perfect at-home, backyard outreach experience for 2021!**

If you do not have children of your own, think of it as the ultimate and easy way to share the Gospel, by hosting in your own neighborhood.

† Scalable for any size group    † Age-appropriate for 5 to 85 years    † Adaptable for different locations

**3 Days of beautifully illustrated Christ-Centered Lessons,  
that are so easy for you to lead kids.**

We know families are experiencing pandemic fatigue, that's why BOLT incorporates live-action videos that will prompt kids to play games that illustrate what it means to listen to, focus on, and follow Jesus. BOLT VBS features music by Ben Calhoun of the Christian chart-topping band--Citizen Way. We have purposefully chosen games and crafts that utilize materials most families already have, or can inexpensively obtain.



**Day 1: Parable of the Sower and the Seed (Luke 8:4-15)**

- Big Idea: I can listen to Jesus
- Memory Verse: Psalm 119:105

**Day 2: Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-36)**

- Big Idea: I can focus on Jesus
- Memory Verse: Proverbs 3:5

**Day 3: Jesus Chooses His Disciples (Luke 5:1-11, 27-32)**

- Big Idea: I can follow Jesus
- Memory Verse: Romans 8:39

**We suggest everyone follow the videos and enjoy activities the week of June 20!**

*\*You could even join us on a Zoom chat-party at the end of the week, so that everyone can share their experiences together as a church. \**

**CLICK HERE AND REGISTER TODAY!**

MORE DETAILS WILL BE SHARED WITH YOU VIA EMAIL SOON.



## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

### EXPLORE OUR NEW AND IMPROVED LIBRARY

Something wonderful is waiting for you in the church library.

Step inside its door from the Welcome Center and you will find a new section, updated with dozens of new titles, waiting for you to browse and borrow. All casual reading materials – both fiction and non-fiction titles – have been consolidated to the corner nearest the sanctuary.

This is the first major improvement specifically for adults, since the library's 2004 opening. Besides newly arranged bookcases, the area features additional lighting, a self-checkout station, a spinning magazine rack, and a tiered display of new arrivals.

Coinciding with the changes, the library is now open and staffed every Sunday between services. Visit between 9:45 to 11 a.m. as a convenient – albeit, much smaller – substitute for the Portage District Library, which has been relocated for a year for building renovations.

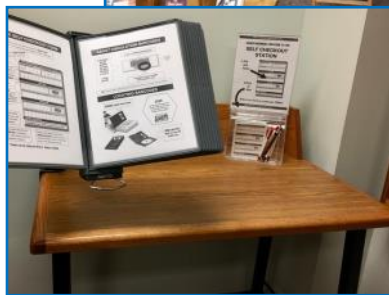
Stop in with your children, and they too can borrow from our extensive collection of books for preschoolers through middle school. Three-fourths of the library is devoted to children's materials, which include picture books, beginning readers, chapter books, and non-fiction titles.

And now searching the collection is even easier, too. The library has its own website where you can browse its online catalogue from the convenience of your computer or electronic device. It's linked to the church website or it can be accessed by downloading a free app called [Librista](#).

For those unfamiliar with borrowing from the library, here's a quick summary:

- \* If you are in the church directory, you have a library card. One is issued for every family.
- \* Watch for an email about your library card number or visit the library to learn it. You must enter it to reserve or renew books online (but you can search the catalogue without logging in).
- \* Library materials can be borrowed for two weeks. There are no late fees, but you will be charged the replacement value for any lost or damaged items.
- \* Up to 15 books can be borrowed per library card. If the church directory lists children at home, you may borrow more books. The limit is 25 per family.
- \* Return your borrowed materials at the circulation desk or by dropping them in a new Book Return next to the library door in the Welcome Center.

*We hope to see you soon in our newly improved library!*





## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



*These are  
some of the  
fun things we  
have been  
doing in CFK!!*



Egg hunting.

Baby chicks came to visit.

Lots of crafts and coloring,

Fishing.

Playing Outside.





# 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*



## GYFC CITY LIFE CENTER OPENS

Youth for Christ and the City Life Center will be the central point of the ministry at Colonial Acres Residential Community. Prayer walks happen on Wednesday's with Tyler, Pam, and team @ 2pm

*Praises from Tyler Gjeltrema, Youth For Christ Staff:*

Glory to God for His many answers to prayer to get this ministry up and running. Thanks be to God for the way in which he has orchestrated the coalition of 5 churches and Youth for Christ, who each bring their own unique gifts to help share the light of Jesus with the folks at Colonial Acres.

Such a good night!!! Thank you all for your prayers! We had 14 teens on our first night. They wanted to be outside, but they wanted to stay and be at club more. They had such a blast hanging out, playing games and eating dinner. And they were so attentive during our teaching time.

We had 3 teens who had never attended club before and one who has only been there once before. So excited for what God has in store and to spread His word in Colonial Acres!

They were thirsty for the Word...so adamant on finding the verses in the Bible and really good small group conversation after club. Our girls could've easily went for at least another half hour.

In addition, another praise, next week we will have two new leaders joining us, allowing us to grow in the number of teens we can faithfully disciple.



## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

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### WHAT WILL THEY SAY?

Our own mortality is often thrown in our face in very dramatic ways. Recently a young man, in college with his entire life ahead of him, died very suddenly, unexpectedly. The reactions were those of shock, disbelief and total devastation for the family. Friends mourned by giving heartfelt testimonies about the young man. They spoke of what a great friend he was, how he always put them first and reached out to them. But they also recalled story after story about how he lived his faith. They knew about his Christian faith because that's how he lived, not because he went to church. He openly shared his faith with others.

Which brings me to the question of the day; What will they say about you, when God calls you home? The details and facts of your life will surface, but what will be the first things remembered? Will they tell tales of great hunting or fishing exploits? Wonderful dinners or delicious desserts may be explained in ways to make your mouth water. Stories of always being available to lend a helping hand are always fondly remembered. But will they also tell how you shared your faith, inviting others to follow Jesus? While doing all those other things is nice, the most important thing is making sure the people you encountered knew about the saving grace of Christ.

I found some interesting definitions recently. A Believer is someone who follows Jesus and will go to Heaven. A Disciple is someone who follows Jesus but will bring others with them when they go.



Church Extension Fund

[billburmeister@mi-cef.org](mailto:billburmeister@mi-cef.org)

800-242-3944

**We do not grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.**

**(1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)**

Those verses give comfort to a family that wonders why; why their son left this earth so soon. It doesn't take away the hurt, but brings comfort knowing he is at peace. We all long for the end of the race, but don't wish to say good-bye to those we love here on earth.

He showed me Jesus! What a great way to be remembered. Not just fondly recalling the good things you did for friends or even strangers encountered on your journey, but that you shared your faith, inviting others to join you in eternity.

That's the mission of Church Extension Fund. Help the Michigan District congregations and members Build the Kingdom. We invite you to call us and find out ways to partner with CEF to make a difference where God has placed you.

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### LAMP TEAM UPDATE:



We are very sad to report that for the second year, we are not allowed to go up to Lac Brochet. The community is devastated. The children keep saying "We miss you" "When are you coming back". But due to the closed boarder between the USA and Canada and the First Nations regulations to restrict access to their vulnerable communities we cannot plan a trip this year.

We are again trying to find ways to bless the community to let them know we have not forgotten them, that God is with them and will never leave them or forsake them. They need our prayers now even more than ever.

Thank you to Carolyn Hornev's Bible study group, who continues to send cards to women in Lac Brochet that we have connected with over the years. They are so appreciated!

# SERVICE

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

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*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*



**Kuddos to the Board of Properties and numerous volunteers for replacing 10 rotten fence posts and repairing numerous sections of fence along the North and East of SMLC property line.**

Wind damage had blown down sections of fence late last fall. Upon inspection it was discovered that those sections and numerous others had weakened and rotten posts that had to be repaired/replaced. Various quotes were received by contractors. The leadership and volunteers decided that we could take care of the job at a fraction of the cost. Over \$3500 was saved thanks to these volunteers, funds that can be used for other needed projects and upgrades. They spent numerous hours over a three-day period in early April digging out the old poles, setting new ones, and reattaching the old privacy fence. They were able to get the job completed just in time for our Easter celebration, and improved the security of our church and school grounds.

Thanks to Jay Koski, Erik West, Rick Jacobs, Rob Kuhlman, Bill Semrau & B.O.B, and our new Board of Properties director Steve Bell. If you would like to use your talents and make a difference on the physical part of our Lord's House, contact Steve or the church office to explore the ways you can help out.





## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

### Concrete Thankfulness

For many years, there has been a need to extend the north sidewalk that borders the school playground. This area has proven to be a muddy mess, which makes its way into the school on shoes and boots creating all kinds of extra work for the school custodians. Not anymore. Thanks to the effort and coordination of our school Art teacher (Tamara) and her husband (Mike), who is employed by Peterman Concrete, we now have that sidewalk extension for which we always dream. However, the appreciation does not end there. Peterman Concrete owners Frank and Helen Peterman donated all of the concrete and supplied us with contractor Bob Gates who gave his time with the cement flatwork as a bonus donation. All of this work was done in a matter of hours over spring break. The students returned from break to



an extended sidewalk and the teachers returned to a relocated bench. We are grateful to God for sending these people our way and for giving them the generosity to accomplish what we would not otherwise have been able to do.

*Greg Johnson*  
Principal



Left Indent



You are invited to  
look through the eyes of young people and  
**BE PART OF THE STORY**



an in-person fundraising breakfast at multiple sites  
supporting the mission of  
**KALAMAZOO YOUTH FOR CHRIST**  
**THURSDAY, MAY 6<sup>th</sup>** 8:00 - 9:00am





## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST



### Christian Homes!! (I'm not joking.)

By Ailene Buchtrup

I am looking for 5-6 Christian families to host foreign exchange students this next school year, either for the whole school year (Aug-June) or for a 5-month semester (either fall or winter). My goal is to have several Lutheran families, including families with children, empty-nesters, and couples and/or singles, from within our Kalamazoo County Lutheran community accept students into their homes and give them a wonderful cross-cultural learning experience. This experience could include teaching the student about our Christian/Lutheran faith, and/or at the very least, giving them first-hand exposure to the lives and habits of loving, open-hearted Christians.

My firm belief is that we, as Americans and as Christians, often get a "bad wrap" in the eyes of the international world. People of other nations and faiths often believe we are ethnocentric, judgmental people who judge and shun others different from us. (Sadly, this does happen, both internationally and intra-nationally as well.) There is a dire need to show people Christ at the most basic level—by sharing our homes, lives and love with them directly.



My husband, John, and I were host parents to a young Turkish-Muslim girl from Frankfurt, Germany for one school year (2002-03). To note: There is a huge Turkish-Muslim population there who we learned are often treated very poorly by German citizens, from bus drivers and teachers to shop owners, police officers and even Christian clergy—people with whom they have daily contact.

Now mind you, we weren't seeking out this opportunity at all. It all began one day while I was at work, managing Children's Protective Services (CPS) with numerous investigations, court reports and case files piled high on my desk awaiting my approval. A CPS worker from another unit entered my office and plopped himself in a chair across from me. His first words, "So....Do you want a kid?" I stared at him expressionless, overwhelmed by my work, and said,... "Jim, get out of my office." (You'd have to know my humor—Jim was used to it—and bowled right over me smiling, and repeated his question.) I then asked, "What is it? Are you referring to one of our court wards? Do you need me to sit with her while you go to court?" Jim pulled out a Polaroid snapshot of a teenage girl with her arms around two other teenagers, and told me to "...look at the

one in the middle with the big smile." He explained that the three teens were "exchange students" from Germany, and that the middle girl, who wanted to come to America more than anyone else in her group, was the only child without a placement. He explained that she was muslim and her birthday was 9-11, and that no one wanted her because of that. (Mind you...It was July 2002, and 9-11 had happened less than one year before.) I knew Jim was seriously advocating for this child, someone he had met personally when he went to Germany to visit his former exchange student. My heart sank as I thought of the ridiculousness of her rejections and the desperation of her plight to come to the USA as she watched months pass, the school year get closer, and no "taker." In my heart, I started to grow more compassionate by the minute and a bit indignant that "I wasn't going to stand by and watch this nonsense. Why not talk it over with my husband and kids? It could be a great opportunity!!" Less than a month later, we picked up 17 year old Huelya at the Kalamazoo airport, and I cannot remember ever seeing a smile as big as hers. It was as close to "love at first sight" as any one of us had ever encountered.

Bringing our "German daughter", Huelya, into our home was one of the best experiences we shared as a family. She taught us things about her culture and Muslim traditions that we would not have otherwise learned, and a great benefit was the broadening of our own children's human and cultural perspectives. She was eager to learn about and immerse herself in our culture and experience our foods, clothing trends and traditions, and connect herself with other young people, including our two daughters, as soon as she could. Our 9-month experience with her morphed into a natural adoption by us as her "American parents", a term which she and her family still lovingly call us today. We made a long-lasting connection with her, and by extension, her parents and relatives, both in Germany and Turkey, who have invited us to come stay with them in their homes. Both Huelya and her parents refer to us as their "Christian family in the US", and thanked us for showing "beautiful love and acceptance" to their daughter during the time she lived with us. Huelya is able to speak openly about what she learned about the Christian faith while with us, and the word "Christian" is a "good word" now in their family.





## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

This fall, John and I are seriously considering bringing another foreign exchange student into our home, at least for part of the school year. I, for one, am excited about bringing a young person back into our empty nest and toting them and their friends around to school and community events they become involved in. The “empty nest” syndrome has been admittedly hard on me, as it has been on so many others with lots of love and more parenting still to give. We are looking for other Lutheran-Christian homes at St. Michael and Immanuel who may also want to host an exchange student in their home. The idea would be that we could be mutual supports to one another, hold our quarterly gatherings together (which are mandatory per exchange agency policy), and hold these meetings at one of our churches. Hosting these gatherings at a church may also help plug the students into youth group meetings and outings, giving them all the more a positive experience amongst Christians, and developing the strong, personal friendships that all children need. Also, I reason, if more exchange students can take back to their communities their stories of loving Christian families and friends who gathered around them while they were here, we stand a much better chance of taking our Lord’s “good news” to the ends of the world, as we have been commissioned to do. We ask for us... and for you... for the power of the Holy Spirit to give us courage and guidance to live our lives looking upwards and outwards to others (the Great Commission), so that they may be drawn to Jesus.

Would you please consider giving a foreign student a positive, cross-cultural learning experience that includes exposure to our Christian/Lutheran faith and families, as well as full immersion in our American culture and school system this coming school year? If so, I’d love to hear from you!! As an Area Representative for **International Student Exchange (ISE)**, and one who can personally vouch for its long-proven expertise and professionalism, I can help you get your foreign student, aka “new family member”, into your home this August....or at least help you begin to “think about it,” pray about it, and make a good decision for your family situation. No rush!

Please keep in mind that all ISE students will receive Covid-19 screening 2-3 days before boarding a plane headed to the U.S., and will be willing to quarantine for 7 days and take a new Covid-19 test once they arrive at your home, if that’s what you would prefer. These students are so excited about the prospects of coming to the U.S. that they will agree to whatever guidelines you’d like them to follow. We can talk more about that, if interested. ISE has many built many provisions into their policies to ensure that any Covid-19 exposure or illness will be handled appropriately, with full health insurance coverage for each student. In the event of a student becoming seriously ill here, there are even provisions for a student’s natural parent to be flown here and put up in a shelter where they can care for their child. (Chances of needing to do this are very slim due to the natural, albeit unexplained, tendency for younger people to fight off Covid symptoms and recover more quickly than the rest of us.)

***So...How about your home? Your heart?***

***Do YOU have room for ONE MORE child?***

If so, I hope you will call me. I can be reached at the Immanuel Church office at (269)345-8090 on Tues-Thurs mornings, or at (269)599-7702 or [Lindytwain1@yahoo.com](mailto:Lindytwain1@yahoo.com)

*Thank-you!!*

## THE RISE OF OUR ELECTRONIC GIVING

FY 2019 \$188,000  
**28%** of general fund was given electronically

FY 2020 \$189,000  
**36%** of general fund was given electronically

6 Months 2021 \$185,000  
**41%** of general fund was given electronically

6 months of e-giving in 2021, matches the total e-giving in fiscal year 2019

IN  
PERSON

ONLINE

TEXT

269-338-8196

GIVE +  
APP

# 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*



SEEKING GOLFERS & SPONSORS  
FOR THE 7TH ANNUAL

## JESUS LOVES KZOO GOLF OUTING FUNDRAISER

**MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2021**  
**HERITAGE GLEN GOLF CLUB**  
29795 HERITAGE LANE, PAW PAW, MI 49079

All Proceeds Support Jesus Loves Kzoo  
Sponsor & Registration Info on Back



**JESUS LOVES KZOO**

Jesusloveskzoo.org/golf-fundraiser/

## REVIVE: AT THE HEART OF THIS SUMMER'S EN GEDI MUSIC FESTIVAL

This is a two-day Christian event featuring regional and national contemporary Christian music artists. It will take place July 23-24, 2021 at the En Gedi Campground River Resort in Leonidas, Mich. You will enjoy a variety of national artists on the Main Stage for both days.

Saturday brings added excitement when the Tentmaker Music Stage fires up with talented up-and-coming regional and national artists!

<https://www.engedimusicfest.com/>





## MAKING MIGHTY MESSENGERS FOR CHRIST

### YOU ARE NEVER ALONE, WHEN YOU ARE PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

As you have heard from so many people, this last year has been the worst one of our lives. We have all been kept apart by the isolation that has been forced upon us by a scary disease. We have been afraid and worried about loved ones that we haven't been able to visit with because of distance or barriers. Those who have parents or loved ones in the hospital and nursing homes haven't been able to spend the valuable time, at this time in their lives, to bring them comfort. We all miss visiting with our church family and seeing them several times during the week.

*What can we do?? How about a few old fashioned ideas??*

- If you have a neighbor or loved one that you cannot visit in person right now, call them. Yes, make an old-fashioned phone call and visit with them. It would do everyone a world of good just to hear a familiar voice and catch up on personal events. Even better take the time to learn how to use Face Time. Be able to see the person and talk to them (almost like being there). If you are not familiar with that way of communication, it is very easy to learn.
- How about writing a letter or writing in a card. I've done that this year and am always thrilled when I hear back from someone that I've been out of touch with.
- Cook a meal and take a portion to your neighbor to show them that you are thinking about them and care for them. Or, even take a basket of goodies and flowers.
- In most places you can get out and walk with someone safely.

Also, kudos to those who have figured out how to watch or listen to our church services on their computers or radios. You've all heard the story about a coal being removed from a fire that goes dark very quickly. You need to stay in touch with the things that are so important in this life.

Remember: One of the enemy's (Satan) driving motivations is to bring division within the body of Christ – to isolate whole groups of us from others for any reason, or to create fissures in healthy interpersonal relationships where caring support would otherwise occur. Unity among brothers and sisters in Christ forms a firm line of defense against Satan's advances, and he knows it. That's why he bristles against it.

So when you're in a place in life where you're feeling completely worn out, one of his leading lies will be to encourage you to overinflate your belief that there's no one else who can understand what you're facing. No one. You're on your own now.

Well, that's simply not true!! The message that God's loves you right where you are will always be true. People need to know that!!

We send out our prayers to all people to help them through a very difficult time. God Bless you.

*Virginia Hetrick*  
Prayer Coordinator



### LYNDA REA HAS JUST COMPLETED STEPHEN LEADER TEAM TRAINING

Lynda joins the current St. Michael Leaders: Pastor & Dana Naumann and Heather Crampton.

We have had previous Stephen Leaders trained in Orlando, FL; St. Louis, MO and Pittsburgh, PA. However, the pandemic has effected this in-person training like it has impacted so many other areas of our lives. For the first time ever, the Stephen Ministry home office is offering online virtual training. Lynda was the first person from St. Michael to participate. Yeah Lynda!!!

Stephen Ministry Leaders are responsible to keep the ministry operating in the way it was intended. They hold meetings twice a month, provide supervision and continuing education for the Stephen Ministers, host training sessions to become a Stephen Minister and for those who want to learn tools for how to assist someone who is in distress. Stephen Leaders work on building awareness of the ministry, so that people will know this is available for them.

Lynda has been an active Stephen Minister for the past 3 years. We are so excited for her desire and gifts, which she can use as a Stephen Leader. Please thank Lynda for what she is doing in her dedication to help people and be there for them in times of distress.

Remember the Stephen Ministry program is available for you. If you are currently struggling with a challenge in your life, you can call the church office to be put in contact with one of the Stephen Leaders. Or, you can call one of the Stephen Leaders directly and they can explain how a Stephen Minister might be able to be there to give you the support and encouragement you need, during a difficult time.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## SHEPHERD GROUPS

Lay Minister	Family Names <u>Start with</u>	Family Names <u>&amp; include</u>
<b>Geoff Bohren</b> 231-679-4927	A	Boelman
<b>Rich Conklin</b> 616-889-0201	Bohren	Chenevare
<b>Dan Bryer</b> 269-323-7416	Chilcott	D
<b>Mel Schroeder</b> 734-646-9652	E	Franzen
<b>Mark Gady</b> 616-250-3730	Frommann	G
<b>John Engelmann</b> 269-544-1542	H	June
<b>Cory Luma</b> 269-365-8281	Jung	Lapekas
<b>Ernie VanOrman</b> 269-548-5714	Lausman	McNees
<b>Eric VanOrman</b> 269-249-7915	Messing	Nelson
<b>Jeff Burnett</b> 269-491-3700	Nieto	P
<b>Andy Allan</b> 269-370-7052	Q	Shook
<b>Greg Wedel</b> 312-961-4636	Sible	Stolsky
<b>Matt Heintz</b> 269-290-8507	Sullivan	T
<b>Arlan Wendzel</b> 269-816-5632	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 5:45 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

### MAXINE M. JUNE FLOWER ENDOWMENT FUND

*It is with great pleasure, joy and thankfulness that the Endowment Committee announces the Maxine M. June Flower Endowment Fund has been established.*

Maxine is a long-time member of St. Michael who, along with her husband Jerry before his passing, has been ministering to all of us for over 50 years through her weekly flower arrangements that grace the Chancel. Maxine recognized that she could provide this service even after God calls her to be with Him. Through her estate planning and working with the Endowment Committee, Maxine established this designated endowment fund to provide weekly altar arrangements and some maintenance of "Jerry's Garden." "Jerry's Garden" is the landscaped island area that she created in memory of her husband.

The Flower Endowment Fund will begin generating income in 2022. We give a large thank you to Maxine for her sharing of God's blessing with us. *And a belated 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday wish also!!*

Any member can contribute to one of the three designated or general endowment funds, including the fund recently created by Maxine, or establish a fund for an area of special interest to them. Please talk with a member of the committee for more information (Brad Hunter, Dave Johnson, Rick Jacobs, John Engelmann, Todd Foster) or Director of Ministries, Jay Koski.

*Todd Foster* (Chairperson, Endowment Committee)

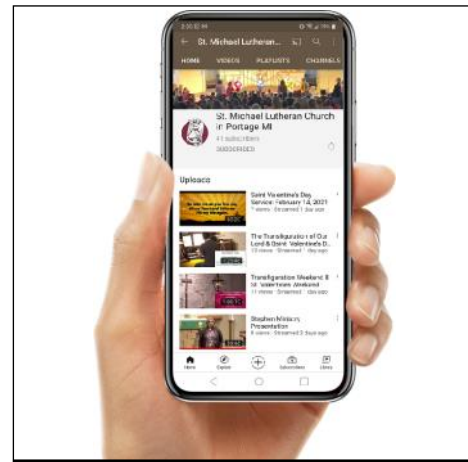
### MARCH FINANCIALS 5 months

11/1/2020-3/31/2021

Church Revenue	\$ 390,854
School Revenue	\$ 428,097
Total Revenue	\$ 818,951
Total Expenses	\$ 726,144
Net Surplus (deficit)	\$ 92,807
Expense Budget	\$ 737,451
Under/(Over) Budget	\$ 81,500
Working Cash Balance	\$ 146,453
Mortgage Balance	\$ 788,424


#### Designated Fund Balances

Endowment Fund	\$ 566,404
Building Contingency	\$ 41,794
Technology Refresh	\$ 11,441
Sunday School	\$ 1,092
Youth Donations	\$ 10,123
Youth Accounts	\$ 11,062
Good Samaritan	\$ 5,333
Memorials	\$ 5,272
L.A.M.P. Mission Trip	\$ 7,192
Quilting	\$ 1,451
Church Worker Scholarship	\$ 235
School Improvements	\$ 28,401
Tuition Assistance	\$ 51,240
School Music	\$ 580
Flower Fund	\$ 1,542
CFK Grant Fund	\$ 27,133
Women's Fellowship/LWML	\$ 3,471




## STAY CONNECTED

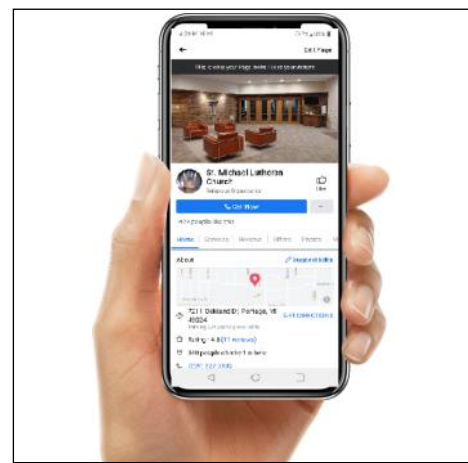
### YouTube

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](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 AND CHILD MINISTRY COORDINATOR**

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

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Jack Spenner

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

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Dar Swift

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