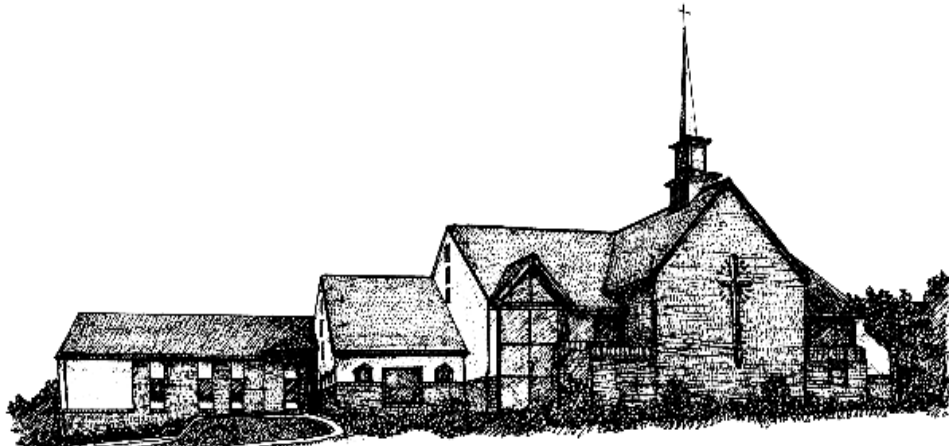


ST. MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



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The Rev. Frederick J. DeRasmo, Jr., Senior Pastor
The Rev. Adrienne M. Meier, Associate Pastor
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Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Friday 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

2016 ANNUAL REPORTS

Report of the Senior Pastor - 2016

As one takes a broad look at the Church in our society today the challenges and changes are many. Belonging to a Church is an increasingly unfashionable idea. Just look at the larger culture. A simple Google search will produce a multitude of research filled with studies and statistics on America's churchgoing habits. Have you ever observed what much of America does on a Sunday morning? How about those that live in your development? Consider what you and your family do on a Sunday morning.

With the possible exception of government, few institutions receive more criticism than the Church. It has been an easy target from the beginning. With its ambitious mission and its many failures, a dismissive attitude is easy to come by. Viewed as irrelevant, out of touch, and full of wishful thinkers, many of today's critics think of church as a useless enterprise. To them, it's an antique way of life, and an inefficient use of time.

Who in their right mind would gather to gaze at a cross and declare things that cannot be proved?

Well, now that I have your attention, here is a partial list, in no particular order, of why I believe many of us elect **TO** bother with Church.

1. We choose to be a part of something that is larger than our own little lives, protected opinions, and self-important ways. We join a family that is bigger than the one we were born into. For me, it's about following a light that is brighter than my own candle. Stay away from church and you're apt to make God into your own image – an attractive Lord who loves exactly the same things you love. Insert yourself into Christian community, directly into the company of people who don't think exactly as you think, and God is apt to start molding you into God's image.
2. Church is that community of significance where you get to come as you are and, by the power of God's Word and the impact of other people, be loved into the person you get to become. No qualifications are required. Practically everything else we encounter has requirements: Voting. Job applications. Medicare. Even public schools have requirements (e.g. vaccinations). Church, in its best expression at least, is a "no-qualifications" home where unconditional love reigns supreme.
3. It is impossible to have Christ apart from the church. This isn't my word or thoughts but the apostle Paul's word. As wonderful as it would be to have Christ apart from the hypocrisies and distractions of other people who believe, Christ is embedded in the church. Sounds foolish, but we are his body.

Plenty of people opt out, preferring to worship nature instead. Yet the most gorgeous sunset does not pass an offering plate to help feed the hungry, clothe the poor, or meet the needs of war torn, homeless refugees. The grandeur of the Grand Canyon offers no clue that Jesus suffered on a cross as an act of love. No Ponderosa Pine tree will tell you to "love your neighbor as yourself." I've never met a mountain stream that will declare the forgiveness of your sins.

4. Church means stopping your week long enough to give thanks to the one who gave you your week. Read Luke 17:11-19. The ratio in that story is sobering. Only one in ten people find God worth the gratitude for the good life they enjoy. The tenth leper who bowed at the feet of Jesus IS the Church.
5. Worship in a congregation is radical stuff. No self-improvement technique can ever compare. Worship is one moment in a week where we cannot customize or program the world to our preferences. Singing together, praying collectively for the sake of others, and subjecting oneself to hearing God's word (which is very different from choosing what one wants to read) are disciplines that make a life. They free us from ad-hoc spirituality that requires us to make up faith every day.
6. In a nation steeped in rugged individualism, joining a community of Christians is about believing more in God and in each other than in oneself. It's about marching to a beat more beautiful than one's own drum. Joys and

sorrows get shared in a Christ-centered community. Once you've experienced this shared life, you know its magnificence and the strength it provides.

7. Church is for those who know their need for God. It is a hospital for sinners – one sinner unashamed of his or her need for God, standing alongside all kinds of other people in the same condition.

I started this list as an exercise of why I believe many of us elect to even bother with Church. How did I do? Do you fall somewhere within these thoughts? Do you agree with or see some of the same things I see ... or ... will you just chalk it up to “these are the things Pastors should be concerned about”? Over my many years of ministry I have observed trends and changes, mood shifts and personal priorities that challenge the importance of the Church. I have seen families make the choice to stay connected to the Church ... just not too connected.

Belonging to a Church is an increasingly unfashionable idea according to many in our culture. But yet ... you come! Why is that? You come ... and because you come, St. Michael makes a difference in people's lives; your life, my life, and the lives of strangers we have never even met! We make a difference in the community we live in and the community we serve.

Earlier this week I conducted a Memorial Service celebrating the life of a St. Michael member who recently entered the Church Triumphant. The family wrote their remembrance of their mother and asked that I would read it during the service. I'd like to share a portion of their words:

“... Mom often reminded us that our lives were very much like stained glass windows. To look at each piece individually would only show broken glass but when artfully put together, those broken pieces of glass create the beautiful picture God intended our lives to portray. When we were particularly burdened or struggling she reminded us that although this portion of our stained glass window might be dark when put into the context of our lives we were blessed to have the faith in knowing that our window would ultimately shine beautifully. Her faith in Christ, in the beauty of his plans for each of us, ultimately gives us peace ...”

Our lives together at St. Michael are like stained glass windows. To look at each of us individually we are just a piece of broken glass, but when the Master artfully draws us all together these broken pieces create the beautiful picture that God intends for our lives to portray. You come ... and because you do, we make a difference in people's lives! Every turn of the pages that follow you will see the stained glass take shape. You will see even more reasons why you come to Church and what we were able to accomplish together, meeting the needs of others.

In closing, I would be remiss if I did not thank specifically our church staff ... my colleagues in ministry, Adrienne, Dan, Bonnie and Linda. The care, attention and dedication that you give to this congregation, and how it is lived out through your work is a blessing to me and our ministry together. The standard of excellence you display is a joy to behold and admire. I pray that we at St. Michael not take it for granted.

God has called us to be a vibrant community of faith. May the Holy Spirit continue to bless our people and the ministry that God has placed before us in the coming year. My prayer for you all is that we continue to find new and varied ministries where we can share Jesus and His love with others.

Your Partner in Mission and Ministry,
Pastor Rick

SENIOR PASTOR'S STATISTICAL REPORT FOR 2016

| | Baptized | Confirmed |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Membership end of 2015 | 1193 | 900 |
| Members received – 2016 | | |
| By Baptism/Child | 8 | |
| By Baptism/Adult | | |
| By Affirmation of Faith | | 7 |
| By Transfer- Lutheran congregations | 24 | 21 |
| By Transfer- non-Lutheran congregations | 5 | 5 |
| Members removed – 2016 | | |
| By Transfer | 7 | 7 |
| By Request | 1 | 1 |
| By Death | 6 | 6 |
| Membership end of 2016 | 1216 | 919 |

Confirmed Members who communed: 478

Unconfirmed who communed: 43

Average Weekly Worship Attendance: 209



REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR – 2016

Much of what I would highlight for 2016 is contained in the reports of the teams. It was, from my perspective, an excellent year. There were a number of new and renewed opportunities to serve, including Lutheran World Relief Health Kits in Lent, Stop Hunger Now meal packaging in the fall, and Christmas for Migrants in December – we provided gifts and the start of a happy Christmas for 15 migrant families living and working in the greater Kennett Square area.

The new Caregiver Circle is a promising ministry area. This group meets nearly monthly around a Bible reading, fellowship, and prayer to support those who are caring for spouses, parents, or adult children. Because of the shorter days of winter, we are hoping to move one of our meetings to a Saturday brunch with a special speaker, the details are forthcoming. I do hope this group will serve as a blueprint for one of the many ways we support one another throughout our lives, fulfilling some of the promises we make during baptism. Suggestions have been made, and are being considered, for similar groups for those mourning the loss of a loved one and those going through divorce. If you would have an interest in such groups, please speak with me. As with many ministries, having members of the congregation to help coordinate, advertise, and recruit can really give a new program the lift it needs to get started (this was how Carols and Beer came to fruition this year - and what fun it was!)

The youth group said goodbye to a record number of seniors, as well as to two extremely fantastic and dedicated leaders, calling for new leadership and new directions. The youth ministry team is greatly expanded and continues to

find ways for youth to connect to Christ, the congregation, and one another. Check out the list of new volunteers in that report, and be sure to thank them when you see them!

Sunday School also underwent some major changes - new curriculum, volunteer change over, and a new format. An honest assessment would say that this ministry runs solely on the backs of dedicated volunteers, however, we continue to struggle with dwindling attendance. I cannot underscore enough how wonderful our volunteer teachers are because, in addition to committing to being at St. Michael nearly every week, these volunteers have indicated their commitment to improving faith formation in our congregation. In May, I led a group of congregation members in a Children's Ministry Shareholder meeting, in which I introduced some principles of faith formation at St. Michael, and also a long-range plan, which was approved by the council in May.

In 2017 I hope to create a series of faith formation benchmarks – naming what we hope our baptized and confirmed members will know at each stage of the faith development, correspondent to age, infant to adult. I hope to interview members of the congregation in order to get a complete picture of our expectations. These benchmarks will aid us in creating a more full faith formation ministry – this will move us beyond the standard Sunday School and Vacation Bible School offerings to a full ministry of complementary programs that serves both as a clear point of entry for inquirers and an obvious step on a path into deeper life for all Christians of the congregation. I also hope that these will set us on a path to be an area innovator in Faith Formation, in keeping with St. Michael's history. As such, I pray that 2017 allows us to see stability in our current ministry offerings so that we can continue to grow and expand our program offerings.

To God be the glory,
Respectfully submitted,
Pr. Adrienne M. Meier



REPORT OF THE MUSIC DIRECTOR - 2016

Heraclitus once said, 'The only thing that is constant is change.' And that quote can certainly be applied to the Music Ministry at St. Michael, which is ever changing and developing!

From children to adults, our lives get busier every year with activities, family and work obligations. Attendance in rehearsals ebbs and flows, so the type of music we rehearse changes almost weekly to adapt to different numbers and voice parts. To accommodate schedules, and yet have a music program that will continue to be an integral part of the worship life of St. Michael, we have changed some of the ways we operate, and offer more options in the way people can participate.

One change was to include High School youth on a regular basis in our adult choirs. This change has been very successful in enriching the sound of our adult choir. Another change is to offer the option of sitting up front with the choir, or just coming up to sing the anthem. This change has been very successful in adding choir members who want to sing but also want to sit with their families. Last year we added an occasional Sunday morning rehearsal which has brought out additional singers, but with a stronger Sunday School (Faith Formation!) program, this timing may need to change in the coming year.

A highlight of our music program is "Christmas Cantata Sunday", held this past year on Sunday, December 18th. "Christmas Cantata" is a bit of a misnomer, as it implies a single work by a single composer. More broadly, a cantata is defined as a 'short musical work, with words, usually based on a religious subject'. And that definition comes closer to what we do at St. Michael. I pick a theme, poems, scriptures or other writings, and find music to complement the texts.

This past year's cantata was called "Sing We Now of Christmas", and it was presented in the form of a Lessons and Carols service. The scriptures used came from a translation of the Bible called, 'The Message', which puts the

Christmas story in present day language. All choirs participated (Chancel, Matins, Youth and Children's Choirs) along with several 'extra' singers from the congregation and community. Instrumentalists Mindy Bowman, Carole Armstrong Lovelace, Naomi Gray, Ron Bellamy, Eric and Dan Folmar, Luke Summa and Karen Markey provided inspirational accompaniment. Jubilation Ringers rang us into the service, and Lou Minella narrated. A lot of work goes into this service, but the overwhelming affirmation from the congregation makes it well worth it.

Last spring our Children's Choir presented the musical, *Table for Five Thousand*. As our children and youth move from activity to activity within the school programs, we have fewer numbers participating, but those who did were excellent! Ryan Church was our lead, with the rest of the Children's Choir and some members of the youth choir supporting the singing. Several of our youth took on leadership roles: Hanna Michel directed the singing, Isabelle Morrison and Katelyn Keefer took over stage managing and crowd control. Parents helped with many behind-the-scenes jobs.

In May, our Vivace Ringers (Youth Choir) traveled to Ocean City, New Jersey to play for the worship services at St. Peter's Methodist. This church is where Kammy and George Franz worship in the summer time. Initially, St. Peter's staff was willing to host us based on Kammy and George's connection. But once they heard the quality of this group, and interacted with our youth, their enthusiasm was overwhelming. I am very proud of this group!. And parents, you have done an excellent job raising such fine young people!

Instrumentalists and other musicians were featured throughout the year. We enjoyed the gifts of Janet Witman on harp, Joe Hrin on clarinet, Ron Bellamy on handbells, Carole Armstrong Lovelace on violin, and the Johannes Brass on Christmas Eve. Rob Furr has contributed his organ skills for communion Sundays. Jim Sullivan, Emily Scarola and Karen Markey filled in as substitute organists throughout the year.

To all who those who support and affirm the music program either by participating in a choir, or expressing appreciation for the work of the choirs, thank you. Thank you for making it a priority in a world when there are so many claims on your time. I am so blessed to have the opportunity to work with so many fine, dedicated people of St. Michael. Special thanks to Bonnie McDonald who goes above and beyond helping in every area of the church. Thanks to Heidi Furr and Jean Hillegass for help with the music library. Thanks to Sheila Wetzel who handles choir robe assignments. Thanks to Linda and Larry Porter who support the bell choirs in so many quiet ways. And to the congregation of St. Michael Lutheran, thank you for your support of me, personally, and your support of the music program. I look forward to being in ministry with you again this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Lorgus, Director of Music



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT – 2016

Looking back at 2016 and reading through the various Ministry Team reports, I'm continually amazed at the amount of positive activity at St. Michael in a given year. I strongly encourage you to spend just a bit of time with those reports – not only does it give a great sense of the momentum at our Church, but is a helpful way to learn about some of the programs and activities that might not normally cross your path.

Toward the end of 2015, the Long Range Plan was solidified. Based on the last Congregational survey and numerous deep dive sessions. The result was a multi-year plan that would help us to focus on the following three priorities:

1. *Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church*
2. *Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church*
3. *Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances*

In 2016, a major responsibility of Council, Staff, and members of the Congregation was to collaborate to put this plan into action. Kris Crickenberger did a fantastic job getting us started as her term as Council President completed, and I was glad to take on the role starting in July.

Early in the year, this work included significant time in Council meetings, within Ministry Team meetings, and within a culminating working session retreat at the Church in early March. The result was a list of key programs aligned to each of the three priorities above, with initial draft timelines, and with documented owners or champions for each key piece of work.

Another key step was to help make sure we had strong volunteer help within each Ministry Team to share their time and talents. With this in mind, we worked together to refresh participation in the Ministry teams, building out our team rosters so they were full, and seeking help from new volunteers. Our intent is that this will keep our frequent contributors from burning out, while also helping engage members of the Congregation who are eager to participate but didn't necessarily know how to get more involved.

With these foundational steps in place, we were able to spend the rest of the year helping manage the day-to-day business of the Church, as well as helping to provide decisioning for key programs being launched, or remove any barriers to executing on the long range plan.

While the fruit of these efforts will take time to bear, I believe we're already seeing so much positive change as evidenced in the Staff and Ministry Team reports. St. Michael welcomed two new member classes; redesigned the Sunday School Hour around Faith Formation; introduced a Caregivers small group; and completed the hugely successful *Stop Hunger Now* campaign. These were all directly aligned with the three priorities of the long range plan, and led by the Staff and Ministry team through their hard work during the year. It's just a sample of the many things going on each week.

One of the first important steps of 2017 will be once again to ensure we have the right plans in place, with a diverse and energized group of volunteers, and with all the support needed to bring our mission to life.

My continued and sincere thanks go out to the outstanding staff at St Michael, above and beyond efforts of the Ministry teams and volunteers, dedication and talent of the Council, and support and ongoing feedback of the Congregation. It truly makes a big difference when all these groups work so well together at St. Michael and has me really excited for a great year ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Heiss, Council President



BUILDING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

Last year's B&P Committee Report discussed major work completed that had been needed for some time, such as new Automatic doors into the Fellowship Hall and new Crash Doors into the Main Front Entrance to the Narthex. We also corrected several cold weather issues that had necessitated previous major repairs and clean-up, the installation of new gas heaters and wireless controls on the great majority of our 13 A/C units in the building, and parking lot resurfacing.

In 2016, we continued our program to update our church. Much of this work will also pay for itself within a short period of time due to the energy savings. This also included the replacement of three air conditioners that were installed on the Sanctuary Project back in 1996.

This program included replacing all Sanctuary lights with LED bulbs, plus all of the front parking lot lights with LED bulbs as well. We also installed a new concrete pad into the Dumpster area. This work was done using Special Project monies given by congregational members.

We also installed a totally new water treatment system due in part to needing a new water softener, but also to solve a lingering water odor problem.

In 2017 we plan to continue that program by installing LED lights in all the remaining outdoor light fixtures, again through the use of special funding.

In 2016, we also organized the work into sectors and assigned individuals to monitor those sectors and correct problems that show up. The work sectors and responsible members are:

- 1) Grounds work, including pest control, weed control, mowing, snow removal, trees and all shrubs and plants: Karen Markey, Darwin Wika
- 2) Lights, inspections, and replacement: Dick Streamer, Bob Johnson
- 3) Security and Fire Protection: Al Bergbauer
- 4) All clock repair and battery replacements: Joe Weber
- 5) Trash pickup, contracts: Bill Vann
- 6) Air Conditioning and Heating, Plumbing, Electrical: Eddie Schultz, Paul Kester and Darwin Wika
- 7) General maintenance and Repairs: Eddie Schultz, Paul Kester, Darwin Wika

We also want to recognize the loss of our long term committee member John Singer, who worked on the committee for many years in many capacities including maintenance, snow removal and grounds keeping. John's knowledge and mechanical capabilities will surely be missed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Darwin Wika



BUILDING & PROPERTY -FACILITIES USAGE REPORT 2016

We are pleased by all the groups that continue to use our church for the many activities other than regular Sunday worship. They include the Sixty-Plusers, the Women’s Group, Carousel Arts Summer Camp, the Youth Group, N.G.A., Community Bible Study, V.B.S., Trunk-or-Treat, the Red Cross Blood Drive, the choirs, A.A. , Mom’s Club of Unionville-Chadds Ford, Music at St. Michael Concert Series, Brandywine Valley Chorale, the “Seekers” Book Club, Women’s Christmas Tea and many others too numerous to mention.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard Streamer,
Facilities Usage Coordinator



CARING SHEPHERDS REPORT – 2016

“The Caring Shepherds Ministry team provides a systematic method for relaying information regarding illness, death, family problems, and other spiritual needs of the SMLC membership to the pastors and church leaders.” Currently the congregation is divided into 17 “flocks”, each with its own “shepherd”.

Although Caring Shepherds do monitor members' attendance, watching for "red flags" that might indicate a concern, that is not the only thing they do. Cards and emails are sent, calls and personal contacts are made.

In addition, each Caring Shepherd is a member of the Prayer Chain and is ready and willing to offer prayer for any who request it. The group also oversees the "Caring Cards". On an occasional Sunday, the congregation may be asked to sign a card to be sent to a member who is experiencing health issues. It is a way for the congregation to communicate its concern and support for that member.

Although the Prayer Shawl Ministry is not a part of Caring Shepherds, the two groups do coordinate who receives a Prayer Shawl and which one that person will receive.

My sincere thanks, and that of the entire St. Michael Family, go to all of our Shepherds who DO CARE: Pat Bodine, Bunny Cameron, Carol Davies, Sue Fisher, Mary Ann Knechtel, Jane Kramer, Jaymie Lacombe, Andrea Loveland, Debbie Schultz, Joan Scone, Emily Singer, Ruth Smith, Kathy and Dick Streamer, Barb and Bill Vann, Jimi-Lee Weber, Kay Wika.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kammy Franz, Chair



CHILD CARE COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

Children (6 weeks up to 4 years) continue to utilize the nursery during church services and special events to play and learn while parents and siblings attend activities. We offer a quiet room for babies to sleep and new moms to nurse as well as space for toddlers to play games, read or color.

Also, a row of seats outside the sanctuary (behind the glass walls) is provided for parents/caregivers with young children who are transitioning from the nursery to engage in the church service.

"Wiggle" sacks, located in the first coat closet on left when entering through the main church doors, contain coloring books, drawing paper and small books to keep young children occupied during the church services.

Sarah Fickes, our paid nursery caregiver, continues to work on her Early Education Degree while spending her Sunday mornings in the SMLC nursery. She shares interactive crafts, bible stories, music and play time with the children during both church services.

Volunteers of any age are also welcome to help update bulletin boards, share a craft, take pictures or read a story to the children. Please contact one of the Child Care Committee members, if interested to obtain forms and requirements for background checks.

Fiscally, the Child Care Committee came in just under budget for 2016 and decreased our budget for 2017. We hope you have the opportunity to spend quality time with your friends and family over the holidays. May your year be filled with happiness, peace and love in 2017. God Bless!

Respectfully Submitted,
The Child Care Committee
Andrea Davis, Chair
Jen Scimone
Pastor Rick DeRasmo
Sarah Fickes, Nursery Caregiver



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

Vacation Bible School: August 4 – August 8, 2016

Vacation Bible School was held at St. Michael on Monday August 1 – Friday August 5, 2016, from 8:45 AM to 12:15 PM. Our theme was “Barnyard Roundup: Jesus Gathers Us Together”, and our key Bible scripture was Psalm 23.

At “Archangel Farms”, we taught these Bible stories:

- Jesus, the Good Shepherd
- Jesus Feeds 5000 people
- The Parable of the Sower
- The Parable of the Lost Son
- Jesus Appears to Mary in the Garden

Activities included large group Openings and Closings with skits and music, as well as small group time for music, games, snack, crafts, and Bible story drama.

We had 135 children register for VBS. Of those, 18% are St. Michael members or have grandparents who are members; 37% list no church affiliation; and 45% list another church affiliation. VBS is an important outreach in our community where God’s love is shared and where local children have a safe and fun place to spend a few summer days.

VBS was staffed by 75 dedicated volunteers: 44 adults (18+) and 31 youth (7th-12th grades). The VBS Steering Committee included Pastor Rick, Pastor Adrienne, Jaymie Lacombe, Bobbi Kozel, Leigh Heiss, and Nancy Lux.

VBS supported two charities. We collected \$668 for Stop Hunger Now (meals for the needy, packaged at St. Michael on 10/2/16) and \$685 for ELCA Good Gifts (a cow, a sheep, a pig, bees, and chicks).

--contributed by Jaymie Lacombe, VBS Director

Adult Education

Adult Application Class:

In January we studied Forgiveness by Adam Hamilton where we learned the freedom that comes with forgiving. In February/March we discussed Glory Days: Living Your Promised Land Life Now by Max Lucado. We closed our Spring session with You Make Me Crazy by Rick Warren which was a series on surviving difficult relationships God’s way. In September/October we studied Starting Point by Andy Stanley which was an exploration of the Bible’s grand story and where you fit in. We ended the year by discussing More to Your Story: Discover Your Place in God’s Plan by Max Lucado. He reassures us that God has a master plan in place for us.

--contributed by Hank Fisher, Adult Education Coordinator

Adult Bible Study

The Adult Bible Study that meets during the Sunday School hour is not so much a formal study of Scripture as it is a forum for Christians journeying through life. Among the books we’ve used as resources were ...

Paul Stroble’s “*You Gave Me A Wide Place,*” a book about “holy” places in our lives, or places where others have encountered God in their lives;

David Bivin's "New Light on the Difficult Words of Jesus," a book about the Jewish culture and faith that shaped Jesus' world religious view(s);

"Journeying with Matthew," a book of reflections on the theology and perspectives presented by the evangelist as we considered specific texts read from the lectionary used for the seasons of the church year; and

"3 Christmases," as portrayed by Luke, John and Matthew dealing with the nuances that each author has passed on to the Christian community.

As the leader/facilitator of the class, my intent is always to make sure that there is a Biblical grounding to help stimulate our conversations and to challenge the participants to think about the implications of God's Living Word for our lives and our witness in the world today.

Contributed by Ray Foy, "Facilitator"

Men's Bible Study

Each Saturday morning "The Commonwealth Prayer Warriors" come together to study God's Word and share our blessings and concerns and strengthen each other through prayer and worship.

We have 12 men that are active members of our group, and an open invitation is offered to any men to join our group, or simply come and try it out. We have been very blessed to have our first female participant in 2016. Pastor Adrienne joined us a few times and provided some wonderful insight on Genesis and Paul's letter to the Philippians. We are hoping that she will continue to find times to join us in 2017.

Whether you are a new member of St. Michael, a longtime member looking for an opportunity to grow in your faith, or not a church member at all, we welcome you. We meet at 8 am on Saturday mornings and we normally are together for 60 – 90 minutes. We have been using the Life Lessons series by Max Lucado, completed Genesis in the second half of last year, and closed the year in Philippines. We also used a new format, The Nelson Study series, to study Isaiah, which we enjoyed.

In 2017 we will start the year completing our study of Philippines. We will then move to a new format which is titled "The Essential Question, How Can You Make a Difference For God". It will take us through a 10 week Bible reading experience that will help us discover what we can do to make a difference with our lives.

We continue to enjoy finding ways that we can serve the church and our community: Setting up or breaking down for events in the Fellowship Hall, helping out with Christmas lights or the summer picnic at Luther House. If you need help, please reach out and we will do our best to serve.

This year the group has also turned our focus to our prayer life and, in particular, making it a point to thank God for the many blessings in our lives. Purposely calling out those "small things", like a meal with our family, a hug from our children, an encouraging phone call from a friend, in our prayers each day. One of the things we have all shared is that our Saturday morning group and the friendship that we have developed is an incredible blessing that we are very thankful for in our lives.

I thank God for the men of St. Michael. It is awesome to have a group of men to come together to study God's Word each Saturday, and to have them be there as friends every day! Please consider joining us on any Saturday morning and my guess is you will find the group welcoming and hopefully another way to grow in your Walk with God.

Contributed by Steve Lacombe, coordinator

Library

The St. Michael Library continued to expand its collection in 2016. Another successful book sale from Augsburg Fortress and Sparkhouse (Augsburg's education imprint) in the Fall allowed us to raise enough money to add new

books and resources and provide these to our St Michael members at no cost. We are blessed with a wonderful free library and I encourage each of you to take advantage of the books, videos, and resources available to you to help continue to grow in your faith. I smile when I walk by and see a child, teenager or adult sitting in the library and enjoying a moment with something they have selected. We thank Deb Parker for her work in managing our library.

--contributed by Steve Lacombe, coordinator

Sunday School-Faith Formation Program

Martin Luther wrote his *Small Catechism* in order to help parents teach their children the basics of faith. In fact, the Reformation, which celebrates its 500th Anniversary in 2017, represented a huge shift in the way we educated and formed Christians. The Industrial Revolution brought with it another major shift - the advent of Sunday Schools, intended to teach reading, writing, mathematics, and morality to children who worked in the factories and whose only day off was Sunday. Scholars, such as Phyllis Tribble, Diana Butler Bass, and others, note that we are currently undergoing another major shift in this ministry area.

This past year, 2016, represents for us a first attempt at changing some of the ways we form disciples – and, more specifically, disciples who are currently children – at St. Michael. We purchased curriculum that is vastly different from what we have used in the past. We changed the format from classroom-only to large-group, small-group. We have encouraged parents and other adults to join us for the large group openings. Some of these changes have been more successful than others. This program continues to be - and likely will be for some time - changed and molded to suit the needs of our congregation.

The long-term vision for Sunday School is a program among several aimed at forming disciples – infant to adult. In the short term, we are hoping for a revitalized ministry that complements our Sunday-morning activity in the congregation. **This ministry simply would not exist without the many volunteers who are available to teach and mentor young people each week.** Their commitment - both in time and in emotional availability and prayerful inspiration for the future - cannot be understated or possibly thanked enough. **Teachers and volunteers, thank you.**

--contributed by Pastor Adrienne Meier

Confirmation

In May, St. Michael Lutheran Church confirmed seven students. For the 2016-2017 program year, we have sixteen students and four adult guides. Confirmation meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month in the evening. In the spring, we concluded with a retreat on the Apostle's Creed, and our bi-weekly programming centered on the Lord's Prayer. This fall and winter, we are discussing the 10 Commandments. In the spring we will move to the church calendar, worship, and Christian discipleship.

--Contributed by Pastor Adrienne Meier



COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE REPORT 2016

The St. Michael Columbarium and Memorial Garden was dedicated in January, 2013 and is now completing its fourth year of service. This mission continues to be entirely self-funded through donor contributions, memorial gifts, and sales of niches and memorial plaques. No money is provided from Church Operating or Reserve Funds. A Perpetual Care account has been established with 15% of each niche and memorial plaque sale price being placed in the account. To date a total of 37 niches and 7 memorial plaques have been reserved.

The Columbarium is made up of 96 niches (each holding up to 2 urns), 24 of which are located within a “Cross” section. There is currently only one niche remaining within the “Cross” section. While our supplier of engraved granite faceplates and urns has had a price increase, we continue to hold our price at \$1,800 for the remaining niche inside the “Cross” section and \$1,500 for those located outside the “Cross” area. This price includes opening and closing of the niche, faceplate engraving, the urn and all shipping and handling charges.

In addition to niches, the St. Michael Columbarium Ministry offers families the option of memorializing their loved ones with a memorial plaque. These inscribed plaques are located on the back of the Columbarium Wall, providing a meaningful way to express our love and to honor loved ones. The price of a 6”x 2” engraved granite Memorial Plaque is \$350.00.

Niche and memorial plaque applications are available by contacting the church office or by contacting any team member.

Columbarium and Memorial Garden Team:

Dick Dietz Rick Wetzel
Karen Markey Darwin Wika
Bill Vann



MUSIC AT ST. MICHAEL (Concert) COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

The Concert Committee continues to experiment with the timing and content of concerts in an effort to attract a wider audience. In the Spring the NewArk Chorale presented one of their American Tapestry concerts, which was well received and artistically well done. However, although in the past this was a concert that typically attracted a larger audience, attendance was disappointing.

Consequently, the committee decided to try a different approach in 2017. Rather than schedule a concert in the Fall, it was decided to try one at Epiphany when there would be less competition and, perhaps, more interest. The Brandywine Harps were scheduled to perform on January 8th.

Our second experiment for 2017 is to go outside our normal “recruiting area”. We have engaged “Silver, Wood and Ivory”, a piano and flute duo from the Lancaster area, on March 5th.

The members of the committee, Sandy Cordani, Rob Furr, Karen Markey, Lou Ross, Emily Singer, Sheila Wetzel, Kevin and Janet Witman, and Linda Lorgus (ex officio), welcome your suggestions for possible artists or ideas on scheduling.

Respectfully Submitted,
George Franz, Chair



ENDOWMENT INVESTMENT COMMITTEE REPORT – 2016

The Endowment Investment Committee, established in 2013 and comprised of three St. Michael members, Hank Fisher, Art Knechtel, and Chair Darwin Wika, invested \$50,000 in four Vanguard Funds in late 2013. We looked primarily at Vanguard, Fidelity, and Thrivent funds but decided on Vanguard as our primary Investment firm.

We selected four funds: 1) a Dividend Appreciation Fund - VDADX, 2) a Dividend Growth Fund - VDIGX, 3) Equity Income Fund - VEIPX, and 4) a Wellington Fund - VWELX; and split the \$50,000 with \$10,000 going to each of the first three Funds and \$20,000 going to the Wellington Fund.

We also received an additional \$1000 bequest from a member estate probate that was invested before the end of 2014, at the same ratio within the four funds as done initially.

To date, funds have grown as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Dividend Appreciation Fund | \$12,487.30 |
| • Dividend Growth Fund | \$12,800.74 |
| • Equity Income Fund | \$13,324.06 |
| • Wellington Fund | <u>\$25,106.75</u> |
| Total | \$63,718.85 |

Please note that contributions to the Endowment Fund can be made at any time, not just at death, although designating the St. Michael Endowment Fund as part of estate planning is an important and lasting opportunity for giving to the church.

Respectfully submitted,
Darwin Wika, Chair



EVANGELISM COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

Highlights – We had a successful year. Trunk or Treat had over 100 children attend the event. The majority, 65 to 70%, were not church members. Many families that came were disappointed that there was no haunted house. We were also down to about 15 Trunks; at least five from previous years were families that had youth involved with the haunted house.

All in all this is an event that attracts many non-church members and is continuing to grow. What we need to work on is seeing how we can get these visitors to attend a service or two. My only concern is that we won't have enough trunks to support the growth as we lost some this year while the number of treaters increased.

The Christmas Tea was a huge success. We had 17 tables an increase in six from the year before, and everyone really enjoyed themselves. This is also an event that we think will continue to grow. The concern is volunteers. Setting up the hall is difficult to do on a Friday night. Most of the volunteers for the tea said it would be easier if the event were held on a Sunday afternoon. More would be able to help with the set-up on a Saturday and it was that the committee could get more servers (men) to give up football for an afternoon to help. This, too, is something we must consider. I know Renee spent nearly 15 hours at the church that day. Others who helped were there setting up to almost midnight. I also think if this event was held on a Sunday, maybe some of the guests could attend a service prior to the tea.

We are looking forward to adding an event this spring and will update Council when more details are known.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Summa, Co-Chair



FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT – 2016

The Fellowship Committee continues to be the small, but diligent, group that strives to provide the congregation with varied and enjoyable opportunities for members to come together and share food, fellowship and fun! This year we continued to serve as sponsors for the Hanging of the Greens, Congregational Meeting Dinners, Breakfast/Worship Events, Easter Brunch, and several Wine and Cheese events. We continue to supply the congregation with coffee in the Archangel Café each week.

It is the goal of the Fellowship Committee to continue to assist and support the work of the other church groups/committees when possible (e.g., 60 Plussers, Sunday School, etc.). We welcome members to join our ranks for whatever assistance you may provide and we thank the congregation for their continued support of our events as evidenced by their willingness to “sign on the line” and provide so many goodies for our events when the need arises.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Kester, Chairperson



FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

The Role of the Finance Ministry Team continues to include the following:

- Monthly monitoring of giving and expenditures versus the budget and prior year
- Managing finances with the Treasurer
- Making recommendations to Council on both budget shortfalls and excesses
- Working with other Church Ministry Teams to anticipate future large funding needs
- Working with the Treasurer and Church Secretary on procuring goods and services economically and efficiently
- Preparing a proposed budget with the Ministry Team liaisons for Council review
- Reviewing insurance coverage and an inventory of building contents
- Developing and reviewing the investment plan
- Encouraging long term financial planning by church members, and
- Ensuring accurate accounting of congregational giving

During 2016, the Finance Team members included Janet Weber, Financial Secretary; Karen Liska, Treasurer; Steve Young; Ray Cumbaa; Randy Stone; Steve Young; David Sharman (part year); Larry Porter; Pastor Rick; and Dana Parker, Chair. Many thanks to Larry Porter for his expertise, leadership, and guidance through this year of transition.

The following were major focus areas this year:

- Working with Council and the Ministry Teams, finalized the 2016 Budget proposal which was approved by the Congregation
- Completed a Capital Reserve study to help define an appropriate balance in the Capital Reserve Fund – thank you David Sharman!
- Completed a study of giving history and trends to help in the development of future revenue scenarios
- Successfully transitioned the payroll function from RW Accounting to Paychex
- Provided detailed expense data to the Ministry Teams as requested to allow improved monitoring and control of budgets
- Continued to promote alternative forms of giving through messages in the church newsletter and church bulletin inserts: Simply Giving, electronic giving through the church website, and availability of a QR Code.
- Working with the Ministry Teams, developed a proposal for the 2017 budget for Council review and approval. Earlier budget preparation timetable allowed us to provide a Provisional Budget for review by the Congregation in early January 2017.

The Finance Team would like to thank all counting volunteers for their service throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dana Parker, Chairperson



LUTHER HOUSE RESIDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES 2016 REPORT

During 2016 the St. Michael Luther House Support Committee, with assistance from Luther Foundation and over **30** members of St. Michael, provided a variety of services and activities for the residents of Luther House.

The committee is chaired by Bruce Beitler. Throughout most of 2016 members of the committee included Mary Ann Knechtel, Bunny Cameron, Christi Wampler, Karen Markey Virginia Noblit, Al & Eileen Bergbauer and Bruce Beitler. During 2016 the committee mourned the passing of long time committee member Donna Brown. The committee is involved in both volunteer services as well as activities subsidized by funding from Luther Foundation and the United Way. Funding for the Christmas gift card project comes directly from St. Michael.

In 2016 our projects included:

During the course of the year the Encore Shop donated numerous shipments of lightly used clothing to Luther House residents. The committee arranged for delivery of several hundred items of clothing to each of the four Luther House buildings during 2016. Clothing not utilized by residents is further donated to Oxford area charities and churches. Christi Wampler has done a great job in managing this activity.

On August 27 the committee hosted the sixth annual summer picnic for Luther House residents. Funding from Luther Foundation provided the tent, beef and pork barbeque, drinks, paper ware and utensils while residents brought a salad or dessert to share. Approximately 110 residents attended the picnic. Many members of the St. Michael congregation assisted in set up, serving food, assisting residents and clean up. In 2017 the committee plans to again hold this event the weekend before Labor Day.

During 2016 the committee organized seven bus trips for Luther House residents. As a result of input from residents, trips focused more on entertainment venues and less on shopping trips. Destinations included Rainbow Dinner Theatre, Milburn Stone Theatre, American Music Theatre, New Ark Chorale Concert, Wilmington Blue Rocks, Susquehanna Riverboat Society and New Candlelight Theatre. Approximately 240 residents participated in these trips which are subsidized by funding from Luther Foundation. Members of the congregation served as trip volunteers and accompanied the residents to handle ticketing and trip logistics.

On December 5, 6, 7 and 8 the committee assisted with holiday luncheons served in each of the four Luther House buildings. Al Bergbauer and Bruce Beitler organized these luncheons which are funded by Luther Foundation. The committee arranged for members of the congregation to assist with set up, food service and clean up. In addition the committee arranged for Wards Restaurant to provide fresh baked pies for the four luncheons. Approximately 210 residents attended the four luncheons.

During the Christmas holiday season the committee arranged for the set up and decoration of Christmas trees in each building and the gazebo. In addition, we displayed the large wreaths made several years ago by St. Michael youth. The wreaths are displayed in the entrance hallways of each building. The Committee arranged for members of the congregation and Luther House residents to completely renovate the wreaths this year. Outdoor lighting was strung on 10 trees located across the Luther House campus. The St. Michael Saturday morning men's group put up the lighting, while the women's group decorated the trees. These groups also serve as volunteers to take down decorations after the holidays. Thanks to Steve Lacombe, Jane Kramer, Patti Hamilton and many other church members for their support of these activities.

Also during the Christmas season the committee prepared Christmas cards for the approximately 280 residents of Luther House. Each Christmas card contained a \$10.00 Giant gift card provided by funding from the Social Ministry Committee and the church's Giant gift card program. The committee thanks Karen Markey and Mary Ann Knechtel for distributing the Christmas cards.

Committee member Karen Markey hosted sing-a-longs in the large Building 3 activity room throughout the year.

The committee wishes to thank all the members of St. Michael who support the activities we organize.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bruce D. Beitler, Luther House Support Committee



MEMORIALS AND SPECIAL GIFTS REPORT – 2016

Memorials were given to St. Michael in the past year for Jean Swanson, Eileen Zeller, Shirley Mathias, Fritz Kramer, Jim Davies, Donna Brown, Dr. Robert Forney, Bob Waites, Anthony Rossi, Elaine Fling, Ruth So, Norman “Pete” Bodine, and John Singer.

Items purchased or utilizing M&SG funds include Recovering the Altar Kneeling Cushions, Easter Johannes Brass, outdoor seasonal flowers, an Office Fax Machine, Bell Tree and Accessories, the Sanctuary Christmas tree and four wreaths.

Following the receipt of a Memorial or Special Gift an acknowledgement card is sent to families and individuals. The giver, if a non St. Michael member, also receives an acknowledgement card. If given by a member of St. Michael, the report in the ARCHANGEL HERALD as well as the financial statement serves as a receipt and acknowledgement.

Many thanks to Sandy Cordani for assistance in reviewing funds and plans for utilizing monies given to M&SG. Mary Ann Knechtel has agreed to assist as we go forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Wika



MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT - 2016

The Mutual Ministry Committee communicated throughout the year with Pastor Rick and toward the end of the year with our new Associate Pastor, Pastor Adrienne. We meet regularly with the pastors, both individually and as a group. Members of the committee also check periodically with our Church Secretary and Director of Music. We are consistent in our concern for the spiritual, emotional and personal needs of our pastors and lay professionals. Our commitment to serve to this end will continue as our congregation moves forward with the mission of “Following Christ’s Example, Welcoming All, Strengthening Each Other, Serving the Community”.

Recognizing the value of open communication concerning attitudes, conditions and needs within the congregation, we continue to encourage you to ask questions and share insights that might benefit our congregation regarding the work of our pastors and staff. Please feel free to contact any of our committee members to share your thoughts.

The ministry of our pastors, lay professionals and the congregation of St. Michael is strengthened by this committee's focus on supporting and building mutual ministry within a trusting and confidential environment. Our deepest appreciation is extended to our staff for their hard work and dedication.

Respectfully submitted,
Lou Ross, Chair



SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT – 2016

Helping others - the simplest way to explain the reason St. Michael Lutheran Church has a Social Ministry Team. In fact, when St. Michael is planning its budget for the year, the budget category that includes the Social Ministry funding is called Ministry to Others.

Our theme for 2016 was “Year of Hunger”. Our focus was not only on helping to prevent the hunger experienced by others, but we provided opportunities for the members of St. Michael to satisfy their hunger by helping others.

The objective of the Social Ministry Team is to encourage members of St. Michael to periodically turn the focus of our congregation outward and to serve our local community, Chester County, the United States and the world. The Social Ministry Team works with members of St. Michael to initiate, coordinate and celebrate the abundance of volunteering time, financial donations and talents that St. Michael members use to help others.

The church provides a portion of its budget for Social Ministry giving. In 2016 the leadership of St. Michael set a goal to allocate 10% of the overall budget to Ministry to Others. We are pleased to report that we will disburse financial support to the organizations and agencies mentioned in this report at the 10% goal level.

At least as important as our financial donations are the many other ways St. Michael members continued to support our community this year. We want to express our gratitude to members of our congregation who volunteered. We are also excited about the teamwork and sharing of resources with and among other St. Michael committees. Much was accomplished as shown below in the following highlights:

- Our Spring and Fall Blood Drives
- Our Good Neighbors Saturday Projects
- The Yard Sale to benefit the Chester County Migrant Ministry

All of the efforts and successes above are due to the congregation’s great participation and support.

There are more “helping others” accomplishments by St. Michael in 2016:

- The Heating Assistance Fund continued during the winter months. The funds raised were donated to Kennett Area Community Service (KACS).
- Our Lenten project collected and assembled health care kits for Lutheran World Relief
- Thanksgiving meal bags were filled with all the fixings for a Thanksgiving meal. KACS provided the turkey and picked up the bags during the week before Thanksgiving.
- We collected and distributed gifts to approximately 17 Migrant families again this year.
- The donation of numerous canned and dry goods to our food closet are used by the Kennett Area Food Cupboard during special food drives and throughout the year.

Of course there are many more activities including Mother’s Day blankets, Giant gift cards, Luther House activities, and many other ways that St. Michael reaches out to others in our community who may be in need.

Family Promise, a Project to Assist Local Homeless Families

St. Michael continued to be a Support Church for Family Promise, which specializes in working with local churches and other community groups to provide temporary housing for families. As a Support Church, we worked with the Church of the Vineyard at the Barn every 13 weeks and assisted with providing food and people to assist homeless families in our area.

Stop Hunger Now

This year we worked with Stop Hunger Now to host a meal packaging event at St. Michael to stop global hunger and malnutrition. The culmination of the summer fund raising, which brought in \$8219.22 (\$3344.04 of this remains to be disbursed to KACS and/or retained to complete the project again in coming years), occurred on October 2 when over 100 members of St. Michael created an assembly line and packaged over 15,000 meals within 90 minutes. These meals fed school children in Mozambique and Zambia. Everyone found the event to be fulfilling in many ways, creating a spirit of community, teamwork and ministry. Next year, we plan to work even harder and strive to package 25,000 meals.

Agencies and Charities that St. Michael Supported in 2016

We provide financial support to many community groups and agencies. The following organizations received funding from St. Michael through the budget line item *Ministry to Others* or the *Lutheran Community Services* line item:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| After the Bell | Provides supervised after-school program of skill-developing activities for Kennett Middle School students |
| Camp Dreamcatcher | For kids who are confronted with AIDS |
| Chester County Migrant Ministry | Helps local Latino residents with food, housing supplies, and general care |
| Community of Love | ELCA congregation in Oxford, PA |
| The Garage | Christian outreach for local youth to encourage them scholastically and emotionally |
| Good Neighbors | A Christian agency whose mission is to make families in need have homes that are warmer, safer and drier, in Southern Chester County |
| Heimberger Mission | Support for Jim and Robin Heimberger's missionary efforts in Mexico |
| Family Promise | Works with local churches and other community groups to provide temporary housing for families |
| Kennett Area Community Services | Crisis services for families who are in need of food, clothing, lodging, heat or rent. Includes Kennett Area Food Cupboard |
| Kennett Area Senior Center | Provides socialization, meals and exercise for seniors in the Kennett area |
| La Comunidad Hispana | Service to Latinos and other vulnerable Chester County residents through health care, counseling, and educational services |
| Oxford Neighborhood Services Center | Provides information and referral to services; also provides food, clothing, rental and utility assistance to people in crisis |
| ELCA World Hunger Appeal | Provides food, grants, and volunteers to ELCA and partner ministries locally, nationally, and globally to end hunger worldwide. |
| Lutheran Disaster Reponse | Pan-Lutheran organization that provides supplies, labor, and emotional support in the wake of natural and man-made disasters worldwide. |

St. Michael gifts also supported many other area programs through our contributions to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

The Social Ministry Team meets throughout the year and we are thankful for everyone’s efforts.

Members: Pastor Adrienne Meier, Pat Bodine, Annette Bowers, Norm Cochran, Dan Folmar, Eric Folmer (incoming youth representative), Rick Huneke (chair), Sue Rossi (council liaison), Andrew Rossi (outgoing youth representative), Stacy Starr, and Jessica Wilson.

The Social Ministry Team is always open to new ideas and is actively seeking volunteers for our goal of ministry to others. If you’re interested in learning more, talk to a member of the committee. Looking ahead to 2017 we plan to continue our work, but we also plan to develop new initiatives through our theme for the year, “Servant for All”. We are interested in ideas and input from St. Michael members on how this can be accomplished.

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Huneke, Chair



TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE 2016

The Technology Committee is responsible for identifying opportunities to utilize new technology at St. Michael. This might include new personal computers, new software applications, or new audio/visual (A/V) capabilities. We also coordinate the installation of the technology, and we do our best to maintain it after it’s up and working.

Beyond managing the quality of sound in our worship spaces, the past year has been a quiet one for our committee. If you are aware of any technology-related items that would enhance our worship service or any of the other ministries we support, please let one of us know.

Ours is a small but dedicated group. Each member has strong skills in particular areas, so we complement each other fairly well. Our team includes Vinci Felix, Daryl Ehren, JR Thornton, Pastor Rick, and me. Don’t hesitate to talk to any of us if you have comments, suggestions, or if you’d like to join our committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Folmar, Chairman



YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT – 2016

This summer we said “Godspeed” to eleven young people who graduated from high school and were headed off to new adventures. We also said “Thank you” to Roxanne Seidel and Megan Minella who retired from active work with our youth. We cannot begin express the overwhelming gratitude due these leaders for their dedicated work for many years.

The renewed and expanded Youth Ministry Team had a vision retreat in July. The team created a directory and a complete calendar for the 2016-2017 program year. The team divided into sub groups - with some planning and supervising Sunday evenings meetings, some teaching Sunday School, some planning and supervising special events (such as lock-ins), some planning for our annual fundraiser (Pancakes and PJs on Sunday, February 26), and some acting as connectors – connecting our young people to the upcoming events and to new relationships in the congregation. This year, we started using InstaTeam to communicate with students and parents.

You may be surprised to read that we are always looking for volunteers. Do you have a special dish you love to teach others to make? Do you have a hobby you're happy to share? Do you want to recruit for your alma mater? We would love to introduce you to our fantastic young people. We are the body of Christ together. The youth group doesn't seek to set itself apart, but to help young people connect to Christ and to their congregation. If you can help, please speak to a member of the team.

The current youth ministry team is: Amy Bossong, Chris Church, Daryl Ehren, Jillian Ehren, Rick Huneke, Brian Keefer, Lois Kester, Bobbi Kozel, J Liska, Nancy Michel, Bill Morrison, and Jenny Sheckells.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Adrienne Meier



WOMEN OF ST. MICHAEL REPORT - 2016

WOMEN OF ST. MICHAEL is a service-oriented group meeting most months to carry out projects showing care for the community outside the walls of our church as well as to meet needs as they arise at St. Michael.

Our first meeting of the year served to charge our personal batteries for service when we enjoyed a presentation detailing the Youth Mission Trip to Detroit in 2015. We commend our Youth and their leaders on their zeal and energy.

Our first project of calendar year 2016 was to prepare, pack and mail College Care Boxes to 13 college students of St. Michael families. A lot of care goes into the selection and packing of snacks to help these young people get through their finals period. We thank St. Michael for a generous monetary allowance to help us meet the ever-mounting cost of mailing the boxes.

We enjoyed presenting sing-alongs at Pocopson Home, Friends Home and Twin Pines Nursing Facility, though this year our planned trip to the latter had to be cancelled because of bad weather conditions. We took sugar-free snacks to Pocopson and gifted Twin Pines with Word-Search books for the residents. These presentations are always well-received by the residents, and we are blessed by our interaction with them.

A special part of our service every year comes in Advent when we decorate Christmas trees at a number of facilities. This year trees were decorated in each of the four residence buildings at Luther House with the addition of the tree in the outdoor gazebo. One tree was decorated in the chapel at Pocopson Home. We have a special relationship at Friends Home in the style of our meeting. Every year we make themed ornaments to take there for their tree and raise our voices together in a carol sing following the decorating of the tree.

Another page in our relationship book with Friends Home covers our helping them present their Mother's Day Tea every May. We make table decorations at our April meeting and then help serve at the Tea in May. Megan Minella is our craft designer and mentor for this project and for our Christmas decorations for Friends.

In June, at our seasonal luncheon, Carolyn Wonderly gave us a wonderful send-off program entitled "The Chrismon Journey," explaining the meaning of various chrismons that are part of the decorations on the Christmas tree here at St. Michael. We enjoyed seeing these creations close at hand.

I want to thank all our ladies for their service and enthusiasm and invite all women members and friends to join us in any of these endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Hillegass, Coordinator



WORSHIP AND MUSIC TEAM - 2016

As some of the main expressions of our Christian faith, worship and music remain central to the life of the St. Michael congregation. Our regularly scheduled worship services provide a time and place for Christ's people to come and be nourished by the Almighty God through the Word and the Sacrament. It is here that we respond through word and music with prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and adoration.

St. Michael approaches worship in a traditional Lutheran way, while continuing to introduce new liturgies and music without disrupting the rich heritage of our Lutheran tradition. From September to May we hold two services on Sunday at 8:00 and at 10:30 while during the summer we meet for one service on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. followed by a time for fellowship. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first and third Sunday of every month as well as at all festivals. There has been some discussion of moving to every Sunday Communion, but the discussion has been tabled until we can engage and enlist more volunteers to serve on the Altar Guild.

Our Worship and Music Team is a dedicated group of members that meets bi-monthly to ensure that we provide opportunities for worship that will stir, deepen, and, perhaps at times, challenge us to explore the pathways of our faith. Planning and study help us offer ways to enrich the worship experiences we offer. Current Team members are: Pastor Rick, Daryl Ehren, Linda Lorgus, Linda Porter, Mark Swanson (Chair), Peryl Marteny, Diana Roberts, Sheila and Rick Wetzel, and Richard Streamer.

Our music ministry at St. Michael continues to be an area that we look to grow while enhancing our worship experience. Linda Lorgus leads our music ministry with continual creativity and tireless dedication. The Adult, Youth, and Children's choirs along with the bell choirs and special music profoundly amplify our worship and praise and provide for a deeper and more meaningful worship experience for everyone participating in the service. Linda is always ready to welcome new recruits to the music program so please consider joining one of the many choirs she has available.

Additionally, we are in need of volunteers interested in learning to serve on the Altar Guild. The Altar Guild facilitates our worship experiences by preparing the altar for worship each week, including setting up for communion and baptisms, caring for the candles and linens, and changing the paraments. If you are interested, we can partner you with a current member of the Altar Guild. Please contact Debbie Schultz or the Church Office if you would like to be a part of this valuable service to the church.

The Worship and Music Team will continue to meet in the coming year exploring how to further deepen and enrich our worship experiences. Throughout the coming year, the Lutheran Church will be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. "Celebrating 500 Years, 1517-2017" will not only be a time for reflection on the rich history of the church, but also a chance to look forward to what lies ahead for all of us. It is our hope to provide some unique celebrations in the coming year to lift up Luther and the Reformation. So be watching for news in the coming months. Please keep the Worship and Music Team in your thoughts and prayers.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pastor Rick