

St. Michael's Lutheran Church
3455 S. Van Buren Road
Reese, MI 48757



CONNECTING People To Jesus

St. Michael's of Richville, Michigan

THE CHURCH SHALL STAND!

The season of Pentecost is now underway. This, the longest season of the church year, is sometimes described as the “non-festival” half of the year, as we have just completed our annual walk through the life of Christ (the “festival” half). Now our focus will be on the life of the church. During His earthly ministry, Jesus had much to say about the Christian life. He also taught us about the work of the Holy Spirit within the church, and how we can recognize the Spirit at work. This will be a joyful season as we celebrate the Spirit at work!

There are many magnificent hymns about the church. One of the most striking is LSB 645, Built on the Rock. (If you have a hymnal handy, please look at this text.) The title reminds of Christ's words describing Peter's confession of faith, “And on this rock I will build My church.” (Matthew 16:18) In verse one, we sing about the everlasting church, that will continue “even when steeples are falling.” The steeple bells which call us to worship continue to ring! They remind us that our church is a place of “rest everlasting,” something that we all long for.

Verse four of this hymn describes a tour worth taking. “Here stands the font” at which we entered into the church's life through baptism. The altar shows us the bread and wine which will become Christ's body and blood, sacramentally given for the forgiveness of our sins. The Scriptures are read from the chancel, proclaiming our Redeemer

to all generations. “Word and Sacrament” is a valuable catch-phrase describing exactly what the church offers to the world, and how we as members of the church celebrate these gifts of God.

And how does the hymn end? The same way our service ends: “My peace I leave with you.” These words of Jesus give us all that we need to face the week ahead.

We are blessed to be members of His church here in this place! May we all continue to rejoice in the gifts that He gives to us when we gather in His name!

(PS: Verses two and three also have a great deal to say about our role in the church. Read them sometime soon!)

God bless us all!

Dr. Jon Eifert, Music Director



June News 2023



Tue. June 13th
Church Meeting Room
1 to 6 p.m.
Donate blood and give the gift of life.
Free Pizza and t-shirts!



Sisters of Ruth

We will be meeting at church June 7 at noon. We will order pizza. If you would like, you can bring a salad or dessert. Contact Luann if questions, 989-823-4785.



Gifts and Memorials

In Memory

Sylvia Buetow

Missions— \$30.00

Ernest Hetzner

Missions— \$10.00

Park Hall Table & Chairs— \$25.00

Dallas Haubenstricker

Video Live Streaming— \$20.00

Park Hall Tables & Chairs— \$45.00

Ronald Weber

Park Hall Tables & Chairs— \$150.00

In Honor Of

Ed Roedel (80th)

Park Hall Tables & Chairs— \$30.00

Terry and Sandy Keinath (60th)

Endowment Scholarship— \$160.00

Wilbert and Arlene Wirth

Music Department— \$100.00

In Thanksgiving

Jim Karst

Park Hall— \$80.00

Erna Rodammer (100th)

Park Hall Tables & Chairs— \$100.00

Finally, as we look ahead to the future, we are truly blessed to have a full-staff within our school. It is a tremendous blessing to have these teachers and staff serving in ministry with our students. We continue to see an increase in our school enrollment numbers which serve as a testament to the work our ECC friends and school families do in promoting St. Michael's. Our incoming kindergarten class boasts a 92% retention rate between Preschool 4s and kindergarten class which exceeds our 5-year average of 85%. Our classes continue to grow and we happily welcome families to apply for enrollment here at St. Michael's. We have a number of projects which are currently in various stages of development. We are working on remodeling one of our current classrooms into a science/STEM/resource room for students to work in with our new curriculum as well as supporting our students with small group or individual instruction. We are eagerly awaiting the new sound and audio visual system in the gym which is being installed in partnership with Frankenmuth Credit Union Foundation for Our Communities grant, private donations, and part of our ECC grant monies. We continue to seek financial support from our congregation and community members in updating our classroom projection resources in order to better provide our students with the accessible learning environment and stay current. We are always looking for ways to better prepare our students for their higher education years and part of that starts with what we do right here at St. Michael's. If you haven't stopped into the school in awhile or it has been a long time since you've been through, please consider making a visit. We'd love to give you a tour and show you what our students are doing and what a blessing it is to have the school and ECC as extensions of St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Richville!



Vacation Bible School

THIS YEARS THEME

Digging into the Apostles Creed

Mark your calendars for July 10-13th, evenings. Free dinner served each night to all children who attend, parents, and helpers.

Volunteers are needed. Teens are welcome to help, and receive volunteer service hours. Please contact Heather Reinbold 989-577-0013 if you're willing to help.



The
Lord stood
at my side and
gave me
strength.

2 Timothy 4:17

REDEEM YOUR POINTS!

Our product codes, found under Coca-Cola product caps and on fridge packs, are going away, but there's still time to donate your codes to your favorite causes.

Through June 30, 2023, you can collect product codes and donate to the charities you love. Get your codes to Doug Doud prior to that day so that they can be entered. Remaining proceeds will go to Hot Lunch.

Notes from the Principal

We are nearly to the end of our 23-24 school year here at St. Michael's! Our students have been doing great as they study, participate in extracurricular activities, and most importantly continue to hear about the love of Jesus. Our year closes soon with our 8th grade graduation ceremony happening on June 8, 2023 at church beginning at 6:30pm. The following day, we celebrate with our students their accomplishments throughout the year with our School Awards Day held after closing chapel on Friday, June 9, 2023 beginning at 9:00am. We invite all members of our congregation to these two year-end events as we celebrate our students! We end our year with our tradition of the School Picnic & Parade to be held on Sunday, June 11, 2023 and look forward to seeing you all there!

Throughout this school year, the students and staff have focused on various missions and community outreach projects, as well as inviting various guests to our school. In fall, we celebrated and supported our 6th grade teacher Courtney Callahan in her struggle with breast cancer. We praise God for her continued success with beating this. This past winter, we continued our mission of collecting, packaging, and sending Christmas shoeboxes through Operation Christmas Child. This year we were able to bless over 160 boxes. We are incredibly thankful for the parent volunteers who helped make this possible again this year! We continue to support a number of families throughout the school year by generous donations that have been gifted by members of our congregation to help families who need assistance with tuition, hot lunch, even meals, and other necessities. Our students have made and donated tie-blankets for patients in various hospitals including Hurley and Covenant in addition to regularly participating with St. Michael's K.I.T. (Keep-in-Touch) program for military and college students. Our Student Council has been active throughout the school year engaging both our school community as well as staff and students with various events and activities. They have sponsored our Trunk-or-Treat event, various fundraisers to support school activities or classes, and have taken a large role in maintaining school spirit. We continue to support the CF Foundation with our annual walk held in the Spring and are honored to support the fight against cystic fibrosis through our annual "Jeans for Genes" campaign with the staff. We also had a visit from Mr. Anthony Ianni, former division one Michigan State Basketball player, who came to school and spoke on topics regarding school culture. Besides our students regularly participating and singing in church services, they have also continued to share their musical gifts in many ways with visits to nursing homes and with our Lutheran School Music Festival and school Spring Music Concert.

Our chapel offerings this year continue to support various missions both locally and abroad. This year, we have sent mission collections to Samaritan's Purse (Operation Christmas Child), Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM), World Missions, and Right to Life of Michigan. Our school and students continue to focus on a ministry throughout the academic quarter and give our chapel offerings to these organizations in addition to prayer support. We continue to support our local area schools, food banks, and other organizations with fundraisers, advertisement, student participation, and/or financial support.

We continue to provide our students with unique learning opportunities whether it is in the classroom, on the playing court or field, or exploring God's creation. Recently, our 7th graders led a science exploration lab using a weather balloon which was launched and recorded various weather and other data. It also included a flight video which was especially awesome for students to see. Be sure to check out our website to see this! If you haven't checked out the new school website be sure to visit. We have several videos posted, two of which are a tour and school introduction video produced by one of our Raider alumni Luke Losee! We have other alumni who have excelled in their respective high schools who continue to do great things! We have alumni in all 4 area schools including Reese, Vassar, Frankenmuth, and Valley Lutheran who are recognized regularly. Be sure to check out the various newspapers, online media, and postings and see which Raider alumni you can spot!

Lutheran Laymen's League



YOU ARE INVITED to a FAMILY NIGHT
DINNER by ST. MICHAEL'S LLL
MONDAY 6/19/23 at 6pm.

Dinner will be potluck with LLL supplying the (brats and hotdogs) meat. We plan to hopefully have it at the new park hall. Please bring a dish to pass along with your own beverage and table service..

A presentation slideshow will be given by Dave and Sally Janson on their recent pilgrimage to The Holy Land, which was hosted by Pastor Mark and Karen Brandt.



JUNE 11TH OUTDOOR SERVICE AND PARK HALL DEDICATION

The Park Hall is almost completed! The June 11th 10:30 service will be our first outdoor worship service of the summer. We will dedicate the new Park Hall at that time. Thanks to our Building Committee, the workers, and all who donated materials, time, and money to make it possible!



Park Hall **DEDICATION**



SCHOOL PICNIC

Our annual School Picnic and Parade will take place on June 11th starting at 2:00 PM. Please join us for delicious food, games, and cold drinks.



LUTHERANS FOR LIFE OF MICHIGAN IS HOSTING ITS ANNUAL DIAPER SHOWER.

The project runs from Mothers' Day through Fathers' Day. Please bring in any size diapers (especially the larger sizes if possible) and place them in the box in the foyer from Sunday, May 14-June 18. The pregnancy resource center (Life Clinic Community Resources in Bay City) is appreciative for the support we give them every year. We are an answer to their prayers.

Critical Theory: The Method Behind Today's Madness

Recently I read an article that helped me understand many of the problems and issues that confront us in the Church and in American culture. The article is called *“The Incompatibility of Critical Theory and Christianity.”* It was written by Neil Shenvi and Pat Sawyer, and was published on the website of The Gospel Coalition. I’m not well-acquainted with this website or the authors but what they wrote was very eye-opening. Critical Theory is a term used mostly in the academic world but it has a tremendous influence in our nation’s politics, businesses, and schools. (Critical Race Theory is derived from the larger concept of Critical Theory.)

Critical Theory is a Marxist way of looking at the world, a world-view, so to speak. The Encyclopedia Britannica website gives this definition of Critical Theory: *“Marxist-inspired movement in social and political philosophy...drawing particularly on the thought of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud, critical theorists maintain that a primary goal of philosophy is to understand and to help overcome the social structures through which people are dominated and oppressed.”*

Basically, Critical Theory sees everything in terms of oppressor vs. oppressed. Shenvi and Sawyer write, *“Modern critical theory views reality through the lens of power. Each individual is seen either as oppressed or as an oppressor, depending on their race, class, gender, sexuality, and a number of other categories. Oppressed groups are subjugated. Through the exercise of hegemonic power—the ability of dominant groups to impose their norms, values, and expectations on society as a whole, relegating other groups to subordinate positions.”*

Karl Marx saw the world in terms of economic power. Marx said that capitalists - the bourgeoisie who own most of society's wealth and means of production - oppress the proletariat, the working class. Critical Theory today (sometimes called Cultural Marxism) sees the world in terms of social and cultural power. In the United States they accuse white heterosexual males of European ancestry of using societal institutions (the government, businesses, schools, etc) to oppress women, minorities, the LGBT community, and others. While there are bits and pieces of truth in Critical Theory, it has been adopted by radicals and extremists on the left. They are constantly searching for new victims of injustice and want to tear down everything they think is oppressive. Critical Theory is behind these movements:

“Defund the police.” We’ve heard this cry from woke progressives for several years. They believe that law enforcement does not protect and serve but rather oppresses minorities and people of color. Some prosecutors are reluctant to press charges against criminals because they see the criminal as an oppressed victim. Critical Theory is behind the call to close prisons. Instead of seeing prisons as a way to keep society safe from criminals, Critical Theorists think prisons are a form of racial oppression.

The refusal to define “woman”: Because men are oppressors and women are their oppressed victims, we must erase the distinction between the two. The call to eliminate separate restrooms has its roots in Critical Theory. Men identify as women and play on their sports teams. Radical activists make ridiculous claims that men can get pregnant. The rationale is if we ignore or blur the differences between male and female, then women will be treated equally.

The banning of offensive words: Critical theorists insist that some words reinforce the oppressor vs oppressed dichotomy. You shouldn’t call it the “master bedroom” because that word is associated with slavery. “You guys” is wrong because it is not gender-inclusive. Michigan State University just released an updated “Inclusion Guide” with 17 pages of directions on what you should and should not say. It is a bewildering maze

of Orwellian New-Speak. The MSU Guide discourages the use of *“male-centric and father-son language”* and *“references to majority religious imagery.”* Words like “freshmen” and “Christmas tree” should be avoided. Every word is examined and judged to see if it is a form of oppression. (Calling the guide “inclusive” is a misnomer. It excludes words that have been part of our collective vocabulary for hundreds of years.)

Open Borders: The people who want few or no restrictions on immigration see the United States as a racist nation stolen from Native Americans and founded on slavery. In order to atone for these sins Critical Theorists believe we must open our borders to all disadvantaged people. (They conveniently ignore the fact that native tribes stole land from other natives, like when the Ojibwe forced the Sioux off their land in the 1700’s. In Central America the Aztecs conquered their neighbors and then enslaved and murdered them as human sacrifices.)

There are many other examples. We are told we must allow “Drag Queen Story Hour” in our schools and libraries because drag queens have been marginalized. Several years ago the Seattle Public Schools issued a statement that *“mathematical knowledge has been appropriated by western culture”* and that *“math has been and continues to be used to oppress and marginalize people and communities of color.”* Telling students that there are right and wrong answers is a form of oppression. Teachers who instruct students how to solve math problems are promoting paternalism. The Olympia, Washington, School Board ended some music classes because they *“inculcate and allow white supremacy culture to continue to be propagated and caused significant institutional violence.”* Since Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart were white Europeans, their music is racist. An article in Time magazine even raised the question of whether Caucasians should make Chinese food, implying that “cultural appropriation” is a form of racist oppression. Practically nothing has escaped the self-righteous finger-pointing of activists schooled in Critical Theory. Everywhere they look they see white supremacy, systemic racism, microaggressions, heteronormativity, white privilege, entrenched patriarchy, and transphobia. When you see the world through the lens of Critical Theory, you will never see anything good.

One of the marks of Critical Theory is how they redefine words to fit their ideology. For example, “white supremacy” used to refer to the KKK and Neo-Nazis. Now Critical Theorists think that anything which comes from Western Civilization and traditional American culture is a form of white supremacy.

The Critical world-view is much different than the Biblical world-view. As Christians we know oppression exists, but sin is no respecter of persons. Three of the most brutal oppressors in the last 50 years were Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, and Pol Pot. None of them were of European ancestry. Marxist nations (Cuba, the old USSR, China, Cambodia in the 1970's, etc) are horribly oppressive. In contrast, Jesus Christ and His apostles preached and lived a message of reconciliation and forgiveness. *“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting our sins against us. And He has given us the message of reconciliation.”* If we are to live in a just and fair society there must be love and reconciliation. The Gospel of Jesus Christ truly liberates. That is the best way we can *“be at peace with one another.”* But there is no forgiveness or reconciliation in Critical Theory. True to its Marxist roots, it divides people into identity groups and thrives on conflict between them. It ignores the progress we’ve made since the days when women could not vote and schools and restaurants were segregated. Critical Theory disregards the fact that we’ve put women on the Supreme Court and as the CEOs of major corporations. It dismisses the reality that we have 133 people from ethnic minorities serving in Congress. Marxism is an economic failure that led to brutal tyranny. Critical Theory is cut from the same ideological cloth. As historian and author Victor Davis Hanson said, “Their goal is to deconstruct America.”

Pastor Gillaspie