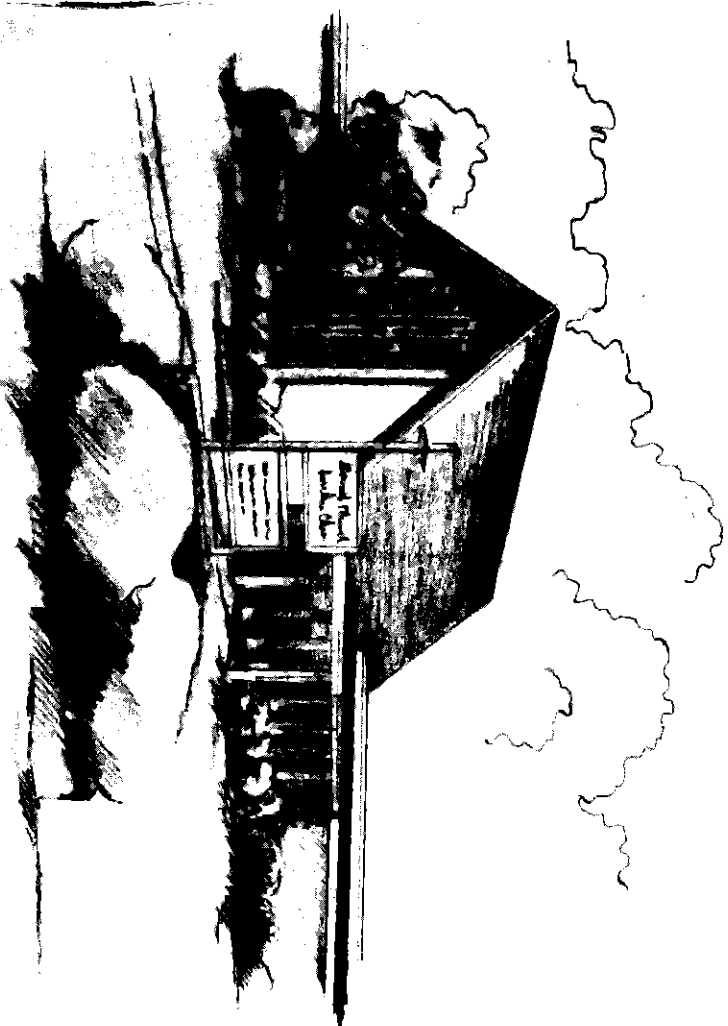
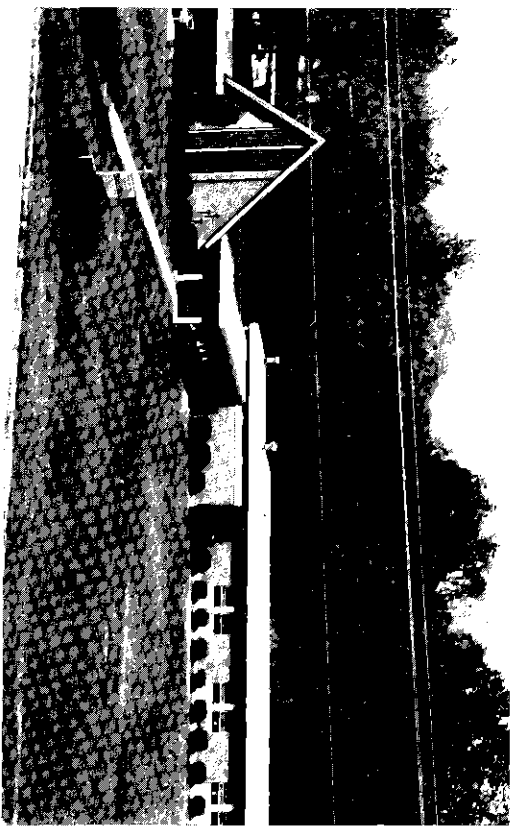


The First 25 Years...
A History



*Saint Michael's Lutheran Church
Doraville, Georgia*

Saint Michael's Lutheran Church
3323 Chestnut Drive / Doraville, Georgia 30340
Phone: (404) 457-7867



St. Michael's Lutheran Church

A History

The history of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Doraville, Georgia is a history of talented, diverse, and unique people. People of God who were concerned and committed to establishing a Lutheran presence and ministry in Northeast Atlanta.

To look backwards twenty-five years is to remember names and faces of those who contributed unselfishly a part of themselves. Their efforts remain today as a testimony to their foresight and dedication. One only needs to look around the church to the altar, the organ, the pews, the candlelabras, etc., and be reminded of the people of the past.

To list everyone from St. Michael's past is impossible. But the occasion demands that we recall at least some of the people of God who played important roles in our congregation's early history.

History in Brief

September 25, 1956

A group of interested people meet under the leadership of Rev. Ted Westermann to discuss establishing a Lutheran congregation in Doraville/Chamblee.

October 7, 1956

A Lutheran mission congregation holds its first worship service at Northwoods Elementary School. Rev. Ted Westermann serves as the pastor.

November 4, 1956

With the approval of its charter, St. Michael's Lutheran Church is officially organized.

July 14, 1957

Rev. Eldor Richter comes to St. Michael's as its first Pastor.

August 9, 1959

Ground is broken for a church on a dirt road known as Chestnut Drive.

January 31, 1960

Dedication of the sanctuary of St. Michael's Lutheran Church.

February 17, 1963

Rev. Robert F. Maltzahn is installed as the second pastor of St. Michael's.

November 23, 1967

Education wing is dedicated.

November 6, 1977

St. Michael's congregation votes to leave the Missouri Synod.

April 20, 1980

St. Michael's congregation decides to join the Lutheran Church in America.

May 15, 1981

St. Michael's is officially received into the LCA.

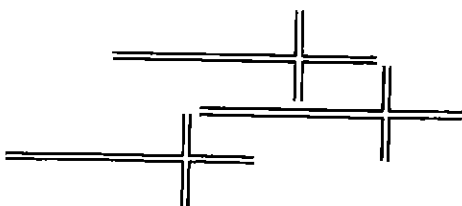
September 13, 1981

A service of reception into the LCA is held at St. Michael's.

November 7 & 8, 1981

A proud St. Michael's congregation celebrates its 25th anniversary.

St. Michael's Lutheran Church The Leadership



St. Michael's has enjoyed an unusual continuity in leadership in its first 25 years. In that time we have had only two pastors in addition to the organizer of the congregation who also acted as pastor for a time.

The moving force who was responsible for organizing the mission congregation in 1956 which became St. Michael's Church was the Rev. Ted Westermann, Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Marietta. Pastor Westermann served St. Michael's for nearly a year until we got a full-time pastor.

A call was extended to Rev. Eldor Richter in June of 1957, and on July 14, 1957, he was installed as the first pastor of St. Michael's. Pastor Richter came to us from Minnesota and was fresh out of the Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis. Pastor Richter served St. Michael's until the fall of 1962 when he accepted a call to return to Minnesota.

In November of 1962, a call was extended to Rev. Robert F. Maltzahn, then serving Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Titusville, Florida. The Call Committee was well advised by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod District Office who said of Pastor Maltzahn "... an acceptable preacher, an outstanding missionary and an excellent youth worker. His personality is especially winsome. He is single. His record in Titusville is rather an enviable one."

Pastor Maltzahn was installed as Pastor of St. Michael's on February 17, 1963. The vacancy created during the several months between the departure of Pastor Richter and the arrival of Pastor Maltzahn was filled again by the Rev. Ted Westermann, who was doing work at Emory University at the time. Pastor Westermann assumed the duties of preaching, confirmation instruction and

visiting the sick, while the Board of Elders carried on the business of the Church.

In 1971, St. Michael's entered the vicarage program, and for the next eight years, a third year student from Concordia Seminary—St. Louis and later from Christ Seminary—Seminec each spent a year at St. Michael's gaining experience in the duties of a pastor. Two young men who are sons of St. Michael's have entered the ministry. They are the Rev. David Hungerford and the Rev. John Sims.

St. Michael's also owes a debt of gratitude to those few founding families who worked so hard in the early days to direct the new church. The first officers of St. Michael's Lutheran Church were Robert E. Lange, President; Fred Collier, Secretary and Treasurer; Jack Summer, Trustee; and W. G. Peregoy, Superintendent of the Sunday School.

An architect by profession, Jack Summer built an altar and a lectern. His wife Ann sewed the altar parameters and saw to it that there were altar flowers each Sunday. Jack also served as Chairman of the Property Committee which recommended the purchase of a six-acre tract on a dirt road known as Chestnut Drive and he prepared drawings of a proposed church building to put on it.

Shortly after St. Michael's was organized, an Evangelism Committee was formed and headed by W. G. Peregoy. The Property Committee was chaired by Jack Summer and the Building Committee was headed by Ernest Shipman.

Much of the property acquired by St. Michael's was given to it by members. The pulpit was given by Robert E. Lange, the baptismal font by Mr. and Mrs. Milton Hambalek and Mr. and Mrs. Herman Lang, the altar books by Pastor and Mrs. Richter, and the hymn board was donated anonymously. Mr. A. H. Ziemer made and donated the cross and a stove was given by Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Peregoy.



The Reverend Robert F. Maltzahn

Pastor Maltzahn was born September 20, 1934, in Tacoma, Washington. He attended a Missouri Synod parochial school in Tacoma and then preparatory school and junior college in Portland, Oregon. He then went on to Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, and graduated in June, 1959.

He served his year of internship at Grace Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, Florida. He was ordained into the Lutheran ministry on August 9, 1959, serving Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Titusville, Florida from this time until he accepted the call to St. Michael's in February of 1963.

Pastor Maltzahn is married to the former Barbara Carol McLain. They have two children, Robert Philip, age 12, and Kara Elizabeth, age 10.



The Reverend E. W. Richter

Rev. Richter graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, June 1957 with a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Divinity degrees.

His Church service includes:

- Missionary-at-Large of Doraville/Chamblee area July 1957
 - St. Michael's Lutheran Church 1957-1962
 - Bethany Lutheran Church, Lake City, Minn. 1962-1968
 - Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Anita, Iowa 1968-1974
 - Trinity Lutheran Church, Clinton, Iowa 1974-1980
 - Hope Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Mo. 1980 - present
- Pastor Richter and his wife, Mary, who were married in 1956, have three daughters: Faith, age 24, Hope, age 22; and Beth, age 20.



The Reverend Ted D. Westermann

Rev. Westermann studied at Concordia Theological Seminary and in 1953 received a Diploma of Theology. He was ordained the same year. Rev. Westermann has since received a Masters degree and later a PhD in Sociology from Emory University.

His Church service includes:

- Trinity Lutheran Church, Ft. Pierce, Fla. 1953-1955
- Faith Lutheran Church, Marietta, Ga. 1955-1958
- Helped organize St. Michael's parish 1956-1957
- Assistant Pastor, Peace Lutheran Church, Decatur, Ga. 1959
- Interim Pastor, St. Michael's Lutheran Church 1962-1963
- Staff anthropologist, New Guinea Lutheran Mission 1964-1968
- Assoc. Prof. of Sociology, Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, Ind. 1968-1976
- Assoc. Prof. of Sociology, Valparaiso, Ind. 1976 - present



Dale Kuhn
1971 - 1972

*Vicars
who have served at
St. Michael's*



Robert Gnuse
1972 - 1973



Kent Nasz
1973 - 1974



Gary Simpson
1974 - 1975



Kal Rissman
1975 - 1976



Doug Ruecker
1976 - 1977



Tom Artelt
1977 - 1978



David Rumbold
1978 - 1979



The Reverend John S. Sims

Rev. Sims is the son of St. Michael's member Mrs. Mable Sims. He was confirmed at St. Michael's on June 5, 1960. John has since graduated from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and was ordained in June of 1972.

John married Phyllis Smith in September 1970 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Nashville, Tenn.

His Church service includes:

- Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, College Park, Ga. 1972-1976.
- Interim pastor, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Atlanta, Ga.
- Interim pastor, Apostles Lutheran Church, Atlanta, Ga.
- Consultation Coordinator of the Southeastern Synod
- Administrative Assistant to the President, Southeastern Synod 1978-1980
- American Lutheran Church, Brussels, Belgium 1980 - present

The Reverend David G. Hungerford

Rev. Hungerford was confirmed at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, May 9, 1965. He later went on to graduate from Christ Seminary—Semnax on May 13, 1977 and was ordained on August 27 of that same year in the Pacific Northwest Synod, of the LCA.

He is married to the former Cynthia M. Fisher. They have three children: Erin, age 5; Matthew, age 4; and Joshua, age 2.

His Church service includes:

- Installed on Sept. 1, 1977 at Hope Lutheran Church, Lynden, Wash. Still serving that parish.



Congregational Presidents

1956	Robert E. Lange
1957	Robert E. Lange
1958	Herman Lang
1959	Ernest Shipman
1960	William Crawford
1961	Harry Muell
1962	Donald Urban
1963	James C. Montgomery
1964	Jim Carmichael
1965	Jim Carmichael
1966	Jim Carmichael
1967	Donald Urban
1968	Jim Carmichael
1969	Lamar Fleming
1970	Donald Linnartz
1971	Donald Linnartz
1972	Richard Seigel
1973	Donald Linnartz
1974	Kenneth Lange / Lloyd Meese
1975	Vern Arneson
1976	Vern Arneson
1977	William Foege
1978	James Outman
1979	Donald Linnartz
1980	Fred Kroger
1981	Arvi Kivi

St. Michael's Lutheran Church **The Facilities**

That first group of St. Michael's worshippers who assembled on October 7, 1956 met in a classroom at the Northwoods Elementary School. It would be three and a half years before the present St. Michael's sanctuary would be dedicated.

The Trustees would arrive early on Sunday morning to sweep up the room, set up the altar furniture and chairs and distribute the hymnals. Outgrowing the classroom, the congregation met in the Northwoods cafeteria until June of 1958 when we had to leave because of a school policy which allowed use of their facilities for only a limited period of time.

So on June 15, 1958, the worship was moved to the Doraville Civic Center for which St. Michael's paid \$5 each Sunday. Since Saturday night was dance night at the Civic Center, those volunteers who set up for church services on Sunday morning performed a herculean task.

In the meantime, the land for the church site had been bought in April of 1958 for \$11,626.25 and Jack Summer's sketches were submitted to the Georgia-Florida District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The estimated cost of the proposed building was \$45,000. The District suggested that the record of giving was not at a level that would support such a building, and felt that \$35,000 was all the church that St. Michael's could afford to build.

A decision, however, was made to go ahead with the plans as they stood, using a \$10,000 loan from God's Bank to make up the difference. Showing the kind of faith that is necessary at times to make things happen, Herman Lang is quoted at one meeting as saying, "Let's go forward with our plans anyway because with all the red tape and so forth involved in getting the money, we would be able to start out on our building plans, and also our congregation will probably have grown to the point where we will be able to handle the loan by the time the building goes up."

The building contract was awarded to Ansley-Aderhold Co. and on August 9, 1959, ground for the church building was broken. The sanctuary was dedicated January 31, 1960.

By 1965, the Sunday School had outgrown the space in the basement beneath the sanctuary and temporary use of Northwoods School was again arranged. Plans were already in existence for an education wing that would be used for a parochial school, but once again the plans were bigger than the available funds could support. The plans were changed in order to pare costs and financing was sought. A loan of \$120,000 was obtained from the Missouri

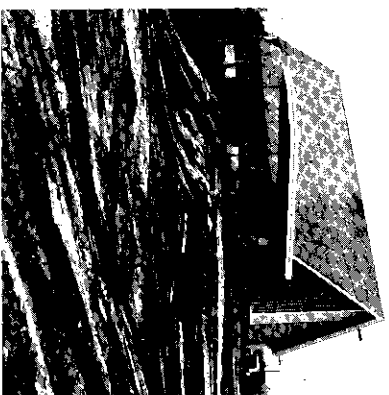
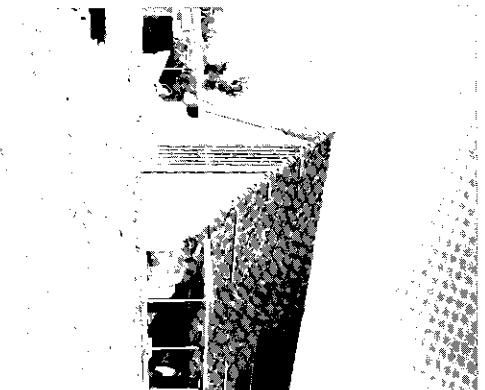
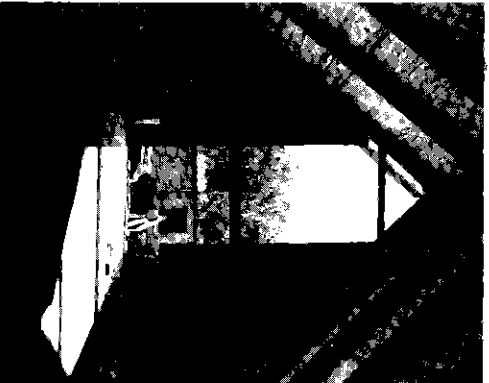
Synod Department of Investment to retire the debt on the property and sanctuary and to build the education wing. Even this sum was not sufficient and the congregation issued church bonds to parishioners for an additional \$5,000.

The education wing was dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 1967. The first function held in the new wing actually occurred about two weeks prior to that, and that was the wedding reception of Robert F. Maltzahn and the former Barbara McLain of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

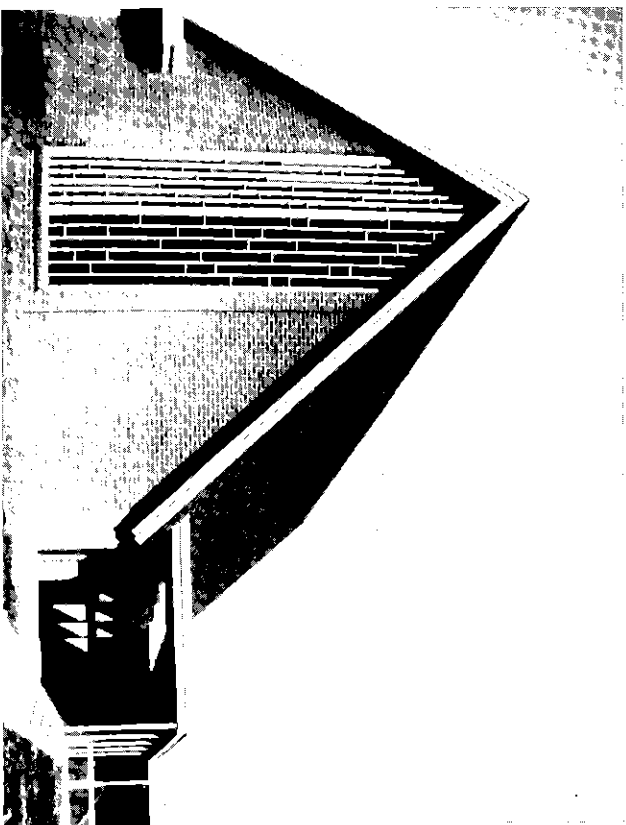
In September of 1977, a fire gutted the basement beneath the sanctuary and caused considerable smoke damage throughout much of the building. At this time, the sanctuary carpet was replaced, the kitchen was moved to its present location, furnaces and air conditioning were replaced and, sometime later, the area under the sanctuary was partitioned to provide a youth room and two additional Sunday School rooms. The renovated basement and sanctuary were rededicated one year later in September of 1978.

Other facilities were added as money became available, or as items were donated. An Allen organ was purchased from the proceeds of an organ fund in 1965, and in 1971, the gravel parking lot was paved.

A Church is Born



Pictured here and on the preceding page, St. Michael's Church is shown in various stages of construction. Below is the finished sanctuary building which was dedicated on January 31, 1960. The education wing was added on later in 1967.



St. Michael's Lutheran Church

Worship and Christian Education

Worship at St. Michael's has experienced changes as conditions affecting it have changed. As early as 1963, attendance at worship services exceeded the seating capacity of the sanctuary and a second Sunday morning service was added.

From 1956 to 1963, the worship service took place at 10:45 a.m. In 1963, an 8:00 a.m. service was added. In 1965, by action of the Church Council, worship times were changed to 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. with Sunday School meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Special occasion services were added in time, including the Stripping of the Altar after the Maundy Thursday service in 1965, mid-week Advent services were added in 1971, and Monday evening services were held in 1977 and 1979 for those people who were out of town on Sunday.

One of the most unique periods in the history of St. Michael's occurred between the years 1975 and 1980. That was the time given to the issue of synodical affiliation. Although there were moments of deep emotion, it was a time when the congregation grew spiritually and closer together.

It began when the leadership of the parish recognized that the direction, emphasis and mission of the Missouri Synod was moving in a different direction from that of St. Michael's. The issues were studied from every position. The Missouri Synod was in the middle of internal conflict that has been described as a power struggle. The decision to leave the Missouri Synod came after much discussion, numerous meetings, intensive investigation and many heartfelt prayers.

On November 6, 1977, the vote was taken to leave the Missouri Synod. The question of where we should go or with whom to affiliate was before the assembled voters. The choices included The Lutheran Church in America, The American Lutheran Church, The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (the emerging church body made up of former Missouri Synod congregations) or become an independent Lutheran congregation. After considerable discussion and through a precise method of elimination, the congregation voted (77-20) to become an independent Lutheran parish with the understanding that the final selection take place within three years.

During the next three years all the options related to synodical affiliations were examined. Representatives of the various Lutheran bodies were invited into the congregation and on April 20, 1980, the decision was made to join the Lutheran Church in America.

On May 15, 1981, Pastor Maltzahn and the congregation were officially received at the convention of the Southeastern Synod of the Lutheran Church in America held in Augusta, Georgia. On September 13, 1981 a special service of reception into the LCA was held in St. Michael's with Bishop Gerald S. Troutman and Assistant to the Bishop, W. Dexter Moser officiating. Pastors and members of the neighboring LCA churches were in attendance and a reception was held following the service.

St. Michael's has always put a high priority on Christian education. The office of Sunday School Superintendent was one of the four original offices established in 1956. Throughout our history, there has been continuous educational opportunities provided for all ages of children and adults. At present, there are four adult Bible study groups active at St. Michael's.

In an April 1960 voters' meeting, those in attendance voted 11-2 to establish a Christian Day School for 5-year-olds. In May of 1960, the first Board of Education was elected. The officers were Robert Knowlton, President; Donald Urban, Secretary; Kenneth Sunderman, Treasurer; and Lew Jollett, Trustee. These people, with the support of the congregation, worked hard to staff and administer a kindergarten for members and neighborhood children.

The school had two paid teachers, and was limited by building codes to a maximum of 35 students. By 1971, enrollment was down to 22 students, and the school was running a deficit of about \$50 a month. About this time the public schools began instituting kindergarten classes, and at the end of the school year in 1971, the Christian Day School was closed.

A scholarship fund has existed for many years at St. Michael's for those members of the congregation who would enter into a course of study leading to full time service in the church. Faith Hungerford was the first person to receive a scholarship. Others to receive grants were David Hungerford, Chip Mohme, John Sims and Pat Carlson.

At present, Pastor Maltzahn is undertaking a course of study leading to a Doctor of Ministry degree. He expects to complete the course requirements in 1982.

Dee Donnelly, St. Michael's first woman Head Elder (1980) is studying at Emory University to earn a Masters of Divinity degree. Her course of study is LCA affiliated, and she will complete her field work at Peachtree Road Lutheran Church.

St. Michael's Lutheran Church **A Community**

St. Michael's boasts many organizations both social and service, through which its members enjoy Christian fellowship.

A Ladies' Guild was the first of these organizations. It was established in 1957 with Edith Shipman as its first President, Ila Stark as Secretary and Jo White, Treasurer. The Ladies' Guild, for many years, was active in fund raising, sponsoring social events, and doing mission work in the community. For example, the Guild made sock dolls for distribution at a children's hospital, sent cards to the sick and sponsored clean-up days. They also purchased items for the church such as shrubbery, curtains and dishes.

Another important organization that has historically been made up mostly of women is the Altar Guild. As the name implies, the Guild serves the church by preparing the altar for worship each Sunday. It is the members of this Guild who prepare for Communion each week, making sure that the wine and bread are prepared and available at the altar. This group also tends to the altar parameters, changing them with the seasons of the Church year and maintains the flower chart for those who wish to donate flowers for the altar.

A Girl's Club was organized in 1960 under the direction of Betty Ladewig, Ruth Scott and Wanda Meese. The club was for girls 9-14, and met after school once a week. The girls learned crafts and cooking. Each year, the girls would serve a tea for their mothers, making the sandwiches and cookies themselves.

The Walther League was chartered in 1961 as an organization for confirmed young adults. The League organized many social activities for youth, in addition to service projects. Most of the landscaping around the new St. Michael's Church was accomplished with Walther League labor.

The group is still in existence today, but is known as the Youth Group. Over the years, the youth have participated in retreats, lock-ins, folk services and chancel dramas. They have contributed their time and talents to the Easter Breakfast, Vacation Bible School, the Halloween Spook House for Sunday School children, and the placing of luminaries around the church property at Christmas time.

In October 1965, a Couples Club was formed with Bob Guhl as its President. Prior to this time, couple's activities had been scheduled sporadically, often under the sponsorship of the Ladies' Guild. The Couple's Club met monthly for social activities and fellowship.

For a time, beginning in 1969, the Couple's Club was divided into junior and senior divisions to better serve the different age groups. The groups eventually reunited and welcomed singles into the club, renaming it Pairs and Spares. In 1980, a Solos Club was formed for those who are presently not married, or have never been married.

Since the mid 1960's, St. Michael's has fielded a softball team in the Lutheran league. The team won a divisional championship in 1968 and again in 1972, and the League Championship in 1975. The 1981 team did well despite the fact that Lloyd Meese and Pastor Maltzahn are the only remaining hold-overs from those glory years.

Perhaps the single best example of the closeness of the St. Michael's community is the annual congregational retreat at Unicoi State Park. In 1981, about 125 members participated in the fourth annual weekend of food, fun and fellowship. Activities include nature hikes, a giant pot luck dinner, and a very moving and meaningful participatory worship service on Sunday morning. Charlie and Nancy Althafter have provided the inspiration and perspiration that have made this event a success.

St. Michael's Lutheran Church **In the Community**

St. Michael's can be proud to say that it has made an impact on the Doraville/Chamblee community, and beyond. The two primary arms of St. Michael's outreach into the community are the Evangelism Committee, one of the oldest committees, and the Social Ministry Committee, which is the newest committee, having been formed in February of 1972.

Some of the very worthwhile projects undertaken by these committees are Bloodmobile Drives, a food pantry for the needy, Christmas parties as well as food and clothing donations to residents of the Tech-Lawson Apartments, visits to nursing homes, parties for mentally retarded children, providing rides to cancer patients who are undergoing treatment, and community volleyball games to promote fitness.

Perhaps the largest project taken up by the Social Ministry Committee was the resettlement of three families from Southeast Asia. The families were referred to us by the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

St. Michael's, in cooperation with other Lutheran churches in the area, took responsibility for helping these families find a home and employment, food, clothing, furniture and appliances, as well as giving them support to help them make the cultural adjustment to American life.

These families were the Khac and Kim Dam family, who arrived August 5, 1975; George, Dorothy and Phillip Tan, who arrived January 29, 1978; and the Singh and Pring Luong family, whom we welcomed on September 5, 1980.

St. Michael's has also "adopted" Mrs. Helena Bruin who has been widowed for 14 years. She now lives at the Ashton Woods Convalescent Center.

The Sunday School is sponsoring an 8-year-old child in Argentina named Maria Angela Barrios. St. Michael's sends \$15 a month in support of Maria, some of which is supplied by the children through collection boxes in their classrooms.

The church has also opened up its facilities to many community groups over the years, ranging from a chess club and child-birth classes to the Sweet Adelines.

St. Michael's Lutheran Church

In Retrospect

Caring, concern, outreach, sensitivity are all words that describe Saint Michael's Church the past twenty-five years. The warmth of its sanctuary and the Gospel have permeated the lives of its worshippers and have been translated into the community wherever its membership has moved. It has been blessed with a unique assortment of God's special people. But, it has also been a blessing to those who have kneeled at its communion rail, been baptized at its font, confirmed as well as married at its altar, and sat in its pews.

It is hoped that whatever the future brings, the witness of St. Michael's will continue to demonstrate the faithfulness to the mission of its first twenty-five years.

Some St. Michael's Trivia

In 1956, St. Michael's had:

48 Baptized members

24 Communicant members

\$2,422 received in offerings

In 1981, St. Michael's has:

482 Baptized members

411 Communicant members

In 25 years at St. Michael's there have been:

164 Adults confirmed or baptized

256 Children confirmed

1385 Brought into membership by confirmation, reaffirmation and letters of transfer

259 Baptisms

120 Marriages

28 Funerals, of which 17 were members

The only current members of St. Michael's who were also here in 1956 are Bill and June Crawford, and daughters Barbara Whitlow and Susan Osborne.

In 1958, St. Michael's was invited to join the Temperance Drive. The congregation declined.

In 1960, President William Crawford reported that men may attend services without a suitcoat, although it is preferred that men wear coats when receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Pastor also stated that it is proper church etiquette that women wear hats in church.

25th Anniversary Committee

Don and Margie Linnartz

Co-Chairpersons

Bill and June Crawford

Jim and Peg Carmichael

Gene and Joan Lee

Sarah Oetgen

Bill Foegel

Arvi Kivi

Fred Kroger

Karen Whitehead

Pastor Bob Maltzahn

Saint Michael's Lutheran

Registration for the LWML Spring Rally will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 10, at Grace Lutheran Church. Discussion of the topic "Share the Faith" will begin at 10 a.m. Lunch will be from noon to 1 p.m. with a business meeting following. Closing and refreshments will be from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Two more work parties are scheduled for church members. Sessions will be Feb. 24 and March 24 from 9 a.m. to noon both days. These are being held to strip and wax the floors of the building. *The Wanderer, 2/7/1973, p. 18*

The Doraville News
New Pastor For

St. Michael's

3/4/92

The Rev. Nedra Merriman will be installed as pastor of St. Michael's Lutheran Church Sunday, March 15 at 3 p.m. at the church. Mrs. Merriman, her husband, David, and daughter, Emily, are moving to Doraville from Raleigh, N.C., where she served Grace Lutheran Church for the past three years.

Mrs. Merriman is a graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, Vanderbilt University with a B.S. degree in psychology and Vanderbilt Divinity School with a Master of Divinity degree. David Merriman is an engineer at the Georgia Tech Research Institute.

St. Michael's has been serving the Doraville community area for 36 years and is particularly known for its music programs under the direction of Dan Hagan, organist; its clown ministry; an annual Pig Roast to benefit the Feed The Hungry program at Redeemer Lutheran; and for its far-reaching social ministry efforts. St. Michael's is located at 3323 Chestnut Dr. in Doraville. Visitors are always welcome.