

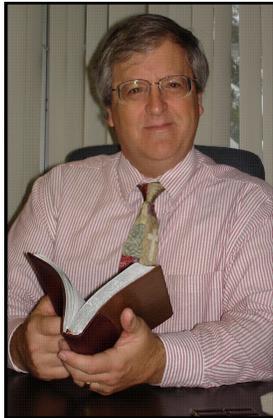
Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

Send to:
smcspublications@gmail.com

The Messenger

From the Pastor

Pastor Jon Zehnder



“Living the Dash”

Maybe you remember, several years ago we read a devotional book together entitled “One Month to Live” – which was really more about living than it had to do with the limits of one month. And although the authors pointed out several things that we really have no control over, their main point was that we do get to decide how we’re going to use the time between the day that we’re born and the day God calls us home. And they shared these 4 principles that might be worthy of our reconsideration as we begin a new year together.

1. Live passionately - understand that God’s gracious desire is for you to live the life that you were called to live – to live life fully. The Apostle John wrote in his 1st letter, 5:11-12, “God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son; whoever has the Son, has Jesus, they have life.” John is saying that life in all its fullness comes in Jesus and it is a precious, sacred gift that God gives us.

And that gift of life is beautiful and wonderful and painful and frightening and exhilarating and awe-inspiring all at the same time – that’s life – it moves fast and the years fly by so we need to understand that those years are precious; today is precious, so don’t wait to live - start living the life that you were made to live.

2. Love completely. John 13:1 says, “Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world & go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love.” Jesus willingly gave His life so that we might live now and eternally. And having been loved by our Savior, we extend that love to others - you love the people in your life and you love God with all your heart. So you put your love into action and you give your love away.

3. Learn humbly. The writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that our Lord Jesus learned that from what He suffered. There’s a unique prayer that I’ve seen for those who are suffering pain and illness and disease that they might realize that they have been chosen to be saints and that they are joined in Jesus in His suffering. We take on the character of our Savior, even in our suffering and we grow in Him.

4. Lean into our God and Savior. Psalm 46:1 says, “God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble” & because that is true the psalmist goes on to say, “therefore we will not fear; we will not give in to despair.” This is the text that inspired Martin Luther to write that great Reformation Hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”.

Knowing that God is with us as we enter this new year, trusting in this God who is our refuge and our strength, we know that He will enable and empower us so that we can live passionately and love completely and continue to learn humbly throughout this new Year. God’s richest of blessings to you in 2018!

Pastor Jon

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Weekend Regular Worship

Sat: 5:30 pm	Informal
Sun: 8:00 am	Traditional
10:45 am	Blended
Sun: 9:15 am	Education Hour: Kids Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes.



Top Events for

January

1/3 — *Revive for Teens, every Wednesday 6-8pm*

1/5 — *Men's Friday Morning Breakfast Bible Study with Pastor Jon Resumes, 8:30am*

1/7 — *Faith Stepping Stone Blessing in 10:45am service for 2-3 year olds*

1/8 — *Church Council, 5:30pm*

1/8 — *Board of Properties, 6:30pm*

1/8 — *Adult Pickup Basketball, 7-9pm*

1/9 — *Middle School Youth Night, 6pm*

1/11 — *DivorceCare session begins: Thursdays 7pm*

1/11 — *"Anxious for Nothing" Womens Bible Study*

1/13 — *VOLUNTEER WORK DAY, 8am-Noon*

1/13 — *LWML, 10:30am*

1/13 — *GriefShare begins, Saturdays 10am-Noon*

1/14 — *Seniors on the Go, after late service*

1/18 — *Prayer Shawl Ministry, 9am*

1/20 — *Touch-A-Truck Event, sponsored by PTL (Call school office for details)*

1/22 — *Elders Meeting, 7pm*

1/23 — *Middle School Youth Night, 6pm*

1/24 — **Open House at St. Michael School, 6-8pm**

1/29 — *Adult Pickup Basketball, 7-9pm*

2018
Happy New Year

SENIORS ON THE GO Our guest speaker will be Lindsay Blackyear, from Tampa, FL. She works through a non-profit called Young Living Foundation. She speaks to bring awareness to the problems children in Africa experience because they do not wear or have any shoes. She collects children's new or gently used shoes and goes to Africa and distributes these shoes to children, mainly in slum areas.

We, at St. Michael, would like to assist in this effort. Even if you do not attend our **January 14, 2018** meeting, we would like to ask for your help in donating shoes. Monetary donations are also accepted to assist with travel and shipping. Checks can be made out to the *Young Living Foundation* and there is also a 'Go fund Me' page.

Thank you and blessings,
Ann Sluiter, Parish Nurse

New Women's Bible Study: Anxious for Nothing

Do you feel weighed down with worry? Does the uncertainty and chaos of life keep you up at night? Could you use some calm? Max Lucado's new Bible Study: Anxious for Nothing will help us explore God's treatment plan for anxiety found in Philippians 4:4-8. Join Lori Schwan in this new five-week women's Bible study Thursday, January 11-February 8 from 10:00-11:30 AM, meeting in Pastor Jon's conference room.

LWML - would like to send out a great big THANK YOU to all who baked and purchased cookies for the Cookie Extravaganza! We could not believe the response. We asked for bakers and we got some fantastic bakers who provided us with some beautiful and delicious cookies, bars, candies and cakes! When we were assembling the cookie tins and plates we actually didn't think we could sell them all. But...we also asked for buyers and we got them! God is good and so are all of you!

Thank you to everyone who donated blood this past year! This is such an important way of contributing to our community as we truly Give the Gift of Life!

Board of Human Care would like to Thank you. We are overwhelmed by the generosity of our St. Michael families. You are the Best! Our Giving Tree and food distributions were a great success thanks to all of you.

Blessings,
Ann Sluiter, Parish Nurse

Thank You

From the Director of Caring Ministries

Julie Berchtold

25 Ways To Spiritually Lead Your Family

Ideas for men who want to leave a spiritual legacy, By Dennis Rainey

Psalm 78 tells us that we are in a spiritual relay race. You and I are taking the baton, and the type of hand-off we make will determine how the next generation follows Jesus Christ, and our assignment is to teach our children to have faith in Jesus Christ. When you read about a man's responsibility to lead his family spiritually, the normal suggestions include organizing family devotions, leading spiritual discussions with children, and helping kids understand a biblical worldview. Those are all crucial, but this list is a bit different! I've found that there are many other ways—some less formal—to influence your wife and children spiritually. So here are 25 coaching tips for men who want to step up to spiritual leadership with their families.



Ministering to your wife:

1. Pray daily with your wife.
2. Write a love letter that she'd like to receive.
3. Discover her top three needs and over the next 12 months go all out to meet them.
4. Buy her a rose. Take her in your arms. Hold her face gently. Look into her eyes and say *"I'd marry you all over again!"*
5. Take her on a weekend getaway.
6. Read the Scriptures to her.
7. Replace the "D-word" with the "C-word"! (D=Divorce, C=Commitment)
8. Court her.
9. Remain faithful to her.
10. Fulfill your marriage covenant.

Leading your family:

11. Schedule a family time at least one night a week.
12. Use circumstances to teach your children to trust God.
13. Protect your family from evil.
14. Restrain your teenagers' passion.
15. Set spiritual goals for your children.
16. Take one or two of your children on mission trips.
17. Catch your kids doing something right—and let them know you caught them.
18. Date your daughters.
19. Inspect what you expect.
20. Do a breakfast Bible study with your teens (15 and older), and study the book of Proverbs.
21. Hug and kiss your sons and daughters.
22. Ask your children for forgiveness when you fail them.
23. Pray with them.
24. Call them to a spiritual mission to do what God wants to do with their life.
25. Persevere and don't quit.

"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly"
Acts 10:2.

Voices of Angels

Here's a date to enter on your fresh, clean 2018 calendars: April 28th. You won't want to miss this! Earthly angels' voices, for sure, will fill the sanctuary on April 28th, at 7:00 PM, as the City of Palms Youth Choir celebrates its second season of performances, singing for the Family St. Michael. Tickets are not required but plan to arrive early for the best seating. Director Matt Koller announced that the choir will be singing the world premiere of a piece composed especially for the City of Palms Youth Choir by Thomas LaVoy. LaVoy is a gifted young composer who has studied with Paul Mealor and James Jordan. Some of his compositions include "Salvator Mundi" and "The Same Stream", both of which can be heard on You Tube. Dr. LaVoy wrote "The Same Stream" for Director Matt Koller and it also premiered in Fort Myers.

The concert is the choir's gift to the community and to St. Michael, although donations for student scholarships are always gratefully appreciated! We have not turned away any gifted vocalist due to their ability to pay. Currently we have four talented young people who rely on scholarships to participate.

The City of Palms Youth Choir is the youth component of the Fort Myers Symphonic Mastersingers. The Mastersingers are well-known throughout our community and are guest performers at the annual Prayer Breakfast in May.

For more information about the choir, please go to www.mastersingersfm.com or follow them on Facebook. The Youth Choir's information is available on their website.

~Stephanie Webb

Congratulations to the St. Michael Softball Team! On December 1st they played for and WON the Championship Title of the Friday Night Church League!



Gifted To Care

Spiritual gifts are gifts to give away. God gives them to us, and we use them to serve others. How are you using your gifts right now? Are you looking for a new way to use them? If your spiritual gifts include one or more of the following—faith, mercy, teaching the faith, encouragement, or knowing—consider **Stephen Ministry**, our congregation's one-to-one care giving ministry. If you would like more information about upcoming Stephen Ministry Training, please contact Julie Berchtold, 939-1218, ext.227.

www.stephenministries.org

From Lori Schwan, Ministry Coordinator

Children's Ministry

Thank You for Serving!

A VERY big Thank You to Music Director Colton LaMay, our Sunday School staff, and all the children and their families for making Christmas Eve such a special worship celebration! If you missed the service, you can watch it on our website.



SUNDAY SCHOOL JANUARY PREVIEW



Preschool Sunday School

Preschoolers love showing us what they can do. They are full of WATCH THIS moments. The goal for this month is to learn that Jesus is the one to watch, because JESUS CAN DO ANYTHING!

Elementary Sunday School

God keeps all His promises and puts His plans into action. Since God has kept His promises to us, we can make a plan to grow in faith and stick to it with the Holy Spirit's help. We will commit to practice faith by reading God's Word (Wk 1), pray to Him consistently (Wk 2), talk about Him with friends (Wk 3), and live out our faith every day (Wk 4).



Family Ministry

"St. Michael's Faith Stepping Stones"

- **Calling all Grandparents** Want to leave a lasting legacy for your grandkids? Join Paul and Sue Schwan each **Saturday Jan. 13-Feb. 3 at 4 PM** for a **new Faith Stepping Stone Class: [Spiritual Grandparent: Leaving a Legacy of Faith](#)**. Together with other grandparents you will learn to pass on your stories to your future generations, specifically faith stories. The class will meet in Paul Schwan's classroom upstairs (elevator is available if needed). It will culminate with a chance to make a video (tips will be provided).
- **Feb. 9-10, 2018 [Father/Son Retreat Grades 5-6—God's Plan for a Man](#)** Now is the time to register for this amazing 24 hour experience! If you did not get an invitation in the mail/email, contact Jack Proctor: Jack.Proctor@gsmlcs.org
- **May 11-13, 2018 [Mother/Daughter Retreat Grades 5-6—God's Design for His Daughters](#)**

Thrivent Financial Members

If you own a Thrivent Financial Product, with the start of the new year you can give \$250 or \$500 without giving any of your money. Contact Lori Schwan to see how you can partner with a fundraiser, service project, or an educational Thrivent Action Team. Those who have choice dollars can also direct them for the year 2017 until Mar. 31, 2018.



THRIVENT
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Usher Schedule	
8:00 A.M.	10:45 A.M.
<p><i>Please contact the head usher if you are unable to serve as scheduled, or secure your own replacement. If YOU would like to serve as an usher, please contact the church office at 939-1218, and let us know which service you prefer.</i></p>	
January 7	
Dale Mast John Hoffmann Kathy Royston Tom Schlotterbeck	Leroy Waldren 989-1048 Ken Fritsch Hannah Zinn Neil Meador
January 14	
John Hoffmann 936-8362 Bill Truax Kathy Royston David Engstrom	Tom Kosteno 489-4398 Marge Bennett Jacob Haycook Roy Hendry Diane Hendry
January 21	
Dale Mast Bob Richardson Kathy Royston Tom Schlotterbeck	Ken Fritsch 997-2596 DD Schleicher Judy Ward Neil Meador
January 28	
John Hoffmann 936-8362 Kathy Royston Bob Richardson David Engstrom	Leroy Waldren 989-1048 Brian Bottorff Jacob Haycook Eric Zinn
February 4	
Bill Truax 482-8418 Bob Richardson John Hoffmann Dale Mast	Tom Kosteno 489-4398 Judy Ward Christian Bottorff Marge Bennett

Church Greeters for January Sunday Services		
Jan 7	8:00 am	Bill & Elaine Armour
	10:45 am	Marlene King
Jan 14	8:00 am	Karen & Ken Zinn
	10:45 am	Ardis Loeber
Jan 21	8:00 am	John & Janis Pohlman
	10:45 am	Tom & Diane Robertson
Jan 28	8:00 am	John & Donna Carlson
	10:45 am	Linda Schachta

Coffee/Snack Volunteers for January Sunday Services		
Jan 7	8:00 am	Tom & Jo Zeller
	10:45 am	DD & Lin Schleicher
Jan 14	8:00 am	John & Donna Carlson
	10:45 am	Ellen Feige
Jan 21	8:00 am	<i>Need Volunteer</i>
	10:45 am	Beth Kosteno
Jan 28	8:00 am	<i>Need Volunteer</i>
	10:45 am	<i>Need Volunteer</i>



We have openings
in our January 2018
**Acolyte and
Crucifer** schedule.
Please
Volunteer through
SignUp Genius!

www.signupgenius.com





St. Michael Lutheran Church
3595 Broadway, Fort Myers, Florida 33901

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Return Service Requested

Sunday School & Bible Study Opportunities
9:15-10:30 AM

Sunday School

- 9:00 – 9:15am “Excite” (games)**
- 9:15 – 9:30am “Engage” (opening)**
- 9:30 – 10:30am**

Individual Grade level Activities

- Infants - 2 year olds*
- Preschool*
- Elementary*
- 6th-8th Grade*
- 9th-12th Grade*

Adult Bible Studies

- Bible Focused Friends**
- Parents of High School Students**
- Marriage Enrichment**
- Family Enrichment**
- Faith Stepping Stones**
- Pastor Zehnder’s Adult Bible Study**

Weekly Bible Study Opportunities

- 7:30 am Tuesday** Men’s Bible Study,
.....6835 Porto Fino Cir, Suite #2, Mike Roach, 275-9233
- 10:00 am Thursdays, January 11 - February 8...** Women’s
.....Bible Study: “Anxious for Nothing”
.....Pastor’s Conference Room
- 8:30 am Friday** Men’s Bible Breakfast,
.....Pastor’s Conference Room
- 9:00 am Saturday**.....Men’s Ministry/Bible Study
..... Education Bldg., Art Room. Call Lee Berchtold,
872-8999
- 9:15 am Sunday** Pastor’s Bible Class,
..... Cafeteria

