

Volume 9, Issue 4
April 2018

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

Send to:
smlcpublications@gmail.com



Pastor Jon Zehnder

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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: <i>Kids Sunday School & Bible Classes.</i>

The Messenger

From the Pastor

Rev. Jon Zehnder

Well, here we are just days after celebrating Easter this year (on April 1st) and what I want to point out is that Easter and Jesus' Resurrection are unique to our Christian faith. Unlike other world religions, Christianity did not evolve over time, it didn't develop gradually around the teachings of one or more persons, it sprang into being, quite literally, overnight.

2000 years ago in Israel, people struggled under Roman rule and they waited for someone to lead them and set them free, he would be the "Messiah". In that day, in that part of the world, there were a few who led freedom movements like that. Harvey Cox, a Harvard professor, writes that there were at least 6 who lived within a century either way of Jesus' time, but every one of them ended up being killed by the Roman government or by some rival faction.

And that meant, for that person's followers, that he wasn't "It"; he must not be the Messiah. So they had 2 choices: give up and go home and quit waiting for the Kingdom, or they could keep going with another Messiah candidate. No one followed a dead Messiah.

Then came **Jesus** and He was unique - He spoke with wisdom, power, and authority, He worked miracles, He was oddly inclusive of women and Gentiles and even Roman soldiers. He got His followers' hopes up, but then one day He was killed...not just killed, but crucified by Rome and the message was very clear - He must not be the One. By their own accounts, His closest followers were devastated; they were petrified about what was going to happen to them; they were done.

But then, in a very short time, and this is a matter of historical record, these same people re-gather, they recommit, they leave their occupations and sell their possessions and they devote the rest of their lives to one specific message - **that Jesus is the Messiah, that He died on a Cross, that He was buried in a tomb and then, on the third day, He returned to life and, "We saw Him; we heard Him; we ate with Him; we touched Him - He is "I" - He IS God's promised Redeemer and Savior."** That was the message!

The Apostle Paul wrote, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, He appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all He appeared to me also... (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)

Paul wrote these words within 20 years or so of Jesus' death. And when he says "that which I received I also passed on to you," that part of it was a Creed and scholars think it was written between 8 and 10 years after Jesus death and resurrection. All 4 of the Gospels were written within between 30 and 60 years of Jesus' death and resurrection, while eyewitnesses were still around.

But it was His followers who said that they were eye-witnesses that He was buried, and that He came back to life, and that they had seen Him. And then they spent the rest of their lives proclaiming that message - they went without food and without sleep, they were exposed to the elements, they were ridiculed, beaten, imprisoned and executed. So why did they do it? There's only one explanation that makes sense - they believed that the Resurrection happened; they were willing to die for what they claimed they had seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears and touched with their own hands.

And then, one more thing - their little movement changed the world! And the message that they proclaimed can still change the world today! That's our message! "That God was in Jesus reconciling the world to Himself, not counting people's sins against them, but He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Jesus we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Cor 5:19, 21) "We are now Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. So we implore others on Christ's behalf - be reconciled to God!" (2 Cor 5:20)

Top Events for

- 4/1 — *Easter Sunday!*
- 4/4 — *Mission Board Meeting, 5:30pm*
- 4/5 — *DivorceCare Ministry, 7-8:30pm*
- 4/6 — *Mother/Son Glow Party at SMLS, 6-8pm*
- 4/7 — *GriefShare Ministry, 10am-Noon*
- 4/9 — *Adult Basketball, 7-9pm*
- 4/9 — *Church Council Meeting, 5:30pm*
- 4/10 — *Middle School Youth Night, 6pm*
- 4/10 — *Choir Practice Resumes, 7pm*
- 4/16 — *Stephen Ministry, 6:30pm*
- 4/17 — *PTL Meeting, 6pm in the Cafeteria*
- 4/19 — *Board of Christian Education Board Meeting, 12pm*
- 4/19 — *SMLS Drama Performance of "Seussical the Musical" 7pm in the Gymnasium*
- 4/20 — *SMLS Drama Performance of "Seussical the Musical" 7pm in the Gymnasium*
- 4/21 — *LWML Meeting, 10:30am*
- 4/23 — *Adult Basketball, 7-9pm*
- 4/24 — *Middle School Youth Night, 6pm*
- 4/28 — *City of Palms Youth Choir Performance in Sanctuary of St. Michael Lutheran Church, 7pm*

Join us on Thursday, April 19 & Friday, April 20, 7:00pm as the Drama Department of St. Michael Lutheran School presents Seussical Kids! Tickets are only \$10 and kids under age 4 are free. Popcorn, candy and drinks will be available for purchase.



Saturday April 7th and Sunday April 8th: St. Michael women of the LWML will be conducting a coffee fund-raiser in the narthex before and after each service. Profits made from the sale of the Lutheran World Relief -Farmers Market coffees will go toward funding LWML charities and also the LWR coffee farmers...did you know that .80 cents per pound of coffee sold goes back to LWR for the farmers?

Won't you please join us for this worthwhile event and help support two very worthwhile church organizations. Thank you!

Faith & Family Night



The Ft. Myers Miracle Baseball Team is offering special group pricing for their April 27th, 7pm game against the Daytona Tortugas! Tickets are \$10 each and include General Admission Ticket, Hot Dog/Drink Voucher, and Post Game Fireworks Show. You must turn in payment to the Church Office **BY APRIL 10th**.

Women's Bible Study:

We meet on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30am, in the Art Room. Join us anytime.

Healthy Start Diaper Drive

I want to sincerely thank the Board of Human Care and members of St. Michael Lutheran Church and School for another amazing Diaper Drive. This year over 5,000 diapers, 78 packages of wipes, and a \$400 Walmart Gift Card were donated! With your support we continue to be able to make a positive difference for our moms and babies.

~From Healthy Start, Lee Health Systems

What Happened to the Coffee and Snacks After Church? For four years we enjoyed coffee and snacks in the narthex after Sunday services while connecting with one another and reaching out to our first-time-guests. Perhaps you knew we discontinued serving as of March, but were wondering why. The reason is simple.

Due to moving, aging, or using their gifts in another capacity, our cadre of volunteers dwindled. Although we attempted to recruit additional ones, response was insufficient to cover each month. We tossed around alternatives, but all required someone to serve, set, and clean up. Possibly, God will nudge a group to pick up the reins. Meanwhile, we can still gather in the narthex to chat and engage our guests after church (sans coffee and snacks).

Thank you to all our coffee and snack servers and to those behind the scene who telephoned and supervised. God is smiling at the joy you brought and we'll see what He has in mind next.

Shalom,
Jan Nieman

From the Director of Caring Ministries

Julie Berchtold

Anatomy of a Grumbler

Complaining shows a loss of perspective, a failure to remember who is in control.

By Dennis Rainey

Many years ago (when Barbara and I had six children fourteen and under) I wrote the following piece about complaining. We must have had an epidemic then of whining and bellyaching around our house.

Dear Friend,

I want to complain about complaining. I want to gripe about grumbling, grouchiness, faultfinding, and whining. My dad used to call it "bellyaching."

Do you ever get annoyed with complaining around your house? I do. I mean, the stuff we grumble about is really big time, major league circumstances. We gripe about who gets to sit where at the dinner table. (We now assign seats.) We grumble about chores, especially who cleans up after dinner.

We get grumpy over socks that never match, toilets that are never flushed, toys that populate the floor, and tubs that are littered with an assortment of dolls, boats, bottles, and melting bars of soap. Kids gripe if they see another child getting an advantage or an unfair gain. I murmur when my car gets trashed out by a herd of French-fry eating youngsters, and grumble when it seems we're seldom on time when our family goes anywhere.

*It became so bad about a year ago, that we all memorized **Philippians 2:14**, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing." That helped.*

Like sulfuric acid, complaining can eat away at whatever it splashes on. Complaining corrodes joy and dissolves good attitudes. Spiritually, it's dangerous and deadly.

I wonder what we would find if we performed open-heart surgery on a complain-er. Exploratory surgery would reveal that grumbling can be a form of heart disease, rebellion against authority. It also shows a loss of perspective, a failure to remember Who is in control. It's an attitude that questions, "Does God really know what's best for me?"

Gripping and complaining are vocal amplifiers of one's heart attitude. God wants us to see Him in the midst of our circumstances, to trust Him even when we do not see the outcome.

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Lutheran Church Extension Fund

Joni Zehnder

LCEF – Y.I. Club

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) has a great opportunity for you - the Young Investors Club (Y.I. Club). With an investment of only \$25.00, you can open up a Y.I. account for your child, grandchild, godchild, or young friend. There are three age levels available:

Little Lambs: ages 0-6 Mission Builders: ages 7-12 World Changers: ages 13-18

Each level provides premium interest rate on balances up to \$1,000.00, the child receives a newsletter and gift. Mission Builders and World Changers can also receive LCEF dollars for good grades and service hours, with a college scholarship program available for high school seniors. Just complete the Fast Form on the lcef.org website, print, and return with initial \$25.00 deposit, or see **Joni Zehnder** for more information or help.

As one investor said, "I realized this was about so much more than just savings – this was about rewarding stewardship."



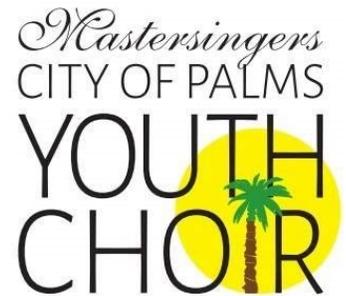
 **Lutheran Church Extension Fund**
 > where investments build ministry



City of Palms Youth Choir

Voices of Angels

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 Mealer and James Jordan. Some of his compositions include "Salvator Mundi" and "The Same Stream", both of which can be heard on YouTube. 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's, 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.

From the Saint Michael Lutheran School Principal

Kati Miser

My northern friends and family tell me that Spring Fever begins with the onset of April, usually accompanied by warmer, sunnier days. But no matter where you live, the celebration of Easter in April should put an extra "spring" in your step and a refreshed outlook on life. After all, we as Christians have the Easter assurance of Jesus' amazing love ... a love that surrounds us all our days – gloomy or joyful. **At Saint Michael Lutheran School, our mission is to educate children and touch families' lives with that awesome love of our Lord Jesus Christ!** That's why the logo you see here is made up of a book, family figures and the cross in the middle. We provide parents with a strong Christian support network in a home-school partnership that assists them in fulfilling their responsibilities to teach for now and for eternity!



Let's create a BUZZ around town about our wonderful school! Post SMLS reviews on Facebook, Google, and other websites to help prospective families learn about Saint Michael. Thank you for all the personal referrals to families, friends, and acquaintances. You could even accompany them on a tour of our campus. Give me a call. New online applications for 2018-19 are being accepted on our website.

By the time you read this, our annual **BID FOR KIDS** auction will be history until next year. We praise God for all the leaders and their volunteers and the energy and work they put into this huge, successful event. So, now it's on to the next major PTL-sponsored event that children of all ages, parents, extended families and our friends in the community enjoy ... **FISHIN' WITH A MISSION** ... on Saturday, May 19. Watch for details about reservations.



From the Ministry Coordinator

Lori Schwan

Children's Ministry

Preschool Sunday School

We get to tell preschoolers that Jesus is God's Son, He is alive, and He wants to be their friend forever. Bottom Line: I can tell others about Jesus!



Elementary Sunday School

While exploring the Road Trip theme, this month we will look at Bible stories where we will choose patience. Students will learn that patience is waiting until later for what they want now. After all, some things are worth the wait!



Sunday School Nursery Reopening

Enjoy loving on little ones? Contact Lori Schwan if interested in volunteering with 0–2-years-olds once a month!

Summer Sunday School Help Needed

Do you want to help during the summer with our preschool, elementary or middle school students? It is fun and easy and the time commitment is for as many weeks as you would like. Please contact Lori if you are interested. Classes start June 3.

Family Ministry

FAMILY VBS from 5:30-8:00 PM will be Monday – Thursday, June 4-7.

Venture onto an uncharted island where kids are rescued by Jesus! Anchor kids in the truth that Jesus carries them through every storm in life. They'll learn to hold onto God's promises when they are lonely, they worry, they struggle, do wrong, and feel powerless. This FREE adventure is for the whole family with dinner, service projects and raffle prizes! Registration will begin in April. Contact Lori Schwan if you are interested in volunteering on our team; there is a place for everyone (behind the scenes or with families) 939-1218, ext. 237 lori.schwan@smlcs.org.



Faith Stepping Stones:

- **Mother-Daughter Retreat for 5th-6th Grade:** God's Design for His Daughters is May 5-6. Cost is \$100 per person. Watch your mailbox for your invitation. Friends are welcome.

Women's Bible Study: Bad Girls of the Bible

We meet on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30 AM, in the Art Room and are studying Liz Curtis Higgs' Bad Girls of the Bible. Join us anytime.

Special Thanks for Holy Week Help

Thank you to everyone who made our Holy Week celebrations so special: the youth hosting the Easter Egg Hunt, Family Fun Party Rentals reduced price of inflatable games, the Board of Fellowship and their helpers who served the BBQ, and all the special worship assistants, altar guild, choirs, musicians, ushers, and office staff as they prepared all the special services.

Foster Parents Are Heroes Ever consider becoming one? Please call Lutheran Services Florida at (239)707-8852 and ask for Tayava Barclay or call (239) 461-7651 and ask for Michelle Scott.

From the Director of Christian Education***Jack Proctor*****Saint Michael Youth Ministries**

The Youth Ministry is always looking for adults who are passionate about investing in the lives of the youth. There are many different ways to get involved! Please prayerfully consider if God is calling you to serve in this way!

**Confirmation**

We are preparing to give a reason for the hope that we have in Christ (1 Peter 3:15). We are currently learning about the Lord's Prayer. Bring your Small Catechism and Bible with you each week in Room 48 from 9:15-10:30 AM.

High School Sunday School

Sunday Mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 with the wonderful Mrs. Sue and other high school students as they dive into God's Word to strengthen and grow them for the week ahead!

Middle School Breakaway

We play games, enjoy snacks, build community, and learn more about God together! We meet on select Tuesdays from 6-7:30 PM in the Joy/Youth Room! Date's we'll meet: April 10, 24; May 8, 22.

High School Revive

Revive is a community of high school students coming together to support, encourage, learn, and laugh together centered on the truth of Christ. Join us on Wednesday nights from 6-8 pm in the youth room!

Adult Pickup Basketball

Lace up your sneakers for some fun and friendly exercise. We play a series of pickup basketball games on select Mondays, 7-9PM. April 9th & 23rd.

PTL Child Care

We need Youth who are looking to earn some points and help out with Child care during the April 17th PTL Meeting. 6-7 PM.

Summer Mission Trips!

*** Fantastic opportunities to connect to God and serve His people! ***

Middle School: Camp Luther Springs. - June 24th-29th

High School: Dominican Republic - June 9th-16th

FL-GA District Mission Trip to Fort Myers Beach - June 17th-22nd

Please be praying for our mission teams and for the people that we will be serving!

Please be on the lookout for any fundraisers the youth will be doing to help make these trips possible!

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>	
April 1	
<p>Dale Mast Bob Richardson Kathy Royston Tom Schlotterbeck</p>	<p>Ken Fritsch 997-2596 DD Schleicher Judy Ward Neil Meador</p>
April 8	
<p>John Hoffmann 936-8362 Kathy Royston Bob Richardson David Engstrom</p>	<p>Leroy Waldren 989-1048 Brian Bottorff Jacob Haycook Eric Zinn</p>
April 15	
<p>Bill Truax 482-8418 Bob Richardson John Hoffmann Dale Mast</p>	<p>Tom Kosteno 489-4398 Judy Ward Christian Bottorff Marge Bennett</p>
April 22	
<p>Dale Mast John Hoffmann Kathy Royston Tom Schlotterbeck</p>	<p>Leroy Waldren 989-1048 Ken Fritsch Hannah Zinn Neil Meador</p>
April 29	
<p>John Hoffmann 936-8362 Bill Truax Kathy Royston David Engstrom</p>	<p>Tom Kosteno 489-4398 Marge Bennett Jacob Haycook Roy Hendry Diane Hendry</p>

Church Greeters for April Sunday Services	
Apr 1	8:00 a.m. George & Linda Walker 9:30 a.m. Marlene King 11:00 a.m. Niel & Jan Nieman
Apr 8	8:00 a.m. Gwen Schaaf and Harry Pietras 10:45 a.m. Linda Schlachta
Apr 15	8:00 a.m. Kevin Baptiste 10:45 a.m. Aaron Bonenberger
Apr 22	8:00 a.m. Ron & Dee Engle 10:45 a.m. Ursula Jean Baptiste
Apr 29	8:00 a.m. Betty Franceschini 10:45 a.m. Lisa Nickel

We have openings
in our
April 2018
Acolyte and Crucifer
schedule.
Sign up today using SignUp Genius!
www.signupgenius.com






St. Michael Lutheran Church
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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

Toddlers- 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
Moms In Prayer
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 Thursday Women’s Bible Study,
..... led by Lori Schwan, in the Art 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

