

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the following month's newsletter. Send to: smlcspublications@gmail.com



Pastor Jon Zehnder

**Inside This Issue:**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Top Events for the Month | 2 |
| Caring Ministries        | 3 |
| Music Ministry           | 4 |
| Note from the Principal  |   |
| Ministry Coordinator     | 5 |
| DCE                      | 6 |
| Volunteer Schedules      | 7 |

**Weekend Regular Worship**

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

# The Messenger

*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Jon Zehnder*

## LENT and the 40-day Red Letter Challenge

Once again we will have the opportunity to gather together in the Midweek (on Wednesdays at Noon and 7:00 pm) for our **Lenten Worship Services** (which will begin on March 6). Once again we will spend 40 days reflecting on the grace of God that sent Jesus to pay the price of our sins, to silence the accusing voices of our enemies – death and Satan, to establish in our hearts His rule of grace and love, and then promised to be with us no matter where we are or what we are going through!

At the same time, we will embark on an incredible spiritual journey simply called “**The Red Letter Challenge**,” where we will read together the words of our Savior Jesus and take on the challenge to reflect Him in our day-to-day lives. There is a difference between knowing and doing, as Jesus said, “Whoever hears My words and puts them into practice is like a wise person who builds their house on a rock” (Matthew 7:24-25).

There is a great line in a song by the Christian group Sidewalk Prophets (“I Want to Live Like That”) where they sing, “Am I proof, that You are who You say You are, that grace can really change a heart, I want to live like that!” Wanting to live like that, reflecting God’s grace in our own lives is part of the daily opportunities in the Red Letter Challenge. It reminds us of what the Apostle Paul said in Galatians 5:6, that “The only thing that counts, the most important thing, is faith working itself out, expressing itself, in love.” I want to live like that!

It’s not about being perfect, it’s not about being better than somebody else, it’s not about following a bunch of rules or being legalistic – it is about following Jesus! It’s about trusting Him enough to do some things in our lives that we may have even done before but to do them now His way. It’s about following Jesus and saying, “Take my life; lead me in every aspect of my life, because my life is Yours Lord Jesus”.

It is 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, “For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for us all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.” My prayer as we embark on this spiritual journey is that not only will you be blessed, but that your family, our congregation, the people you come in contact with as well as our community might be blessed by God through us!

*\*Please see page 5 for my notes on the Budget Review\**

# Top Events for March

- 3/1 — *Field Day at SMLS*
- 3/3 — *DR Luncheon, 12pm (after late service)*
- 3/4 — *Church Council Meeting, 5:30pm*
- 3/4 — *Board of Properties Meeting, 6:30pm*
- 3/5 & 12 — *Middle School Youth Night, 6pm*
- 3/6 — *Ash Wednesday Services, 12pm & 7pm*
- 3/9 — *LWML Monthly Meeting, 10:30am*
- 3/10 — *Blood Drive, 8:30am-1pm*
- 3/10 — *Lunch & Learn*
- 3/11 & 18 — *Adult Basketball, 7pm*
- 3/13, 20 & 27 — *Midweek Lenten Worship, 12pm & 7pm*
- 3/16 — *New Member Dinner*
- 3/18 — *Stephen Ministry Meeting, 6:30pm*
- 3/19 — *SMLS PTL Meeting, 6pm*
- 3/21 — *Prayer Shawl Ministry, 9am*
- 3/21 — *School Board Meeting, 12pm*
- 3/23 — *LWML Spring Rally hosted by St. Michael*
- 3/25 — *Elders Meeting, 7pm*
- 3/30 — *Annual Bid for Kids AUCTION, 6pm*

**Lunch and Learn** (formerly Seniors on the Go) will meet on **Sunday, Mar. 10th** after the late service (about noon) in the cafeteria. All are welcome! Come and join us for lunch and fellowship and see what you can learn! *Please sign up in advance at the sound booth.*



## Picnic & Pearls

You are invited to attend the annual Bid for Kids Auction hosted by the PTL of St. Michael Lutheran School. This is an event you won't want to miss! There will be both live and silent auctions, amazing class baskets, live entertainment and a delicious dinner.

**Saturday, March 30th**  
**6:00pm**

*Invitations will be mailed out soon.*

**Please contact the office if you would like to donate any items or become a sponsor!**

## From the Parish Nurse

*Ann Sluiter*

The Neuropsychiatric Research Center and Parish Nurse Ann Sluiter will be offering a limited time event to seniors 55 and older to screen for Dementia.

The Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCa) tool will be used. This was designed as a rapid screening instrument for mild cognitive dysfunction. It assesses different cognitive domains: attention and concentration, executive functions, memory, language, visual constructional skills, conceptual thinking, calculations and orientation.

Our Parish Nurse will be administering the test, which takes about 10 minutes and Angel Duncan, M.A.-MFT, ATR Director of Education and Research Associate will meet with each person for an interview and evaluation and to offer recommendations.

Dates available:   Thursdays, March 21 and March 28, from Noon to 3:00pm  
                          Thursdays, April 11 and April 25, from Noon to 3:00pm

Each person should allow for 30 minutes. Please call Ann for an appointment: 239-691-0110. This will be held in the church. **There is no charge for this evaluation.**

William and I did this evaluation 3 years ago, as we wanted to have a baseline of our cognitive abilities. Some recommendations were made and followed to improve our lives. Now, I'm recommending that you do the same.

Blessings,  
Ann Sluiter RN, A.D., Parish Nurse

***From the Director of Caring Ministries******Julie Berchtold*****Kids are Worth Every Single Penny — And More***By Leigh Harper*

CNBC recently retweeted an article from 2017 titled, “*Here’s How Much You Save When You Don’t Have Kids.*” In the piece, the writer breaks down estimates of the cost of raising children in different scenarios based on income level. Of course, the numbers are ghastly. But my immediate reaction is the writer is totally missing the point.

Kids are 100 percent worth every penny. In fact, I could never put a price on my children. If I had a choice between parenting or having more disposable income, the decision would be a no-brainer. At the end of my life, I won’t be sad that I couldn’t afford a bigger house, more vacations, or designer clothes. I’ll be thankful for the rich memories and lives we’ve built *with* our children.



Plus, all the money isn’t due “up front” when you welcome a child into the world. The hundreds of thousands of dollars mentioned in the article are paid – no, *invested* – over time. Adding a child might mean subtle lifestyle adjustments like eating out less (you won’t want to take your young children to the restaurants you enjoyed before kids anyway!), driving a slightly older car, or taking fewer vacations. Thankfully, none of those changes even compare to the joy I receive from my kids.

It’s also important to remember that you’re in control of most of the financial decisions involved in parenthood. You don’t have to get caught up in trying to keep up with the Joneses, buying your children every gadget, or enrolling them in every activity. Sometimes less really is more.

The game-changing truth left out of the article is ... *God provides.* My husband didn’t think we were financially “ready” to have kids when we unexpectedly became pregnant. In fact, we were living in a tiny basement apartment, and he momentarily panicked when I showed him the positive pregnancy test.

But since becoming parents, God has met all our needs *and* many of our wants. We also weren’t planning on adding to our family after our first child, but when we became foster parents to an 11-year-old, He provided. He has proven his faithfulness over and over.

Now, I am not advocating for being irresponsible, lazy, or going into debt on purpose and then waiting to see if God will come to the rescue. There is a difference in being reckless and living wisely while trusting in His provision. We can’t blindly expect Him to pay bills when we aren’t stewarding what He has given us well.

***“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it” Gen. 1:28.*** The next generation needs to be filled with Christ followers, and it is truly my honor to raise two of them.

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**Lenten and Easter Worship Services**

**Ash Wednesday:** Mar. 6      12pm & 7pm

**Midweek Lenten Services:**  
Mar. 13, 20, 27, Apr. 3, 10      12pm & 7pm

**Palm Sunday:** Apr. 14      10:00am

**Maundy Thursday:** Apr. 18      12pm & 7pm

**Good Friday:** Apr. 19      12pm & 7pm

**Easter Sunday Celebration:**

Sat., Apr. 20

5:30pm

Sunday, Apr. 21

8:00, 9:30, 11:00am

***From the Director of Music Ministries******Vicar Colton LaMay***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus,

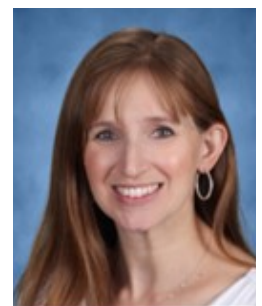
My second course in pastoral formation was a course on worship. Below you will find an extremely condensed summary of the course that covered the basics of our worship practices. If you would like to view the full article, please visit: <https://coltonlamay.com/summary-of-christian-worship/>

Worship is God coming to us directly through His Word and Sacrament. It is a rehearsal of the World Done Right – where we are able to practice living as God’s people each week in order to focus our innermost desires on God’s kingdom and receive Him in the ways He has promised to continue to make Himself known: Through Word and Sacrament. We also learn to live with one another in a manner that is acceptable in the sight of our Almighty Father. Through worship, He continually forms our hearts for His love and service, not only in church, but throughout daily lives, with everyone we meet, caring for all as Christ cares for us. He meets us over all boundaries of time and space to continue His Story that spans the history of the galaxy – a Story where He invites us to be active participants in this reenactment here in this place. He gathers us in to participate directly through worship and guides our hearts through His Means of Grace.

This reenactment is so important for us as Christians as we constantly require reminding and formation from God. We continually sin and fall short of God’s grace and glory. But, rehearsing each week the forgiveness of sins only found in Jesus each and every week permeates our hearts and minds and shapes our life in Jesus. With this, we are able to practice together, with six generations of believers in our midst, the celebration that countless Christians before us have celebrated. We share in His death as we have shared in His life and it is in these rites and ceremonies where we are guided by the Story through Word and Sacrament to live a life that is wholly His and that we devote our love to those around us, thinking outside ourselves and our nuclear families into the world around us that needs the love of Jesus. He empowers us through His Holy Spirit to be His ambassadors in this place – to work and love through His Holy Name that He might draw the whole world to Himself, providing the life-saving Grace that is only found through Him. Praise be to the One Who breaks the darkness and gives us everlasting life and eternal peace! To His precious name be all the honor and glory, now and forevermore, Amen!

***From the Saint Michael Lutheran School Principal******Kati Miser***

As we enter the season of Lent, we focus on the death of Jesus on the cross for our salvation. This somber season is followed by the joyous celebration of Easter when Jesus rose from the dead to complete God’s plan of salvation for us. At Saint Michael, **our mission is to educate children and touch families’ lives with that awesome love of God in Christ Jesus!** Here they learn a powerful, life-giving message and the encouragement to share it with all with whom they come into contact ... especially sharing the love of Jesus in word and actions.



Be sure to check out the school’s *biggest* fund-raiser of the year...happening on March 30th!



**By the way, enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year has begun.** Spread the word about our school to your friends and neighbors. Give me a call to set up a tour to see our school first-hand.

## From the Ministry Coordinator

Lori Schwan

### Children's Ministry

#### Preschool and Elementary Sunday School

#### Red Letter Challenge Kids

During Lent, Preschool and Elementary Sunday School will also have a chance to learn about BFSGG (Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going like Jesus). Parents, jump into a study while your kids are learning. It is a great way to equip you for conversations as you do the daily challenges together.

#### Faith Stepping Stones:

- **Mother-Daughter Retreat for 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** God's Design for His Daughters – Apr. 26-27. Watch your mailbox for invitation.

#### Thrivent Financial Members

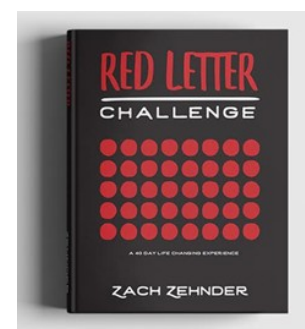
The Red Letter Challenge gives you many opportunities to do awesome Thrivent Action Teams with \$250 as seed money. Contact me to see how you can partner with a fundraiser, service project, or an educational Thrivent Action Team. Those who have choice dollars can also direct them for the 2018 up until Mar. 31, 2019.

#### Campus-Wide Study

We are excited this Lenten Season to unite as church and school, with all ages: children, youth, and adults to study and take the Red Letter Challenge together. Author and LCMS Pastor Zach Zehnder has created a 40-day discipleship challenge to introduce, through the words of Jesus, the five main principles of being a disciple: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. Join us as we take the Red Letter Challenge!

If you haven't yet received your book or children's chart, or signed-up for a Group Study, contact Lori Schwan ([Lori.Schwan@gsmcls.org](mailto:Lori.Schwan@gsmcls.org) or 939-1218 x237). We are trying to set up several serving opportunities for the week of serving. Watch the bulletin for more details.

- March 2-April 13: Campus-Wide Study
- March 5: Daily Reading Begins
- March 30: Special Serving Day



## Budget Review

Pastor Jon Zehnder

### Our Support of the Mission and Ministry of Saint Michael

The 2019-2020 budget has been approved for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2019 and ending on June 30, 2020 – a total budget of \$5,680,720

**Church income** is set at \$1,317,490 with offsetting expenses the same

- Income comes from \$1,119,689 offerings + special gifts of \$10,300 + designated funds of \$187,500
- Funding is dispersed through 9 Ministry Boards as follows:
  - (1) For Ministry - \$603,690 (45.8%)
  - (2) For Administration - \$601,800 (45.7%) (Includes the salary and benefits of 12 full and part time people who serve on behalf of the ministry of Saint Michael)
  - (3) For Missions - \$112,000 (8.5% of the total budget, but 10% of the anticipated offerings to be received). Of that total amount - \$51,000 is sent in support of District & Synod ministry; \$34,200 is sent in support of 3 Circuit ministries (Amigos en Christo; FGCU Thrive; Pelican Lutheran – Golden Gate); \$23,800 is used for our Dominican Republic mission (with additional support raised through direct sponsorship and special gifts – the goal of which is \$26,200); new in this year's budget is \$3,000 for our support of missions in Liberia.

**School income** is set at \$4,363,230 with offsetting **expenses** of \$4,363,230

- With 90 full and part time employees, 66% of the school budget is for the salary and benefits of those who serve the children and families of our school
- The School Board makes up the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministry Board of Saint Michael Lutheran

*From the Director of Christian Education*

*Jack Proctor*

## **Saint Michael Youth Ministries**

*A message from Megan Pearce. A child of the congregation and a current DCE student at Concordia University Texas:*

Hey St. Michael Lutheran! I just wanted to thank you all for supporting me during my time here at Concordia Texas University in Austin, Texas. I have been learning more about my faith, expanding the possibilities for my future, meeting a ton of new people, and having the time of my life out here. So far during my time here I have gotten to take a lot of different classes, my personal favorite being Curriculum and Methods.

This class taught me all the basics of how to write Bible studies and messages, manage classroom settings, manage my time better, and so much more. Out of the many lessons I have learned here at Concordia so far, I would have to say that God's plan for you is what you would least expect so you should never assume you have it all figured out. The longer I am in the DCE program here at Concordia, the more passionate I have become about my calling into the mission field. It is because of this growing passion that I hope to one day be a part of a plant church where I will be able to go out into the community and echo the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! None of this would be possible without your financial support and prayers. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to go to school on this beautiful campus to learn more about what I love.

~ Megan Pearce



I am so proud of Megan as she pursues the calling God has given her to go into ministry. She is not the only standout! Saint Michael is blessed by many talented youth. Ever consider getting involved with the youth ministry? Contact me to explore possibilities!

Throughout the season of lent the Youth Ministries is excited to embark on the Red Letter Challenge!



In...  
Confirmation  
Sunday School  
&  
High School Revive



Jack Proctor  
Director of Youth Ministries  
[Jack.Proctor@gsmles.org](mailto:Jack.Proctor@gsmles.org)  
239.939.1218 ext 224

| <b>Usher Schedule</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| 8:00 A.M.  | 10:45 A.M.  |
| <p><i>Please contact Marge Bennett if you are unable to serve as scheduled, or secure your own replacement. If YOU would like to serve as an usher, please contact Marge Bennett at 560-4159, and indicate which service you prefer.</i></p> |   |
| <b>March 3</b>   |   |
| Bill Truax<br>Bob Richardson<br>John Hoffmann  | Tom Kosteno<br>Marge Bennett<br>Woody Jackemeyer<br>Eric Zinn<br>Roy Hendry<br>Diane Hendry             |
| <b>March 10</b>  |   |
| John Hoffmann<br>Nila Little<br>Kathy Royston<br>Roger Reppert   | Leroy Waldren<br>Niel Nieman<br>Jacob Haycook<br>Neil Meador<br>Christian Bottorff<br>Aaron Bonenberger |
| <b>March 17</b>  |   |
| Bill Truax<br>Bob Richardson<br>Kathy Royston  | Ken Fritsch<br>Marge Bennett<br>Roy Hendry<br>Diane Hendry<br>Tom Kosteno<br>Woody Jackemeyer           |
| <b>March 24</b>  |   |
| John Hoffmann<br>Nila Little<br>Kathy Royston<br>Roger Reppert   | Tom Kosteno<br>Aaron Bonenberger<br>Christian Bottorff<br>Eric Zinn<br>Jacob Haycook<br>Niel Nieman     |
| <b>March 31</b>  |   |
| Bill Truax<br>Bob Richardson<br>Kathy Royston  | Leroy Waldren<br>Marge Bennett<br>Neil Meador<br>Woody Jackemeyer<br>Tom Kosteno<br>Roy Hendry          |

| <b>Church Greeters for March Sunday Services</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Mar 3</b>                                     | 8:00 a.m. Tom & Jo Zeller<br>10:45 a.m. Marlene King             |
| <b>Mar 10</b>                                    | 8:00 a.m. Kevin Baptiste<br>10:45 a.m. Ursula Jean Baptiste      |
| <b>Mar 17</b>                                    | 8:00 a.m. Joni Zehnder<br>10:45 a.m. Linda Schlachta             |
| <b>Mar 24</b>                                    | 8:00 a.m. <i>Need Volunteer</i><br>10:45 a.m. Ron & Liz Ghormley |
| <b>Mar 31</b>                                    | 8:00 a.m. Judy Scharpenberg<br>10:45 a.m. Jan Grube              |

If you are moved to serve the congregation of St. Michael Lutheran Church either as a *Greeter* or an *Usher*, please contact the church office at 239-939-1218 Ext. 241.  
  
 We have many other volunteer opportunities as well, including helping to prepare the sanctuary for worship each week.

We have openings in our *March 2019* **Acolyte and Crucifer** schedule. Sign up today using [SignUpGenius.com!](http://SignUpGenius.com)







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

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**Permit #97**

**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**

*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

**8:00 am Thursday** .....Moms In Prayer,  
 .....Little Chapel

**10:00 am Thursday** ..... Women’s Bible Study,  
 .....led by Lori Schwan, in the Youth 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

