

Deadline for submissions is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the following month's newsletter.

Send to:  
smlcspublications@gmail.com



Pastor Jon Zehnder



Saint Michael Lutheran  
CHURCH • DAY SCHOOL • FOUNDATION

**Weekend Regular Worship**

Sat: 5:30 pm Informal  
Sun: 8:00 am Traditional  
10:45 am Blended

# The Messenger

*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Jon Zehnder*

## “Heating up the Summer”

If you've lived for any length of time in Southwest Florida, the title above seems redundant at best, possibly discouraging at its worst, because **it gets hot and humid here in the summertime!** But the kind of “heating up” I want to talk about has nothing to do with the temperature *outside* – it has to do with the climate, the environment, that we create *inside* our church, our family of Saint Michael. (And no, I'm not talking about turning off the air conditioning, either).

We turn up the heat and grow warmer as a congregation through **fellowship**. And isn't that what we've missed the most these 14-16 months during the pandemic?! And it's more than just saying “hello.” You see, Christian fellowship happens when we know each other well enough to encourage each other, pray for each other, and rejoice, as well as weep together.

Hebrews 10:24-25 describes fellowship this way, “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as we see the Last Day approaching.” As we start to feel more comfortable gathering in-person for worship, I want to encourage you to do that, to rejoin the fellowship we enjoy as we worship and study together.

But let me make one more point; there was a follower of Jesus named Joseph (you can read about him in the Book of Acts, starting in 4:36-37). He is remembered as one of the all-time great encouragers, so much so they called him “Barnabas” (which means “son of encouragement”). Acts 11:28 says that Barnabas encouraged the believers in Antioch to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

Today, maybe more than ever, we need more people like Barnabas because we live in a culture, time, and society that is hostile at worst and ambivalent at best to encouraging us to remain faithful to Jesus. That kind of fellowship and encouragement can only come from other believers in Jesus as we meet, worship, study, and walk-through life **together**. So, let me ask you – who is Barnabas to you? And who are you a Barnabas to? And let's commit together to turn up the heat this summer as we encourage one another as only followers of Jesus can do

for each other.

**P.S. Annual Voters Meeting** July 25<sup>th</sup> between the worship services. Thank you for your incredible support of our mission and ministry. Projections at the beginning of the pandemic were that 20% of all Christian churches and schools would close due to lack of support. Your generosity was simply overwhelming. We not only met our projected budget needs but exceeded it. And we praise God for all of you!

**P.S.S Watch out for Fraud** Once again we are hearing of e-mails supposedly from me asking you to send me gift cards or money. I, and we, will NEVER DO THAT! We, as the Church, respond to needs through our Sunshine Account or through our Board of Human Care. Donations are gathered here or given to the Church to distribute to those in need. Thank you in this area as well, for your prayerful consideration and amazing support of the opportunities we placed before you this past fiscal year. What blessings you provided to so many others!

*Pastor Jon*

***From our Principal******Kati Miser***

At Saint Michael Lutheran School, **our mission is to educate children and touch families' lives with the awesome love of Jesus Christ!** Check out our SMLS Facebook page for photos and posts about recent events and stories shared by Saint Michael families about the impact of our school on their lives. Give me a call if you

want to see our school first-hand. Online applications for 2021-2022 are being accepted on our website.

***A Message from Julie Berchtold***

My dear St. Michael Family,

I want to thank you all for your love, prayers, and support shared with me as I faced intense health challenges in 2020. Due to fifteen months of dealing with harsh antibiotics and all the stress, infusions, and testing involved due to three very rare and serious bacterial ear infections, I have decided it is time for me to retire from fulltime ministry as of July 30<sup>th</sup>. Although the ear infections are gone, this regimen took its toll on me, and I need time to continue the healing process. This has been an extremely hard decision for me to make as I loved my job and having the privilege to serve God, under Pastor Jon's leadership, with an amazing team of administrators and staff whom I greatly love and respect. I know God will provide for my vacancy as He directs us to fill this position with a skill set that is needed at this time to serve our ministry in the greatest of ways. Lee and I will continue to facilitate Marriage Enrichment, Stephen Ministry, and various small group Bible Studies in the future.

All my love,  
Julie



Are you gearing up for school? Buying supplies

before the mad rush? Don't forget to register with Amazon Smile! Amazon Smile is a program that donates a portion of your purchase price to the charity of your choice. You can choose St. Michael by using this link when you shop:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-0791044>

Every little bit helps! Thank you for supporting St. Michael Lutheran Church and School!



## That Same Stupid Fight: Handling Conflict with Your Spouse

By Janel Breitenstein

There's a reason so many of us would rather get a cavity filled with Kenny G in the background than have that same ... stupid ... fight. Conflict with your spouse is inevitable for all couples. The following concepts from **Peacemaker Ministries** may result in love being a little less of a battlefield.

**Why do we fight?** Conflict with your spouse happens when values collide. He wishes she would park straight; she wishes he would apply the same logic to getting his socks 17 inches closer to the hamper. As **James 4:1** puts it, *"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?"* Conflicts can be tricky because the way we go about handling them is heavily influenced by the culture in our family of origin. Whether our "normal" includes glossing over, gossiping, lashing out, storming away, or having a family meeting, our personal experience has dictated "acceptable" responses to conflict.



**Escaping:** There are the classic "stuffers," who prefer a false peace. They're escaping conflict by outright denial; internalizing responses to conflict.

**Attacking:** On the other end of the spectrum are "blowers," who shoot for a false justice. They might attack with words, physical force, or the withdrawal of privileges, like money or sex.

**Peacemaking:** In the middle of these extremes is the true peace and true justice of godly responses: Talking it out. Finding a mediator. Overlooking an offense. Jesus calls us "blessed" when we are peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). Not peace-fakers. Not peace-breakers.

**The replay** - We don't act as "peacemakers" just because it's the moral thing to do. It's because when we enter conflict, we have the opportunity to honor God and replay His actions when He was in conflict with *us*. When sin broke our relationship with God, He went the distance to repair that relationship and make peace with us. When we were His enemies, God demonstrated the quality and quantity of His love by making a way for peace (see Rom. 5:8). And it's a job God has passed on to us. The way we show forgiveness, peace, and justice in our relationships is a show-and-tell about what God did for us through Jesus. Conflict also allows us to serve others and to grow as it gives us new ways of looking at life.

**What next?** Resolving conflict with your spouse in a healthy way starts with taking 100% responsibility for our contribution—even if we think our contribution is only 5% of the problem. Here's a tip I heard from author Gary Thomas: **We always underestimate the impact our sin has on other people.** When we're not trusting God to meet those desires, they can become demands. As you're able, **consider how to embrace humility and confess to the other person.** Admit specifically what you did, as well as admitting the attitude that was in your heart. And acknowledge the hurt you've caused.

**The PAUSE process** - So you've decided you'll intentionally honor God and trust Him with this conflict with your spouse. How can this become "Let's work on the issue of household division of labor" rather than "her vs. him"?

Peacemakers outlines a five-step process to keep in mind:

1. **Prepare:** Seek counsel. Pray. Continue to examine your own heart and reactions.
2. **Affirm Relationships:** Show value for the relationship and hope for the future.
3. **Understand and Acknowledge Interests:** People's positions are motivated by their spoken and unspoken interests: Concerns. Desires. Needs. Limitations. Fears. Values.
4. **Search for Creative Solutions:** There are almost always more than two options.
5. **Evaluate Options:** Which of these speak to both of our interests? Is there a way I need to willingly lay down one of my interests?

**"How can I know if I've really forgiven them? I'm still mad when I think about the issue."** Forgiveness is one of the most challenging tasks we face as human beings. It's not a natural response but a supernatural one. **Forgiveness is a choice.** It's a decision modeled after God's forgiveness of us: a decision not to hold the offense against the offender (see Matt. 18:21-35). It releases the person from their sin against us, desiring good and blessing for them. And since forgiveness is a choice *we* make, it doesn't even depend on the other person. We can forgive whether the person is sorry or not.

**But here's what forgiveness isn't.** It's not forgetting or excusing, releasing someone from worldly consequences of sin. This is different from revenge. It's accountability for their choices. A forgiven criminal should still go to jail. Forgiveness isn't a feeling, although feeling might be present. It's promising the following: I will not...

- Keep ruminating negatively on this.
- Seek to hurt my offender as a result of this; I will seek to bless him or her, even if that means establishing accountability and finding justice.
- Gossip about this, speaking to others who are not part of the solution.

Instead, I will continue to pursue a relationship with the offender (unless repentance has not been demonstrated and love dictates I set boundaries to protect both of us). In all of this, you might even come to a renewed appreciation of the lengths God has gone to forgive us, and play out the gospel in your own life and for those you love.

## *From the Ministry Coordinator*

*Lori Schwan*

### **Summer Sunday School**

Kids, join us throughout the summer for a little fun and refreshment for Summer Sunday School. Join us in person in the music room or on Zoom. Contact Lori Schwan for Zoom info.

### **Thrivent Financial Members**

If you own a Thrivent Financial Product, you can give \$250 two times without giving any of your own money. We have several opportunities to partner with service projects like prayer shawl ministry, making a difference for community in-gatherings with supplies or sponsoring Faith and Film, etc. Contact Lori Schwan to see how you can partner with a fundraiser, service project, or an educational Thrivent Action Team.

### **Women's Bible Study**

We've moved back on campus in the youth room but also have Zoom as well. Join Lori Schwan on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30 AM on Zoom or in the youth room starting June 10<sup>th</sup> for ladies Bible study. We are continuing our in-depth study on Daniel.

### **Faith and Film This Summer**

We've had a great start to our Monday Faith and Film Movie nights! The goal is to process secular movies through God's redemptive lens and develop the skill of how to have spiritual conversations with different ages over popular culture. It's perfect for families and people of all ages! Doors to the gym open at 5 PM, and the movie will begin at 5:45 PM. Bring your favorite lawn chairs or rent chairs or even couches to support the youth ministry! Dinner and movie snacks will also be available for a free will donation. The SMLC youth are raising money for the 2022 National Youth Gathering!



We WON'T be having a movie on July 5<sup>th</sup>, but feel free to check out your own favorite movie and look for themes of faith. Here is the July movie schedule:

**July 12** – Yes Day

**July 19** – Dolphin Tale

**July 26** – The Croods

Co-sponsored by the Youth and Parish Education Boards. Questions? Email [Lori.Schwan@gsmc.org](mailto:Lori.Schwan@gsmc.org)

### **Voter's Meeting and Fellowship Breakfast**

Our bi-annual voter's meeting will be Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:15-10:30 AM in the gym. This is the time of year when we share our annual report, having completed our 2020-2021 fiscal year. This year we will also be celebrating *Julie Berchtold's retirement* with a fellowship breakfast. We are collecting cards, well wishes, and gifts at the office.

If you cannot be there in person, you can Zoom using the church volunteer account.

Use this link: [Join Zoom Meeting](#) or use the meeting ID and passcode below.

Meeting ID: 305 113 7001

Passcode: church

If you don't have a computer, you can call in with a phone. Please contact Lori Schwan for the phone number and passcode that we get from Zoom the morning of the meeting.

### **Pastor Jon's Sunday Bible Class is Back**

Join us Sunday morning in the cafeteria to study the book of Hebrews. If you cannot be there in person, you can Zoom using the church volunteer account.

Use this link: [Join Zoom Meeting](#) or use the meeting ID and passcode below.

Meeting ID: 305 113 7001

Passcode: church



*From the Director of Christian Education*

*Jack Proctor*

When I came to Saint Michael, I was a kid fresh out of college. A single, tall, goofy guy who couldn't grow a beard. Now five years later, so much has changed. God has been doing some incredible things, and now I'm married, have a baby, and still can't grow a beard.

Coming here right out of school, I didn't know what to expect. It became clear to me that I was being called to Fort Myers, but I had no idea what God had in store for me here. I was simply amazed at the body of Christ I was joining. Not only because it was a friendly and a fun place, but also because you all had trust. This trust wasn't in me, but rather trust in your God who brought me to you. That trust was empowering and inspiring.

Through all the various experiences I've been blessed to have, from leading mission trips in and out of the country to conferences and youth gatherings of all sizes, teaching, coaching, having lock-ins and fundraisers, the biggest thing I've learned to be true is 1 Corinthians 10:31: "...whatever you do, do for the glory of God." It doesn't matter what God has you doing. It matters why you do it and how you go about doing it. If God's glory is your motivation, you'll find yourself joining in on what Jesus is already doing. You get better than a front row seat to Jesus in action - you get to be His teammate! You don't need to worry because He handles all the miraculous parts for you. You are responsible for being faithful, and He is responsible for the result.

As I follow this call to go, I go with the trust you taught me. Trust in our God who is already at work in San Antonio and who will continue to do eternity-shaping things in Fort Myers through His people at Saint Michael.

With all the love and gratitude we can muster,

Jack, Jazzy, and Noah Proctor



Thanks to all the volunteers who helped at the Proctor Fellowship Breakfast! It was an amazing time of fellowship, and such a sweet way to say goodbye to the Proctor family. Thank you for all you do!

The church and school office will be closed on Monday, July 5<sup>th</sup> in celebration of the Fourth of July. We hope you and your families have a wonderful and safe Fourth of July!



The Lee Health Blood Mobile will be on campus from 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup>. They are always so thankful for our donations. If you can, please consider donating.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

Please see Pastor Colton's note on page 6 regarding sound booth volunteer opportunities AND a special training session on July 24<sup>th</sup>!

We could also use help cleaning and preparing the sanctuary for weekend services. This would take about two hours per week. If you are interested, please call the church office.

*Director of Worship and Music*

*Pastor Colton LaMay*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus,

Over the last couple months we have been working to update the streaming equipment in the church. The goal has been to improve the quality of the stream, update the performance of the streaming computers, and create a more user-friendly workspace. I will gladly share details of the setup with anyone interested, but won't give you too much technical jargon here. The important detail I would like to share is that **we are still very much in need of extra help to operate the audio and video streaming equipment for worship services.** Our goal is to establish a team so no one person takes on all the services, so **we are looking for anyone who might have an interest in learning the system. We will be holding a training session on Saturday, July 24<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.** Coffee and donuts will be provided! We hope to see you there!



As always, it is a blessing to serve alongside you, and I pray you have an excellent month!

Blessings in Jesus,  
Pastor Colton

*TMN Network News and Events*

Check out these exciting events from Thrivent! For more information, go to the Thrivent Southeast Event page. (<https://www.thriventfinancial.com/member-network/southeast/events/>)

- July 14: Ron Blue - Simplify Money Management, God's Way
- July 21: Retirement and Taxes with Ed Slott
- July 28: Bethany Hamilton
- Aug 04: Economic Update with Peter McFarland
- Sep 02: Lauren Daigle Virtual Concert
- Sep 17-19: Tony Dungy
- Sep 22: Understanding Social Security and Annuities with Robin Mueller
- Sep 29: Student Loans with Ryan Law



Coach Tony Dungy

STAY CONNECTED:

- Facebook: [@southeasttmn](#)
- Web: [Thrivent.com/southeast](http://Thrivent.com/southeast)
- Email: [SoutheastTMN@thrivent.com](mailto:SoutheastTMN@thrivent.com)



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 \* Do you have any specific prayer needs or requests? \*  
 \* Please email them to [stephanie.bellino@gsmllcs.org](mailto:stephanie.bellino@gsmllcs.org) \*  
 \* or you can call (239) 939-1218 Ext. 241 and leave a voicemail message. \*  
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