

Deadline for submissions is the 15th 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

Happy 80th Birthday, Saint Michael!

Some of you know the story of God's grace in the history of our Church and School, but that story is always a reminder that God works all things together for our good. Near the turn of the century, traveling missionaries visited and discussed the possibility of starting a congregation. The challenge was that no bridge spanned the Caloosahatchee, so transportation was by boat only.

It was not until 1931, and the completion of the Edison Bridge, that Lutherans renewed their efforts in this area. The city was canvassed, and worship services were begun with an average of 7 in attendance. In 1939, Rev. H.E. Hartmann (from Trinity Lutheran, Delray Beach) led a delegation of 38 Walther Leaguers to Fort Myers to call on 800 households. They helped organize a new Lutheran Mission. The District assigned a full time missionary in 1940.

In September 1941, Rev. Art Weber arrived to lead that small congregation. And on **September 29, 1941**, Saint Michael Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Myers was officially chartered as a congregation in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. (The name comes from the Church festival held on September 29th in honor of Saint Michael and All Angels). Within 6 months, the members dedicated their first sanctuary on the northwest corner of Grand and Lafayette (a parsonage for the pastor to live in was also constructed next door).

By 1953, the little church was sold, and a new sanctuary was built on the southeast corner of Coconut and McGregor. In 1956, Kindergarten classes were begun (**Happy 65th Birthday to our School!**). By 1964, the school had grown to a complete 9-grade level elementary school.

Our final campus move came when our current Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall (now the Office Center) were built on the southwest corner of Broadway and Carrell in 1968. The Education Building followed in 1978. Since then, we have built the Anderson/Eichler Fine Arts & Athletic Center, bought the property to the south side of Spanish Court to provide parking and an athletic field, purchased and renovated what is now our Early Learning Center, built a large maintenance building, expanded the narthex, and renovated the sanctuary, including adding stain glass windows and hurricane glass.

As the oldest Missouri Synod congregation in southwest Florida, Saint Michael has had the privilege and opportunity to daughter 6 congregations: Good Shepherd (NFM), Zion (SFM), Grace (aka "Bethlehem" EFM) Trinity (CC), Beautiful Savior (LA), and the mission in the Dominican Republic.

Over the years the Lord has richly blessed Saint Michael's congregation with a passion for people, for families, for education, for youth, for outreach, missions, and human care. We stand in the succession of that long line of people who loved their Lord Jesus and who were willing to serve others. **That adventure continues to lie before us!**

Thank You from the Zehnder Family

On behalf of our entire family, thank you all for your kind thoughts, cards, and prayers during our Dad's hospitalization, transition to Hospice, and ultimately home to heaven. Your care, comfort, and concern for us was simply overwhelming. Thank you all, and God bless and keep you in His care.

Thank you for your prayers!

From our Principal

Kati Miser



This year's theme, "In All Things," is based on Romans 8:28, "We know that *in all things* God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." After being in session now for a month, our loving and gracious God has been showing us how He is working "good" for us *in all things* ... especially relationships between students, students and teachers, teachers and parents, administration, and all of the above. It's obvious that Saint Michael Lutheran School is still *educating children and touching families' lives with the love of Jesus Christ!* Your continued prayers are requested on behalf of that ministry to children and families during the 2021-2022 school year.



Give me a call if you want to invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to experience Saint Michael Lutheran School. Both in-person and virtual tours are available.

From the Director of Little Saints

School is back in session at Little Saints, and even in the middle of a pandemic, we welcomed 22 new students to our school in August!

It's going to be another busy year for Little Saints. Our infant and one-year-old rooms are completely full for the entire school year. We still have spaces open for new students in our two-year-old classrooms for this school year. If you know of anyone looking for a school for their two-year-old, please have them contact Stacie.Thompson@gsmllcs.org to discuss our openings.



Apples and fall leaves abound as we move into our fall studies in September. If anyone happens to make a trip up north this fall, we would love some real fall leaves to share with our little ones. It's so confusing for our little ones living in Southwest Florida in the fall, when the weather is not getting cooler, and the leaves only fall if we have a hurricane! Keep safe, everyone!

Visioning for the Future

Navigating leadership transition for a senior pastor in the coming years is a monumental task on its own. Add in additional staff transition, and St. Michael is in a situation which can be much more complex. At this key moment in the life of our church, St. Michael's leaders are seeking to be faithful to the call of God, to safeguard the identity that has been established over the last several decades, and to advance the vision of the church into the future. The Board of Elders, along with the approval of the church council, has contracted Pastor Jacob Hoyer, a Certified Navigator in the Vision Planning Processes. He will be guiding a team of congregational leaders and staff to create a vision framework of values, mission, strategy, and measures which will be shared with the congregation in anticipation of moving into the future.



Pastor Jacob Hoyer

From the Ministry Coordinator***Lori Schwan***

Children's Ministry **Simply Loved Sunday School**

We are so excited about our new Simply Loved Sunday School Curriculum. We are gathering as PK3-Kindergarten and 1st-4th Grade. This curriculum uses aspects of our beloved VBS including Bible Buddies, great songs, and fun learning. But it also focuses on teaching the Bible in



a meaningful way surrounded by the loving care of adults without taxing our volunteers. Contact Lori Schwan if you are interested in volunteering with the kids or behind the scenes.

New 5th and 6th Grade Sunday School Class

Our preteen kids in 5th and 6th grade have heard the Bible stories, but their minds have developed to ask those harder questions. This new class is a place where it is safe to wonder and talk together as we see how the Holy Spirit answers those questions and empowers us to be bold for Him.



Thrivent Financial Members

If you own a Thrivent Financial Product, you can give \$250 two times without giving any of your own money. 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 ELC Board Room but also have Zoom as well. Join Lori Schwan on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30 a.m. on Zoom or on campus for ladies Bible study.

DivorceCare – New Edition 4.0

A new session of DivorceCare, for separated or divorced, meets Friday mornings 8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. from **08/27/2021-12/17/2021**. Join any session. This group will be online and in person. Register at: www.divorcecare.org. Have questions? Call Lori Schwan 239-939-1218, ext. 237.



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.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 305 113 7001

Passcode: church



Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Wednesday Youth Nights

We had a great start to our weekly Middle School Youth activities and High School Revive from 6-8 PM. Join us as we have dinner hosted by families each week at 6 PM. At 6:30, our activities and discussions will begin, for each group separately, in both the gym and youth room. We will be looking for volunteers each week to assist Sue Clark with high school and Lori Schwan with middle school.

Car Wash

The middle and high school youth will be holding a free car wash from 7:30AM-12:00 on Sunday, September 26, 2021. Attend worship on Saturday night. Parents are needed to help valet park cars. Watch emails to sign up. This is a great time to gain points to help pay for the youth activities.

Middle School Youth Gathering

The LCMS FL-GA district is sponsoring a 6th-8th grade youth gathering at Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center in Leesburg, FL on November 5th – 7th. Friends are welcome, too. Our main speaker will be DCE Emilie Stooksbury who was the MC for the National Youth Gathering. We'll enjoy music by St. Paul Weston, topical breakout sessions, and a servant event on site. Registration includes lodging, transportation, 4 meals, and a t-shirt. A \$50 deposit of \$200 for Early Bird Registration is due by Sept. 26th. If you don't catch the Early Bird Registration, regular registration would require a \$50 deposit of \$210 Registration by Oct. 10th. Final payment is due Nov. 1st. Details and paperwork will be emailed. You can use your points to offset the cost of the gathering (see Lori Schwan for balances). Also, there are scholarships if needed. Adults, please see Lori if interested.



Stay Connected

Send a text to 81010 – enter @smyth20212 to join our youth ministry Remind and stay up to date on all that is happening.

Confirmation

We are meeting weekly in the main education building Rm. #48 for 7th and 8th grade confirmation on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:30. Parents are encouraged to join us.

9th Grade Confirmation Retreat with Parents

Before the Rite of Confirmation on Oct. 31st at the combined worship service at 10 AM, we will take a pause to retreat. Parents and freshman will gather at Southern Waters on Sept. 18th from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. We will review the foundations of our faith and receive your confirmation verses. Faith Statements will be due Oct. 17th, and we will have one-on-one meetings before Oct. 24th to practice explaining our faith.

National Youth Gathering

The NYG will be July 8 – 14, 2022 in Houston, TX. This is the 16th NYG! This trip is for students entering 8th – 12th grade, and it is an opportunity for 20,000+ high school students from around the country to come together to celebrate God's goodness. Want to know more? Check out these link or contact Sue Clark (239) 349-0395 or fmsclark13@gmail.com

[Why the Gathering](#)

[National Youth Gathering Theme - In All Things](#)

