

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

3595 Broadway
Fort Myers, FL 33901

The Messenger

From the Pastor

Rev. Jon Zehnder

At the end of this month, once again, we'll celebrate the **Reformation**. On the eve of All Saints' Day (called "All Hallows' Eve," our "Halloween"), October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. It was a call for "reform" and change against certain practices and teachings of the Church.

Out of the struggle that followed came a theology based on Scripture and a way of reading the Bible that shook medieval Christianity and changed the political landscape. Three phrases sum up the three principles at work in reformation theology:

- **By Grace Alone** means that it is ONLY through God's undeserved love that we are declared righteous – that God "sees" us as holy and faithful. The Medieval Church taught that they helped "make" people righteous. The Bible teaches that God alone saves us (Titus 3:5-7); we cannot save ourselves by our own efforts (the good things we do and the bad things we avoid doing – Eph. 2:8-9).
- **By Faith Alone** means that we only trust in God's promises to us in Jesus (a trust that is a gracious gift by the working of the Holy Spirit in us – believing in our hearts and confessing with our mouths that Jesus is our Savior, Rom. 10:9). Again, it is not by our own efforts that cause us to receive this gift of faith – not our finding, choosing, or deciding – it is God's working in us.
- **By Scripture Alone** means that only God's Word is our sure guide for faith and life, not any human teachings or traditions. As Christians who celebrate our faith in our Lutheran tradition, we like to say, "The Bible is the only source, rule, and norm for everything that we believe, teach, and confess."

The insight that freed and inspired Martin Luther was simply this – what makes us righteous is not our own virtue but only the righteousness God gives us as a gift of His grace. All other religions are based on a plan where a person needs to work their way into heaven. Christianity is the only religion based on what God has done for us in Jesus.

Because of Jesus, a God of grace promises to declare and accept us as righteous in His sight. Through faith we receive that promise. The Reformers called that "Justification by grace through faith." To really understand our Reformation heritage, we need to understand that the theological force that is always reforming us, and the church, is the powerful Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus!

Some Lutherans from U.S. History

- Lutherans came to America seven years before the Pilgrims.
- The Statue of Liberty's creator, Frederick Bartholdi, was a French Lutheran.
- The first book translated into any Native American language was Luther's Small Catechism.
- The Liberty Bell was hidden from the British under the floor of Zion Lutheran Church in Allentown, PA.
- John Hansen, a Maryland Lutheran, was the first President of the Continental Congress, serving until George Washington was inaugurated.
- Frederick Muhlenberg, the first Speaker of the House of Representatives, was a Lutheran pastor.
- The second oldest U.S. military unit was formed by 137 men from St. John's Lutheran Church, Charleston, SC.

St. Michael Lutheran Birthday Observance

A year of "Jubilee" (celebration) – in light of our Church's 80th birthday and the School's 65th, we'd like to invite you to share memories and/or pictures of people, moments, and stories that touched your heart or blessed your life. We'll be sharing those in various ways throughout the year. Praise God for all the ways He has blessed us!

Pastor Jon

From our Principal***Kati Miser***

It's obvious that Saint Michael Lutheran School is still *educating children and touching families' lives with the love of Jesus Christ!* The classrooms and campus are alive with over 105 staff who truly care about the more than 470 children and 350 families you find there. You hear His Name spoken during classes and chapel, and you experience His love IN ALL THINGS ... whether it's a situation between children, between staff, or between staff

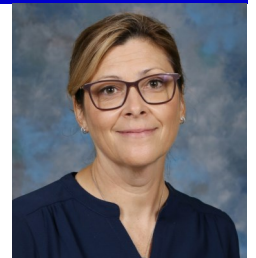


and parents. What a blessing to know that, even though the seasons may be changing, our faithful God is unchanging ... His promise to be our "all in all things" brings us peace and joy especially during these challenging times. Your daily prayers for SMLS are so appreciated as they continue to be a light in our community.

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

***From the Director of Little Saints******Stacie Thompson***

We are happy to announce our annual Pirate Pasta Dinner is back this year! This event is a great chance for the families to get together, enjoy a few hours eating Carrabba's and bonding, while the children enjoy safe games and activities in the gym. We are excited to enjoy this event with our families again this year! Funds raised from this event will go toward building a new storage shed for the Little Saints playground since our old shed is falling apart.



October is fire safety month. The FMFD will be back this year visiting the kids on October 7th. This is a great time for the kids to meet the firemen, learn about fire safety, and climb into the trucks!

Little Saints will be holding our mini fall festival day again this year on October 29th. Our little ones will enjoy a day filled with games, activities, and a costume parade. This event was such a hit last year, we decided to make it an annual event for the kiddos!

***Thank You******Ann Sluiter, Parish Nurse***

William and I would like to thank the congregation for their prayers, cards, and concerns. At present time, I am at the 6-month recovery point of my bone marrow transplant. My doctor says the transplant was a success! My journey is not over, but I am making good progress. Please continue in prayer for me and my family.

From the Ministry Coordinator

Lori Schwan



Children's Ministry

Simply Loved Sunday School - Kids and volunteers are loving our new Simply Loved Sunday School Curriculum. We are gathering as PK3-Kindergarten and 1st-4th Grade. While both age groups have been going in chronological order until this time, this month we will move into a thematic unit: Good News for Outsiders. 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 month's questions:

- I've Heard God Loves Me...But Does He *Like* Me?
- Does God Ever Have Fun?
- How Come Good Things Happen to Bad People?
- Noah's Ark...Really?



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 – Action Teams

If you own a Thrivent Financial Product, now is the time to start getting your two Action Teams with \$250 each as seed money for a fundraiser, service project, or an educational event. Contact Lori Schwan to see how you can partner with the many events that will be happening before 2021 comes to a close.

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 AM on Zoom or on campus for ladies Bible study. We are studying [Louie Giglio's The Acts of the Apostles](#).

DivorceCare – New Edition 4.0

DivorceCare, for separated or divorced, meets Friday mornings 8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. through 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 Back

Join us Sunday morning in the cafeteria to study the book of Hebrews. If you cannot be there in person, you can now get Pastor's weekly outline on our webpage, and you can come on live via 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. Each group separately has activities and discussions. We are growing closer to each other and God. Having a variety of adult volunteers each week to assist Sue Clark with high school and Lori Schwan with middle school has been a blessing.

Car Wash

Thanks for supporting our youth through the Car Wash last month. These funds help our students be able to participate in a variety of activities and events.

Middle School Make a Difference Day / Defy Event

6-8th Graders: join us on Saturday, October 23rd for Make a Difference Day. We will start with serving by sprucing up the garden at Community Cooperative, having lunch, and then going to have some fun at Defy. We will also have youth from other churches join us. Meet at St. Michael at 8:30 a.m., and parents can pick up at Defy at 3:45 p.m. Cost is \$25 and includes grip socks for one hour of jumping and snacks. You can use your points to pay for it. You will need to sign up with your \$25 by October 20th. Waivers need to be signed by parents online before you can jump. We need parents to drive and participate. Contact Lori Schwan if interested.



Middle School Youth Gathering

Because of the uncertainty of the effects of Covid this upcoming November, the FL-GA district had to make the tough decision to cancel the Middle School Youth Gathering. The youth board is continuing to devise another event that we will do locally on Saturday, November 6.

Confirmation

We are meeting weekly for 7th and 8th grade confirmation on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:30. Parents are encouraged to join us. We have just wrapped up our review of the purpose of Confirmation, the validity of the Bible, and the Apostle's Creed. We will start moving into the Ten Commandments.

9th Grade Confirmand Retreat with Parents

Before the Rite of Confirmation on October 31st at the combined worship service at 10 AM, parents and freshman gathered at Southern Waters to review the foundations of our faith and receive your confirmation verses. Faith Statements will be due October 17th, and we will have one-on-one meetings before October 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. This is the month to make sure we are signed up in preparation to send our registration on November 1st. Want to know more? Check out these links or contact Sue Clark (239) 349-0395 or fmsclark13@gmail.com

[Why the Gathering](#)

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

Special Reformation Celebration

Each year, we like to celebrate Reformation in special way. We will still do that this year on Sunday, October 31st in a safe way. We will not have education classes this week, but instead, we will enjoy the following:



- We will have a combined worship service at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary that will include the Rite of Confirmation. We will still social distance and, if needed, overflow into the Anderson-Eichler building. Like all our services, we will have it live streamed for those who are more comfortable with an online viewing option. More details to come.
- Following the service, the Board of Fellowship will provide an opportunity for those who want to connect with each other to share a simple meal either eating outside or inside. If you want to help with this event, contact Chuck Oliver at Charliet1333@gmail.com or (239) 292-6058.

Visioning for the Future

In September, we had our first of seven monthly meetings with Pastor Jacob Hoyer, Certified Navigator in the vision planning processes. Our vision team, made up of congregational leaders and staff, met the first night to talk about several staff vacancies and how that can align with this process. The next day we began our process under the theme “Rethink.” This month we will be discussing what makes St. Michael unique using three questions:



Pastor Jacob Hoyer

- What are the unique needs and opportunities where God has placed us? (Place)
- What unique skills and capabilities does God bring together in us? (People)
- What particular focus most animates and energizes our leadership? (Passion)

Intermezzo Choir



The Intermezzo Choir of the Ft. Myers Symphonic Mastersingers is for singers with early to mid-stage memory loss and their care partners. The Intermezzo Choir will meet on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. September 29th - November 17th at St. Hilary’s Episcopal Church on McGregor Boulevard. The cost is \$40 per person. The choir includes social time with light refreshments, warm-ups, rehearsing familiar and signature standards, and jazz and pop song. Virtual participation via zoom will also be available. To register, go to www.mastersingers.com/intermezzo-choir.

St. Michael Choir



The SMLC Choir has resumed for the season! If you have a passion for singing praises to our Lord, please join us for practice Tuesday evenings from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Want more information? Contact Diane Rohrs at 239-339-7226.