

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

3595 Broadway  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 939-1218  
[www.smlcs.org](http://www.smlcs.org)

# The Messenger

*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Jon Zehnder*

## “In like a Lion, out like a Lamb”

It's interesting that we refer to the month of March this way, isn't it? It just naturally draws us to two wonderful pictures of our Savior Jesus. He's called the “**Lion** of the tribe of Judah” (Revelation 5:5) to signify His strength, and He is called the “**Lamb** of God” (John 1:29, Revelation 13:8) to signify His willingness to sacrifice Himself for our sake.

And so, our Lion and Lamb Jesus was willing to use His strength as God the Son to sacrifice Himself in order to cover the debt of our sins! What a Savior we have! This is what we remember during the season of Lent, which will begin on March 2 with Ash Wednesday. Lent is the Church Year's springtime – out of the cold and dark of sin's winter (think Northern winters) emerges people reborn in their Lord's Easter resurrection to live new lives.

Easter is the oldest Christian season. The observance of Lent appeared between 200-300 AD. Originally, Lent lasted 40 hours to remember the time Jesus lay in the tomb. Then, it was extended to 40 days to remember Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Since Sundays are always little celebrations of Easter, Sundays were never days you would fast (which is why Lent runs six weeks.)

Lent calls us to take time out of our busy schedules to pause and to ponder Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf (because it was for our sins that He suffered and died.) It gives us the opportunity to look back on the impact of our Baptism as we live our lives every day. Paul reminds us of this in Romans 6:4, “We were therefore buried with Jesus through baptism into death in order that, just as He was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

Pastor Jon

*From our Principal**Kati Miser*

In this church season that we call “Lent,” we focus on the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross for our salvation. However, joyfully, this somber season is followed by His victorious resurrection on Easter Sunday! **Our mission at SMLS is to educate children and to touch families’ lives with the awesome love of Jesus Christ** shown by His death and resurrection! Here’s a challenge for each of us: place a cross (even one that you make out of paper) where you and your family can see it every day. Each day, thank our Savior Jesus for something your family has because of His amazing love. Write it on a sticky note, and attach it to the cross. By the end of the 40 days of Lent, that cross should be pretty well-covered.



Did you know that each of our SMLS families commits to 20 hours of volunteering each year to help with school functions? Have you heard that our biggest fundraiser – the **Bid for Kids Auction** – takes place this year on Saturday, April 2? There have been an average of 250 guests in past years who have helped raise over \$65,000 to benefit our children. You do not have to be a school family to volunteer or even to come to the auction. Tickets are available at the school office. Watch for updates about those events. Plus, check out our SMLS Facebook page where Saint Michael families share their stories about the impact our school has had on their family.

**Applications for the 2022-23 school year are now open.** Click the “admissions” tab at the top of our website. Give me a call if you want to invite a friend, neighbor or family member to experience Saint Michael Lutheran School.

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

In February, Little Saints “ones” and “twos” planted our vegetable gardens. We began to learn about growing plants from seeds and how to care for the things we grow. We hope to share pictures with the congregation as we watch the gardens grow.

Also in February, our two-year-olds learned all about our community helpers and the important jobs of those who serve us every day. This was concluded with a visit from one of our local pediatric dentists’ offices. The dentist taught us about caring for our teeth so they grow healthy and strong.



In March we look forward to a study on our family heritage, the diversity of our friends and how our families come from all over the world. We will work with the children as they pin locations on the world map to show where their grandparents are from. We will learn how children in other countries dress differently, go to different schools and eat different foods. Then, we wrap the week up with a delicious array of homemade foods from all over the world when each family brings in one of their favorite traditional foods.

*Visioning for the Future*

We did not meet as a whole group in February but worked in individual committees to be able to summarize our work on strategies and measures we will use to know if we are meeting our mission with the values we share. These will then be presented to an eighth of the congregation at our second “Wet Cement” meeting at the beginning of March. We will piggyback that with our last vision meeting with Pastor Jacob Hoyer, Certified Navigator in the vision planning processes.

*Pastor Jacob Hoyer*

## *From the Ministry Coordinator*

*Lori Schwan*

### **Children's Ministry**

#### **Simply Loved Sunday School**

In March both Pre-K 3 to Kindergarten and first to fourth grades will study Israel entering the Promised Land. Contact Lori Schwan if you are interested in volunteering with the kids or behind the scenes.

#### **Fifth and Sixth Grade Sunday School Class**

Our preteen kids in fifth and sixth grade have heard the Bible stories, but their minds have developed to ask those harder questions. This 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.



#### **Mother-Daughter Retreat for Fifth through Eighth Grades**

After a COVID hiatus, we are so excited to bring back our Mother-Daughter Retreat: God's Design for His Daughters. We will be having it at Riverside Retreat on Friday, March 18 at 4:00pm through Saturday, March 19 at 3:00pm. Cost is \$90 per person. Watch your mailbox for your invitation. Space is limited. We will have a mother pre-meeting Sunday, March 13 during Sunday School from 9:15 to 10:30am in Mrs. Nara's classroom (room #50).

#### **Youth DCE Call Committee Update**

During February, the Youth DCE Call Committee met to discuss names that they had gathered of possible Directors of Christian Education from the Synod's database. Initial Zoom interviews began. Thanks for continuing to keep this process in prayer as we discern from the Holy Spirit whom God has in mind to serve and lead our congregation in this next phase.

#### **Thrivent Financial Members**

If you own a Thrivent Financial Product, you can give \$250 two times without giving any of your money. Contact Lori Schwan 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 2021 up until March 31, 2022.**



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

Join us Sunday morning in the cafeteria to study "Living A New Life - What Do I Believe and Why It Matters." If you cannot be there in person, Zoom is also available. [Join Zoom Meeting](#) ID: 305 113 7001 Passcode: church

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

Join Lori Schwan on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30am on Zoom or on campus in the ELC board room for ladies' Bible study. We will finish up Derwin Gray's study of the Book of Hebrews on RightNow Media and then begin Matt Chandler's study of Psalm 119 (also on RightNow Media).

#### **GriefShare**

It hurts to lose someone. GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. It's not too late to join us on **Saturdays from 10:00am to 12:00pm** in Pastor's conference room. Register at: [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org). Questions? Contact Susan Gaertner (586) 243-9335 or [gaertner.susanmark@gmail.com](mailto:gaertner.susanmark@gmail.com).

#### **DivorceCare**

DivorceCare is meeting on Tuesday mornings at 8:15am to 10:00am through March 29, 2022. Anyone separated or divorced can join any session. This group is online and in person. Register at [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org). Have questions? Call Lori Schwan (239) 939-1218, extension 237.

## *Saint Michael Youth Ministries*

# *Saint Michael Youth Ministries*

### **Wednesday Youth Nights - Oasis Came**

With Lent starting March 2, we will be sharing in the Wednesday night worship in unique ways. At the final Lenten service on March 30, the youth will lead worship. We will still have some fun as well with dinner, games and small group discussions on the Word.

### **National Youth Gathering**

If you missed the chance to register with the other 27 kids and 6 adults, it's not too late! Contact Lori Schwan. On Wednesday, March 9, we want all National Youth Gathering participants to join us from 6:00-8:00pm. Our next payment of \$400 is due on March 16.

### **High School Living Faith**

The high school youth group is taking the opportunity on the first Sunday of every month to live out our faith, bringing the Scriptures to life. The youth enjoyed some fellowship time around a bonfire and some s'mores. Watch the bulletin and emails for information about this month's activity, and use the Google form to sign up.

### **High School Sunday School**

The High School Sunday School class is now studying the book of Judges. They meet Sunday mornings from 9:15 to 10:30am in the Youth Room.

### **Seventh and Eighth Grade Confirmation with Parents**

In March we will talk about the Office of the Keys. Parents are encouraged to be a part of these classes as they apply to our lives. Please bring Small Catechisms every week.

### **Youth Thank You**

The youth want to thank the congregation for all the support you gave through the \$600 bake sale and the Edison Parade (about \$1200 profit). This helps the youth with all their activities including the National Youth Gathering and the Middle School Summer Servant Event at Camp Luther Springs.

### **Wall O' Money**

Our congregation is so generous in support of all the youth activities we do. February 19 through March 13, we will have our Wall O' Money fundraiser available in the narthex of the church. We will have 200 envelopes from \$1 through \$200. If you would like to donate toward our youth activities like the National Youth Gathering or the Middle School Summer Servant Event, simply select an envelope, place that dollar amount in the envelope and return to church. If you are worshipping electronically and want to donate, contact Lori so we can assist you in that process.

### **Middle School Summer Servant Event at Camp Luther Springs**



Our beloved Middle School Summer Servant Event is back! Those going into sixth through ninth grades are welcome to join other youth from around the Florida-Georgia District for a week of camp fun as well as serving in the community around Gainesville. Parent drivers will leave Sunday, June 19 in the late morning, and parent drivers will return to pick them up on Friday, June 24 around noon. Total cost for camp and transportation is \$450 if registered by March 15 (price goes up after that). Payments can be made with a deposit of \$150 to hold your spot. Points can be used to help pay for this event. Watch for more details.



## *Concordia University Ann Arbor Choir and Band*

Concordia University Ann Arbor Choir and Band will be performing in worship at St. Michael Lutheran Church during our midweek Lenten service on Wednesday, March 16 at 6:30pm. We will have a light fellowship meal beforehand at 5:30pm. All are welcome to attend!

## *Thrivent: March 2022 Events*

Anyone who is interested can attend Thrivent's free virtual events for March 2022:

### Savvy Tax Strategies

Online webinar presented by Mike Fuehrmeyer

Discover how to create an efficient retirement tax strategy.

**Tuesday, March 15 (8:30am, 12:00pm, 7:00pm)**

**Wednesday, March 16 (8:30am, 12:00pm, 7:00pm)**

RSVP <http://bit.ly/ThriventSavvyTax>

### Women and Social Security: What You Need to Know

Online webinar presented by Mary Beth Franklin

Learn about the role of Social Security in a woman's financial strategy.

**Tuesday, March 22 (7:30pm)**

**Thursday, March 24 (12:30pm, 7:30pm)**

RSVP <https://thrivent.me/WomenSS>

**thrivent**<sup>®</sup>



## *Board of Human Care*

### Thank You

The Board of Human Care would like to thank everyone for their generous donations in January to the cause of tornado relief. Because of your commitment to helping others, you raised over \$9,000.00. With an additional \$1,000.00 contributed by the Board of Human care, we were able to send \$10,000.00 to the Mid-South District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for tornado relief.

The clothing drive was also a success. We collected over 200 warm item that were delivered weekly. The Board of Human Care and Salvation Army would like to thank you again for your generosity!

### Easter Food Baskets

During March and April, the Board of Human Care will be accepting monetary donations for our Easter Food Basket Project. Each holiday gives us the opportunity to serve between 50 and 70 local families and agencies in our area.

No amount is too small. Donations can be mailed to the church or placed in the offering plates at the church exits. Please enclose checks or cash in an envelope marked "Board of Human Care" so it can be directed to the Easter Food Basket Project.

## *Taste of the Dominican Republic Luncheon*



The Mission Board will be hosting its Taste of the Dominican Republic Luncheon on Sunday, March 27 immediately following the 10:45am service. As this is a fundraising event, donations will be accepted for the support of our mission in the Dominican Republic. Stay tuned for more information.

## *Lent and Holy Week Schedule*

We hope you can fellowship with us during this upcoming Lenten season.



### **Wednesday, March 2nd - Ash Wednesday**

Service times at Noon and 6:30 p.m.  
with a light fellowship meal at 5:30 p.m.

### **Wednesday, March 9th**

Service will be recorded and posted online only.

### **Wednesday, March 16th**

Service at 6:30 p.m. led by the Concordia Choir  
with a light fellowship meal at 5:30 p.m.

### **Wednesday, March 23rd**

Service will be recorded and posted online only.

### **Wednesday, March 30th**

Service at 6:30 p.m.  
with a light fellowship meal at 5:30 p.m.  
The youth group will be assisting in this service.

### **Wednesday, April 6th**

Service will be recorded and posted online only.

### **Palm Sunday Services**

Saturday, April 9th at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 10th at 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Lunch and Easter Egg Hunt  
immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service.

### **Maundy Thursday**

Thursday, April 14th at Noon and 6:30 p.m.

### **Good Friday**

Friday, April 15th at Noon and 6:30 p.m.

### **Easter Services**

Saturday, April 16th at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 17th at 8:00 a.m.,

9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

## *Saint Michael Foundation*



I am sure you've seen this logo thousands of times and wondered, "What do those three stylized individuals, standing on an open book with the cross in the center, mean?" Well, the book is the Bible which is centered on the message of the Good News that God was in Jesus reconciling the world to Himself by laying our sins on Him so we could receive His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:19-21). The three individuals represent our church, our school and our foundation.

Our foundation was created to ensure that the ministries and missions that the Lord has challenged us to do would remain strong and effective into the future and that new opportunities could be pursued and funded. Through board-established policy, funds are professionally managed using short-term, long-term, and endowment strategies that support the work of the church, the school and missions.

From generation to generation, we pass the blessings we have received forward as God works through our gifts and works through us to touch hearts for eternity and to change lives in our congregation, our school, our community and around the world. As of the end of December, our Foundation stood at \$1,624,166. Please prayerfully consider how you might be a blessing to those who will follow us. Feel free to check out information on our website ([smlcftmyers.com/saint-michael-foundation/](http://smlcftmyers.com/saint-michael-foundation/)), or call Bob Jablonski (Saint Michael Chief Financial Officer) at (239) 939-1218 or Michael Roach (Investment Manager) at (239) 275-9233.