

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



Pastor Jon Zehnder



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

The Messenger

From the Pastor

Rev. Jon Zehnder

"I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God." (Psalm 40:1-3a)

Who knew that David went through a flood and then had to clean up afterwards?! As we continue to process this storm that we went through (and what it left in its wake), please remember that your crisis emotions and reactions are normal responses to abnormal circumstances. So first, continue working through them; don't deny them or ignore them or rehearse them, but "Pour out your heart to God, for He is our refuge." (Psalm 62:8)

Second, be willing to receive from others. (You know the joy you receive when you help. So, don't deny someone else that blessing.) Third, don't allow the Evil One to drive you into bitterness. As we move forward, may God grant us all the ability to focus on what's left and not on what was lost. And, here's the last point: rely on our Savior, Jesus. In His grace to us, our God has set our feet on Jesus; He is our solid ground, and He can deliver us and sustain us no matter where we are or what we're going through. He is our Hope!

Did you notice that, after David describes the storm he went through, he acknowledges that it was God who lifted him; it was God who set his feet on a firm place to stand, and then there's this: "He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God."

That verse reminds of me Habakkuk 3:17-19a where the prophet says, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will be joyful in God, my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength."

We have the opportunity to join David and the prophet Habakkuk in singing a new song, a hymn of praise and thanks to our God, as we celebrate our **National Day of Thanksgiving on November 23 and 24**, Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m. and Thursday at 10:00 a.m.



Pastor Jon

From Our Principal

Kati Miser



To say that the past month has been challenging would be an understatement. School families, staff and church families have experienced so much loss from Hurricane Ian. Despite the destruction, our families know that God is BIGGER than the storm. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity and care we have seen during the post-storm clean-up and startup of school. Not only is our own community coming together to meet the needs, but our Lutheran churches and schools across the country are also stepping up to help. The PTL chose to move forward with (rather than



canceling) the “Fall into Fun” festival on campus despite the ongoing storm recovery. Not only that, but they made the event bigger than ever, FREE and open to the public, handing out food, supplies and even Halloween costumes for children who may have lost theirs in the storm. This family of faith has come together to keep the mission of the school alive through these dark times: *educating children and touching families’ lives with the love of Jesus Christ!* Thank you for keeping our school ministry in your prayers.

From the Director of Little Saints

Stacie Thompson

October was a little scary for the families of Little Saints, but we are so blessed that every one of our families survived the storm. Many of our families have property damage as so many in the community do, but, thankfully, everyone is safe. In the midst of all the craziness, we did manage to learn about the fall and enjoyed two fun fall events this year. Thank you to Curtis Volkmann for sending us a big box of fall leaves from Minnesota! The kids loved getting to see and touch actual fall leaves.

During the week of November 7-11, we will hold our eighth annual pet food drive. The holidays are a difficult time of year for the animal shelters; people are focused on holiday shopping and the shelter donations drop. Please join us in giving when the need is so crucial. We are collecting dog food, cat food, treats, pet toys, bleach, old towels, cat beds and leashes. All donations are going to ARC (Animal Refuge Center) in North Fort Myers. Please drop off your donations in the drop box in the church narthex starting Sunday, October 30. Thank you!



Visioning for the Future

Over several months, leaders of Saint Michael gathered to help us understand “Who We Uniquely Are.” It’s what we need to understand before we fill our staff ministry leadership positions. We were able to build a framework for both short-range and long-range planning that will take place as congregational leaders, volunteers and members explore that in more detail with the new ministry leadership staff.

We looked at one side of that framework which is “Our Mission,” the guiding compass of our Church. It answers the question, “What are we ultimately supposed to be doing?” in order to set our overall ministry and mission direction. Here is that statement: “Reaching across boundaries to cultivate peace in Christ from generation to generation.”

Two months ago, we explored the first part of that statement, “**reaching across boundaries**,” recognizing that we live in a world afflicted by separations and divisions and have been called by our Savior to reach across those chasms because each and every person matters to our God. Last month, we looked at the phrase, “**to cultivate peace in Christ**,” knowing that there are many wonderful ways we can understand and experience God’s blessings of peace every day of our lives. Even in the midst of trouble, trial and storm, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is with us, and He can sustain us and keep us in that peace.

The final piece of “Our Mission” is, “**from generation to generation**.” This phrase applies both vertically and horizontally. Vertically, we pass wisdom, knowledge and the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus intergenerationally but also horizontally through time. The people of Saint Michael have been reaching out for decades, and, God willing, we will continue to do so for many decades to come. We want to help equip anyone willing, regardless of their spiritual or physical age, to join in our mission of reaching out toward others.



Pastor Jacob Hoyer

From the Ministry Coordinator

Lori Schwan

Children's Ministry

(see page 4)

Reformation Celebration

Thank you to all who helped with the Reformation combined worship and meal. It was a blessing to so many and a great way to connect with our St. Michael family.



Thrivent Financial Sponsors Needed NOW!

We usually do more than half of our action teams during the holiday season (over 50). We are in need now of people who want to sponsor teams. Please contact Lori Schwan if you are interested in sponsoring a Thrivent Action Teams education event, fundraiser or service project.



Women's Bible Study

Join us on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30am on Zoom or on campus in the ELC boardroom for ladies Bible study. We are starting a new study: Kyle Idleman's *One at a Time*.

GriefShare

GriefShare is meeting on Sundays from 1:00-3:00pm through November 20, 2022 in Pastor Jon's conference room. Anyone can join any session. Find out more at www.griefshare.org. If you have any questions, please call Gail Schultz at (732) 991-0642.



GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays



Are you wondering how you will survive the weeks surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas? Are you dreading these holidays knowing that everything has changed and that happy memories from years past can't be recreated? Our Surviving the Holidays seminar on Sunday, November 6 from 1:00-3:00pm will provide support for people who are grieving a loved one's death. It will cover how to deal with the many emotions you'll face during the holidays, what to do

about traditions and other coming changes, helpful tips for surviving social events and how to discover hope for your future. You can register at www.griefshare.org.

DivorceCare

DivorceCare is meeting on Tuesdays from 11:00am-1:00pm through November 15, 2022. Anyone who is separated or divorced can join any session. This group is online and in-person. Register at www.divorcecare.org. If you have any questions, please call Lori Schwan at (239) 939-1218, ext. 237.



DivorceCare: Surviving the Holidays

After separation or divorce, your Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays won't look the same as they used to. Traditions change. Some family members won't be there. Social gatherings can be stressful, but DivorceCare: Surviving the Holidays can help. This special, one-time DivorceCare class will meet Tuesday, November 1 from 11:00am-1:00pm. This group will be online and in-person. Register at www.divorcecare.org.

Pastor Jon's Sunday Bible Class

Join us Sunday morning in the cafeteria to study the book of Revelation. If you cannot be there in person, Zoom is also available. [Join Zoom Meeting](#) ID: 305 113 7001 Passcode: church

Advent Event for Families of All Ages

The board of parish education invites you to our annual Advent wreath making breakfast on Sunday, November 27 from 9:15-10:30am. In addition to making wreaths for your household, some will make wreaths for those who are homebound and deliver them along with Advent devotions. Feel free to recycle your Styrofoam wreath from last year.



Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Fifth and Sixth Grade Sunday School

Our preteen kids in the fifth and sixth grades will ask Jim Grier and Tiffany Roszell their difficult 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.

Wednesday Youth Nights

We've been making the most of these last few weeks of light before daylight saving time ends to play some fun games outside. Then, we will move on to games that are best played outside in the dark. Thank you to the many adults who volunteer weekly to make these fun nights possible. If you would like to sign up to host or sponsor a dinner, please contact Lori. See what is planned for youth nights in November below.

- November 2—Slip 'n' slide kickball on the soccer field
- November 9—Challenge course and Veterans Day appreciation
- November 16—Chick-fil-a Thanksgiving feast (bring a side dish or dessert to share)
- November 23—No youth night (Thanksgiving Eve service at 6:30pm in sanctuary)

Middle School District Youth Gathering

Please pray for our eight middle school youth and three adults attending the LCMS FL-GA District middle school youth gathering at Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center in Leesburg, FL on November 4-6.



Seventh and Eighth Grade Confirmation with Parents

After finishing our Martin Luther unit, we are studying the Apostles' Creed. We encourage parents to attend with their teens. Any seventh and eighth grade students are welcome to join us. This class meets upstairs in the education building (look for printed signs).

High School Sunday School

Join us in the youth room as our journey of walking through the Old Testament continues in 1 Kings.

Stay Connected

If you are not receiving e-mails or text messages about youth activities, please contact Lori so that you can be added to our contact lists.

Children's Ministry

Sunday School Nursery

We have volunteers who are serving in the nursery during Sunday School to show the love of Jesus to infants under two years so parents can strengthen their faith during this important education time.

"Simply Loved" Sunday School

Last month, we learned about following Jesus, and, this month, our focus for Pre-K 3 through fourth grades will be on the prophets and how they were preparing people for a savior. If you would like to help the children's ministry in multiple possible ways, please contact Lori.

Operation Christmas Child

Help share God's love with kids through Operation Christmas Child. Pastors in other countries invite kids who are affected by war, poverty, natural disaster, famine or disease to know Jesus by giving them a box filled with gifts and the message of Jesus. On November 13, bring your small items (no candy or food, toothpaste, used items, toy guns/knives/military figures, liquids or lotions). Some of our older kids will sort and pack them on November 20. We have shoe boxes already this year. If you would like to contribute money, the cost to ship each box is \$9.00.



Director of Worship and Music

Ben Ball

Saint Michael has hired Ben Ball as our new Director of Music and Worship. Ben is currently serving as the Director of Traditional Music and Worship and organist at New Hope Presbyterian Church here in Fort Myers, a position he has held since 2015. Prior to coming to Fort Myers in 2015, he served at churches in Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. He earned a Master of Music degree in church music (with a dual major emphasis in organ performance and choral conducting) from the Conservatory of Music at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia and a Bachelor of Arts degree in church music (with a dual major emphasis in organ and voice performance and a minor emphasis in piano performance) from Bridgewater College in Bridgewater, Virginia. While at Shenandoah Conservatory, he also studied opera and composition and was the recipient of the Cooksey-Parker Excellence in Organ award for graduate level students. He has recorded two CDs on the Allen Organ (pipe-digital combination organ) at New Hope: *Hymns of Triumph* and *He Is Born*. He is active as a composer and arranger of new hymns and choir anthems along with his wife, Katie, who serves as one of the music teachers here at SMLS. Ben and Katie have two young children, Elly and Vivie, and are looking forward to getting to know the Saint Michael family!



The Stardust Memories Big Band



You are invited to experience a season of great music performed by some of Southwest Florida's finest jazz musicians! The Stardust Memories Big Band is returning for their ninth season performing outdoor evening concerts in Cambier Park (755 8th Ave. S, Naples, FL 34102) and Riverside Park (10451 Old 41 Rd., Bonita Springs, FL 34135). All shows are from 7:00-9:00pm and are free to attend with a \$5 per person suggested contribution.

Shows are December 12-13, January 23-24, February 6-7, February 20-21, March 6-7 and March 20-21. For more information about individual concert events, you can view the full schedule at <http://www.stardustmemoriesbigband.com/shows.php>. The Stardust Memories Big Band is led by Craig Christman.

From the Board of Elders



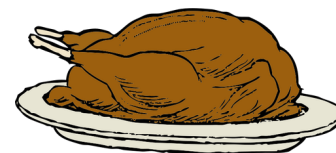
The Pastoral Transition Committee has approached the process of evaluating candidates utilizing the report produced by the Vision Framing Committee under the guidance of Pastor Jacob Hoyer. The output was produced during ten meetings over a twelve-month period. The committee included a diverse composition of a dozen members of the congregation and staff. This process was validated with additional congregation members at three "wet cement" meetings whose purpose was to affirm the direction of the process and conclusions reached. Taking these recommendations, the Pastoral Transition Committee has evaluated over three dozen candidates, approximately 30% of whom are congregational nominations. The committee has completed a number of interviews and is in the process of scheduling more. The skills, values and congregational mission priorities identified by the vision framing process continue to be applied during the interview process with candidates in order to narrow the number down to a list of three to five candidates who we will invite to St. Michael for a campus visit. After the congregation has met with these pastors, members will participate in the final decision by voting for the next Senior Pastor.

The board of elders will continue to provide detailed updates on a regular basis as they prayerfully seek God's guidance throughout this process. Please contact Kelly Zinn if you have any questions at kellyzinn65@gmail.com.

From the Board of Human Care

Thanksgiving Meals

The Board of Human Care will again be assisting local families with their Thanksgiving meals. We usually help around 50 families, but the number may be more with those additional families in need after Hurricane Ian. If you would like to assist in this effort, please designate your check or envelope (if giving cash) to “Board of Human Care, Thanksgiving.”



Valerie's House

Thank you for your support for Valerie's House during the Month of October. SMLCS families and friends continue to be such a blessing to others in need!

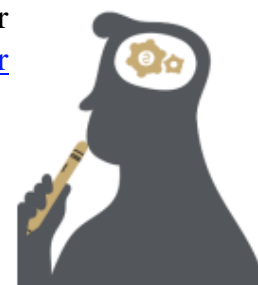
Thrivent: November 2022 Events

Anyone who is interested can attend Thrivent's free virtual events for November 2022. Learn more about the events and RSVP at <https://www.thrivent.com/member-network/southeast/events>.

The Easiest Way to Win College Scholarships—Starting in 8th Grade

November 8, 2022 (12:00-1:00pm; 7:00-8:00pm)

Jeannie Burlowski is a nationally recognized college planning speaker. She is an academic strategist, podcast host, speaker for students ages 10-26 and their parents and grandparents. She is also the author of the book *LAUNCH: How to Get Your Kids through College Debt-Free and into Jobs They Love Afterward*.



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Opportunities to Serve

Church Cleaning

The church housekeeping team is looking for additional members! We have a small team keeping God's house in order. If you are interested in joining the team, please call Lisa Ciarlo at (407) 864-7436.

Ushers and Communion Assistants

We need volunteers as we have returned to the rail for Communion. Interested in becoming an usher or Communion assistant? Please contact Lee Berchtold at (239) 872-8999.



Sound Booth

We are in need of volunteers at all three service times who would be interested in serving in one of a few roles in the sound booth during worship. If enough people become volunteers, then they will be able to rotate weeks in the booth. Different roles are available from clicking through the slides to operating the sound board and camera for the livestream. No prior experience is needed; we can set up training with someone more experienced to help you get started. Please contact Laurel Volberding if you are interested in serving in this way at (239) 470-8026 or ronlaurelv@earthlink.net.

Altar Guild

The altar guild is in need of assistance at all three services. Altar guild is a wonderful way to serve at St. Michael behind the scenes and to make new friends! Please call Deb Helton at (239) 560-5830 for more information.

