

Volume 15, Issue 4
April 2024

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the following month's newsletter. Send to: shea.flynn@gsmles.org



Pastor Dave Bass



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

The Messenger

From the Pastor

Rev. Dave Bass

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia! With this joyful proclamation, the holy Christian church continues to share and live out this enduring truth. Here at St. Michael, we are no different. As winter gives way to spring, we know that change is in the air. Change is in the air within our congregation as well as our vision planning with Jacob Hoyer reaches the final phase. While we've covered much ground as the vision team and have a clear, long-range dream now, we begin the journey of putting all the pieces into place to make the long-range dream a reality.

To guide our understanding on where the Lord is leading us, I will be sharing a sermon series this month entitled *Redeeming Rest – Practicing Sabbath*. As the Lord of all creation rested on the seventh day from all that He created and as He rested in the tomb having completed the work of our salvation on the cross, so we as a congregation will rediscover what it means to live in Sabbath rest as God's people.

While this might appear to be counterproductive as a congregation, I can assure you that the fruit that will be borne forth from this plan will result in rested and refreshed lay volunteers in our ministries and a clear vision and mission plan as we continue "Reaching across boundaries to cultivate peace in Christ from generation to generation." More information will be made available in upcoming worship services, our newsletter and online! The Lord continues to lead us as His people, and we continue to trust Him. It is my hope and prayer that you are doing the same.

Pastor Dave



*From the Principal**Kati Miser*

He's alive! Jesus is alive! We just celebrated Easter, the resurrection of our Savior. That statement is so exciting to us as Christians! This awesome event brings us the assurance of the forgiveness of our sins and of eternal life. What amazing love of our heavenly Father is demonstrated in the life, death and resurrection of His only Son, Jesus! At St. Michael Lutheran School, **our mission is to educate children and touch families' lives with that amazing love of Jesus Christ.** A vital part of that mission is providing parents with a strong Christian support network in a home-school partnership. The closer that we are drawn to the cross and Christ's resurrection, the more transformed our lives become and the more we influence those around us. So, how are you sharing that Good News with your family, neighbors and friends?



By the time you read this, our annual **SMLS Auction** will be history until next year. We praise God for all the leaders and volunteers who put so much energy and work into this huge, successful event. So, now it's on to the next major PTL-sponsored event that children of all ages, parents, extended families and our friends in the community enjoy: **Fishin' with a Mission** on Friday through Saturday, May 10-12. Keep an eye out for details on how you can be involved.

Please share your stories about the impact St. Michael has had on your family. Post SMLS reviews on Facebook, Instagram and other websites to help prospective families learn about St. Michael. Thank you for all your personal referrals of St. Michael to families, friends and acquaintances.

We are accepting new online applications for 2024-25 on our website. Just click the "admissions" tab at the top of the page! Give me a call if you want to invite a friend, neighbor or family member to experience St. Michael Lutheran School firsthand.

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

In March, Little Saints celebrated our **family heritage** with a week of learning about the states and countries our children and families are from. Families were encouraged to send in special ethnic dishes and treats on Friday as we ended the week with special dress, games and music from all over the world. Keep an eye out for pictures of heritage week activities to be shown in the announcement slides before Sunday services.



Little Saints will be closed March 28 and 29 in observance of the **Easter** holiday. Before our long weekend, all of Little Saints will be celebrating Easter with the traditional egg hunts and celebrations. Easter is always a favorite holiday of the little ones; finding brightly colored eggs filled with treats is so exciting!

From the Ministry Coordinator

Lori Schwan

GriefShare

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences, the loss of someone close. GriefShare's current session is meeting on Saturdays from 9:00-11:00am through April 13 in Pastor Dave's conference room. You may join any session. Please register at GriefShare.org. If you have any questions, please contact Gail Schultz at gail1370@aol.com.



DivorceCare

DivorceCare is currently meeting on Tuesdays from 11:00am-1:00pm through April 9, 2024. Anyone who is separated or divorced can join any session. This group is available online and in-person. You can register at www.divorcecare.org. If you have any questions, please call Lori Schwan at (239) 939-1218, ext. 237.

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 for a fundraiser, service project or an educational Thrivent Action Team.

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Sunday Marriage Enrichment

Anyone is welcome to join any Sunday morning at the boat table in the St. Michael office for the marriage study *The Art of Marriage* on RightNow Media.

Sunday Adult Bible Class

Join us Sunday morning in the cafeteria to study *One Christ, Many Creeds*, a look at various denominations in the Christian church. If you can't be there in person, a Zoom option is also available. Join Zoom meeting ID 305 113 7001 with password "church".



Sunday Women's Bible Study

This women's Bible study, *Praying the Names of God*, will focus on a specific name of God each week and how they can use it as a focus of prayer. Priscilla Flynn looks forward to welcoming you on Sunday mornings in Pastor Dave's conference room.

Wednesday Women's Bible Study

This women's group meets on Wednesdays at 10:30-11:30am in the Early Learning Center boardroom as they study the book *His Last Words* by Kim Erickson.

Thursday Women's Bible Study

This group meets on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30am in the Early Learning Center boardroom and on Zoom. They are beginning a study of Ecclesiastes that can be found on RightNow Media.

Saturday Men's Bible Study

This group meets on Saturdays from 9:00-10:30am at the boat table in the St. Michael office. They are currently studying the book of Ephesians.

Photos for Our Online Directory

Thank you to Sam Johnson for taking household pictures for our online directory! We will be uploading all of those pictures into our directory and then emailing out invitations to the password-protected directory. If you didn't get your photo taken, you can email a picture that you would like used to lori.schwan@gsmc.org. You can go to tinyurl.com/SMLCPortraits and enter the password *church* to preview your pictures and purchase them at a special rate for St. Michael families. If you have any questions, you can email studiosam08@gmail.com.



Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Saint Michael Youth Ministries

Seventh and Eighth Grade Confirmation with Parents

Seventh and eighth grade students and their parents will study Baptism in April during Sunday school (9:15-10:30am) in room 48 of the education building (Mrs. Weaver's room).

High School Sunday School

Join us in the youth room as our journey of walking through the Old Testament continues in Esther. Check out this incredible story of living out faith told without mentioning God.

Wednesday Youth Nights

Each Wednesday, middle and high school students grow in their faith with dinner, games and small group devotions. We are returning to meeting from 6:00-8:00pm now that Lent has ended. If you would like to volunteer or to sponsor a meal, please contact Lori Schwan. Electronic donations can be made in the youth designation at secure.myvanco.com/L-Z8M7/home. Simply type "Wednesday Dinner" in the provided text box. Contact Lori Schwan if you have any questions.

Compassion International Scholarship

Thank you to everyone who is living generously by sponsoring a child in a developing country through Compassion International. Our youth group sponsors Renata, a 15-year-old girl who lives in Indonesia. In addition to bringing in cash to help pay for her \$43 monthly scholarship, you can now make electronic donations in the youth designation at secure.myvanco.com/L-Z8M7/home. Type "Compassion" in the text box provided.

Middle School Summer Servant Event

Our beloved middle school summer servant event at Camp Luther Springs is back! Students entering sixth through ninth grades are invited to join other youth from around the FL-GA District for a week of camp fun as well as serving in the community around Gainesville. We have 9 students and 1 adult registered. If we exceed 11 youth attending, we will need an additional adult to help chaperone. We will depart from St. Michael on Sunday, June 23 in the late morning and will begin our trip home on Friday, June 28 around 1:00pm, arriving at St. Michael in the early evening. The cost for camp before transportation is factored in is \$585. We will share the cost for transportation as we get closer to the event. Fill out the Google form at tinyurl.com/LutherSprings24 to let us know if you might be interested in this event. Once you know that you will be going, please send in a check for \$175 as a non-refundable deposit to reserve your spot on the trip. Payments and points can be used to help pay for this event. Scholarships are also available.



Car Wash

The middle and high school youth will be holding a free car wash from 7:30am-12:00pm on Sunday, April 14. Youth should attend worship on Saturday at 5:30pm or virtually at livestream.com/smlcs so they can participate in the car wash on Sunday morning. We will need help from parents in order to park cars. Youth and their parents should keep an eye out for an email where they can sign up. This is a great opportunity to gain points to help pay for youth activities (especially the middle school summer servant event at Camp Luther Springs).

Stay Connected

If you are not receiving emails or text messages about youth activities, please reach out to Lori Schwan so she can add you to her communication lists.

From the Director of Worship & Music

Ben Ball

*In the silence of the Savior, I find His strength; I find His grace.
As they mocked Him, tried and beat Him, still His silence echoed through.*

*In the silence of the Savior, I feel His power; I feel His care.
Even when the nails did pierce Him, kept His silence firmly still.*

*In His silence, we are given life; in His silence, we are free.
Cost the life of Christ, our Savior, paid for us on Calvary.*

*In the silence of the Savior, I see His pain; I see His love.
Hung atop a splintered cross of wood, through His silence I am healed.*

*In the silence of the Father, the whole world groans; the whole world cries.
As the Son lay dead, entombed in stone, there His mercy forms my life.*

*In His silence, we are given life; in His silence, we are free.
Cost the life of Christ, our Savior, paid for us on Calvary.*

—text by Katie Ball, 2020

He is risen! He is risen indeed!

So many folks jump from the glad shouts of “Hosanna!” on Palm Sunday to the triumphant statements of “He is risen!” on Easter Sunday. So often, the in-between—Holy Week—the shouts of “Crucify Him!” and all the pain and suffering are forgotten or become merely a passing mention. But in that suffering, in that total darkness and in that silence are where our sins are forgiven and where our new life begins. Katie penned the lyrics above back on Good Friday of 2020. It focuses on the phrase “in the silence.” This silence goes two ways: Jesus knew what would happen and allowed it to happen without opposition, without fighting back but simply in silence, and the Father did the same from heaven. Either one could have called upon legions of angels for rescue, but both remained completely in silence. On this side of the cross, I pray we never forget this silence. My hope is that we will live each day as Easter people with the joy of Christ’s resurrection and triumph over death always on our hearts and on our lips as people who belong to Christ alone!

Blessings,
Ben Ball

Palm Sunday

Thank you to everyone who helped make Palm Sunday such an incredible celebration!



From the Director of Children & Family Ministries

Katy Bass

Sunday School (Nursery through Sixth Grade)

- Children two years old and younger are cared for in the sanctuary nursery by a consistent team of volunteers to allow parents and older siblings to attend Sunday school or Bible studies.
- Kids three years old through fourth grade will be learning all about Jesus and what he teaches us through his parables.
- Kids in fifth and sixth grade are learning answers to questions that they have.

Please contact Katy Bass if you are interested in volunteering with the kids or helping out behind the scenes.

Worship Packs for Kids

Don't forget to pick up a worship bag for your child as they enter the church. Each bag contains activities related to the sermon and children's message, stickers, a craft and a snack. The plastic bags are yours to keep, but we ask that you return the pencil pouch to the designated basket.

Donations Needed

Children's ministry is in need of cake mix (chocolate, vanilla or confetti), frosting (chocolate or vanilla), packs of birthday candles, hand lotion, hand sanitizer and fuzzy socks. They are needed by April 14, and there is a bin in the church narthex in which to drop off supplies. If you have any questions, please see Katy Bass.



Service Project

On Sunday, April 21, our pre-k through sixth grade Sunday school classes will be working on two service projects. We will be putting together birthday boxes for local food pantries as well as care kits for people being treated for cancer. All children are invited to join us at 9:30am on April 21 to help. Donations of supplies are being accepted.

Small Group Census

We are in the process of compiling an accurate listing of all of the small groups at St. Michael! If you are the leader of a small group, please email Katy Bass (katy.bass@gsmlcs.org) to let her know the name of the group, when and where the group meets, the theme or topic of the Bible study, whether you are open to new members and any other notable information. Thank you for your help in connecting all of our church's small groups!

From the Board of Human Care

Sixth Grade Community Service

This month, our sixth graders are going to be serving others in our community during their spring break. Each year, our sixth graders are given nonprofit organizations to serve. In previous years, they have given their time to Community Cooperative, Salvation Army, LARC, ECHO, Oasis Youth Shelter to name a few. The board of human care is asking for your help to pay for the transportation that will be used to safely get our sixth graders to and from their service projects. We are so happy to see our children using their spring break to serve our community! Pray for them as they learn a new way to love other through Christ by sharing their energy, smiles and love of God through their presence and service. If you would like to help with their transportation needs, please put your gift in an envelope marked transportation (or write it on your check memo).

Minds in Motion

Are you interested in helping with a hands-on service project in Fort Myers? We have an opportunity to serve children with special needs during a Lee County "Minds in Motion" event on Saturday, April 20 from 10:00am to 1:00pm. Sue Hansen from the board of human care applied for a Thrivent Action Team for a face painting station. If you are interested in helping, please contact Sue at (847) 987-0150, or email her at suehansen103@gmail.com. We will be using stencils. So, you do not need to have any special art skills in order to help.