

Volume 16, Issue 8  
August 2025

Deadline for submissions  
is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the  
following month's newsletter.

Send to:  
shea.flynn@gsmlcs.org



Pastor Dave Bass



**Weekend Regular Worship**

Sat: 5:30 pm Blended  
Sun: 8:00 am Traditional  
10:45 am Modern

3595 Broadway  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 939-1218  
www.smlcs.org

# The Messenger

*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Dave Bass*

In 2021, our congregation began an intentional visioning process that would set the stage for the senior pastor transition that would take place in September 2023. Working with Pastor Jacob Hoyer from Clarity Navigator, we set forth with a bold yet achievable six-year vision plan which we kicked off last September. The congregational mission statement which came forth as part of the vision planning is that as members of St. Michael we are ***“Reaching across boundaries to cultivate peace in Christ from generation to generation.”*** The vision team, working with congregational leadership, was challenged to bring that vision to life in the ministries of St. Michael. They determined that this mission statement should be fulfilled through *institutional renovation* in step with *spiritual formation*.

In good Lutheran form, you might be asking, “What does this mean?” With the Lord’s guidance, our congregation will seek to:

- Strengthen our staff and facilities.
- Continue aligning our ministries with our mission.
- Develop rhythms of accountability in governance, leadership and financial stewardship.
- Help each other grow in faith and practice of our faith.

While you might not see these goals being fulfilled in the week-to-week worship life of our congregation, the servant leaders and called leaders of our congregation have been addressing how to achieve these goals in the life and ministries of St. Michael.

Our desire to strengthen our staff is a prayer that has been answered with the addition of Pastor Roy Peterson and Sam Morganstern who are already making a difference in their respective ministries. Working with the elders and church council, the called staff have been working on realigning our ministries with our mission. You can read more about that in the annual report.

As we continue fulfilling the goals of our vision plan in strengthening our facilities, the board of stewardship has been hard at work setting the groundwork for a campus master plan to address our facility needs which will be funded

through a capital campaign in 2027 while also addressing our current debt. We want to ensure that the buildings the Lord has blessed us with will allow us to meet our needs for future growth and the ability to live out our mission statement.

I invite you to join us on Sunday, August 24 after the late service to hear more about this part of fulfilling our vision plan. More information will be shared in upcoming worship services. The Lord has blessed our church and school so faithfully in the past. I trust He will continue to do so as we follow His will for us.

Blessed to be with you in the journey,  
Pastor Dave Bass

*Pastor Dave*

*From the Principal**Dan Maser*

Hello, Saints! I'm excited to join the team here at St. Michael, and I look forward to meeting everyone and serving as the new principal. As we quickly approach the new school year and begin this exciting journey together, we embrace this year's theme, **"Lead On, Good Shepherd,"** drawn from John 10:27 where Jesus says, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."* Just as a shepherd leads with love, care and purpose, we look forward to following Christ's example in all we do, whether in the classroom, on the court, stage, playground or even

in the hallway. Whether you're returning to St. Michael or joining the St. Michael family (like me), know that this year will be filled with opportunities to grow in faith, wisdom and community under the gentle and faithful leadership of our Good Shepherd.

At St. Michael, our mission is more than academics—it is **educating students and touching families' lives with the love of Jesus Christ.** This year, we renew our commitment to nurturing not only minds but also souls. Through prayer, service and joyful learning, we will walk closely with Jesus and one another. May this school year be one of unity, discovery and deep spiritual growth as we follow the path He has set before us. Together, let us listen for His voice, trust in His direction and boldly go where He leads. Welcome back (or welcome to) St. Michael—let's journey forward in faith!

*From the Director of Little Saints**Nikki Howley*

We are gearing up for another great year at Little Saints! Little Saints is welcoming 20 new families to our school this August. We are excited to introduce them to our St. Michael family! We have a great group of **teachers and assistants** at Little Saints once again this year. Our team consists of:

- Nikki Howley (director)
- Carol Flores (older two-year-olds)
- Na'Kaiya Pickett (older two-year-olds)
- Kiary Monroy (younger two-year-olds)
- Clara Eacholes (one-year-olds)
- Tiffany Coyne (transitional one-year-olds)
- Ashley Negron (infants)



With God's help, this group of amazing ladies and support staff are going to make it an amazing school year!

Little Saints is holding its annual **Pirate Pasta Dinner** for Little Saints families on Saturday, September 27 from 5:00-7:00pm. This is a great opportunity for the families to bond while kids have fun playing games. Save the date!

*From the Director of Children & Family Ministries**Katy Bass***Wiggles Welcome: Grab a Worship Pack!**

Wiggles happen—we get it! That's why we've created worship packs for kids to help little hearts and hands stay engaged during worship. Each bag is filled with goodies like sermon-themed activities, stickers, a fun craft or fidget toy and even a snack to keep stomach grumbles at bay. Grab one at the sanctuary entrance before the service starts! The plastic bags are yours to keep, but please drop the pencil pouch back in the basket when you're done so we can refill it for next week. Worship together, wiggles and all; we're glad you're here!

**Backpack Blessings**

Students of all ages are invited to bring their backpacks to 9:30am worship on Sunday, August 10 for a special backpack blessing! During the service, we'll pray over the students and their backpacks, asking God to guide and protect them throughout the school year. Each student will receive a special backpack tag as a reminder that their church family is praying for them and cheering them on every step of the way. It's a meaningful way to start the school year with faith, encouragement and community!

*From the Director of Youth Ministry**Sam Morganstern***A Brief Farwell... For Now**

As summer draws to a close, I can't help but reflect on what an incredible season it's been in youth ministry. Over the past few months, our youth have shared meals, played games, dug into God's Word, served joyfully at VBS, spent a week growing in faith at Luther Springs and experienced the unforgettable LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans. It's been a summer full of connection, laughter, growth and God's abundant grace, and I feel incredibly blessed to have been a part of it.



While I'm deeply grateful for all that this summer has held, it's also a little bittersweet as I prepare to head back to Concordia University Irvine for the fall semester in order to complete my degree on August 12. I am so thankful for the bonus three months that I got to spend with all of you here at SMLC. Your love, encouragement and Christ-like hospitality made me feel truly welcomed and appreciated. The light of Jesus shines so brightly through this congregation!

The good news is that it's not goodbye for long as I will be back in January to officially begin my internship! Until then, I'll be praying for each of you. May your fall be filled with God's peace, purpose and presence.

I will continue to write these monthly newsletters while I am wrapping up my degree so that I can stay in contact from California! However, be on the lookout for updates related to middle school ministry from Ms. Chloe Brock as well as high school updates from Ms. Janet Oliver.

With gratitude and excitement,  
Sam Morganstern

**High School Ministry**

The high school ministry has had an incredible summer! Thank you to everyone who attended, served and participated in the various activities over the past few months. It's been a joy to grow together in faith and fellowship.

As we look ahead, be on the lookout for the upcoming fall schedule. It will be released soon! During my absence this fall semester, Janet Oliver will be facilitating the high school youth group. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to either myself or Katy Bass.

**Middle School Ministry**

The middle school ministry was an absolute blast this summer! I would like to thank everyone who attended, served and participated in the various activities. We had a fantastic time growing in faith and fun together.

Be sure to keep an eye out for the fall schedule which will be released soon! During my absence this fall semester, Chloe Brock will be facilitating the middle school youth group. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to either myself or Katy Bass.





## From the Director of Worship & Music

Ben Ball

Summer is quickly cruising to its conclusion! It seems as if the last day of school was only yesterday, and now we are about to begin again. We would love to have you join us in the music ministry! And, conveniently, we have many ways you can do that each week!



- **Sanctuary choir** meets on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30pm September through May and sings at one service each weekend (alternating between 8:00am and 10:45am). Reading music is helpful but is not required, and we offer training as we go.
- **Handbell choir** meets on Tuesday nights from 6:00-6:45pm September through May and rings in worship once every four to six weeks. Reading music is helpful for this ensemble, but it is not required. Please see me directly if you are interested in handbells as spaces are limited.
- **Worship team** rehearses before 10:45am worship on Sunday mornings and plays throughout the year.
- **Tech ministry** – Do you like to push buttons? Then, we have a seat for you! Our tech ministry is the structural backbone of the music and worship ministry. We need volunteers who can advance slides, run our live broadcast and other things as your abilities allow.
- **“Share the Music” scholarship program** – Your contributions to this special account allow us to bless the lives of select middle school students with weekly private music lessons from professional instructors in our community. This not only enhances our school’s music program but blesses us in worship and gives the kids an opportunity to get comfortable playing solo in front of a supportive church family. If you feel called to support this wonderful music support ministry, please make any contributions designated for “Acct. #9105 Private Music Lesson Fund.” Thank you for all your support!
- **Prayer ministry** – If you are one of those people who says you just cannot sing, that’s okay. But, you *can* pray! Please make an effort to regularly lift our worship and music ministry in prayer. Pray that what we do would be Christ-centered and God-honoring.

Please continue to reach out to me at any time using my church email address, [ben.ball@gsmlcs.org](mailto:ben.ball@gsmlcs.org).

Blessings,  
Ben Ball  
Director of worship and music

## Fishin’ with a Mission

St. Michael Lutheran School PTL’s annual Fishin’ with a Mission event is back on September 12 to 14, 2025 at South Seas Resort on Captiva Island. This event brings together school families and anglers for a weekend of fishing, beach time and fellowship. You won’t want to miss it! Registration links are below. Click on the link for the per-event pricing. If you have any questions, please email [fishinwithamission1@gmail.com](mailto:fishinwithamission1@gmail.com).



- Inshore registration: <https://smlcs.ejoinme.org/inshoreangler>
- Offshore registration: <https://smlcs.ejoinme.org/offshoreangler>
- Rock the Dock: <https://smlcs.ejoinme.org/rockthedock>
- Luau: <https://smlcs.ejoinme.org/luau>
- Awards dinner: <https://smlcs.ejoinme.org/awardsdinner>
- Room request options include **1 bedroom beach and bayside** and **2 bedroom tennis and beach**. Email your room request to [fishinwithamissionrooms@gmail.com](mailto:fishinwithamissionrooms@gmail.com)

***From the Director of Assimilation and Senior Adult Ministries******Lori Schwan*****Baseball Game**

Part of assimilation is connecting people together. That can happen in a formal way such as a small group Bible study or an informal way by sharing a game together. This month, we have an opportunity for all generations to watch the Fort Myers Mighty Mussels take on the Tampa Tarpons on Thursday, August 21 at Hammond Stadium. Gates open at 6:00pm, and the first pitch is at 7:05pm. Tickets are only \$18 each, and \$5 of every ticket sold will be donated to Lutheran Services of Florida and the amazing work they do in our area. Tickets can be purchased at [gofevo.com/event/LutheranServicesFL25](https://gofevo.com/event/LutheranServicesFL25).

**Lee County Little Community Band Concert**

On Tuesday, August 5 at 2:00pm, any senior is invited to attend the free Lee County Little Community Band concert at Lakes Regional Library on Bass Rd. and Gladiolus. If you would like to enjoy lunch together at Starr's before the concert, RSVP to either Lori Schwan ((239) 292-6544; [lori.schwan@gsmllcs.org](mailto:lori.schwan@gsmllcs.org)) or Liz Solovieff ((919) 724-9378). The seniors will meet at Starr's (at the corner of Gladiolus and Winkler) at 11:30am, enjoy a lunch together and then drive a few blocks to the concert.

**2W Club Activities**

In July, eleven people enjoyed learning to play Mexican train. In August, we will be having Ben Ball come in to demonstrate the new "Orgelkids Kit," an instrument designed to be built and rebuilt by kids so that they learn the inner mechanics of the instrument. We will meet on Saturday, August 16 at 1:00pm in the cafeteria. Anyone who has lost a spouse is welcome to attend. One does not need to be a member of the church to join the group. If you have any questions, please contact Gail Schultz.

**Name Tags**

In August, we will submit another order for name tags. If you would like one, please let me know or fill out the form at <https://forms.gle/DpgeWx2TpU8bjGHA>.

**Thursday Women's Bible Study**

The women's Bible study has decided to keep meeting over the summer with members facilitating Lysa TerKuerst's Bible study, *I Want to Trust You, but I Don't*. It will explore areas where we want to trust others, ourselves or even God, but we don't. Join the group on Thursdays from 9:30-11:00am on Zoom (Meeting ID: 305 113 7001 Passcode: church) or on campus in the ELC boardroom.

**DivorceCare**

Most churches who host DivorceCare groups only hold fall and winter sessions, often leaving five months without support during a stressful time. This summer, St. Michael has had participants in its hybrid group of Zoom and in-person attendees from around the country with new people joining every week. At the time of this newsletter, we have had 18 new people register. Thank you for lifting up this ministry for those separated or divorced. We meet on Tuesdays through August 26 from 11:00am-1:00pm. Join any session online or in-person in the Early Learning Center's boardroom. Go to [DivorceCare.org](https://DivorceCare.org) to register or sign up for daily email devotions. If you have any questions, please call Lori Schwan at (239) 939-1218, ext. 237.

