

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

Send to:  
shea.flynn@gsmcls.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

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Fort Myers, FL 33901  
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# The Messenger




*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Dave Bass*

**A St. Michael Snapshot**

If I were to ask everyone who is connected to the St. Michael family to send me a snapshot of our campus, I suspect the photos would be as varied and unique as the individuals who captured each moment. Each photo in reality would represent only part of the greater whole that is St. Michael.

On Pentecost Sunday, we shared the mission and vision for our congregation which will guide us over the next six years: “Fanning the flame of God’s peace to sustain mission for the next generation.” This is the big picture of where ministry is headed for our congregation. The steps we are taking to achieve this goal are defined as institutional renovation in step with spiritual formation. This begins with our board of elders, church council and church staff working together to guide the St. Michael family as together we

gather for Sacraments  , join in community  and serve the world .

Some of our institutional renovations have already begun taking place where we gather for Sacraments. As I approach the one-year anniversary of serving as your pastor, here is a snapshot of some of the ways that we have begun fulfilling our vision strategy, focusing on institutional renovation.

New chalices and a new flagon have been purchased as part of our Communion ware. We have a new paschal and Christ candle which is being used for the appropriate seasons of the church year along with specific use for Baptisms and funerals. New candles have been purchased for the altar and the candlesticks behind the altar. An additional octave of handbells has been added to our current set which will greatly enhance our handbell choir. The new pipe organ is on its way and will soon be helping lead us in worship to our Lord.

Sound system improvements have taken place in the sanctuary with new ceiling speakers, new microphones and an updated hearing assistance system being installed. The livestream for our online worshippers has been updated, and new TV monitors have been added in the choir loft and at the back of the sanctuary. The nursery for our little worshippers has been renovated, and our narthex and chapel are in the process of being reorganized. The banner closet has been reorganized as well.

There will be many more snapshot moments in St. Michael’s future, but from this quick recap it’s clear to see the beginning steps of this amazing journey that the Lord has invited us to be a part of together!

Next month, we will be sharing more about how we as St. Michael will be intentionally joining in community as we invite you to connect with five people in our congregation whom you will come to become better acquainted with over the next year. I am excited to see how the big picture of our vision will continue to be revealed in and through each of you. I trust that there will be many snapshot moments that you will be part of as this exciting journey continues to unfold in helping us “reach across boundaries to cultivate peace in Christ from generation to generation.” To God be the glory!

*Pastor Dave*

*From the Principal**Kati Miser*

St. Michael Lutheran School continues to experience God's grace and the support of His people. Thank you! Now another exciting time lies just ahead as the new school year opens on Wednesday, August 14. This year's theme is "Endure" which is based on Hebrews 12:1-3. **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with**

**perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."** Just imagine what life at Saint Michael would be like if students, staff and parents would "fix their eyes on Jesus!" It's like the popular question from the 1990s, "What Would Jesus Do?"

Your continued prayers are requested on behalf of our ministry to children and families during the 2024-25 school year. **At St. Michael Lutheran School, our mission is to educate children and touch families' lives with the awesome love of our Lord, Jesus Christ!** There is still time to give me a call if you want to invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to experience St. Michael Lutheran School in the upcoming school year.

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

We are gearing up for another great year! Little Saints is welcoming **17 new students** to our school this August. We are excited to welcome them to our St. Michael family! We have a great group of **teachers and assistants** at Little Saints again this year. Our team consists of:

- Nikki Howley, director
- Stacie Thompson, office and admissions manager
- Megan Oharriz, older two-year-olds
- Carol Flores, older two-year-olds
- Franciel Diaz, younger two-year-olds
- Clara Eacholes, one-year-olds
- Tiffany Coyne, transitional one-year-olds
- Ashley Negrón, infants

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

Little Saints is holding our annual **Pirate Pasta Dinner** for our families on Saturday, September 28 from 5:00 to 7:00pm. This is a great opportunity for the families of Little Saints to bond while the kids have fun playing games. Save the date!



## *From the Ministry Coordinator*

*Lori Schwan*

### **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.



### **Lysa TerKeurst and Natalie Grant “Trust Again Tour”**

You can buy tickets for speaker Lysa TerKeurst and singer Natalie Grant’s “Trust Again Tour” on Thursday, October 24 at First Assembly of God. There are various types of tickets available from VIP with a question and answer session beforehand, early seating or general admission. Seats aren’t reserved. So, St. Michael members can purchase tickets through the following link: <https://www.ticketweb.com/event/the-trust-again-tour-with-first-assembly-of-god-tickets/13717473>.

### **GriefShare: Loss of a Spouse Seminar**

Do you dread the lonely days and nights? Do you wonder what to do with your spouse’s belongings? Do you feel like your brain is in a fog? Are you unsure of how you’ll go on? At the Loss of a Spouse seminar, you’ll discover that other people understand, why it hurts so much, reasons for hope and practical tips for coping. This one session will be offered on Saturday, September 7 from 9:00-11:00am in Pastor Dave’s conference room. Please register at [www.griefshare.com](http://www.griefshare.com). Daily email devotions are also available from the same website. If you have any questions, please call Gail Schultz at (732) 991-0642.



### **GriefShare**

A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grieving the death of a loved one: a spouse, parent, child, friend, sibling, coworker or other relative. Through this 13-week group, you’ll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what is normal in grief. St. Michael’s GriefShare will be held on Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00am from September 14 through December 14 in Pastor Dave’s conference room. Anyone who has lost a loved one can join any session. Please register at [www.griefshare.com](http://www.griefshare.com). Daily email devotions are also available from the same website. If you have any questions, please call Gail Schultz at (732) 991-0642.

### **DivorceCare**

A new DivorceCare group will meet for 13 weeks on Tuesdays from 11:00am to 1:00pm from September 3 through December 17. Anyone who is separated or divorced can join any session. The group meets virtually and in-person in the early learning center boardroom. Please register at [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org). Daily email devotions are also available from the same website. If you have any questions, please call Lori Schwan at (239) 939-1218, ext. 237.

## *From the Board of Human Care*

During the month of August, the board of human care will be collecting school supply items for Eva’s Closet. Any and all items will be appreciated including backpacks, pencils, colored pencils, pens, crayons, markers, loose leaf paper, construction paper, spiral notebooks, binders, scissors, glue sticks and school glue. We will have a collection box in the narthex. Thank you for helping local children in need get ready for school! For more information about Eva’s Closet, visit [www.evas-foundation.org](http://www.evas-foundation.org).



*St. Michael Youth Ministries****St. Michael Youth Ministries*****LCMS Youth Gathering 2025**

Students currently in seventh through eleventh grades are invited to the LCMS Youth Gathering taking place in New Orleans. We will be gone July 18-24, 2025. It's time for each family to pick the fundraiser that they would like to help facilitate. If you need more information about fundraising ideas or the gathering itself, please check your email for the link or contact [lori.schwan@gsmlcs.org](mailto:lori.schwan@gsmlcs.org).

**Service at St. Michael**

Can you lend a hand on Sunday, August 4 from 9:15 to 10:30am between services? We need to remove all of the furniture from the classrooms being used for summer programs so they can be cleaned the next day. Youth are encouraged to join anyone from the congregation or school who would like to help with our institutional renovation. Points and service hours can be earned through this opportunity.

**Mandatory Meeting for Acolytes and Parents**

Currently serving acolytes and youth interested in serving are invited to join us alongside their parents for this mandatory meeting on Sunday, August 25 from 9:30 to 10:30am in the sanctuary. Anyone in grades four through 12 are welcome. If you are unable to attend this meeting, you will need to contact Lori Schwan.

**Wednesday Youth Nights**

Starting on August 14, we will resume our weekly Wednesday middle and high school dinners, activities, devotions and small group discussions from 6:00 to 8:00pm. We ask for each family to sponsor a dinner during the year either through making, purchasing or funding the meal. We will send out a Google form each week for youth to sign up so that we have an estimated attendance number for planning our meal.

**Parents and 6th-12th Grade Kick-Off**

We would like all parents of 6th to 12th grade students to join us on Wednesday, August 28 from 6:00 to 8:00pm to hear about the youth program for this year. This will include the following:

- 2024-25 youth calendar
- Youth Sunday school
- New modular confirmation
- Wednesday night youth group for middle and high school
- Ninth grade confirmation preparation
- FL-GA District Middle School Youth Gathering
- FL-GA District High School Leadership Event
- LCMS Youth Gathering
- Camp Luther Springs/FL-GA District Middle School Servant Event
- Fundraisers throughout the year
- Point system explanation to fund activities and trips
- Service projects for the year
- Ways for families to become involved directly or behind the scenes

**Rally Day**

Youth are invited to join us Sunday, September 8 for our Rally Day breakfast and annual vision kick-off. Regular Sunday classes will begin the following week (September 15).

**Stay Connected**

If you are not getting emails or text messages about youth activities, please reach out to Lori so you can be added to these lists.



## From the Director of Worship & Music

Ben Ball

It is hard to believe, but summer is almost over! The one great thing about the summer months is that I get to relax just a bit without everything going on around campus. However, I don't sit around well, so it is my main planning and preparation time for the year ahead. All the music for the sanctuary and handbell choirs has been planned and is awaiting that first rehearsal. **You are invited to join our ranks!** If you are interested in joining any of our ensembles (sanctuary choir, handbell choir or the worship team), please contact me directly so we can get you plugged in. Our **rehearsals begin on Tuesday, September 3.** The handbell choir rehearses on Tuesday evenings from 6:00-6:45pm, sanctuary choir from 7:00-8:30pm, and the worship team on Sunday mornings between worship services. For handbells, reading some music is encouraged but not required, and space is limited, so please contact me immediately if you want to ring.



### Choir Cantata

On Wednesday, December 18, the choir will present a cantata as the Wednesday evening Advent service. This is our "Blue Christmas" service, nearest to the shortest and darkest day of the entire year. Composer Joseph Martin has written a wonderful work called *The Longest Night* as a winter service of hope and healing. It contains some tunes and text you will recognize (and others will be brand new to you), but all of it is very meaningful. One interesting thing for this night is that our new organ will be showcased as the orchestra behind the choir with its ability to provide various musical colors to support our vocalists. Soloists, readers and congregation participation are all included in this special service, and I encourage you to mark your calendars and invite friends to attend!

### Share the Music Scholarship

Your contributions to this special account enabled us to bless the lives of six of our middle school students last academic year with regular weekly lessons with professional instructors. This not only enhances our school's music program but blesses us in worship and gives the kids such a great learning opportunity to get comfortable playing solo in front of a supportive church family. As we embark on a new and exciting academic year, we need to replenish funding for the year. 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!

### Mark Your Calendars

There will be several more dates to add this fall, but two very important dates to plan to attend are:

- **Sunday, November 10, 2024 at 3:00pm** – On Martin Luther's birthday, we will be holding a festival of Reformation hymns led by organ, choir, soloists, readers and brass quartet.
- **Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 3:00pm** – The official dedication concert of the new organ

Blessings,  
Ben Ball



2023-24 Share the Music Scholarship students

## *From the Director of Children & Family Ministries*

*Katy Bass*

### **Sunday School in a Box**

The August boxes for each family are in the narthex. Each week has a fun experiment to do as a family to help connect the message of each parable. Families can talk more about the parables of the week and then work together to cook a simple meal. There will also be packets for our families with preteens and teens.

### **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.

### **Worship Pack Snack Donations**

We are in need of some snacks for our children's worship packs. We need individually-packaged snacks such as Goldfish, Nilla Wafers, Teddy Grahams, pretzels, Cheez-Its, veggie straws, granola bars and animal crackers. Please avoid any snacks that contain nuts. Any snack donations can be left in the collection bin in the narthex.



### **Church Nursery Update**

The nursery is coming together nicely! Thank you to everyone who has donated to help with toys, diapers and more. There are a few more things to do in the room, but it should be completed very soon.

### **Sunday School Teachers and Substitutes**

We are currently making plans for our Sunday school for infants through fifth grade for when we resume this fall. Over the years, we have had incredible teachers to help teach our youngest people about Jesus, but we could use a few more hands to help make it happen! If you are interested in leading a group of children this coming year, please let Katy Bass ([katy.bass@gsmllcs.org](mailto:katy.bass@gsmllcs.org)) know. There will be an informational meeting in August for those who are interested.

### **Backpack Blessings**

All students are invited to join us for a special backpack blessing on Sunday, August 11 at both worship services. Bring your backpack, and join us during the children's message for a special time of prayer as everyone begins the new school year. Each student will also receive a special gift to remind them every day that they are a child of God! St. Michael's teachers will be commissioned for the year at 10:45am worship.



### **"Find Your Five" Vision Rollout**

Join us on Sunday, September 8 at 9:15am in the gym as we roll out the next step in our vision for St. Michael! We are excited to announce that "Find Your Five" will be the focus of the upcoming year here at St. Michael. This initiative aims to foster deeper connections and a stronger sense of community among our members. To introduce this concept and explain what it will mean for our community, we invite you to this special event where breakfast will be served and there will be engaging activities for the whole family. We look forward to embarking on this journey together with you.

### **Sunday Morning Fellowship**

Please join us for a time of fellowship in the cafeteria from 9:30 to 10:30am. Coffee and refreshments will be served. Take some time to get to know someone new or catch up with old friends. Volunteers are needed to make coffee and bring refreshments (e.g. pastries or donuts). Please contact Laurel Volberding if you would like to help at (239) 470-8026.