

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

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

I look forward to seeing you at one of our weekly worship services, in one of our classes or maybe even among friends as we share a meal together!

May God bless you and keep you always in His care!

Pastor Dave

*Pastor Dave*

# The Messenger

*From the Pastor*

*Rev. Dave Bass*

**Back to School!**

The month of September has always held a connection for me of returning to school. Growing up in Chicago, the school year would begin immediately after Labor Day, and it would end around the middle of June.

Here at St. Michael, our school year began on August 14. What a joy it was to welcome all our students back to campus! While our students were on summer break, our campus remained active in other ways. St. Michael was blessed with upgrades to our internet capabilities on both the school and the church side of our campus. New carpeting was installed in the office center. We held a campus clean-up day which resulted in spaces being cleaned and organized along with upgrades to the furniture in the youth room. The church nursery was updated, and our narthex and chapel have undergone some updates as well. While some projects are still ongoing (the completion of the playground and the complete resurfacing of our parking lot), we have had a successful summer! We also continued laying out ministry plans for our confirmation, Sunday school and adult education opportunities for our congregation. It's hard to believe that the summer days have quickly turned into the days of fall.

As our students have now returned to campus, we as a congregation will also be returning to class! Please check your weekly bulletin and emails for information on the Christian education opportunities being made available to you.

Our congregational fall rally day is on Sunday, September 8. In between our worship services that Sunday, we will be sharing the next step in our six-year vision plan!

*Find Your Five* is an intentional initiative to make new and meaningful connections to others in our church family. We know that meaningful friendships take time to cultivate, and we know from Jesus Himself that cultivation usually happens around meal fellowship. As part of the *Find Your Five* initiative, our fall sermon series is entitled *Meals with Jesus*. This series will help us understand how church can be the place where our interpersonal relationships can become lifelong friendships!



*From the Principal**Kati Miser*

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..." After being in session now for almost a month, our master teacher, Jesus, has already been helping us keep our eyes fixed on Him through His servants in this place. It's the relationships developed here

between students, staff and parents that will encourage us to focus on Jesus and grow in our faith.

We have two September events to take note of:

- On **September 13**, which is **Constitution and Citizenship Day**, our middle school choir will be singing the national anthem at the U.S. Courthouse in downtown Fort Myers, and our fifth grade students will be reciting the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution.
- This is the school year in which we are renewing our **accreditation** with the National Lutheran School Association and COGNIA. We will be sharing information with you in September about surveys that will allow you to participate in that process.

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 us 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 welcomed all of our little ones back on August 14; what a day of excitement and wonder as we enter into **another year at Little Saints!** Please watch for photos from our first days in church on Sundays.

It's going to be another busy year. Most of our classrooms are completely full for another school year. If you know of **anyone looking** for an early childhood education for their little ones, please advise them to reach out early as we are consistently staying one year out on openings at Little Saints.



Little Saints is gearing up for another **Pirate Pasta Dinner**. This year, the dinner will be held on Saturday, September 29, from 5:00 to 7:00pm in the gym. This event is the one fundraiser Little Saints holds every year. It gives our families an opportunity to build relationships within a safe environment and gives the kiddos a chance to play games and win prizes. Grandparents and family friends are welcome to join in on the fun!

*From the Accreditation Facilitator**Judy Scharpenberg*

*St. Michael Lutheran School and Little Saints Early Learning Center are committed to continuously improving the quality of our school... the application of the SMLS mission statement, the faculty and staff, our educational facility, curriculum, classroom instruction and atmosphere... and its impact on our community.*

The process is called **accreditation** with an extensive review this year by the **National Lutheran School Association**. Accreditation gets renewed every five years. This is one of those years, and it culminates with a visit by a NLSA review team in April 2025. The results of this review will also give us a dual accreditation with the nationally-known educational institution called COGNIA. However, we need your help to give these...

*(continues on page 5)*

## *From the Ministry Coordinator*

*Lori Schwan*

### **Thrivent Financial Members**

We are gearing up for a fall full of fundraisers and special events. Contact Lori Schwan to see how you can partner with a fundraiser, service project or educational Thrivent Action Team to get \$250 as seed money to go toward the project.

### **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 14 from 9:00-11:00am in Pastor Dave's conference room. Please register at [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org). 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 21 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.org](http://www.griefshare.org). 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.



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

Join us on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30am on Zoom on campus in the ELC boardroom for a women's Bible study led by Lori Schwan. We will be starting a new study on September 5.

### **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 our special Rally Day 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. Please let us know if you are planning to attend by calling the church office or using your phone to scan the QR code on this page.



## *St. Michael Youth Ministries*

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### LCMS Youth Gathering 2025

Students in grades eight through twelve are invited to the LCMS Youth Gathering taking place in New Orleans on July 18-24, 2025. Youth registration deposits of \$150 and adult applications are due on Wednesday, September 11. We will be meeting with all participants every month to build community leading up to the event.

### Service Opportunities

Sign up to help with gym setup on Friday, September 6 from 3:00 to 4:30pm or teardown on Sunday, September 8 from 10:30am to noon. Youth are invited to join us for Rally Day on Sunday, September 8 for the breakfast and annual vision kickoff. Points and service hours can be earned.

### Car Wash

All youth attending activities this year like LCMS youth gatherings will be looking for sponsors for our car wash on Saturday, September 21 from 10:00am to 1:00pm at Edison National Bank. You can pledge a specific amount per car or a flat donation. Then, we need everyone to bring their car to the free car wash so we can wash as many as possible!

### Wednesday Youth Nights

Join middle school and high school youth on Wednesday evenings for 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.

### Youth Ministry Weekend

The LCMS FL-GA District is sponsoring a Middle School Youth Gathering and a High School Leadership Event at Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center in Leesburg, FL on November 3-5. A \$50 deposit of the \$255 registration cost is due by Wednesday, September 11. The final payment is due October 23. See Lori for details and the required paperwork. Students can use their points to offset the cost. There are also scholarship available if needed. Any adults who are interested in going as chaperones should contact Lori.



### Becoming a Confirmed Member of St. Michael

This summer, we evaluated both our youth and adult programs to become confirmed members of St. Michael and made some changes. Pastor Dave is looking forward to being a part of the programs for both adults and youth!

- **Foundations of Faith**—Adults who wonder what Lutheran Christians believe, want a refresher on Lutheran doctrine or would like to become members of St. Michael can attend Sundays, September 15 through October 20 from 9:15 to 10:30am in the cafeteria.
- **Ninth Grade Confirmands**—Ninth graders who have completed their confirmation instruction will meet with Pastor Dave and Lori Schwan on Wednesday, September 11 from 6:00 to 8:00pm for a final review in preparation for the rite of confirmation at our combined 10:00am worship service on Sunday, October 27.
- **Youth Confirmation Modules**—We will be having seven learning modules on Sundays scattered throughout the year from 12:15 to 4:00pm with lunch provided. Students will also be given a project to work on at home for each module. Student in grades six through twelve will be able to complete these modules over one year or several. Students currently in eighth grade will only need to work through the modules that they didn't cover last year. We will have several LCMS-trained church workers who will be leading the classes. Parents will be asked to attend some of the modules. Students who have completed all seven modules along with a cumulative review will then be confirmed. The first of these modules (covering the **Apostles' Creed**) will be led by Pastor Dave on **Sunday, September 15** in the cafeteria.



## From the Director of Worship & Music

Ben Ball

*Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him.  
Let the Amen sound from His people again; gladly forever adore Him.*  
-text by Joachim Neander (1680)



The organ installation is now complete! It went off without a hitch... but with lots of sore muscles and a few headaches with the attic chamber where the speakers are located being five feet tall at its highest point and sloping down to three feet in some places. It clearly wasn't designed for someone of my size! Because of the preparation work we did prior to



the organ's actual arrival, we cut a two-and-a-half week installation down to four days! Everything went smoothly with the installation, and the organ spoke in our sanctuary for the first time on Thursday, August 1 and was blessed in all three of our worship services on August 3 and 4. I would like to give a huge thank you to everyone who made this installation possible. The new organ is an absolute delight to play! It can be delicately and intimately soft or thunderously loud, and everything in between. It integrates most of the previous pipe organ with tons of new digital additions which allow the organist a much greater palette of sound capabilities. I look forward to introducing you to its many tonal abilities in both worship and concerts.

### Mark Your Calendars

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

- **Sunday, November 10, 2024 at 3:00pm** – In addition to observing Martin Luther's birthday, we will be holding a festival of Reformation hymns led by organ, choir, soloists, readers and brass quartet. A special note of interest is that there will be a freewill offering collected to support the Share the Music Scholarship.
- **Friday, December 6, 2024 at 6:30pm** – *Sounds of the Season* Christmas concert
- **Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 3:00pm** – The official dedication concert of our new organ

Blessings,  
Ben Ball

## From the Accreditation Facilitator

Judy Scharpenberg

(continued from page 2)

...organizations a clear picture of our school and its relationship with our church. Please cooperate if you are able to when you are asked to take a brief survey by one of our accreditation team members during the month of September. The accreditation team members and the groups that they are responsible for are listed below.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • <u>Accreditation facilitator</u> —Judy Scharpenberg                               | • <u>Little Saints parents</u> —Jenna Thibadeau and Stephanie Russell        |
| • <u>School administration</u> —Kati Miser, Jennifer Pohlman, Shelly McGovern       | • <u>Little Saints staff</u> —Nikki Howley, Stacie Thompson and Carol Flores |
| • <u>Church staff</u> —Pastor Dave Bass and Ben Ball                                | • <u>School staff (preschool-grade 2)</u> —Vivian Tapanes and Katie Sanchez  |
| • <u>Administrators in ministry</u> —Lori Schwan and Katy Bass                      | • <u>School staff (grades 3-5)</u> —Karen Atkinson and Paulette Mueller      |
| • <u>Office staff</u> —Jeanie Free and Holly McCord                                 | • <u>School staff (grades 6-8)</u> —Betsy Courtney and Molly Eckes           |
| • <u>Special services</u> —Madeline Tipton, Stephanie Letourneau and Kirsten Weaver | • <u>School staff (special classes)</u> —Katie Ball and Amber Whitaker       |
| • <u>School board</u> —Stephanie Webb, Vicky Manietta and Ken Danielson             |  |
| • <u>Church council</u> —Kelly Zinn and Sue Clark                                   |  |
| • <u>Church members</u> —Dee Engel and Jill Johnson                                 |  |
| • <u>School parents/PTL</u> —Hillary Eng and Meg Minor                              |  |

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

*Katy Bass*

### **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.

### **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.

### **Sunday School and Adult Bible Study Begins**

Sunday, September 15 will be the first day for our Sunday school and adult Bible classes. Nursery will be provided in the church for children age two or younger. Sunday school classes for kids age three through those in eighth grade will take place in the school building. Ninth through twelfth grade students will be meeting in the youth room. We will have a variety of classes for adults which will be taking place in the Anderson-Eichler (gym) building: *Foundations of Faith* adult information class (Pastor Dave) in the cafeteria, *Inspired by the Holy Spirit* women's Bible study (Priscilla Flynn) in the staff dining room, *The Art of Marriage* (Lee and Julie Berchtold) in the music room and parenting Bible study (Joe and Katelyn Cochran) in the band room.



### **Sunday School Service Project Collection**

Our Sunday school kids will be doing a service project in October and will need some items. We are looking for donations of bath-size bars of soap, adult toothbrushes in original packaging, hair combs, metal nail clippers and lightweight bath towels. There will be a collection bin in the narthex for all of these items beginning the first week of September.

### **Rally Day Food Help**

Calling all cooks! We need help with breakfast casseroles for Rally Day on September 8. If you are willing to cook a casserole for Rally Day, please let Katy Bass know. If you need a recipe, let Katy know, and she can supply one.



### **Church Cookbook Committee**

As part of the *Find Your Five* vision rollout, we will be assembling a church cookbook. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please let Katy Bass know. Work will begin on this project in the coming weeks.

### **Moms Weekday Bible Study**

Beginning on Tuesday, September 10 at 8:00am, there will be a moms Bible study meeting in the narthex. Childcare will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Meg Shores at (478) 279-1812.

### **Men's Small Group**

Men's small group will begin on Tuesday, September 10. This group meets every Tuesday at 8:30am at Mike Roach's office at 6835 Porto Fino Circle Suite #2. Please note that the time is different than it has been in the past.

### **Men's Saturday Bible Study**

Men's Saturday Bible study will begin on Saturday, September 7. They will meet every Saturday from 9:00 to 10:30am. This group is led by Lee Berchtold, and they will be studying Ephesians.

