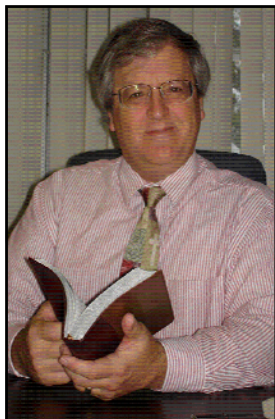


Pastor Jon Zehnder



Weekend Regular Worship

Saturday	5:30 PM	Informal
Sunday	8:00 AM	Traditional
	10:45 AM	Blended

Communion is offered the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month at 10:45 AM, and on the 2nd and 4th Sunday at 8:00 AM (and the Saturday before, at 5:30 PM).

9:15 AM Way Station Sunday School & Bible Classes/Classes for all ages, from 2 years old, to youth and adult.

Wednesday Illuminate Bible Studies

Dinner	5:30 PM	(\$6)
Studies	6:15-7:30 PM	
Middle & High School FOCUS	5:30-7:30 PM	

Don't forget to use the online calendar found on the first page of www.smlcs.org.



The Messenger

St. Michael Lutheran Church and School
3595 Broadway, Fort Myers, Florida 33901
239-939-4711 **www.smlcs.org**

Drawing people to God's love in Jesus, and empowering them to become fully devoted followers of Christ.

From The Pastor – Reverend Jon Zehnder

"And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Now all of this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Behold, the virgin shall be with Child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel', which translated means, 'God with us.'"

Matthew 1:21-23

"God with us"... that's what Christmas is all about! And He is with us still! No matter where you are, no matter what you're going through – there is no need to fear because Jesus says, "I am with you – always!"

That truth reminds me of an article I read that was written by a shepherdess. She wrote, "Whenever we sell a lamb to someone we always try to sell two. It's not because we want to sell more sheep, but rather we know sheep need companionship – sheep are miserable when they're alone."

In the Bible, God calls us His sheep. He knows we

do not like being alone, that's why He came along side us as Immanuel – "God with us". And that's why Jesus promised that He would never leave us or forsake us! So come and celebrate! We have a God who IS ALWAYS THERE, a God who is always with us – He is "Immanuel"!

HOLIDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

ADVENT Midweek:
Noon and 6:15 p.m.
Nov 30; Dec 7; Dec 14
(5:30 PM dinner \$6)

CHRISTMAS EVE,
Saturday Dec 24th
5:30 p.m.
Family Christmas Worship
(Way Station Kids leading)
7:30 p.m.
Candlelight & Carols
11:00 p.m.
Candlelight & Carols

CHRISTMAS DAY,
Sunday Dec 25th
10:00 a.m.

Christmas celebration
(only one worship service on
Christmas Day)

NEW YEAR'S EVE,
Saturday Dec 31st
5:30 p.m.

New Year's Eve Worship with
Communion

NEW YEAR'S DAY,
Sunday, Jan 1st

- 8:00 a.m. Worship
- 9:30 a.m. Bible Classes and Sunday School
- 10:45 a.m. Worship with Communion

Advent

"Advent" (which means "coming") is the time of year that we celebrate the anticipation of Jesus coming again and we prepare to celebrate His first coming as that Babe in Bethlehem. Advent begins a new church

year (officially November 27). Midweek worship opportunities help us focus on this season.



From Our School Principal

Gift Giving?!

We do many collections at St. Michael that result in gift giving. There is no shortage of opportunity in the world today. I am proud that we are bounteous in our gift giving. Way to go Saints! Keep it up! *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."*
¹⁰ *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."* Gal 6:9-10 (NIV) I know it becomes a challenge to constantly give.

In this passage Jesus talked about gift giving. (Jesus said) *"What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"* Luke 11:11-13

One online devotion writer made these comments about the passage:

The questions Jesus asked in the passage above are known as rhetorical questions.

My high school English professor told me a rhetorical question was one which had an answer that was so obvious it didn't need a reply. If you reread that passage, you will almost automatically find yourself saying, "No father would ever do such a thing. Not never. No how."

In recent years I've heard numerous parents say things like "I had religion forced down my throat when I was young. I'm not

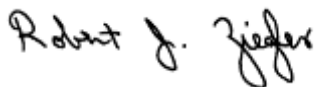
going to do that to my kids." Or, "When my child is old enough, I'm going to let him decide what religion, if any, he wants."

To many those words sound both modern and sophisticated; to me it sounds like some parents are dropping their children. Think about it. Are those parents consistent? Do they say things like "My parents forced me to read, spell, learn math, and I'm not going to do that to my children?" Do they say, "When my child is old enough, I'm going to let him decide if he wants to have manners, not wear diapers, etc?" Of course not, they teach their children the important things.

Indeed, the Lord made parents so they could show their children the way. Moms and Dads were designed to be the loving Savior's first, foremost and best witnesses to His little ones -- witnesses to Jesus.

Jesus knew we are good at gift giving for life here. We meet physical needs. He reminds us that the Father meets physical and spiritual needs. We need to remember to give both. So we give the gift for life here and for eternity. Be sure you are giving both gifts to the children. *"To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life."* Romans 2:7 (NIV)

Your choice to partner with us at SMLS is a testimony to your gift giving in both realms. Together we are Celebrating: Christ & Children!



Robert Ziegler, School Principal

Seniors On The Go

- **Fri. Dec. 9** - Attend the evening performance of "White Christmas" at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre.
- **Celebrating Jesus' birth through the whole month of December, no regular Seniors On The Go activities are being planned.**

A blessed Christmas is wished to all.

Questions or suggestions?

Contact
Marilyn Lehman
239-242-0635.

Yarn Needed



Do you have extra yarn to donate?

The women of the Prayer Shawl Ministry are asking for donations of complete or partial skeins of yarn.

Please place in the Narthex or church office.

Questions? Contact Janice Waldren, Darlene Fritsch, or Marlene King.

Looking Ahead — Keep checking our St. Michael Lutheran website for our online calendar with event updates: www.smlcs.org

December

Advent Midweek (each Wednesday) Worship Noon, & 5:30 PM Dinner, 6:15 PM service
07, and 14 (correction)

Senior Social (anyone 55 plus!) 11 @ Noon

School Christmas Festival Concert
08 @ 1:30 PM and 6:00 PM in Sanctuary

School Christmas Vacation, Dec. 19-Jan. 02

Family Christmas Eve Worship Rehearsal
21 @ 5:30 , Dinner served, too!

Christmas Eve @ 5:30 PM (family service),
7:30 PM, 11 PM Candlelight
24

Christmas Day @ 10:00 AM
25 —Followed by Christmas Feast Dinner, rsvp

New Year's Eve, Sat. @ 5:30 PM w/comm.
31

January

New Year's, Sun @ 8 & 10:45 AM w/comm.
JANUARY 01

School Resumes
03

Epiphany
6

DivorceCare Sessions Resume (Thursdays)
12

GriefShare Sessions Resume (Saturdays)
14

5th Sunday Breakfast @ 9:15AM
29

Blood Drive
29

<http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx?ci=L6L6F0F0J4F0O9N8H2>

February

Boy Scout Sunday
05

Valentines Day
14

SMLS Grandparents Day at school
17

Living Well with God and Attitude
19

Presidents' Day
20

Ash Wednesday — 22 @ Noon & 6:15 PM
5th Annual Covenant Marriage Affirmation Ceremony & Reception
24 @ 6:00 PM

Wednesday Lenten Worship
29, @ Noon and @ 6:15 PM

March

Lutheran School Music Festival-Stewart, FL
2

SMLS Art Fair (4:30-6PM) NJHS Ceremony
4 @ 4:30 PM

National Lutheran Schools Week 4th-10th
Dynamic Marriage Sessions Begin
7

Wednesday Lenten Worship
7,14,21,28, @ Noon and @ 6:15 PM

Family Retreat in Alva/Board of Fellowship
09-11

Daylight Savings Time Begins — 11

Martin Luther High School Choir at SMLC
18 @ 7 PM

SMLS Bid For Kids Auction
24 @ 5:30 PM, 2012

Board of Missions

Larry and Pat Ryan attended the FORO planning meeting in the Dominican Republic in October along with LCMS leadership. Church dignitaries from North and South America were also in attendance to discuss and evaluate strategic plans for the next 5 years. Pastor Krey and others praised St. Michael Lutheran as an exemplary model of what one church can accomplish in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Lutheran Church. Larry expressed that our congregation went through the door that Christ opened, and under the leadership of Pastor Jon, we simply followed.

After the FORO meetings, the team traveled to Las Americas for the dedication of the national church, located in close proximity to the national capital. The dedication was awesome, and the first ordained Dominican pastor, Pastor Willie, presided at the ceremony. Over 300 people attended the service, which included 16 baptisms and 4

confirmations. Larry gave Pastor Willie 36 additional baptismal napkins made by Darlene Fritsch.

Larry and Pat then went to Santiago to meet with a delegation from Wisconsin, who came to discuss continuing the effort to make the campus in Palmar Arriba a model school that could be replicated both in the Dominican Republic and across Latin America. The Good Shepherd Lutheran Home for developmentally disabled children will be included as part of the model. Reading and math were identified as two immediate areas of focus.

The enrollment at Concordia Lutheran in Palmar Arriba has almost doubled. The school now has a library and the internet café is nearly complete; however, additional computers are still needed so that English and computer classes can be offered to adults in the community. The small fees from these classes will go back to the church. Attendance at weekly services continues to grow.

A breakfast program for the children is in place along with a garden project.

The following is an excerpt from a letter by one of the Wisconsin principals that sums up some of the sentiments from the trip:

My weekend was crazy, but it has also taken me until now to get past the emotions and feelings I had upon our return. The life-changing adventure will always live in my memory as a God-directed 'epiphany' for me, of sorts. I have long taken too much for granted. I have long thought that situations such as we learned about in the Dominican Republic were for others, but not for me.

Boy, did God change those two lines of thinking in particular! I can't thank you enough for being part of what shaped and enriched the time in the Dominican Republic. I still am at a fair loss for words to describe to others the things we experienced,



what we learned, and how I, personally, have grown because of it. Whatever I/we can do for their sakes—let's just say, "I am ALL in!"

My appreciation for what St. Michael has already accomplished with the eager hands and hearts from that place will forever stand as a model for what, in my mind, the South Wisconsin District should be able to accomplish for the sake of Concordia Lutheran School. Kissaryis and all those dear people are in my thoughts and prayers. I find myself looking at the clock and thinking..."Right now they are....(fill in the blank...).

Mary Irish

Board of Fellowship

Christmas greetings from the Board of Fellowship. We are planning to revive the church picnic tradition in January – so check the weekly bulletin

for more details. Also, mark your calendars for March 9-11 for the 2012 Family Retreat to be held at Riverside Retreat Center

in Alva – we all had a wonderful time last year and had people from 2 yrs old to 60s and 70s. A good time was had by all!



Recycle the Warmth/Amigos Center

Offering protection against the cold!

We are collecting **used & new blankets for families of the Amigos En Cristo Center.**

Please share the warmth, and place your contribution in the collection box found in the church Narthex **by Dec. 11th.** Interested in touring the Amigos Center? Please contact Anita Dennis, 239-278-0342.



Blood Drive Last Month

Many thanks to everyone who donated blood (11 units collected!) at the Nov 20th Blood Drive and also thanks to those who participated in the 3rd Annual Sluiter-Sandell Bake Sale!



It was a huge success and we love and appreciate everyone!

Questions? Contact Ann Sluiter, Parish Nurse, 989-4711 x 287.

Board of Human Care *This is a matching funds event!*

Our Thanksgiving Food Drive was a huge success which enabled us to deliver nearly fifty food baskets to families throughout our community. We are *most grateful* to all in our congregation and school for the generous **donations of food and funds** and to



In the Narthex we have put up a **Christmas tree with tags** for all the children of families

to whom we will be *delivering Christmas food baskets.*

- Please feel free to,
1. take a tag,
 2. return it attached to a wrapped gift, by
 3. Sun., December 18.

These gifts add so much to the children's holiday!

(And, thanks to the students of Joni Zehnder's art class for designing the beautiful gift tags.)

Also note, our annual **Christmas Senior Social** will be held immediately after the late service on **Sunday, December 11th.**

A delicious dinner will be served in the cafeteria with live entertainment and many door prizes. Seniors 55 & over, you are our guests, please plan to attend. RSVP by calling 939-4711 x 225.



We ask that you bring a gift of men's or women's socks, t-shirts, or underwear for the homeless. Thank you for your help and generosity. Questions? Call Pat Ryan, 239-540-8520.



 **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans:**
Let's thrive.™

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for their matching funds support of \$400.

Many thanks to all.



Baptisms

November 06
Charles David Arland Gehringer
November 06
Brooke Taylor Wilkerson

Save the Date: February 24, 2012



Plans are being made for St. Michael's 5th Annual Covenant Marriage Affirmation Ceremony & Reception. All married couples are invited to attend this special ceremony to

renew their wedding vows.

Immediately following the ceremony held in the Sanctuary, there will be an intimate dinner reception officiated by Pastor Jon in the gym; this includes music and dancing in a tastefully decorated setting. Cost is only \$50 per couple. Please watch upcoming bulletins for additional details.

Volunteers are needed to assist with this lovely event! Questions? Contact 239-939-4711 x 231 Toni Martin.

Thank You!

Thank you, the outpouring of compassion, affection & respect for my wife Kathryn, is overwhelming. Words don't do it justice. Her everlasting smile and attitude was noticed by all. She truly had a great love for our Lord and Savior and was looking forward to seeing Him in heaven. On behalf of myself and my children, thank you so much.

Don Zehnder

Update—Chaplain Bill Miller

Bill and Darlene Miller write:
Because of God's faithfulness and GRACE Full ways and because He involved you in prayer and varied support in the past 2 years...

- + 68 congregations have been encouraged and challenged in their Mission involvement, + A complete Sunday School of a Lutheran Church in Minnesota was mobilized to raise funds for a specific project in Ecuador, began correspondence with 3 children ministries and began organizing a Short Term trip to Guatemala.
- + 32 Pastors of Quito, Ecuador (the capital) came together for a Conference on Pastoral Care in Family Crisis.
- + 14 Seminarians and 8 Pastors completed a course in Pastoral Counseling with Bill in Guayaquil (The seaport city of 4million).
- + 10 Pastors of 3 denominations and 3 missionaries (OMS Intl.) completed a course in the Theology of Stewardship in Cuenca, Ecuador.
- + 5 Lutheran leaders from 3 Church

Bodies birthed by Germans, Norwegians, and American missionaries with World Mission Prayer League came together to discuss possible development of Seminary level training in Ecuador.

- + The only Christian University in Ecuador is discussing with Bill the start of a Chaplaincy training Program complete with CPE offered in partnership with the Christian Hospital of HCJB in Quito.

- + 8 Independent Pastors in Dallas, TX are meeting in monthly gatherings for mutual encouragement and education.

...Wow, is God Good? In the midst of financial woes and difficulties He is always at work. (Romans 8:28,29)

Thank you for your love, expressed in many ways to the glory of God who desires all peoples to be saved! We love you back, Bill and Darlene.

SeniorFest 2012

Mark Your Calendars!
February 15, 2012



Lift Up Your Hearts SeniorFest2012
Engaging Speakers
SeniorFest 2012
Zion Lutheran Church Fort Myers
Save the date:
Wednesday
February 15, 2012
More information coming soon!
Laughter
Fellowship
Delicious Lunch
Lift Up Your Hearts
ALOHA FLORIDA SENIORFEST

Amigos En Cristo

As the year comes to a close, the holidays are upon us, the weather begins to cool, our family and friends are returning to Southwest Florida, so many things happening all at once. It's easy to find ourselves overwhelmed but God will provide clarity, direction and peace provided we put our faith and trust in Him.

Over the last few months, Amigos Center has seen tremendous growth in our

ministry and despite the tough economy we are faced with each day, God continues to provide. We completed our 6th Harry Chapin mobile food pantry bringing the total number of families served well over 5000 for the year in Immokalee. Our Savior Lutheran, St. Petersburg came down to learn more about Amigos Center and took part in our mission in Immokalee.

In the last quarter of this year, Amigos Center has built new partnerships with Liberty Tax, Florida Community Bank and Edison State College. These partnerships will enable us to provide education, leadership, build camaraderie and strengthen the communities in which we live.



Please Save The Date:
Wednesday March 28th, 12pm for the Friends of Amigos Luncheon at the Hilton in Naples.

If you or someone you know are interested in learning more about the Amigos Center ministry, please contact Leah McCann at: 239-297-9658 or leah@amigoscenter.org. We want to share our good news with you on what we are doing and how God is using us to share His love.

Church Worker—Rebecca Schaaf

I'm 4 weeks in on my second portion of student teaching. I spent my first 8 weeks of the semester, Student Teaching I, in Dorechester, Nebraska at a small public K-12 school.

Now, I am in Tomball, Texas teaching at Concordia Lutheran High School. Both student teaching experiences have been wonderful so far. God has blessed me with two total different

but great experiences. I have learned so much, and I can't wait to start teaching.

With the holidays coming, I hope everyone has safe travels and enjoys the time off with love ones.

Blessings,
Rebecca Schaaf

Church Greeters for the Month

Dec 04	8:00 a.m. Bill & Ella Haines 10:45 a.m. Wilbur Jones & Marlene King
Dec 11	8:00 a.m. Joyce & Darryl Bell 10:45 a.m. Betty Riano
Dec 18	8:00 a.m. Greg & Beth Gehringer 10:45 a.m. Liz & Ron Ghormley
Dec 24	5:30 p.m.. Judy Ward 7:30 p.m. The Troast Family 11:00 p.m. TBA
Dec 25	10:00 a.m. Shirley Lockman

Sunday School & Bible Study Opportunities

9:15-10:30 AM

**Early Childhood Adult Learning Center (ECALC)*

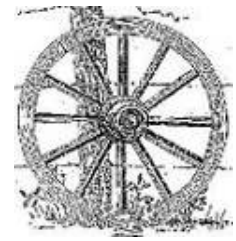
Nursery (0-2)	Church Nursery
Parents & Toddlers	*ECALC, Rm 13
Preschool 3-4	*ECALC, Rm 1
K – 1 st Grade	*Education Bldg. #25 (Flynn)
2 nd -3 rd Grade	*Education Bldg. #4 (McGovern)
4 th -5 th Grade	*Education Bldg. #17 (Art Room)
6 th -8 th Grade (Confirmation)	Band Rm
9 th -12 th Grade	Youth Rm
Parents of Teenagers (resumes 8/28)	Class Rm #49
Marriage Enrichment	*ECALC, Rm 22
Pastor Zehnder's Adult Bible Study	Cafeteria
20 Something Bible Study	Pastor's Conference Rm

Why I Am A Lutheran

Most Christian churches believe and teach that Christ died on the cross for the sins of the World. However, the difference comes when we ask the question. "How does one obtain the forgiveness of sins for themselves that Christ earned?"

It is a good question and a vitally important one. We know that just because something exists does not mean everyone possesses it. This is true also of Christ sacrifice for us. So how do we receive it, obtain it? Does one have to do something and if so what? Can one buy it, earn it, choose it or is it just given automatically to everyone.

These and other questions we will be exploring in the weeks ahead.



5th Wheels

Join us at the 5th Wheels monthly potluck dinner, always the 3rd Friday of the month. We will meet **December 16th at 6PM** in the back of the Office Center at St. Michael. This group invites widows, widowers, mature divorced individuals, and singles. We'd love to have you join us!

Questions? Please contact Violet Zurowski 239-482-2291.

Living Well with God and Attitude

Mark your calendar for the next meeting on February 19th. Questions? Contact Gene Heiwig, 561-1571.

Weekly Bible Study Opportunities

6:30 pm (3 rd Mondays only)	Stephen Ministry (Continuing Ed. & Supervision Men's Bible Study, 12670 New Brittany Suite #101, call Rob Royston, 939-2222
7:30 am Tuesday	Ladies Bible Study, ECALC, Bdrdm Ladies Exper. Christ, Pstr Conf. Walk Thru Bible, Bdrdm ECALC (Meets 2 nd & 4 th weeks only)
9:30 am Tuesday	Dinners (\$6) in our cafeteria
10:00 am Tuesday	Bible Studies and FOCUS
5:30 pm Tuesday	Prayer Shawl/Quilting Ministry (3 rd Thurs), ECALC Boardrm.
5:30 pm Wednesday	Men's Bible breakfast in Pastor's conference room
6:15 -7:30 pm Wednesday	Men's Ministry/Bible Study Rm #22 ECALC call Lee at 872-8999
9:00 am Thursday	
6:45 am Friday	
9:00am Saturday	

Caring Ministries

Blended or Battling? By, Mark Gungor

Stepfamilies face many challenges. Taking a group of total strangers and throwing them together and expecting them to get along is chock full of problems. **These stepfamilies are often called “blended families,” but there’s nothing blended about most of them. They tend to be more like two opposing armies lined up for battle than anything that can even remotely be referred to as “blended.”**

My best advice to those who are considering remarriage with children from previous marriages: wait. Just hang on, trust God during this time and wait until the kids are grown—and even then it still isn’t a guarantee! Sometimes even adult children will have a difficult time with their parent’s remarriage. But generally those who wait until the kids are out of the house have much less trouble and way fewer problems.

If, however, you choose to go into a stepfamily situation, know that it’s going to be a very rough road to travel. **You will have to deal with each other’s children, the ex-spouses, the multiple sets of grandparents, complicated holiday and summer schedules, etc.** General guidelines for

those of you who are already in a blended family situation:

- Don’t make your spouse choose between you and his/her kids.
- Allow your spouse time with his/her kids.
- Let the biological parent deal with discipline issues.
- Get help from other stepfamily organizations.
- And above all: *Don’t* criticize or condemn your spouse’s children. I know, I know...you’re just trying to help your spouse see the problems and you’re just trying to help, but trust me—you are headed down the path of misery.

Finally, don’t try to change people—just try to understand them. People don’t like it when others try to change them. Go down that path with your stepchildren and you can virtually guarantee you will become the “wicked stepparent” in their minds. Understand why they act the way they act and let them know you understand, and you have a chance to turn from a wicked stepparent into a compassionate human being.

***An effective tool to understand each other—** I suggest that you go to

www.flagpage.com and have everybody go online and complete their “**flag page.**” This is a very simple tool that we use with couples and it works great with stepfamilies. **It gives you a measurement of what makes each person tick and what they truly need to feel loved and understood. And remember: while you may know the nuances of your own kids—why they act the way they do and what their emotional buttons are—you can’t possibly know the new kids in your family the same way.**

Everyone has their triggers, and if you don’t know where they are, one wrong step and things blow up!

Then sit down and talk about all of your Flag Pages together. **You will understand why each one acts the way they act, this is what they need to feel loved and happy, and this is who they truly are.** It’s still hard, but it can really help everyone understand each other. Read them aloud so that the kids hear what’s right about them. Everyone loves to hear what’s great about them and it really does something for the kids to hear this. **Then create everyone’s Five Rules to Feel Loved.** It’s a simple exercise that gives you a road map to follow for these kids. **Post them on their doors and now everyone knows what the others need, how to relate to them, how to build them up and encourage**



Julie Berchtold, Caring Ministries, offering small group ministry & personal counseling.

Email:
Julie.berchtold@smlcs.



DIVORCE Care



them. It’s really powerful stuff. That kind of light shining into the relationships helps tremendously.

Reprinted from Marriage,
www.marriage magazine.org.



DivorceCare—Are you separated or divorced? You don’t have to go through it alone. DivorceCare will help you learn how to deal with the pain of the past and look forward to rebuilding your life. DivorceCare meets Thursdays, 9/8/11-12/8/11, 7-8:30 p.m., ECALC. Join any session. For more information call Julie or Toni, 239-939-4711.

Nurturing Notes from the DCE

Children's Ministry

Way Station

During this month at Way Station Depot, we continue to learn our songs for the 5:30 Christmas Eve worship service so join us in the art room at 9:15 for singing and snacks then go to their classes at 9:30. We'll have a special rehearsal for the service on Dec. 18 during Way Station. Since Christmas falls on a Sunday, there will not be any Way Station that morning, but we will have a movie together on Jan. 1.



5:30 Family Christmas Eve Worship

We will continue with the tradition of the Christmas Eve 5:30 worship service being an opportunity for the children to help lead us in worship of the newborn Savior. This year the kids will be participating in a different way as we explore the "Whys" of Christmas. We will be rehearsing with the children (2 year olds – 5th grade) for the Sundays in December during Way Station time. We will have a rehearsal during Way Station on Sun., Dec. 18 and a dress rehearsal on Wed., Dec. 21 with a pizza party for the whole family at 5:30 followed by a rehearsal from 6:15-7:30. If you want to help with music, props, costuming, or technology, contact Lori Schwan. All children are welcome. Make sure your family has the CD so they can practice.

Wednesday Parenting Class

They will be taking a break for the month of December during Advent, but resuming in January.

Wednesday Serving Opportunity

Do you have desire to support parents who are trying to be the best parent and spouse they can be? We no longer have any assistance in taking care of about 8 children ranging from 1-9 during Wednesday night Bible studies. We could use a few people even if they would rotate

from week to week now through the end of this month. If you can assist from 5:45-8:15, please contact Lori Schwan 939-4711 x 224.

Youth Ministry

High School Sunday School

Don't x Christ out of Christmas! Plug in Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:30 as we celebrate again the true meaning of this holy day!

Confirmation for our Middle School Students

In December we will begin our study of the New Testament with the life of Jesus. Parents, please attend with your child on December 4. If you miss a class, check out the lesson as a family in Living Scripture. Bring that book and your Bible each week. We will let our lights shine as we make luminaries on Dec. 18. We will not have any class on Sunday, Dec. 25, but we will on Jan. 1.

Middle and High School FOCUS

During Advent we will continue to enjoy wonderful dinners (\$6/person) prepared by Sue Briggs from 5:30-6:15. We will then make our way over to worship in the sanctuary at 6:15. We will spend the remaining time until 7:30 sharing highs and lows.

Parenting Teens and Preteens Class



You're not alone in this journey through your child's adolescence. The group of parents who gather on Sundays from 9:15-10:30 find great joy, comfort, and encouragement. Focus on the Family's "Be

Prepared: Equipping Kids to Face Today's World" is great for parents of teens or preteens. Jump in when you can. Janice Sickels facilitates after watching a DVD clip. The group meets at the boat table in the back of the office center.



Lori Schwan, Director of Christian Education, provides spiritual guidance and fun for the children.

Email:
lori.schwan@smlcs.org
Phone 239-939-4711
x 224

High School Summer Mission Trips



The DR mission team has been selected and are

starting to raise their funds to get there, but we still have time to register more people for the FL-GA District Servant Event in Ocala National Forest (June 24-30). Contact Lori Schwan if you are interested in attending this awesome and affordable event. Cost will be between \$260-\$320.

Poinsettias for Christmas

You can purchase **EXTRA LARGE** Poinsettias for **\$13.00 each** to support the youth of our congregation. Poinsettias can be picked **before** Christmas the first week of December for:



- ☺ Home holiday decorating
- ☺ Gifts to your family and friends

DCE (continued)

☺ Gifts to your co-workers

Poinsettias can also be purchased to beautify our sanctuary in honor or memory of a loved one and picked up **after** Christmas. Order yours today from a youth or using a form available in the bulletin or on the web.

Christmas Progressive Meal and Servant Event

On Dec. 4 middle and high school



youth will serve and have fun at the same time.

Meet in the cafeteria at noon where we will enjoy appetizers as we form groups. Then we'll go shopping for gifts for families in need. Middle and High School Youth will split to go to a house for main course and present wrapping. The middle school youth will get the chance to deliver the Christmas pillow cases the girls made last month to children in the hospital while the high school youth will carol and visit at an assisted living/convalescent home. We will finish with desserts at Troast's house. Parents pick up there at 6 PM. Consider bringing in your financial donations early so we can plan as effectively as possible for the purchase of gifts and food. Adult drivers and host houses are needed. **Sign up by Thurs. Dec. 1.**

Luminaries for Christmas Eve

Each Christmas St. Michael Youth make, set up, ignite, and clean up 400 luminaries for Christmas Eve. Middle and High School Youth will assemble the luminaries during class on Sun. Dec. 18. If you are here on Christmas Eve, we could use you

and adults to help with one of the three times: 4:00 (luminary set-up), 5:45 (luminary lighting), and midnight (luminary extinguish and clean up). Sign-up with Lori.



Salvation Army Congregational Servant Event

Looking for a way to serve once you get out of school over Christmas? We have a special opportunity to ring bells for the Salvation Army at Edison Mall on



Thurs., Dec. 22. Sign up with Lori for an hour block of time from 10 AM – 8 PM. This is a great servant event for families of any age all the way through adults.

11th and 12th Graders Check out - REAL LIFE: COLLEGE FAITH

What is it like to be a Christian in college? Spend the weekend, Jan. 13-15, learning about "College Faith" from college students. You will also get the chance to know other Lutheran 11th and 12th Graders who are thinking about attending college. There will be college students at the event from different Universities throughout Florida and Georgia. Cost is \$140

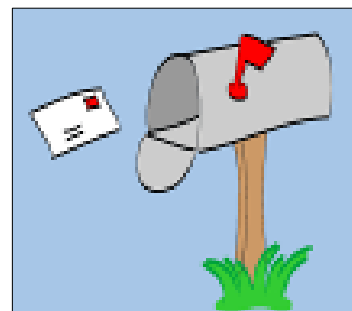
(plus lunches and dinners). Sign up with Lori by Dec. 11.

FL-GA High School District Youth Gathering

High School students, mark your calendars now for Mar. 2-4 as we will have a great opportunity to attend the FL-GA District High School Youth Gathering in Orlando. It will have a new face this year. Not sure you would have enough money? Consider saving some of that Christmas money, or sell some extra poinsettias. Adults interested should contact Lori Schwan for an application. We will have registration information in January.

Mail Minister Needed

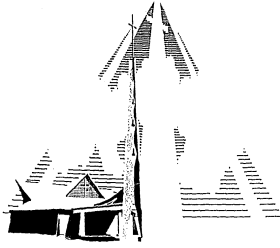
Do you like to volunteer behind the scenes from home, keep things organized, and encourage lots of people? We have an awesome mail ministry of volunteers who send get-well, birthday, and anniversary cards to members of our congregation. We have a need for someone to send birthday cards to our adult members. If you are interested, please contact Lori Schwan.



Usher Schedule	
8:00 A.M.	10:45 A.M.
<i>Please contact the head usher if you are unable to serve as scheduled, or secure your own replacement. If YOU would like to serve as an usher, please contact the church office at 939-4711, and let us know which service you prefer.</i>	
Dec 4~2nd Sunday in Advent (2 Blue Candles)	
Bill Truax...482-8418 John Hoffmann Charles Cook Elaine Everhart Bob Richardson Sharon Harrington	Tom Kosteno...489-4398 Bud Snell Chuck Oliver Leroy Waldren Marty Natter Ken Fritsch
Dec 7~Wed. Advent 6:15 p.m. (2 Blue Candles) Volunteers needed	
Dec 11~3rd Sunday in Advent (2 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)	
Don Zehnder...267-1414 Justin Gehringer Jack Polhman Elaine Everhart Dale Mast John Hoffmann	Leroy Waldren...989-1048 Frank Most Roy Hendry Diane Hendry Ken Fritsch Darlene Fritsch
Dec 14~Wed. Adv 6:15 p.m. (2 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle) Volunteers needed	
Dec 18~4th Sunday in Advent (3 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)	
Richard Rybak...567-0149 John Hoffmann Bill Truax Kathy Royston Justin Gehringer Jack Pohlman	Elaine Everhart...543-8527 Dee Lemke Bud Snell Marty Natter Diane Hendry Roy Hendry
Dec 21~Wed. Adv 6:15 p.m. (3 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle) Volunteers needed	
Dec. 24~Sat. Christmas Eve (all 4 candles & white) Volunteers needed	
5:30 pm	7:30 pm
11:00 pm	
December 25~Sunday 1 service at 10am Volunteers needed	
January 1	
John Hoffmann...936-8362 Charles Cook Richard Rybak Kathy Royston Don Zehnder Elaine Everhart	Dee Lemke...731-3727 Chase Kollmann Zeke Michael Marty Natter Chuck Oliver Crysta Oliver

Acolyte Schedule		
8:00 AM	10:45 AM	
Please sign up for the Sunday and service you would like to serve as a crucifer or acolyte by the 15 th of the month. If you know that all the Sundays in this month are not good, please list your name under the column for those who can't serve this month and we will not assign you. If you haven't signed up or noted no availability for the month, we will assign as needed.		
December 4, 2nd Sun. in Advent (2 Blue Candles)		
A- Kayla Wherry A- Dana Wherry	C- Dustin Blair A- Megan Ward A- Alyssa Collins	
Dec. 7, Wed. Advent 6:15 p.m. (2 Blue Candles)		
A- Justin Irizarry A- Jared Irizarry		
Dec. 11, 3rd Sun. in Advent (2 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)		
C- Christian LeSueur A- McKenzie Yelvington A- Allison Denison	A- Lily Martinez A- Zoe Michael	
Dec. 14, Wed. Advent 6:15 p.m. (2 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)		
A- Peyton Staas A- PJ Yaloff		
Dec. 18, 4th Sun. in Advent (3 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)		
A- Kayla Wherry A- Dana Wherry	C- Nalani Garcia A- Christofer Zinn A- Hannah Zinn	
Dec. 21, Wed. Advent 6:15 p.m. (3 Blue/ 1 Pink Candle)		
A- Janet Oliver A- Tommy Hoolihan		
Dec. 24, Sat. Christmas Eve (all 4 candles & white)		
5:30 pm	7:30 pm	11:00 pm
A- Christian Bottorff A- McKenzie Yelvington	A- Peyton Staas A- Sarah Tice	A- PJ Yaloff A- Zoe Michael
Dec. 25, Sun. Christmas Day 10 a.m. (all 4 candles & white)		
C- Volunteer Needed A- Volunteer Needed A- Volunteer Needed		
Dec. 31, Sat. New Year's Eve 5:30 p.m. (all 4 candles & white)		
C- Volunteer Needed A- Volunteer Needed A- Volunteer Needed		

If you cannot serve when scheduled, PLEASE find your own replacement AND also notify the office at 939-4711 by MONDAY of the change to Sunday Service and by Friday for a mid-week service. Names are printed in the bulletin according to this schedule.



St. Michael Lutheran Church and School
3595 Broadway, Fort Myers, Florida 33901
239-939-4711 www.smlcs.org

"THE MESSENGER" Published monthly

Address Service Requested

Christmas Feast on December 25th

Christmas Feast You are invited to a special meal prepared on Christmas Day following the 10 AM worship service. Please RSVP by signing up by the sound booth, or calling the church office 939-4711. Volunteers are also needed to assist that day, please contact Lars Marell at 849-1660.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you are looking for something meaningful to do with your knitting, crocheting, sewing and quilting talents, you are asked to be a part of this ministry. Our mission is to use our God given skills to comfort those in physical, emotional, and spiritual need. We welcome you to check it out. We meet only once a month on the 3rd Thursday at 9 AM in the ECALC Boardroom. If you have questions, please contact Janice Waldren at 220-4333 or Marlene King at 673-9720.

Seniors On the Go

Do you have the heart for organizing people for fun events? Do you like to serve God's people? This ministry is currently an active group which provides opportunity for many people (ages 55 and over) to enjoy fellowship together with events like trips, meals, in-house movies, theater and more. This group is in need of someone who likes to encourage others to participate, plus arrange for future events. The efforts are very rewarding and the chances of building new friendships is a great possibility! For more details, contact Lars Marell 849-1660.

Fellowship and Volunteer Opportunities

Can you help this month?:

Comfort Meal Ministry
Cooks As Needed

Yarn donations

Blanket donations

Christmas Eve
Luminary
setup and cleanup

Christmas Feast
Volunteers needed
please see Lars Marell