

february newsletter

please join us for worship

- February 3/4 Telling the Story: Abraham
- February 10/11 Telling the Story: Isaac
- February 14 Ash Wednesday: The Heart of Darkness
- February 17/18 Telling the Story: Rebekah
- February 21 The Darkness of Denial
- February 24/25 Telling the Story: Jacob
- February 28 The Darkness of Disconnection
-

Ash Wednesday Worship

11:00a and 7:00p with ashes and Holy Communion

You are invited in Christian community to a meal at
12:00p in Luther Hall or 5:30p in the Gym

CONNECT with Pastor Goff

When Laura and I went to Alaska this summer with my brother and his wife, the three of them were anxious to see the **aurora borealis** or “northern lights”. (Notice I didn’t put myself in that group because I knew that would require getting up at an hour of the night when I wanted to be asleep!)

However, if you have ever seen them or if you have seen any pictures of them, the aurora borealis are really spectacular. In case you are interested, the aurora borealis are potentially visible under dark skies from late August to mid-April. A clear and cloudless sky are the best conditions and the strongest lights tend to appear between 9:00p-2:00a, although the best viewing is apparently between 11:00p and midnight. Typically, they are more likely visible in the northern parts of Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Alaska, Russia and Iceland. We were in Alaska in late August, so potentially they would have been viewable then but we didn’t see them (at least I didn’t because I was asleep!)



I’m thinking about this “light in dark” image as I think about the theme we are focusing on during the season of Lent and Easter this year, “The Death of Darkness, Liberating Light”. Maybe the presence of, or feeling of, darkness makes you uncomfortable. Maybe it causes you to feel scared. There probably aren’t a lot of people who actually like darkness (unless you are trying to sleep). But sometimes, just like with the aurora borealis, you can’t see the light of something unless it is dark.

For all practical purposes, the season of Lent is a season of darkness. But actually, that’s okay. If the season of Lent is intended to be a season of repentance and reflection, we can really only do that when we see how dark our sin really is. For our six mid-week Lent services we will focus on the themes of:

- Feb 14 – The Heart of Darkness (Ash Wednesday)
- Feb 21 – The Darkness of Denial
- Feb 28 – The Darkness of Disconnection
- Mar 6 – The Darkness of Doubt
- Mar 13 – The Darkness of Despair
- Mar 20 – The Darkness of Deception



I know that looks like a lot of darkness. But at the end of those 40 days, we will be eager and all the more prepared to see the light, the light of the victory and resurrection of Jesus. Maybe some of us would rather skip the darkness and go straight to the light. But truly, the light of Easter is all the brighter when you come out of the darkness.

One of the hymns we will sing, probably several times, throughout Lent is, “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness” (LSB 849). The first stanza begins, “Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light.” It is the liberating light of the resurrection that pulls us all out of the darkness of our sin. The last stanza of the hymn is:

*Let us praise the Word Incarnate, Christ, who suffered in our place.
Jesus died and rose victorious that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness, seeing what our God has done.
Let us praise the true Redeemer, praise the One who makes us one.*

If it wasn’t for the darkness (of reflecting on our sinful nature), the light (of Jesus’ forgiveness) may not seem all that bright.

You may already know this, but Easter is early this year (March 31). Don’t miss the opportunity to prepare for the “liberating light” of the resurrection by first stepping into the darkness of Lent.

Pastor Goff

BRIDGING THE GAP

As the weather has changed into an Indiana winter, we often find ourselves hunkered down and not wanting to do much, if anything. It certainly does not seem the prime season to start something new. However, in Ecclesiastes we read "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens (3:1)." For the Bridge Ministry, it is a season of discovery. Discovering who is leaning in (see January 7 Sermon - Leaning In, on YouTube). Discovering expectations of young adults. Discovering new places and ways to connect with the community of Fort Wayne. I am excited by the new opportunities and challenges that lay ahead as we work towards training up, coaching, and mentoring young adults to lead young adults.

Did you know: SpringTide Research Institute puts out a "State of Religion and Young People" study every year to help faith leaders (and congregations) better understand how to connect with young people. In 2020, the research developed around the term Relational Authority, and the impact trusted seasoned adults (who strive to have a relationship with young people) have on their lives. Research shows that spending time, actively listening, and engaging young people in honest and authentic conversations, helps build relationships and in turn helps them hear from the authority figures in their lives in a more receptive way.

How can you be intentional, connect, and build relationships with people who are leaning in to know more about you and your story (especially about being connected to Jesus)? Here are some ideas:

- Pray for them weekly
- Invite them to share a meal
- Write a letter of encouragement to them
- Ask them open ended questions or inquiries when you connect:
 - Tell me about your week.
 - What are you passionate about?
 - What obstacles are you facing right now?
 - How can I help you?

*"You will be my witnesses in
Jerusalem, and in all Judea
and Samaria, and to the
ends of the earth."
Acts 1:8*

REDEMPTION HOUSE MINISTRY

Redemption House is a network of transition homes for women who desire to redeem their lives from past destructive behavior by developing a faith-based lifestyle and by gaining the skills necessary to achieve and maintain success.

Women residents are assigned to Redemption House by the courts as an alternative to jail. During a six-month residency at Redemption House, women work to develop job skills, find freedom from addictions, and mend broken relationships. As a Christian community, we grow together in faith and positive lifestyle choices.

Redemption House forms partnerships with local agencies, organizations, businesses, churches, and individuals to carry out our important mission. We rely on the expertise and generosity of allies who believe in what we do.

St. Michael will provide a meal and Christian community at Wayne Street on February 4/March 3 and Fairfield Avenue on February 18/March 17. If you would like to be a part of this important ministry, please contact Linda Chapman at 417-3052.

REDEMPTION HOUSE GALA

The Redemption House will be having their second annual **Butterfly Gala** on Tuesday, April 23 at the Grand Wayne Center. More details on this wonderful evening will be coming soon!



CONNECT with Stephanie Maxson

I have been going through the history of St. Michael as part of our **70th Jubilee Celebration** and found an article in the Fort Wayne News Sentinel from 1958 titled "Churches One of the Greatest Outlets of Modern Music". Here are a few excerpts from the article:

Next to the schools, Fort Wayne churches provide the greatest outlet for the musical talents of residents of the city. With little or no glory, loyal groups of singers each week rehearse the music which will be presented in the worship services in most of the city's approximate 130 churches on Sunday morning. The role of music in the church has been constantly growing in importance through the years. Many adults still sing at no other time during the week- only during the church services. But the churches are working to promote the joy of singing through the organization of choirs of many age levels. Raising the standards and tastes of the congregation through artistically-presented sacred music, the churches make a real contribution to the cultural life of the community. **Fort Wayne News Sentinel 1958**

These days, I'm not sure churches would receive such a nice commendation for contributing to the cultural life of the community.....but we DO make a difference. St. Michael's choirs get to share the joy of singing because we know our joy comes from the Lord! *The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust Him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving. Psalm 28:7* The joy we experience in worship spills out in the way that we live our lives, which impacts those around us, and **yes**, affects our community. We can learn from the history of our city and our church and be encouraged to continue to make an impact. The church, and each of us individually continues to make a difference in our community because of the work Christ has done in and through us!

FEBRUARY MUSIC REHEARSALS

Monday – BELLS

4:00p Grace Notes
6:00p Harmony Ringers
7:00p Resound

Tuesday- BANDS

7:00p Life Song, New Song, King's Strings

Wednesday- CHOIR

6:30p Women's Choir (2/2, 2/28)
Men's Choir (2/7, 2/21)
7:00p Adult Choir

Thursday- BLUE GRASS & INSTRUMENTAL

6:00p Instrumental
7:00p Blue Grass



ORCHESTRA AND INSTRUMENTAL SMALL GROUP REHEARSALS START FEBRUARY 8!

Instrumental rehearsals start in February! This year we will meet as both a large group and by section to work on music for Easter and also on ensemble music. Here is the schedule for February:

February 8	6:00p-7:00p	Full Orchestra
February 15	6:00p-7:00p	Strings
February 22	6:00-7:00p	Brass
February 29	6:00-7:00p	Woodwinds

You can request a packet of music (hymns and songs to accompany the choir) by contacting our music director, Stephanie Maxson, at stephanie@stmfw.org. Thanks for passing this information on to instrumentalists you know!

CONNECT with Stephanie Maxson continued

JUBILEE Decade Display (1954-1964)

Help us celebrate the history of St. Michael by checking out the display of pictures, memories, and events from our congregation's beginning. The display will be out from February 10- March 3. Thanks to everyone who helped compile this information and who were willing to share their memories as we tell the story of St. Michael!

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICES BEGIN WITH ASH WEDNESDAY ON FEBRUARY 14

Ash Wednesday services will be at 11:00a and 7:00p on February 14. Both services will have ashes and communion as we worship the Lord and prepare our hearts, minds and souls for the season of Lent. Come early to prepare for worship through prayer stations set up in the lobby. Midweek services will continue each Wednesday at both 11:00a and 7:00p through March 29th. You can also attend the services via live stream.

LENTEN MEALS ON FEBRUARY 14—12:00p and 5:30p

Please join us for Christian community at 12:00p as the J.O.Y. Group provides lunch in Luther Hall. At 5:30p, the St. Michael Youth will serve a taco dinner in the gym with a free will donation!

ACADEMY NEWS

Please join us for the Annual Academy Dinner on March 9 at 6:30p!

- Menu:** Bronze chicken, garlic smashed potatoes, oven roasted vegetables, garden salad and dinner roll
- Cost:** \$15/adult
\$10/children 12 and under
- Enjoy:** Entertainment provided by our Academy Students
- Goal:** Raise money to provide scholarships and purchase equipment for the coming year!

THANK YOU!

Thanks to the generous donation from one of our members, the flute choir has a new instrument! You may have noticed the addition of a brand new **alto flute**, not quite as big as our bass flute, but larger than a regular flute. We are thankful for Camille Blake who has been playing her personal alto flute with us for many years. The purchase of this instrument allows us to continue to play with the full flute family. St. Michael is also blessed with our very own arranger, Angie Judt, who will now be able to arrange and write music for this new instrument. Praise God for the way he uses the gifts we have to glorify Him!!!

ESM MUSIC

Come support our ESM students as they share their musical talents at these upcoming events!

- | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| March 1 | TALENT SHOW | 7:00p (Union Street Campus) |
| March 15 | MUSICAL- <i>Godspell</i> (Grades 6-8) | 7:00p (Union Street Campus) |



CONNECT with Stephanie Maxson continued

ST. MICHAEL IS HOSTING A FINE ARTS CAMP!

WHEN: June 24-28 Registration opens in March!

THEME: "Imagine; Created in His Image"



What is the Fine Arts Camp (FAC)?

FAC is a week-long summer day camp (9:00a-3:30p) at St. Michael Lutheran Church, where faith and creativity connect through an overall theme. Dates for this year's Fine Arts Academy are June 24-28. The week culminates in a Friday evening program where the students get to share what they've been working on all week!

Who attends Fine Arts Camp (FAC)?

FAC is open to all youth who have completed Kindergarten through 8th grade.

What do kids do at Fine Arts Camp (FAC)?

Kids get the chance to participate in a wide variety of visual and performing arts, like dance, drama, cooking, painting, sewing, woodworking, music, and more, taught by highly qualified teachers. And they have lots of fun, too!

Who are the staff of Fine Arts Camp (FAC)?

Our faculty is comprised of many talented and experienced teachers who have a passion to serve God with their art. Most are actively involved in teaching, either privately, in their churches, or in the school systems. They are deeply committed to sharing their expertise and their faith. A list of our faculty will be available soon.

Be a Teen Volunteer!

Our amazing student volunteers have completed 9th-12th grade and serve as examples of servant leadership before and during the week of FAC. Interested in being a teen volunteer? Please email St. Michael's Director of Youth, Emma Deines, at emma@stmfw.org

UPCOMING BIBLE STUDIES

Beginning Sunday, February 18, a few additional Bible classes will begin!

- **A Hebrew Perspective for Understanding the Bible (6 weeks).** This study will examine Hebrew culture, tradition and language exploring Scripture and further understanding its meaning. Topics will include, but are not limited to, the impact of the Ancient New East practice of foot washing, the effective teaching methodology employed by Jesus, and exploration of "authority" in both the Old and New Testaments, and the people of Jesus' time (i.e., Sadducees, Orthodox Jews, Gentiles, Zealots). Location – Gym.
- **Thrive: Living Resilient and Renewed (12 weeks).** Using the Thrive workbook, this class is designed for helping anyone have strength, recovery and resilience from any mental health difficulty or disorder. Location – Room 22 in the school (Mrs. Smith 2nd Grade Classroom).
- **Money and Marriage God's Way (7 weeks).** This class is a video based Bible study from Compass Ministries. It provides insights for your marriage and your finances. Together, you will explore what God's Word says about earning, spending, giving, debt reduction, and investing. You'll also discover how to communicate more effectively and resolve conflict. Location – Conference Room
- **GriefShare:** Through this 13-week adventure, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way. Join us Tuesday evenings, March 5-May 28 from 6:30p-8:30p in Luther Hall. Contact Robert and Rebecca Boyd with questions at (862) 409-4520 or bb4bboyd@gmail.com.

YOUTH with Emma Deines

CHECK-IN WITH DCE INTERN EMMA!

The focus of our bible studies will be on identity, belonging, and purpose. Youth will discover who and whose they are, how they are a part of the church, and how they can go into their world and share the Gospel. Through youth nights, small groups, and fellowship events students will grow together and discover what it means to be a disciple. I look forward to all that God has planned for 2024, so I invite you to join in the adventure. Here are some exciting events happening in the next month!

[Youth Calendar! - Subscribe to the St. Michael Youth Google Calendar](#)

YOUTH NIGHTS! "FIND YOUR IDENTITY"

Youth Nights are held on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday of each month. Middle School is from 4:00p-6:00p and High School is from 6:00p-8:00p! Learn more about "whose you are" in Christ!

February 4	February 18	
March 3	March 17	Green Extravaganza!

HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER SERVANT EVENT

What are you doing this summer? This summer High School youth will head to [Camp Linn Haven in North Carolina](#)! To learn more and to register scan the QR Code!



ASH WEDNESDAY DINNER - FEBRUARY 14 FROM 5:30-6:30p

Do you enjoy tacos and supporting the St. Michael youth? Join us for a taco dinner before the 7:00p Ash Wednesday service. Donations will be to help the youth travel to North Carolina to serve the Camp Linn Haven community.

WINTER JAM! FEBRUARY 15 FROM 5:00p - 10:30p

Save the Date! This is an amazing concert where Christians from all over Fort Wayne gather together at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum to praise our Heavenly Father! If you are a youth, family, or anyone from St. Michael please join us for this amazing opportunity to worship together. Please RSVP using the QR Code!



FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP NIGHT! FEBRUARY 20 FROM 6:00p-8:00p

High School Youth had a blast last month at Electric Works! This month we look forward to trying some new games and a new devotion series! Keep your calendars open and join us again at Electric Works! See you there!

"CONNECT" - FOR 8TH GRADE CONFIRMATION

Join DCE Emma at Electric Works on Tuesdays from 3:00p-5:30p. This is a time to get to know each other, play some fun games, and enjoy some snacks.

CLHS CHOIR TOUR – FORT WAYNE PERFORMANCE, FEBRUARY 4

Concordia Choirs will be performing on Sunday, February 4 as part of their choir tour. The performance will be at Kramer Chapel on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne and starts at 7:30p. The tour also includes performances in Kokomo, IN, Collinsville, IL and St. Louis, MO.

24-HOUR THEATER FESTIVAL PUBLIC PERFORMANCE, FEBRUARY 10, 7:00p

The 24-Hour Theater Festival is an event the CLHS Theatre Department sponsors each year to encourage students to give theater a try. Each year, upwards of 80+ students are involved. Students can participate as writers, directors, actors, dancers, tech crew, set design or stage crew. The event begins at 7 p.m. on Friday night, when the writers gather to pair up and write four shows. The next morning the directors meet with the writers to go over their shows and then are handed a list of students who will be their actors. Students then break up into their various casts and start preparing their shows, while the set, stage and tech crews also prepare for the show.

Performances of the four original student produced shows will be on Saturday, February 10 at 7:00p, 24 hours after the writers first met to write the shows. It is open to the public! Cost is \$2.00 or a canned good, which will be donated to Construction.

CLHS WINTER MUSICAL - GUYS AND DOLLS

Friday, February 23 and Saturday, February 24 at 7:30p

Sunday, February 25 at 2:00p

Considered by many to be the perfect musical comedy, Guys and Dolls ran for 1,200 performances when it opened on Broadway in 1950. Set in Damon Runyon's mythical New York City, Guys and Dolls is an oddball romantic comedy. Gambler, Nathan Detroit, tries to find the cash to set up the biggest craps game in town while the authorities breathe down his neck; meanwhile, his girlfriend and nightclub performer, Adelaide, laments that they've been engaged for fourteen years. Nathan turns to fellow gambler, Sky Masterson, for the dough, and Sky ends up chasing the straight-laced missionary, Sarah Brown, as a result. Guys and Dolls takes us from the heart of Times Square to the cafes of Havana, Cuba, and even into the sewers of New York City, but eventually everyone ends up right where they belong. This musical is directed by Mr. Chris Murphy, with musical direction by Mrs. Kathryn Peperkorn.

MENTAL WELLNESS SERIES AT ST. MICHAEL

St. Michael will offer a series of presentations over the next five months related to mental wellness. One in five adults (some statistics say 1 in 4) are living with a mental health disorder. Over the course of our life time, one in every two people will be impacted by a mental health challenge in some way. As a church, we believe that God has made us with body, mind, and spirit and so it is appropriate for the body of Christ to address all three to some degree. These sessions will begin an awareness of the importance of caring for our mental and emotional wellness. These sessions will be held in Luther Hall and child care will be available.

February 20 (Tuesday), 6:30p-7:30p Depression and Faith in the Life of the Christian

It doesn't matter if you call it clinical depression, seasonal affective disorder, or just "winter," the fact is that depression is a part of our lives. It may be that you suffer from it, or a loved one or friend, or that you simply want to learn more about it. We will discuss the relationship between depression and faith, and the most elusive thing when we are suffering, namely, hope in Christ. Presenter: Rev. Dr. Todd A. Peperkorn (Assistant Professor of Pastor Ministry and Missions, Director of Vicarage at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne)

BELONGING TO GOD'S PEOPLE *with Celine Newman*

In 2024 we celebrate 70 years of St. Michael! Throughout this year of Jubilee we will grow together through celebrations and spiritual practices while sharing the story of what God has done and is doing through His people.

JUBILEE CELEBRATION DATES

February 24	Generosity Event	September 8	Rally Day
April 28	Congregational Meeting	October 26/27	Reformation/Fall Fun Festival
June 8/9	Camp Lutherhaven	December 14/15	TBD
July 20/21	TBD		

JUBILEE GENEROSITY EVENT

We kick off our Jubilee Celebration Events with a Generosity event happening on February 24. This event will include a breakfast for our public servants, a chance to make small plaques for our new members and neighbors, and a collection, assembly, and distribution of neighbor gift bags. We hope you are about to join in the celebration of being able to give.

Keep an eye out on the website, in parish notes, and our weekly emails for more details about this event!



CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS CLASS BEGINS MARCH 3

This five-week class is designed for those who are new to the Christian faith or new to the Lutheran church. This is also a great class for anyone who would like to renew some basic and foundational topics we confess and practice in the Christian faith. Location – Luther Hall.

OUR LEADERSHIP IS STRENGTHENING!

Leadership is an essential vocation in the Church and it doesn't just happen with the paid staff. The 2024 iLead Events and our Leadership Bible Study series have provided lay leaders (all those who are serving but not a part of our Leadership Team.) at St. Michael with some important community and studies on topics that pour into the growth and development of a leader.

Our first iLead session opened this year's presentations with the Texas District President talking about the Role of the Church. He led us to consider that "The Church is at its best when focusing on the Gospel" and detailed how we can choose kindness over chaos, redemption over rejection, and salvation over satisfaction.

The following week we discussed how we can grow not only as leaders but as followers. We all function in both roles throughout our different vocations and being able to see the balance and develop both sides of these interconnected roles is crucial to being a healthy leader.

On January 21 we hosted John Wymore as he spoke on the concept of Humbler Leadership. Helping us to understand that the gift and practice of humility in leadership is one of the top markers of a successful leader. He gave us good questions to ponder and practice as we work towards humbler leadership.

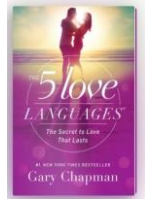
Finally, on the 28th Pastor Shawn walked through several applications of ways that we can come to know ourselves and our gifts better so that we can be more intentional and effective in using them in our leadership.

There are still four more weeks to join in studies. Each one has proved to be great opportunities to grow with and as Christian leaders. Our next event is on February 4 @ 8:30a at St. Peter's Lutheran Church where we will hear Gabe Casper present on Resilient Faith. You are encouraged to join us and if you would like any more information contact Celine Newman at celine@stmfw.org.

FAMILY MINISTRY *with Jen Clendenen*

We love because he first loved us!

Attention, parents! You're probably familiar with the renowned book, "The 5 Love Languages" by Gary Chapman, right? It's one of my favorite books to read in February because it is a great reminder of how to love and care for our spouses. Did you know that Dr. Chapman has published editions designed specifically to help parents connect with their children and teens through the power of love languages?



You are already doing a fantastic job loving your children, but wouldn't it be amazing if you could love them in a way that truly speaks to their hearts? That's where the concept of love languages comes in. Dr. Chapman believes that we all have our preferred ways of giving and receiving love, and guess what? Kids have their own special love language too! Take the quiz to identify each family member's unique love language and look for ways to share those with them. There's even a quiz designed specifically for young children. I believe you'll find that loving with intention goes a long way.



Quiz link: <https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>

Bonus: Don't miss out on the chance to strengthen your family bond and grow closer to God - join the February Family challenge and see how many tasks your terrific family can tackle together! Get ready for a month of love, service, prayer, and tons of family fun!

ST. MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY FAMILY CHALLENGE

WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US. 1 JOHN 4:19

Mark the box as you complete each task.

How many can you complete before the end of the month?

PRAY

PLAY

PRaise

SERVE

WORSHIP

GROW

Take the Love languages quiz & share with your family.	Worship together!	Random Act of Kindness Bless the World 	Family Game Night	Go to Sunday School or Bible Study	Go around the table & share what you love most about each person.	Each family member donates something to charity.
Leave a kind note for someone to find.	Family fun Obstacle Course, fort, nerf war, or scavenger hunt	Quality Time try to spend one on one time with each family member.	Call & talk to a loved one or send them a letter.	Go for a walk and clean up your neighborhood	Pray together - be specific blessings & concerns	Random act of kindness for someone in our church.
Attend Lenten services. 	Family movie night snuggles	Family Bible study - topic Love	Write cards of encouragement to a nursing home or hospital.	Random act of kindness for a neighbor.	Parent Date Night	Buy a few extra groceries and donate them to a food pantry.
Make a care package for someone.	Words of affirmation - hide notes for them to find.	Acts of Service for each family member or draw names.	Make a card or drawing for a friend or family member.	Gifts small surprises homemade or purchased thoughtfulness is key.	Kids plan the fun!	Reading Party snuggle up with your loved ones and a good book. Read to someone younger than you.

BELONG

J.O.Y. GROUP (Just Older Youth 55 and older!)

Wednesday, February 14 (Ash Wednesday)

We will be providing lunch after the 11:00a worship service.

Thursday, March 14

Join us for a Game Day from 1:00p to 3:00p. We will have board games as well as decks of cards. Attendees are encouraged to bring their favorite games and snacks to share.

"SAVE THE DATE" for the annual Tin Caps Game on Tuesday, June 18. The entire congregation is invited and tickets are \$14.00. It is Parkview Field Tuesday \$2.00 night.

GAP MINISTRY—February 17/18

St. Michael believes in the importance of prayer. God Answers Prayer members want to pray for you and with you. Join them in the conference room after the services.

PRAYING FOR OUR NATION—February 7/21

Join us at 1:30p in the Lobby as we pray for our leaders and our nation. We will meet regularly on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Please connect with Christine Harrison for more information and to engage in this ministry (charrison75@comcast.net).

PURLS— February 6/20

This fun group meets from 1:00p-3:00p on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Everyone who knits, crochets or wants to learn is welcome to join! The St. Michael PURLS knit and crochet shawls that are available to give to a person who is ill, suffering a loss, or in the midst of a life crisis. A supply of shawls is available in the lobby for members to take and present to someone in need. Direct your questions to Pat Armstrong through the church office.



COFFEE BREAK WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY—February 14/28

Join us the second and fourth Wednesdays at 9:15a for Christian fellowship and the study of God's Word!



BOOK CLUB—Thursday, February 15

This month we are reading *Housemaid* by Freida McFadden. Because January was canceled due to weather, we will also discuss *Lessons in Chemistry*. Contact Camille Blake at 409-9196 with questions.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE IN WORSHIP

Ushering & Greeting is a wonderful way to serve together as a family! Would you consider serving with your son/daughter or grandson/granddaughter? Thank you! Please contact Dave Crow, lead usher at dcrowboilers65@icloud.com or Jen Chafee at jenchafee5@yahoo.com to sign up!

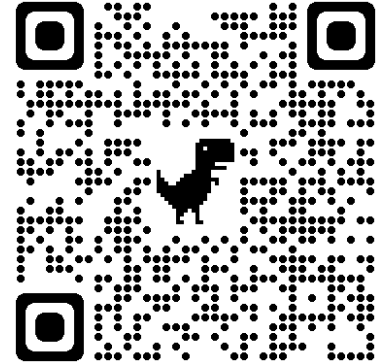
EMMANUEL-ST. MICHAEL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ESM KINDERGARTEN & PRESCHOOL INFORMATION AND ENROLLMENT SESSIONS

Are you exploring Preschool or Kindergarten options for your child? Do you have a friend or neighbor who is looking for an excellent school for their family? With a long history of academic achievement, Emmanuel-St. Michael Lutheran School exceeds the standard for excellence of education in northeast Indiana. However, at ESM we hope to provide even more. In partnership with families, that foundation of faith, academic excellence, and preparation for a life of service and leadership is formed. Come learn more! REGISTER ONLINE at www.esmeagles.com.

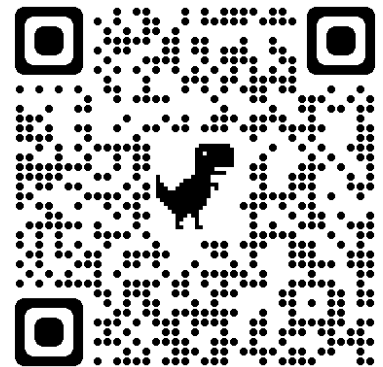
KINDERGARTEN Information and Enrollment Sessions:

- Thursday, February 15
- 6:30p-8:00p | Getz Road Campus - 2131 Getz Road
- Bring your future student for a fun activity with teachers!
- Childcare provided for siblings



PRESCHOOL Information and Enrollment Sessions:

- Thursday, February 1 | Getz Road Campus - 2131 Getz Road
OR Thursday, February 8 | Union Street Campus - 1123 Union Street
- 6:30p-7:30p
- Information session for parents
- Childcare provided



QUESTIONS? - Contact Erin Clark, Director of Admissions
422-6712 | eclark@esmeagles.com | www.esmeagles.com



SAVE THE DATE FOR EAGLES RISE 2024!

Please join us for Eagles Rise, Emmanuel-St. Michael's annual fellowship and fundraising event, on **Friday, March 8** at Goeglein's Homestead. The evening will provide an opportunity for parents, supporters of ESM, former students, teachers and administrators to gather, share fellowship and raise money for our school. Watch for more information coming soon!

ST. MICHAEL FINANCIAL UPDATE

January to December 2023

<u>INCOME</u>	Actual	Budgeted	Actual vs budget
Offerings	\$1,649,866	\$1,658,900	\$(9,034)
Facility	\$13,521	\$12,500	\$1,021
Interest	\$21,854	\$7,000	\$14,854
Grants	\$21,057	\$30,263	\$(9,206)
Fellowship	\$1,870	\$-	\$1,870
ESM/CLHS Support	\$4,149	\$4,500	\$(351)
Misc.	\$3,432	\$1,500	\$1,932
Total Income	\$1,715,749	\$1,714,663	\$1,086
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Missions	\$24,942	\$26,569	\$(1,627)
Education	\$656,750	\$656,750	\$-
Youth & Family	\$15,332	\$18,500	\$(3,168)
Administrative	\$39,267	\$33,350	\$5,917
Pastoral Support	\$8,377	\$9,195	\$(818)
Worship	\$11,369	\$13,695	\$(2,326)
Boards & Committees	\$12,821	\$15,300	\$(2,479)
Utilities, Maintenance & Supplies	\$179,119	\$180,990	\$(1,871)
Salaries	\$568,929	\$575,698	\$(6,769)
Taxes and Benefits	\$168,228	\$176,816	\$(8,588)
Nursery, Gym Setup, Worship	\$7,833	\$7,800	\$33
Total Expenses	\$1,692,967	\$1,714,663	\$(21,696)
Net Income (Loss)	\$22,782	\$-	\$22,782

Thanks to the Lord for His abundant provisions and for your support of St. Michael ministries! In December, we received almost \$200,000 in offerings, which ends the year for St. Michael in favorable financial position.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I get my 2023 Offering Statement?

1. Check your email. Statements were emailed on January 25.
2. If you can't find it, check out the instructions below or email jmlee3@gmail.com.

How do I increase my online offering?

You can email our financial secretary at jmlee3@gmail.com with the following information:

- The current amount and the new amount you want to increase it to
- The effective date of the increase
- **Why did my online offering remain the same even though I increased my 2024 pledge from 2023?**
- First, thank you for committing to support St. Michael Ministries. Your pledge does not give us authority to increase or decrease your offerings. We are happy to assist you, but we will need you to email jmlee3@gmail.com with the current offering, new offering, and effective date.

How to Retrieve Your Offering Statements

1. Go to <https://stmfw.fellowshiponego.com>.
2. Logon with your user name and password. If you do not know your user name and password, email tammy@stmfw.org or click on Forgot Password.
3. Click on the circle in the top right corner with your initials. You will be taken to your profile.
4. Select GIVING (Exhibit A).
5. This will display your pledges and all your offering history.
6. Select STATEMENT (Exhibit B).
7. Click on the required date filter (Exhibit C) and which transactions you want to include on your statement (ALL, tax deductible (YES), or non-tax deductible (NO)).
8. Click on DOWNLOAD at the bottom of the window.

If you have any questions or would like the church office to print you a copy, feel free to reach out to Tammy Bruns, Executive Director, at tammy@stmfw.org.

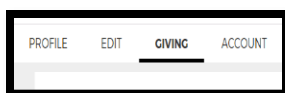


Exhibit A



Exhibit B

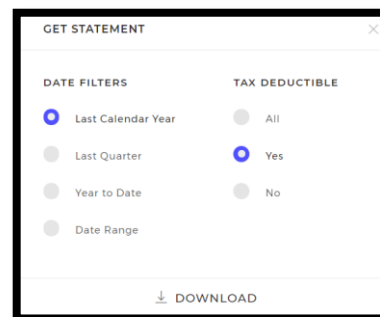


Exhibit C

STEWARDSHIP

A donor-advised fund is a powerful generosity tool. Is it a tool that is right for you? Here's how it works:

1. **Add money to your DAF**
2. **Get an immediate tax deduction for your giving**
3. **Give from your DAF to just about any registered charity**

But you are already giving right now, right? Why do anything differently?

1) Managing Receipts: You get **one itemized receipt** at the end of the year for all your DAF giving. No more chasing down receipts from 15 organizations.

2) Anonymous Giving: When you give from your DAF, your giving can be completely anonymous (though it doesn't have to be).

3) Lump Sum Giving: Receive a large bonus? Sell your business? Avoid the massive taxes now while you decide how you want to give it.

4) Non-Cash Gifts: If you have **stocks, real estate, or other investments** that have appreciated, you can move them into your DAF and give away the returns *tax-free*. That's right, *no capital gains tax*.

5) Compounding Tax Savings: There are countless layers of tax savings that can maximize the impact of your giving through a DAF.

6) Tax-Free Growth: As you grant the funds in your DAF to other ministries, any funds remaining in your account are invested and multiplied *tax-free*.

This article was adapted from Finish Line Ministries

LUTHERAN LAYMANS LEAGUE

Celebrate with the Indiana LLL District at their annual convention at St. Michael on Saturday, March 16. All are welcome to attend. Our guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker of the Lutheran Hour® focusing on Energizing Mission along with Rev. Jason Taber, Outreach Pastor, Cornerstone Lutheran Church, Indianapolis Campus.

Doors open at 9:00a with the convention beginning at 9:30a and concluding with a worship service at 2:30p. The registration fee is \$20 which includes lunch.

Join us for a day of spiritual growth with inspirational presentations to encourage and equip you as partners in His mission. Complete the registration form at the Information Desk and return with your registration fee to Rick Hoffmann, Indiana LLL District President, 10510 River Birch Run, Ft. Wayne, IN 46814. If you have any questions or need more information you can contact Rick by phone: 442-4550; email: rhoffmann.sphr@gmail.com. Registration deadline is March 5. You can also register to attend here: <https://stmfw.org/register>.

WHAT ARE ST. MICHAEL'S FAVORITE BIBLE VERSES? CHECK OUT THIS AMAZING VIDEO!

<https://youtu.be/l3yVwxwGo04>

ELDERS

WHO IS YOUR ELDER?

You are encouraged to contact an elder any time you feel a spiritual need or concern! You are free to connect with **any** elder. Please call the church office at 432-2033 with questions. Below are the email addresses for all elders. Their phone numbers can be found in F1Go. Information also is available on the church bulletin board! Please do not hesitate to reach out to an elder if you have a spiritual need. They are here to help you.

Craig Patterson

cpatterson@beckmanlawson.com

Ryan Meyer

ryanlmeyer68@gmail.com

Adam Hahn

jjandak@cinergymetro.net

John Baker

jdbake22@gmail.com

John Hein

JHein@brotherhoodmutual.com

John Hendrickson

jlh1051@gmail.com

Keith Miller

keithcherimiller@frontier.com

Bob Boyd

jdalesells@yahoo.com

Mark Muntzinger

Mark.Muntzinger21@gmail.com

Michael Kuhn

mdkuhn8214@gmail.com

Nathan Nix

nathananix@gmail.com

Paul Selking

pselking1@gmail.com

Jeremy Allyn

energymanallyn@gmail.com

Bob Cole

bob51cole@aol.com

Al Claus

aclaus4@yahoo.com

Steve Manges

slmanges@gmail.com

Paul Leininger

Indylein@comcast.net



GOD'S BLESSINGS ON OUR FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES!

God's blessings to...	Day	Years	God's blessings to...	Day	Years
Jeremy and Rian Faux	2	17	Jim and Karen Martin	17	51
Dick and Susan Fox	3	45	Bob and Vickie Scholl	23	50
David and Lori Hudson	6	53	Nathan and Bethany Wickert	23	22
Dan and Karen Clendenen	7	48	Dean and Christy Willson	23	33
Ron and April Cohen	8	21	Jason and Renee Hoagland	24	17
Dave and Amy Crow	8	2	Mike and Suanne Roemer	27	59
Gary and Norma Endersby	14	48			

FEBRUARY BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS



We will celebrate baptism birthdays on February 17/18. Please pray for Brody Bienz; Ryker Bolinger; Owen Bostwick; Frank Cavazuti; Griffin Coe; Daniel Davis; Ivy Murphy; Nadelyn Roehm; Maggie Schwyn; Jack Tourney; and Lincon Woolwine.

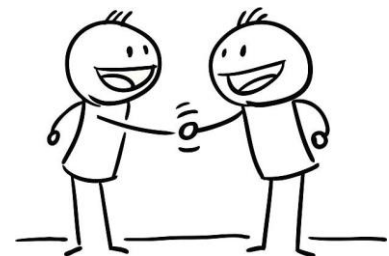
FEBRUARY MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

God's blessings to: Sonja Sodano, 2/1, 83; Carol Korte, 2/2, 83; Mike Bristol, 2/3, 80; Margaret Jones, 2/13, 82; Peggy Macke, 2/18, 87; Jim Biddle, 2/28, 85. **Happy Birthday!**

CHECK OUT OUR TOWN HALL MEETINGS!

St. Michael will be hosting town hall meetings in the coming weeks, and we invite you to be a part of the conversation. As our congregation grows, how can we continue to serve faithfully and function efficiently? A committee has been reviewing St. Michael's governance structure and wants to share how some updates could help our staff and volunteers serve the church even more effectively. Join us for one of these 60 minute sessions to learn more, ask questions, and see how we can all work together.

- **February 11** 9:30a during Adult Bible Class in the Gym
- **February 20** 1:00p during JOY Group in Luther Hall
- **February 29** 6:30p at St. Michael in Luther Hall
- **March 3** 12:00p at St. Michael in Luther Hall
- **March 12** 6:30p online via Zoom
- **March 16** 6:15p following Saturday night service in Luther Hall



May the Lord prosper these efforts so that St. Michael can continue to be a place where all are equipped and encouraged to belong, become, and bless!