

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

Next weekend is **God's Work Our Hands** (GWOH) weekend (September 12-13). St. Paul though never needs a special weekend to serve the community but it does give us an opportunity to do something different than we normally do. This year we are partnering with Grace-based Grief Resources for Children (www.ggrchelpers.org). Their slogan is helping the helpers to help children.

This organization provides **Kids Comfort Kits** for professional helpers to distribute to children navigating loss or trauma. They are given to first responders, children's hospitals, etc. Each kit contains a Teddy Bear, crayons, coloring book, stickers, and a blanket. On **Saturday, September 12 at 12noon in the Fellowship Hall** we will put together the kits and bless them during worship on Sunday. We would like to raise \$1,500 for this organization on top of putting the kits together. **Any donation toward this amount will be greatly appreciated.** A note on your offering envelope or check or in the comment section through our online giving that says Bear Bags, GWOH, or Comfort Kits will all get the money to the right account.

As many of you know, the story about St. Paul's architectural gem of a campus and the desire for St. Paul to use it as an asset for the community is what drew me to ask the Bishop's office if I could interview to be your pastor. It's been almost nine years and we continue to work and pray for what ways we can continue to do that.

We are now embarking on a partnership with Architecture Sarasota (www.architecturesarasota.org) to help us continue to envision how our campus could be "a model for how preservation, design, and housing can work together to address contemporary community needs. We are starting to explore a new future for the property, one that preserves and adaptively uses its distinctive architecture while introducing inspired, attainable housing to help address one of the region's most pressing needs.

Central to this initiative is an extraordinary academic collaboration with Florida Atlantic University, the University of Southern California, and the University of Florida. During this current 2026-2027 academic year, a total of seven upper-division design studios will use St. Paul as a living laboratory. Faculty and students will investigate the site at multiple scales, developing alternative master plans for the campus, designs for new housing, and strategies for the adaptive use of one or more of Lundy's buildings.

The collaboration embodies Architecture Sarasota's approach to applied research: bringing together universities, designers, community partners, and stakeholders to explore possibilities before decisions are made and a strategy is developed. The resulting work will help establish a vision for St. Paul that honors an important architectural legacy while demonstrating how thoughtful design can help address the most pressing needs of Sarasota and other communities." (This quote is from Architecture Sarasota August e-newsletter).

I love this last paragraph in how it sets the stage for us. This is just the beginning of exploring possibilities, so nothing is set in stone. We are gathering information and designs (with no cost to St. Paul) to help us create a strategy that St. Paul as a congregation will have all the final decisions on.

The students from Florida Atlantic University will be on our campus on Thursday, September 17, 2:30-4:30 to see our property. They have already been working on the project so on Friday, September 18 at 5:30p at the Pavilion of Architecture Sarasota they will be presenting their initial analysis and research. We are welcomed and encouraged to attend this presentation. The address for the Pavilion is 265 South Orange Avenue. If you want to carpool as there is limited parking, please let me know and we can organize it.

Take care and God bless
-PrAshley