

# The Messenger



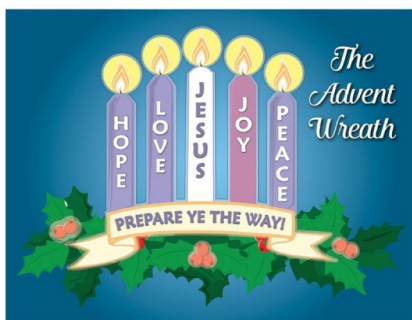
Monthly publication of St. Paul Lutheran Church  
& Early Childhood Learning Center

DECEMBER 2023

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

Happy December. This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. It's actually my favorite way for it to fall on the calendar. It typically means that Advent is all in December rather than starting at the end of November. The turkey and Thanksgiving gets its full month before Santa comes in.

But now, it's Santa's turn. Now I'm okay with all the Christmas songs and decorations. Let's prepare!



Advent is the preparing time for the arrival of Jesus, both in the celebration of his birth, but also the recognition that He will come again. So throughout this month of December, we prepare. We prepare in many ways at the church: with Christmas trees and manger scenes, A *Visit with Santa* for the kids on Dec. 9, with three soup suppers held on Wednesday nights at 6p (Dec. 5, 13 and 20), with the Holden Evening Prayer service on Wednesday, Dec. 6 and 13 at 7:00p where we

will hear about Mary, the mother of our Lord's story, with Blue Christmas worship on December 20 at 7:00p where we will have time to reflect on the ways that Christmas isn't always about happiness and brightness but how God is still with us in grief and sadness, and even with the Sunday worship where the candles of the Advent wreath will be lit by a different family each week, with all of this leading up to December 24, Christmas Eve.

We will worship in the morning of Sunday, Dec. 24 at 9:30a like a typical Sunday morning. This will be the fourth Sunday of Advent, as it falls on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. This will be our final preparation for Christmas Eve night. We will get all the Nativity pieces in place and sing some Christmas songs that will prepare us for Christmas Eve worship later that night. At 7:00p we will have our Traditional Candlelight and Holy Communion service. Our bell and vocal choirs will lead us in singing Christmas carols to celebrate Jesus's birth. We will finally be able to put Jesus in the nativity scene while singing Happy Birthday to him.

And Christmas Eve is really just the beginning of our celebration of Jesus' birth. Come Christmas Day, Santa will be back in the North Pole, but our 12 Days of Christmas have just begun. While we won't have worship on Christmas Day, and the church office will be closed, I encourage you all to do something each of the 12 Days of Christmas to celebrate Jesus' birth. Sing a Christmas carol, say a prayer, help someone in need, or give a gift; and do it in the name of Jesus' birth. Merry Christmas!

Take care and God bless.

DrAshley

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# Council News

## Congregation Council November Synopsis

The Congregation Council met for its regular monthly meeting on November 20, in person and by Zoom at 6:30p.

- The draft of the proposed spending plan for 2024 was presented. Members discussed it and will ratify the final document by email prior to the Special Congregation Meeting scheduled for Dec. 10.
- Ratified the email vote to approve the submittal to the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the mandated national church changes to our Constitution.
- Ratified the email vote to approve the change in Section 16:01 of the Constitution from the percentage of voting members to a number of voting members.
- Approved the acquisition of Naloxone for emergency use subject to the policy and procedures set forth by the Safety and Emergency Preparedness Ministry team.
- Approved Kevin Flanigan as a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

### Executive Committee



## Message from the Church Office

**Pastor Ashley and the Parish Administrator will never email or text you asking for donations of money or gift cards.**

Please ignore these scammers. You should always contact the church office if you are not sure.



The Messenger is the newsletter of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

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St. Paul Lutheran Church is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA.

Pastor: Rev. Ashley Nicolls

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Donald J. Hillerich

### Executive Committee

George Hutfilz, president  
Judy Carnal, vice president  
Sharon Wittren, secretary  
Marty Hillerich, treasurer

### Congregation Council

Irene Felicetti, Carol Grosch, Judy Carnal, Lori Fountain, Amy Hildreth, Alexandra Wise, George Hutfilz, Marty Hillerich, Bob Lariviere, Daniel Mills, Judy Roberts, Susy Scholl, Ron Zimmerman, Pastor Ashley Nicolls

### Ministry Team Leaders

Sharing & Caring – Jan Kruse  
Christian Education –  
Communications – Sue Scherr  
Early Childhood Learning Cntr – Marilyn Hutfilz  
Evangelism – Bob Lariviere  
Safety & Emergency Preparedness - Cindy Paxton  
Fellowship – Carol Grosch & Alexandra Wise  
Finance –  
Food Pantry – George Hutfilz  
Outreach Ministry Fund – Daniel Mills  
Property – **Seeking volunteer leader**  
Social – Judy Roberts  
Stewardship – George & Marilyn Hutfilz  
Worship and Music – Sharon Wittren  
Parish Administrator – Tracy Bateman  
Director of Music – John Ferreira

The Messenger is published monthly and distributed without charge to St. Paul Lutheran congregation members and friends.

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**MISSION STATEMENT** As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we are called through Baptism to proclaim and bear witness to God's reconciling grace in Jesus Christ to all; so that by joyfully sharing God's Word and encouraging each other to service for the sake of others, our lives together make a difference for Christ and His kingdom.

# ECLC News



On October 20, our ECLC students were visited by our local firefighter community helpers. They learned about basic safety practices, how to participate in a group activity as well as what our community partners do. Thanks to our local fire department for visiting and conveying the importance of preparedness and what your job entails.



Early Childhood Learning Center  
Lisa McLean, Director  
Iven Ayad, Assistant Director StPaulECLC@verizon.net





## Ministry Corner

### Part 4: Social Ministry Part I

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Social Ministry is an important ministry of our church.

The Community Meal, which we host every Tuesday, is an incredibly important ministry that allows for our guests to receive warm, delicious meals prepared by volunteers from our congregation and United Church of Christ and Faith Lutheran. From the first of the year through the end of October we have served a grand total of 1,796 people, a whopping 3,860 meals, and the numbers keep on growing! In January, for example, we served 179 guests and then 240 guests this past October. We guarantee that every person who walks through our doors receives a meal, and possibly a second helping as well as offering to-go meals. This ministry operated during the Covid-19 pandemic, through hurricanes, and even holidays, highlighting how vital we believe this is for our community.

None of this would be possible without the hardworking hands of many people. Every week we have to devise the menu, go shopping, cook the massive amount of food, serve each person, and clean up. For a lot of our guests, this is the only hot meal that they may receive during the week, so we are sure to approach this ministry with care and diligence. Every person who comes to this meal is always very appreciative of the food we give them and the fellowship offered as well.

Another ministry that is run weekly is the Food Pantry, which continues to grow. From January through the end of October this year, we have served approximately 3,200 households, 6,000 adults and 900 children. This is an incredible feat!

Once again, a lot of hard work and selflessness goes into the Food Pantry by a large group of volunteers who have put in over 1,700 hours to keep this ministry running. Members of our community receive a bag of food staples as well as a couple of loaves of bread, meat, fresh fruits and vegetables, and various sweets. Just recently we gave out turkeys to people in preparation for Thanksgiving.

Some of our volunteers also receive the food from All Faith's Food Bank, organize it, place staples in bags, and fill the refrigerators and freezers prior to any guests coming on Saturday for distribution. Some volunteers on Saturdays get to the Fellowship Hall by 7:00a to start to set up for Food Pantry, and there are already people lined up to receive food. The doors open for registration and distribution at 9:00a. The need is certainly great in our community.

Together, with the Community Meal and Food Pantry, we at St. Paul strive to keep our community fed, nourished, and cared for.

Our sincere thanks to all who vounteer for this important minstry of St. Paul.

Judy Roberts  
Social Ministry Chair





## Hope Seeds

God's Work. Our Hands.

Come join us to socialize, have fun and make a difference in the world. We fill several thousand small bags with seeds which will be sent to several countries so families can grow their own food. We gather the third Monday of every month. Come when you can, leave when you must. The next gathering will be on December 18.

## Son Day School

This faith building opportunity meets each Sunday after worship in the Fellowship Hall. Join this group and reflect on Sunday's worship readings, sermon, and whatever else!

Grab a coffee and something sweet first at Social & Coffee Hour!



## Prayer Ministry

St. Paul offers many ways to pray with and for loved ones, the community, and the world!

**Online Prayer Chain** - an email goes out weekly with prayer requests. Please let PrAshley know if you want to be a prayerer.

**Prayer Crosses** - Located in the Fellowship Hall, the Sanctuary, and outside for prayers to be placed either in or on. Any prayer request put on the cross in the FH or Sanctuary will be put on the outside Hope Cross.

**Prayer Zoom** - Talking with God (see below) facilitated by Deacon Kim Heindl meets every Thursday at 4:00p.

## Talking with God

As people of faith it is quite natural that we talk to God. In quiet moments, in moments of uncertainty or challenge, and in times of joy. It is part of our worship and helps us grow personally and communally in our relationship with Jesus. I would like to invite you to join a group of us that gather every Thursday at 4p via Zoom. We talk, share our lives, joys, concerns, and we pray. No stress and easy to be part of! Follow the link below (it is the same every week) or email Kimberly Heindl for an invitation: [kaheindl@comcast.net](mailto:kaheindl@comcast.net).

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81662784525pwd=QSt4TGNSR2F3L0ovUDJ3SVdWbjRYUT09>

Meeting ID: 816 6278 4525

Passcode: 628552

# THEY'RE BACK! ...Oink, Moo, Cluck, Bah, Bzz...

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The Good Gifts ornaments will be displayed on the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall beginning Sunday, December 3. You can choose one or more ornaments to donate to the ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts program and this year, as happened last year, your donation will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000 by an anonymous donor. We are also anticipating some support from the OMF and ECLC, as they will also be participating and teaching the students how they can help other children far from our community. What a great way to help our brothers and sisters from around the world!

Each ornament will have a gift you can purchase with prices ranging from \$10-\$500. Here is a sample of what the ornaments will include:

- Barnyard animals (cows, sheep, goats, chicks, and piglets)
- Honey bees
- Water jugs
- Mosquito nets
- Vaccinations
- And more...

For the more expensive animals, such as a cow or sheep, please consider purchasing as a family or a group of friends to help offset the cost.



We will be in the Fellowship Hall after the worship service for assistance on Sunday, December 3, 10, and 17. Call Cindy Paxton at 941-586-0192 or email [cindypaxton12@outlook.com](mailto:cindypaxton12@outlook.com) with any questions. Please make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church and note Good Gifts on the check. Please no IOUs - there will be plenty of ornaments to purchase on these three Sundays.

Thank you for sharing and for helping to make this Christmas a little brighter for others.

For more information about the Good Gifts program, go to [www.ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://www.ELCA.org/goodgifts).



# Harvest Fest

Thanks to all who made this a success.

November 11, 2023



There's a kid in all of us.



A fun time was had by all.



What form!!



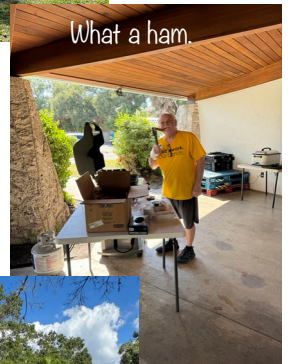
Even the adults had a good time!



Grillmaster Frank



Bubby Charlie!



What a ham.



Dr. Ashley batting.



Yummy ice cream!



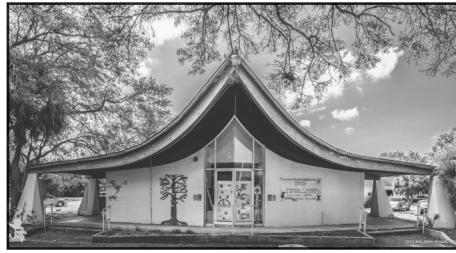
Great swing, Mason!



Rick, it's right there!







## Raise the Roof! Raise the Kids!

Click on the link below to be taken to our MB100 article in the *E-Spirit Newsletter*.

<http://bit.ly/savetherooftoraisethekids>



**Help us save artist architect Victor A. Lundy's soaring beams by donating to the St. Paul Education Building Renovation Campaign. Thank you.**

Donations may be placed in the offering plate on Sundays, or mailed to the church office. Be sure to indicate that it is for the campaign. Thank you.

For online giving: <http://bit.ly/3ZZOdoH>

## Save the Dates

December 10 - Annual Meeting following worship around 10:30a. The spending plan, as well as council and nominating team elections will take place. Please plan on attending as a quorum is needed.

January 14- February 4 - "Where have you been?" Last year we focused on where we are from, and this year it will be where we have been. So get out your travelogues and mementos, and join us during Coffee Hour following worship in the Fellowship Hall.

January 14 - Free concert at Arlington Park sponsored by the Arlington Park Neighborhood. Let's be good neighbors and show up to get to know who lives near our church. Time yet to be determined.

January 2- March 12 - Find Peace in Your Week -this worship service beginning at 6:15p will be a nurturing, hopeful gathering filled with music, inspiration, prayer, and a sense of community. We are inviting Community Meal guests to this worship opportunity following their meal. We also want to share this new worship opportunity with the school and neighborhood. All are invited to attend.



- Dec. 3 Theresa Alger
- Dec. 6 John Miller
- Dec. 7 John Puckhaber
- Dec. 8 Wilma Panthana
- Dec. 11 Judy Roberts
- Dec. 14 Sandy Choquette
- Dec. 15 Tyler Riley
- Dec. 18 Robyn Wood
- Dec. 21 Virginia McQuaig
- Dec. 26 Ashtyn Keifer
- Dec. 29 Wilma Armstrong
- Dec. 29 Pamela Collis
- Dec. 29 Patricia Collis
- Dec. 30 Earleen Ashbrook

*Happy Anniversary*

- Dec. 7 Evelyn & Pete Gulliksen
- Dec. 21 Brenda & Barry Smith

# Thank you!

A BIG thank you to all who attended my 99th birthday celebration, sent cards, flowers, and gifts. I am feeling truly loved by my brothers and sisters of St. Paul. You are all a treasure. Thank you so much.  
Ethel Hamilton

# The Chosen



continues to meet each Wednesday at 4:00p.

Nov. 29	Season 1 Ep. 6&7	"incredible Compassion & "Invitations"
Dec. 6	Season 1 Ep. 8	"I am He"
Dec. 13	Season 2 Ep.1	"Thunder"
Dec. 20	Christmas Special	"The Messengers"
Dec. 27	Season 2 Ep. 2&3	"I Saw You" & "Matthew 4:24"
Jan. 3	Season 2 Ep. 4&5	"The Perfect Opportunity" & "Spirit"
Jan. 10	Season 2 Ep. 6&7	"Unlawful" & "Reckoning"
Jan. 17	Season 2 Ep. 8	"Beyond Mountains"
Jan. 24	Season 3 Ep. 1	"Homecoming"
Jan. 31	Season 3 Ep. 2	"Two by Two"
Feb. 7	Season 3 Ep. 3	"Physician, Heal Yourself"
Feb. 14	Season 3 Ep. 4&5	"Clean, Part 1" & "Clean, Part 2"
Feb. 21	Season 3 Ep. 6	"Intensity in Tent City"
Feb. 28	Season 3 Ep. 7	"Ears to Hear"
March 6	Season 3 Ep. 8	"Sustenance"

# December

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Dec. 2 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
11:00a A Visit with Santa  
for Face Autism

### Dec. 3 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Visit with Santa  
Prep  
10:30a Sharing and  
Caring Ministry Meeting  
10:30a Outreach Ministry  
Meeting  
10:30a Sunday School

### Dec. 4 Monday

7:00p Worship and Music  
Zoom Meeting

### Dec. 5 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Chapel  
11:00a Education  
Building Construction  
Meeting  
5:30p Community Meal

### Dec. 6 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
4:00p *The Chosen* Bible  
Study  
6:00p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup  
Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:45p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 7 Thursday

9:00a Food Pantry Prep  
4:00p Prayer Team Zoom  
Meeting

### Dec. 9 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
2:00p A Visit with Santa

### Dec. 10 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Annual  
Congregation Meeting  
11:00a Sunday School

### Dec. 11 Monday

1:00p EvANGELism  
Ministry Meeting  
6:00p Guitar Sarasota  
Concert

### Dec. 12 Tuesday

**Ministry Reports Due**  
9:30 ECLC Chapel  
5:30p Community Meal

### Dec. 13 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
4:00p *The Chosen* Bible  
Study  
6:00p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup  
Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:45p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 14 Thursday

9:30 Food Pantry Prep  
12:00p Finance Meeting  
Zoom  
12:00p Prayer Shawl  
Group  
1:00p Executive Team  
Meeting  
4:00p Prayer Team Zoom  
Meeting

### Dec. 15 Friday

**Messenger Deadline**

### Dec. 16 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
1:00p Guitar Sarasota

### Dec. 17 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Sunday School

### Dec. 18 Monday

1:00p Hope Seeds

### Dec. 19 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Chapel  
11:00a Education  
Building Construction  
Meeting  
5:30p Community Meal

### Dec. 20 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
4:00p *The Chosen* Bible  
Study  
6:00p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup  
Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:45p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 21 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
4:00p Prayer Team Zoom  
Meeting  
6:30p Council Meeting

### Dec. 23 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution

### Dec. 24 Sunday

**Christmas Eve**  
9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Sunday School  
7:00p Christmas Eve  
Worship Service

### Dec. 25 Monday

**Christmas Day**  
**Office Closed**

### Dec. 26 Tuesday

5:30 Community Meal

### Dec. 27 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
4:00p *The Chosen* Bible  
Study

### Dec. 28 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
4:00p Prayer Team Zoom  
Meeting

### Dec. 30 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry

### Dec. 31 Sunday

**New Year's Eve**  
9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Sunday School





•For all those serving in the U.S. Military •The homeless in our neighborhood, our city, our nation and the world. •The Florida Bahamas Synod Office of the Bishop Staff: Bishop Pedro, Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Khader, Rob C., Rob R., and Pr. Nicole in the Bishop’s office, Specialists Kim, Brittney, & Stephen, Support Staff Tina, Yuliet, & Ileana. •SURE - Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. •Community Meal & Food Pantry Guests. •Our members and our preschool teachers and students, and our Arlington Park neighborhood.

<p><b>Members</b>                  Beetle Family                  John Beyer                  Henry Blosser                  Susan Burmaster                  Sue Fisher                  Bob Fong                  Cecilia Morvick                  Jean Panthana                  James Paulsson                  John Puckhaber                  John Ryan                  Susy Scholl                  Betty Snowton                  Ted Swartzbaugh                  Sandy Tull                  Ginger Webb                  Karin Zukowski</p> <p><b>Homebound Members</b>                  Theresa Alger                  Sharyn Brodnax                  Joan Caddell                  Donna Casala                  June Manselle                  Virginia McQuaig                  Michael Reiter                  Carole Wilson</p> <p><b>Friends and Family</b>                  David - <i>Cody Eddleman’s step-dad</i>                  Debbie - <i>Scherr’s friend</i>                  LaShonda - <i>John Beyer’s friend</i>                  Marc - <i>Susy Scholl’s friend</i>                  Marilyn - <i>S. Weckwerth’s aunt</i>                  Susan &amp; Jim - <i>Cindy Paxton’s friends</i>                  Sandi Acevedo - <i>Acevedos sister-in-law</i>                  Joseph Alfini - <i>friend of Susy Scholl</i></p>	<p>Clinton Allen - <i>Jim Paulsson’s friend</i>                  Buete &amp; Pearson family - <i>Brian McCulley’s family</i>                  Caroline Burmaster - <i>Susan Burmaster’s sister-in-law</i>                  Kathleen Cannon - <i>Puckhabers’ friend</i>                  Alice Chanover - <i>Puckhabers’ friend</i>                  Jessica Clements - <i>Kathie Snyder’s friend</i>                  Mike Cunningham - <i>H. Roberts’ friend</i>                  Cody Eddleman - <i>John Beyer’s husband</i>                  John &amp; Joy Emanuelli - <i>Roberts’ friends</i>                  Gladys Faraone - <i>H. Robert’s friend</i>                  John Foor - <i>Ryan’s friend</i>                  Gallagher Family - <i>Dorothy Boller’s in-laws</i>                  Lily Gibson - <i>Susy Scholl’s neice</i>                  Lois Heisler - <i>Susy Scholl’s niece</i>                  Niklaus Heisler - <i>Irene Felicetti’s great-grandson</i>                  Katy Hernandez - <i>M. Acevedo’s niece</i>                  David Jackerson - <i>Susy Scholl’s son</i>                  Philip Koepke - <i>Irene Felicetti’s friend</i>                  Kate Kretschmann - <i>Lindy Lindemann’s family</i>                  Karen Kugler - <i>Marty Hillerich’s friend</i>                  John Logan - <i>Judy Carnal’s brother</i>                  Kenny Manselle - <i>June Manselle’s son</i>                  Shirley &amp; Dan Martin - <i>Susy Scholl’s friends</i>                  David McCall - <i>Judy Roberts’ brother</i>                  Fran McCracken - <i>Kathy Snyder’s friend</i>                  Marsha McKinney - <i>former member</i>                  Pam Mills - <i>Daniel Mills’ sister</i></p>	<p>Becky Nobles - <i>Lindy Lindermann’s friend</i>                  Linda &amp; Jim Norris - <i>Doris Scholotterback’s family</i>                  Karen Paulsson - <i>Jim Paulsson’s sister</i>                  Terry Panthana - <i>Jean Panthana’s niece</i>                  Hannah Puckhaber - <i>regular attender</i>                  Manny Rivas - <i>Cindy Schlotterback’s friend</i>                  Nola Ruth - <i>ECLC student</i>                  Clint Shantz - <i>former member</i>                  Brian, Kenny &amp; Tommy Schlotterback - <i>Doris Scholotterback’s sons</i>                  Cynthia Lu Scholl - <i>Susy Scholl’s sister</i>                  Rob Scianni - <i>Sciannis’ son</i>                  Donna Shepherd - <i>Gail Seyfarth’s sister</i>                  Joan Simone - <i>Puckhabers’ friend</i>                  Bethany Smith - <i>Smiths’ daughter</i>                  Muriel Stephenson - <i>JoAnn Jordan’s sister</i>                  Noel Scott Studenwalt - <i>Smiths’ nephew</i>                  Jean Taffe &amp; family - <i>Susan Burmaster’s cousin</i>                  Elaine &amp; Mark Vanderweight - <i>Jim Paulsson’s friends</i>                  David Weinberger - <i>Puckhabers’ friend</i>                  John &amp; Janet Welther - <i>Ethel Hamilton’s family</i>                  Dottie Lynne White - <i>Susy Scholl’s sister</i>                  Michael Whitney - <i>Jan Kruse’s son-in-law</i>                  Judith Wismer - <i>Community Meal guest</i></p>
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“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble, with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” 2Corinthians 1:3-4

## St. Paul Lutheran Church

& Early Childhood Learning Center

2256 Bahia Vista Street, Sarasota, FL 34239

☎ 941-955-6479 Preschool 941-955-6480

📞 940 -955-8600

🌐 [www.StPaulSarasota.org](http://www.StPaulSarasota.org)

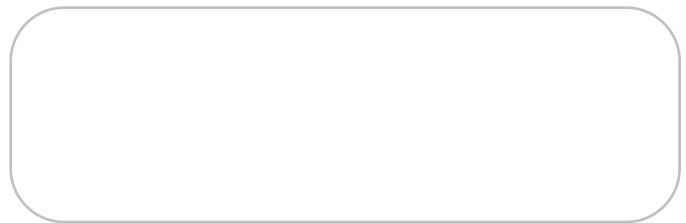
**Rev. Ashley Nicolls, Pastor**

**Rev. Don Hillerich, Pastor Emeritus**

### Sunday Schedule

9:30a Service of Worship In-person

9:30a Service of Worship on Facebook Live



## St. Paul Mission Prayer

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God of grace and love, you created us as your children and have brought us to St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are not perfect people, but this church is the perfect place for imperfect people. Thank you for your grace through Christ given to us. You call us to proclaim to everyone we meet that your grace is for them too. As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we ask you to help us joyfully share your word and serve your people, so that together our lives make a difference in your kingdom here on earth. Strengthen us in our mission together; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.