

The Messenger



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

AUGUST 2026

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

Happy August! This month's article is going to be a little different than normal but it's kind of where my head is at writing this on the day of the Major League Baseball All-Star game and heading into August, so I thought I would share.

Many of you know I am a big baseball fan. I have often found connections between baseball and religion. We even once did a Holy Humor Sunday based on baseball. Where the book of Genesis begins with "In the Beginning", I often wondered if it was really In the Big Inning 😊 as the joke goes. And of course, the idea of making our way home is another easy connection. And a lot of faith goes into being a fan of any team.

My two favorite movies are "The Field of Dreams" and "A League of Their Own". And this August they are both coming to life in a new way for me. "The Field of Dreams" movie is about a man named Moonlight Graham who played in only one game in Major League Baseball. He played in the outfield, never got a ball hit to him, and never had an at-bat. When the season was over, he quit and became a doctor in a small town in northern Minnesota. I played Little League baseball in that small town named Chisholm, MN. Growing up (and still today) Chisholm has Doc Graham Days. The field where the movie took place was in Dyersville, Iowa. While growing up the Ghost Players from Dyersville would come to Chisholm and put on baseball clinics for the kids. Dyersville is just a half an hour from where I went to seminary, so while I was at seminary I would go see these same Ghost Players and show them pictures of them and me from 10 years earlier. The movie has had a wonderful following for decades. Now Major League Baseball for the 3rd time will have a game at the field in Dyersville. This year, it's the Minnesota Twins (my favorite team) playing there for the first time on August 13.

Probably my favorite line, that to me sums up the beauty of baseball and religion, is from the James Earl Jones character to the Kevin Costner character. "The one constant through all the years, Ray, has been baseball. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It has been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game: it's a part of our past, Ray. It reminds us of all that once was good, and it could be again. Oh... people will come, Ray. People will most definitely come". To me it lives out the scripture from Philippians 4:8 to hold onto whatever is true, noble, and good.

I said my other favorite movie is "A League of Their Own". The movie is about the women's baseball league during World War II. I played baseball growing up, often one of the only girls playing on boys' teams. I still remember being 9 or 10 years old sitting at the Pizza Hut in our mall after watching the movie and being amazed that other women had played baseball years before me. It gave me encouragement to keep playing the game I loved. I played women's baseball all around the country and Canada from 1998-2008. And now this movie is coming to life again.

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The Women's Professional Baseball League starts its inaugural season August 1. The teams are all named after an influential woman in the city where the team is centered: New York Heights, Boston Hunters, San Francisco Firebells, and Los Angeles Queens. All the games will be played in Springfield, Illinois at the Robin Roberts stadium (no the stadium is not named after Robin Roberts the anchor and sports analyst who was my initial inspiration to becoming a sport reporter. The stadium is named after the Philadelphia Phillies Hall of Fame pitcher from Springfield, Illinois). While many think baseball is for boys/men and softball is for girls/women, this league helps live out the scripture for me that helped me to become a pastor where apostle Paul writes, there is neither male or female in Christ.

If you want more information on the league, here is the website www.womensprobaseballleague.com

Take care and God bless

-DrAshley



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.

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Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Donald J. Hillerich

Executive Committee

JoAnn Jordan, President
Judy Roberts, Vice President
Bob Lariviere, Secretary
George Hutfilz, Treasurer

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Irene Felicetti, George Hutfilz, JoAnn Jordan, Bob Lariviere, Nancy Parmakian, Judy Roberts, Mike Scherr, Esther Smith, Pastor Ashley Nicolls

Ministry Team Leaders and Council Liaison

Cornerstone - Foundational Resources for Ministry
Coordinator - Sue Scherr; **Council Liaison** - Mike Scherr
Early Childhood Learning Center
Coordinator - Sue Scherr; **Council Liaison** - Esther Smith
Invitation & Connection
Coordinator - Bob Lariviere; **Council Liaison** - Bob Lariviere
Mission & Inspiration
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Worship & Music
Coordinator - Earleen Ashbrook; **Council Liaison** - Nancy Parmakian
Parish Administrator - Tracy Bateman
Director of Music - Fonda Davies

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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.

Farewell & Welcome

Fonda's Farewell — August 9

During worship on Sunday, August 9, we will offer a farewell and Godspeed to Fonda Davies, our Director of Music Ministry, and her husband Bill, with thanks for the musical gifts she has shared so generously with this congregation. Please stay afterward to enjoy her final postlude and to thank her personally at a reception in the Fellowship Hall.

Welcome Tambry — August 16

On Sunday, August 16, we will welcome Tambry Schoolcraft as our new Director of Music Ministry. Along with a rich history as a church musician, Tambry serves as a classroom music teacher at Sarasota Christian School. All are invited to introduce themselves during fellowship following worship.

We give thanks for the music that carries our worship — and for those who lead us in it.



Sanctuary Open on Monday & Saturday Mornings

Prayer is Your Personal Conversation with God

St. Paul Lutheran Church constantly supports you in your prayers: Sunday worship; Prayer requests; Community Prayer Cross near Bahia Vista Street; Prayer Box in Fellowship Hall; Online Prayer Chain; Prayer Zoom; and now in the Sanctuary Saturdays 8am - 11am and Mondays 9am - noon.

You are welcome to the Sanctuary quiet to converse with God your way.
Just You and God. Your private thoughts. Sharing with God your thankfulness or your worries.
Know you are not alone.

Narthex News

There is a new inside small library as you walk into the Sanctuary on the right side.

Open Saturday, Sunday and Monday

9:00 - 12:00n

Enjoy Reading

Borrow, Donate, Share



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 pray-er.

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.



Hope Seeds
International Inc

Hope Seeds



Hope Seeds met on Monday, July 20 packing 3,600 okra seed packets to be sent worldwide to help families grow their own food and become self sustaining. Join a great group of people with wonderful conversations. We hope you can join us on August 17 at 1:00p to continue this important ministry. Come when you can, and leave when you must.

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.

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

Meeting ID: 816 6278 4525

Passcode: 628552

Celebrating God's Family



Rooted in Christ!



August 8	Charlie Beetle
August 14	Matthew Miller
August 15	Rev. Ashley Nicolls
August 15	Colleen Miller
August 19	Alison Mills
August 27	Brenda Smith
August 27	Kasthuri Jayaraj



August 8	Manny & Laurie Acevedo
August 23	Mike & Sue Scherr
August 30	Jim & Margaret Bull



Football

It is almost that time of year again for St. Paul Fantasy Football. We would love to have you join the "team" to compete against others loving the game. Just contact Barry Smith at 941-726-9276 by August 15 if interested.

Ringling 101
Learn the ABCs of handbells!

sponsored by
Ring Sarasota

No experience necessary, no commitment, no performances, no pressure!
Enrollment is limited, so please email Terri to register
terri@ringsarasota.org

Mondays: August 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, 2026
6:00 - 7:00 pm
Pine Shores Presbyterian Church
6116 Crestwood Ave.
(2nd floor)
Free! (donations appreciated)

New this year! **Ringling 102** **New this year!**
for more experienced musicians

Want
to
Learn?

Here is your
chance to
learn how to
become a
ringer.

JOIN US SUNDAY, AUGUST 2ND
WORSHIP BEGINS AT 9:30 AM
BLESSING OF THE
BACKPACKS &
SHRIMP BOIL FUN!



Come casual, bring the kids, and get ready for a joyful morning!

Join our whole church family for a joyful, child-friendly worship service as we send our kids into the new school year with God's blessing. Bring your backpack or lunch box — every child (and teacher!) is invited to have their blessed!

During worship, **we'll also share highlights from our week** of Tremendous VBS — come see and celebrate everything your children learned!

After worship, stay for the fun!

🍷 **Shrimp Boil Potluck** — Hot dogs will be available for kids who aren't interested in the beef, chicken or shrimp. Option to bring a side or dessert to share!

🏠 **Bounce House** — for all our kids to enjoy!

A tree-mendous way to celebrate our Tremendous week together.

St. Paul Lutheran Church
2256 Bahia Vista St, Sarasota, FL 34239

Boil
&
Bless

**August 1 Saturday**

9:00a Food Pantry
Distribution
12:00p CPR Training

August 22 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry
Distribution

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 2 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service
11:00a Shrimp Boil/Bless
the Backback VBS
Celebration

August 9 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service

August 15 Saturday

Messenger Deadline

9:00a Food Pantry
Distribution

August 23 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service

August 3 Monday

7:00p Worship & Music
Ministry Zoom Meeting

August 10 Monday

1:00p ICU Team Meeting

August 16 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service

August 25 Tuesday

5:30p Community Meal

August 4 Tuesday

5:30p Community Meal

August 11 Tuesday

5:30p Community Meal

August 17 Monday

1:00p Hope Seeds

August 26 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry

August 5 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry
9:15a ECLC Board
Meeting

August 12 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry

August 18 Tuesday

6:00a Elections
5:30p Community Meal

August 27 Thursday

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

August 6 Thursday

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

August 13 Thursday

ICU Reports Due

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

August 19 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry

August 29 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry
Distribution

August 8 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry
Distribution

August 20 Thursday

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

August 30 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service



•For all those serving in the U.S. Military, especially Gage Fournier. •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 Pastors Carlos, Derek, Nicole and Rob, Specialists Kim, Bill & Brittney, Support Staff Jordan, Yuliet, & Ileana. •SURE - Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. •Community Meal & Food Pantry Guests. •Prayers upon the HOPE Community Prayer Cross. •The Arlington Park neighborhood.

Members

Manny Acevedo
Beetle/Miller Family
Dorothy Boller
Susan Burmaster
Judy Carnal
Missy Craig
Sue Fisher
Joann Flanigan
Bob Fong
JoAnn Jordan
Carolyn Masters
James Millikan
Valerie Nicolls
Nancy Parmakian
James Paulsson
Cindy Paxton
Colleen Ryan
David Shannon
Betty Smowton
Sandy Tull

Homebound Members

Evelyn Gulliksen
Lindy Lindemann
Virginia McQuaig
Michael Reiter
Doris Schlotterback
Carole Wilson

Friends and Family

Alice - JoAnn Jordan's friend
Brad - Cincy Paxton's brother
Cheryl Bydo - Robert's family
Debbie - Scherr's friend

Ed - Sandy Choquette's friend
Jim - Nancy Parmakian's son
Mark - Hillerich's friend
MJ - Ron Zimmerman's friend
Patty - Cindy Paxton's sister
Sharon - Jane Schubert's friend
Sandi Acevedo - Acevedos sister-in-law
Jesus & Reyna Alegria - Sandy Tull's nieces-in-law
Kareem Ali - Fred Melton's friend
Clinton Allen - Jim Paulsson's friend
Laura Anderson - Robert's niece
Billie Jean Athey - C Mele's friend
Sheryl Brandes - Sue Scherr's sister-in-law
Lavinia Brown - Helen Puckhaber's friend
Buete & Pearson family - Brian McCulley's family
Caroline Burmaster - Susan Burmaster's sister-in-law
Wayne Cobb - Carolyn Jacobson's friend
Todd Couch - Sandy Choquette's son
John & Joy Emanuelli - Robert's friends
Gladys Faraone - H. Robert's friend
Tony Felicetti - Irene Felicetti's brother
Bill & Vickie Hall - Fonda Davies' family
Niklaus Heisler - Irene Felicetti's great-grandson
Katy Hernandez - M. Acevedo's niece
Pr. John Hilficker - Conrad Helwege's friend
Sandy Holloway - Helen Puckhaber's friend
Nicole Ketler - Susan Burmaster's friend
Kate Kretschmann - Lindy Linderman's friend
Karen Kugler - Marty Hillerich's friend

Jesse Lugo - Jose Lugo's brother
David McCall - Judy Roberts' brother
Marsha McKinney - former member
Linda Munkelwitz - Judy Carnal's friend
Becky Nobles - Lindy Lindermann's friend
Linda & Jim Norris - Doris Schlotterback's family
Karen Paulsson - Jim Paulsson's sister
Gary Perkins - Judy Carnal's friend
Hannah Puckhaber - former attendee
Manny Ribas - Cindy Schlotterback's friend
Anita Rose - Irene Felicetti's friend
Claude Russell - Tracy Bateman's uncle
Brian & Kenny Schlotterback - Doris Schlotterback's sons
Hailey Schlotterback - Doris Schlotterback's granddaughter-in-law
Bill Schroeder - Conrad Hellwege's friend
Bethany Smith - Smiths' daughter
Joyce Swartzbaugh - former member
Natalie Smowton Boxx - Betty Smowton's great-granddaughter
Noel Scott Studenwalt - Smiths' nephew
Bill Sweeney - Hutfilz's grandson
Michael Taylor - Addy Miller's friend
Dan Torrence - Kathy Snyder's friend
David Van Ness - Missy Craig's brother
Mark Vanderweight - Jim Paulsson's friends
Andrea Waltje - Irene Felicetti's friend
Curtis Weckwerth - Rick Weckwerth's cousin
John & Janet Welther - Ethel Hamilton's family

"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

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



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.