

The Messenger



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

APRIL 2026

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

Happy April! April will continue to be a busy time at St. Paul. I joked around that the time between Christmas and Lent would come quickly if we blinked. Well we blinked again and now Lent is almost over and we are heading into the Great Three Days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and the Easter season. Here is a list of upcoming ministries.

Maundy Thursday is April 2. We will have a **worship service at 7p** that includes Holy Communion and the stripping of the altar.

Good Friday is April 3. There is the annual pilgrim walk downtown at 7a. Meet at the Regal Theatre at 7a for it. In the evening at 7p we will have a worship service that includes a progression of darkness through song and scripture.

On Saturday, **April 4** we have our **Kids' Easter Celebration from 1:30-3:30p**. It's an annual tradition with the egg and rock hunt along with crafts, egg decorating, and pictures with EB the Bunny. New this year we will be giving out flowers to all the families at the event and encourage them to bring the flower back to Easter Sunday worship and the kids will participate in the processional by placing the flowers at the base of the cross that is at the front of the sanctuary.

Easter Sunday, we gather at 9:30a to worship for the **Resurrection of our Lord Day**. You are encouraged to bring bright plants to decorate the front of the sanctuary and single flowers to decorate the living cross outside in the courtyard. After worship our annual releasing of the butterflies will happen again. The flowers on the outside cross is a favorite place for the butterflies to land on before they fly away.

The **Sunday after Easter** we keep celebrating the resurrection of our **Lord with Holy Humor Sunday**. We haven't had it for a few years but I wanted to bring it back this year. The theme is Christmas in Easter. We'll sing Christmas carols but with Easter lyrics. I especially wanted to do this theme because our Music Director, Fonda, couldn't be with us on Christmas Eve last year due to her health and the previous Christmas Eve our organ wasn't working, so this will be the first time we would be able to hear some of Fonda's favorite Christmas pieces.

On **Monday, April 13**, the **Early Childhood Learning Center's annual art show and fundraiser is from 6-7p** in the Fellowship Hall. It's a great way to support the school. We are also collecting gift cards to use in the silent auction. If you want to donate one, please put it in the offering plate or bring it to the office with a note on it. The school is also providing a letter that can be brought to restaurants or stores that could donate items to the auction. The letter is in the narthex.

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March Council Report

The Council is reading and discussing the book – Growing Young – 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church.

The Council approved the motion to cancel the July 2026 meeting.

The Finance Committee made a motion to donate the money raised during the *Day of Giving* to the ECLC this year. The motion passed.

Save the Date

Noon to Noon April 15-16, 2026



Presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

More information is on pg. 3.

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.

Mailing address:
2256 Bahia Vista St.,
Sarasota FL 34239-2499



Phone: 941-955-6479 Fax: 941-955-8600
ECLC Preschool 941-955-6480
Email: StPaul-Admin@verizon.net
Preschool email: StPaul-ECLC@verizon.net
Council email: StPaul-Council@verizon.net
Pastor email: prashley1010@gmail.com
Web site: www.StPaulSarasota.org
Editor: Sue Scherr

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

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

Congregation Council

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

Ministry Team Leaders or Council Liaison

Sharing & Caring – Jan Kruse
Christian Education – **Seeking volunteer leader**
Communications – Sue Scherr
Early Childhood Learning Center – Esther Smith
IEvangelism – Bob Lariviere
Safety & Emergency Preparedness - Cindy Paxton
Fellowship – **Seeking volunteer leader**
Finance – George Hutfilz
Food Pantry – George Hutfilz
Outreach Ministry Fund – Bob Lariviere
Property - Mike Scherr
Social – Judy Roberts
Stewardship – George & Marilyn Hutfilz
Worship and Music – Judy Carnal
Parish Administrator – Tracy Bateman
Director of Music – Fonda Davies

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



St. Paul ECLC Art Show Fundraiser

COME JOIN US FOR

We will have our students Artwork on display for all to see their creativity along with a silent auction with many exciting goodies! We will have a 50/50 raffle, a photo booth and gorgeous framed black and white photos for purchase. Invite everyone and anyone! All proceeds go towards St. Paul ECLC a nonprofit organization.

When: April 13th, 2026
Where: Fellowship Hall
Time: 6pm to 7pm
 2256 Bahia Vista St. Sarasota
 FL 34239

Silent Auction!

- Themed baskets
 - Classroom made
- Gift Certificates
- and much more!

PrAshley's article continued from pg. 1

Sarasota has a **day of giving** every other year. It's a great way to give to St. Paul and other non-profit organizations that serve this area. This year the event is **noon April 15 until noon on April 16**. givingchallenge.org is the website to go to and search St. Paul Lutheran Church. Monies donated through this will be given to the Early Childhood Learning Center. The Community Foundation will match anyone's gift from \$25-\$100 per person and per organization. It is only available online.

On **Monday, April 27**, is the **SURE (Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity) Nehemiah Action at 6:30p at First Congregational Church on Euclid**. Even though this was delayed from March 9 to April 27, we hope to have 30 people at the gathering to encourage community leaders to fund mental health access for children.

St. Paul continues to be the community that cares. These are just some of the ways we care for our community. Hope you continue to be involved.

Take care and God bless

-PrAshley



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

Monday, March 16, volunteers met in the Fellowship Hall to pack seeds. There were 21 volunteers who packed 3,600 beet seeds.

There was a lot of laughter, conversation, and tasty snacks.

There is a meeting every 3rd Monday of the month from 1:00-3:00, so come when you can, leave when you must. Hope you can join us for our next meeting on April 21.

Plant a Seed. Feed a Soul.



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!



April 7	Frank Scianni
April 7	Ron Zimmerman
April 12	Carol Grosch
April 12	Addison Miller
April 16	Laurie Acevedo
April 18	Adriana Miller
April 22	Laney Miller
April 27	Myrna Dority
April 28	Farrah Lemay
April 30	Jeffrey Miller



April 23	Dottie Albright & James Millikan
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Save the Dates

- April 2 Maundy Thursday Service 7:00p
- April 3 Good Friday Pilgrim Walk 7:00a
Good Friday Service 7:00p
- April 4 Children's Easter Celebration 1:30p
- April 5 Easter Service 9:30a



- April 10 Holy Humor Service 9:30a
- April 13 ECLC Art Show Fundraiser 6:00p

Nehemiah Action

Moved! April 27, 2026

First Congregational UCC

Doors open @ 6 pm Call to order @
6:30 pm

Good afternoon, SURE Network:

After conversations with Treva and with our co-chairs, Rev. Dr. Mary Alice Mulligan and Rev. Dr. John Walker, we are recommending that we move our Nehemiah Action to April 27, the same date as our previously scheduled Celebration. This shift reflects our shared commitment to doing this action with the level of preparation, turnout, and accountability it deserves. With so much work still to be completed in the coming weeks, we want to ensure our research is thorough, our faith leaders have ample time to prepare their networks, and that public officials receive enough notice to prioritize their attendance and engage in meaningful negotiation. We are deeply grateful for your flexibility and partnership as we make this adjustment. Our goal is not simply to hold an event, but to organize a powerful, unified Nehemiah Action that brings out as many people as possible and reflects the full strength of our congregations. By aligning the action with the Celebration on April 27, we believe we can build broader participation, stronger momentum, and a more impactful outcome for the entire SURE network. Rev. Dr. Wes Bixby has confirmed the Sanctuary is available for the 27th, so the location remains the same. Thank you all for your commitment to justice and I look forward to seeing you all at 6pm at First Congregational UCC.

- May 27 Confirmation Service 9:30a



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 1 Wednesday

April Fool's Day!

8:00a Property Ministry
6:00p Bell Practice
7:00p Choir Practice

April 2 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep
7:00p Maundy Thursday Service

April 3 Friday

Good Friday

7:00a Pilgrim Walk
7:00p Good Friday Service

April 4 Saturday

9:30a Food Pantry Distribution
1:30p Children's Easter Celebration

April 5 Sunday

He is Risen Indeed!

9:00a Easter Worship Service followed by Butterfly Release

April 7 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Chapel
5:30p Community Meal

April 8 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry
6:00p Bell Practice
7:00p Choir Practice

April 9 Thursday

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

April 11 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry Distribution

April 12 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service

April 13 Monday

1:00p ICU Team Meeting
ECLC ART SHOW 6:00p
7:30p Worship & Music Meeting Zoom

April 14 Tuesday

Ministry Reports Due

9:30a ECLC Chapel
5:30p Community Meal

April 15 Wednesday

Messenger Deadline Tax Day!

8:00a Property Ministry
10:00a Architecture Sarasota Tours
6:00p Bell Practice
7:00p Choir Practice

April 16 Thursday

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

April 18 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry Distribution

April 19 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service

April 20 Monday

1:00p Hope Seeds

April 21 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Chapel
5:30p Community Meal

April 22 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry
11:00a PEO Meeting
6:00p Bell Practice
7:00p Choir Practice

April 23 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep
4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom
6:00p ESL/SSL Dinner/Class

April 25 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry Distribution

April 26 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service
11:00a Confirmation Class

April 28 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Chapel
5:30p Community Meal

April 29 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry
6:00p Bell Practice
7:00p Choir Practice

April 30 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep
4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom
6:00p ESL/SSL Dinner/Class



Prayer Request

•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 Tina, Yuliet, & Ileana. •SURE - Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. •Community Meal & Food Pantry Guests. •Prayers upon the HOPE Community Prayer Cross. •St. Paul ECLC teachers and students. •The Arlington Park neighborhood.

Members

Manny Acevedo
Earleen Ashbrook
Beetle/Miller Family
Dorothy Boller
Susan Burmaster
Missy Craig
Sue Fisher
Joann Flanigan
Bob Fong
Dr. Don Hillerich
JoAnn Jordan
Carolyn Masters
James Millikan
Valerie Nicolls
Nancy Parmakian
James Paulsson
Colleen Ryan
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
Debbie - Scherr's friend
Donnie - CM guest
Ed - Sandy Choquette's friend
Jeff - CM guest
Jim - Nancy Parmakian's son

Loo-Ann - Helen Miller's daughter
Mark - Hillerich's friend
MJ - Ron Zimmerman's friend
Ryan - CM guest
Sharon - Jane Schubert's friend
T.J. & Family - CM guest
Sandi Acevedo - Acevedos sister-in-law
Jesus Alegria - Sandy Tull's niece-in-law
Reyna Alegira - Sandy Tull's niece-in-law
Kareem Ali - Fred Melton's friend
Clinton Allen - Jim Paulsson's friend
Laura Anderson - Robert's niece
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
Todd Couch - Sandy Choquette's son
Mike Cunnigham - H. Roberts' friend
Fonda Davies - Director of Music
Dave Eller - Carolyn Mele's friend
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 Ketter - 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
Becky Nobles - Lindy Lindermann's friend
Linda & Jim Norris - Doris Schlotterback's family
Karen Paulsson - Jim Paulsson's sister
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 - Hutfiz's grandson
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.