The Messenger



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

SEPTEMBER 2023

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

It's great to be back from Sabbatical. I thank you as a congregation for allowing me the time away. Thank you especially to Pr. Don Hillerich for being the Sabbatical Pastor. I wouldn't have been able to go away without knowing St. Paul was in great hands. While much of my time away was focusing on my renewal and reflecting on where God has been in my 15 years of ministry, I also used that time to reflect on where God is leading us as St. Paul Lutheran Church.

I thought back to the excitement we had when I started here in October of 2017. The congregation was coming out of a time of transition in many ways. There was an energy of wanting to be who we were now, not years or even months before I arrived. There was an eagerness to see where God was leading us together. We came up with plans and ideas and implemented them and we were moving together faithfully. It was a great time to be St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Then in 2020 the world changed with the pandemic and we had to do ministry differently. St. Paul has continued to be a strong and vital congregation even amidst the pandemic. Yet, the congregation we are now is not the congregation we were before the pandemic and that's okay. God is still doing a new thing with us as we look to refresh, renew, regroup, rekindle, rebuild, restart, rest, refocus, revive, recreate, and any other re-word we can come up with together.

It is very appropriate that we do this work. Most research shows that every five years a congregation is called to be doing this work together. Why do we do what we do? Where can we be re-invigorated? Is everything we are doing working? Can we try something new? And we want to do this prayerfully. And I believe that's where this Sabbatical time came in.

While I was reflecting on where St. Paul is being led, several St. Paul members were doing the same thing. We were doing it separately but the Holy Spirit was leading us together and I believe we were coming up with similar ideas.

What I have been led to think about is deepening relationships. I've shared with you in the past that this is the longest tenure I have had as a pastor. This is my fourth congregation. The other three have been four 1/2 years or less. I was comfortable in being a pastor for a short time somewhere but my desire has always been to have a long tenure at St. Paul. So during my Sabbatical I needed to reflect on how I do that because it's not something I've ever done before. And deepening relationships I believe is the key for not only me but also our congregation. We have many people we interact with at the church between the school, the community meal, food pantry, and even Hope Seeds. Where can we deepen our relationships with these people who are already here? How can we share the Gospel with them in new and creative ways? We are also in the community of Arlington Park. We are the only church in this neighborhood. Where can we deepen these relationships? Many of you know that was one of the reasons I desperately wanted to live in the neighborhood. And I am now here and settling in. One of my goals for Sabbatical was to create a prayer request station at my mailbox. I have a sidewalk that goes right by it and many people walk every day. We got our first prayer request in it last week. And the architecture community is another favorite of mine to continue to reach out to and deepen relationships.

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Council News

The Congregation Council met for its regular monthly meeting on August 17, 2023, in-person and by Zoom.

- The Congregation Council will meet for a retreat on October 21, 2023, to formulate a vision together with Pastor Nicolls and her experiences of renewal from sabbatical. The focus will be on deepening relationships with our community.
- Ratified the unanimous email vote of August 10, 2023, to approve the 2023-2024 salaries of the Director and Assistant Director of the ECLC.
- Approved the 2023 Advent/Christmas Worship Service schedule as follows: Advent services at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, December 6, 13, and 20, (preceded by light meal); Sunday, December 24, 9:30 a.m. designated as a prelude to the 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.
- Approved the use of Fellowship Hall by Life Line Screening for an allday event on Monday, November 6, 2023.
- Approved the Education Building Roof Renovation Contract pending architect review, authorizing the president to sign the contract, and designating Rick Barry as the owner's (church's) representative.
- Approved the use of Fellowship Hall on Thursday, September 28,
 2023, 5:30-7:00 p.m. for a meeting of The Sarasota Alliance for
 Historic Preservation, Inc. This group has donated to our Raise the
 Roof campaign.

 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.



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he 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 – Susy Scholl
Communications – Sue Scherr
Early Childhood Learning Cntr – Marilyn Hutfilz
Evangelism – Bob Lariviere
Safety & Emergency Preparedness - Cindy Paxton
Fellowship – Carol Grosch & Alexandra Wise
Finance – John McAuliffe
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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A new school year has begun. We are not quite at capacity though, so we still have openings See Lisa for more information.

Back to School!!

SAVE THE DATES:

October 10 Trike-a-Thon Fundraiser for the ECLC.

Look for more information regarding a Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser for Raise the Roof! Raise the Kids! in Oct.



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

Ministry Corner by Brian McCulley

This new feature will visit each of the active ministries and committees at St. Paul Lutheran Church in a one by one writing for 2023 and beyond. It is intended to offer insight and seek volunteer interest as well. "Many hands make for light loads", and "God's Work, Our Hands" come to mind.

First, let's explore and examine the mysteries within the ministries. Lots of questions arise:

Are they Constitutional? Are the members elected or volunteer? Are they really hard work and time consuming? Do they make you rich? Are opinions and ideas welcome? Are they strictly business? Are they perfect, or a work in progress? Is there leadership and delegation? Are they funded? Are they full time or part time? Are they weekly, monthly, annually? Is there investment? Are they helpful to prayer and awareness? Do they develop relationships? Are they born of the Spirit? So many questions/mysteries! There is really only one answer to almost all, and that answer is "yes".

The ministries are God inspired and taught through Jesus. They enrich the church greatly, and I find that a little more helping out leads to personal and spiritual growth. Who could ask for anything more.

The big question is, can you be a more active part of the body and family at St. Paul? You have probably heard or read of the "spiritual gifts" in I Corinthians 12:15-26, or "fruits of the spirit" in Galations 5:22, or "a time for everything" from Ecclesiastes 3:1-13. These all explain God's body building program for each of us and for the church. The body has many parts.

I should state that there is no such heirarchy as primary, secondary, or subordinate lay volunteer helpers, individuals, or groups at St. Paul. ALL are vital, whether they meet periodically, seasonally, daily, weekly, monthly or based on availability. We participate as we are able and as we are called.

Praise and thanksgiving for the wisdom of God. More information will be forthcoming about these questions/mysteries of the St. Paul body and its parts.

Brian...lay person and long time St. Paul member

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Alta Vista Back to School Gift Card Drive

Thank you to all who donated. We raised \$975!



Dr. Mindy Long, Principal, and Assistant Principal Meredith McArthur

Thank you from Betty Smowton

Betty and her family would like to thank everyone for their cards, condolences, and support after David's passing. Special thank you to all who helped during his celebration of life in July.

Attention Widows

Thrivent Financial is having a free program with lunch at Der Dutchman on Sept. 29 at I2n. It will be a time to hear a testimony from a woman of faith who lost her husband and how she found her purpose again. This is a time to fellowship with other widows and meet local Thrivent repersentative Robert Smith. (It is not a program focused on selling anything.) It is a time to experience God's love for you. Please let PrAshley know by Sept. IO if you plan to attend.

Ringing in the New Season

The St. Paul's Music Ministry will begin in less than one month. That means back to weekly Handbell rehearsals on Wednesdays @6:00pm and Vocal Choir rehearsals @7:00pm.

The bell ringers are especially excited to finally get to play with and show our newly refurbished Schulmerich 3 octave - 37 bells. Over the summer they were shipped up to the Pennsylvania factory for an Essential Handbell Refurbishment. This included disassembling every bell and replacing every nut, screw, springs, yoke assembly: then, polish casting to voice and blend each bell. Thank you for being good stewards of the gifts and talents God has placed in our care. The re-dedication of the Handbells is planned for Sunday, September 24





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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 in Oct. Date still pending.

Assistant Minister Training

Have you ever wanted to try to be an assisting minister during worship but were afraid to volunteer because you didn't know how to do it? Please volunteer, and we will train you. Let PrAshley or Sharon Wittren know you are interested, and we will get a training time scheduled. It's really easy and a great way to serve our Lord through St. Paul. Youth are also encouraged to volunteer.





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! Led by Susy Scholl.

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



Homemade Communion Bread

Now that we are back to distributing the wafer at worship, there has been conversation about going back to having homemade communion bread. We were wondering if there are people who want to make it. If you don't have a recipe, we can provide one for you. Please let PrAshley know if you are wanting to help with this ministry.



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 prayer

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.

Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/i/81662784525pwd=QSt4TGNSR2F3L0ovUDJ3SVdWbjRYUT09

Meeting ID: 816 6278 4525

Passcode: 628552

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Dear Siblings in Christ,

You may have recently seen the new video from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton — Future Church: God's Love Made Real. We have an unprecedented opportunity to learn about our church — to listen to and learn from YOU! Will you lend us your voice?

We want to learn more about our church, about what is strong and good, and about where we need to grow in Christ together. This information will help us learn how to better serve our congregations, synods, ministry partners and the world around us. It will help us lean into the vision and do our part in creating a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. But we need your voice to do it. We need the voices of your colleagues and friends.

There are two distinct opportunities for you to lend your voice to the future of our church:

- 1 Take the survey.
- 2 Watch for opportunities to participate in a listening group.

We hope you will do both, but if you have to choose, please do the survey and encourage those around you to do the same.

These two steps will help us become "Future Church: God's Love Made Real" and move together, as a church, in the directions the Spirit is calling us to go.

Sincerely,

Louise Johnson

Executive for Administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop



Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE)

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up: do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 43:19 SURE's kick-off gathering is Monday, Sept. 18 at 6p at First Congregational Church (1031 S. Euclid Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237). SURE has hired a temporary Executive Director. A former Lead Organizer and current pastor at 12 Springs Church in Sarasota, Rev. Ryan McBride, is now the temporary Executive Director. The new Lead Organizer is a former teacher in Sarasota with a passion for justice ministry. SURE is excited about the fresh vision that God is bringing to the organization. Whether you just want to learn about SURE, or it's been 10 years since you've been involoved, or you have remained fully committed to the efforts, please join the gathering on Sept. 18 for SURE's relaunch with a renewed vision, enthusiasm and resolve.

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VBS in Outer Space!

























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Now the part I always have to remember, and I think most church members need to remember too – We aren't deepening our relationships with people for our sake or for the sake of St. Paul. We are doing it for their sakes, to love them, to listen to them, to learn from them. If we show up looking at these people just for what they can do for us, they will realize that quickly. And for some hesitant about Christians, Christianity, or church, that might be their default setting. They will assume we just want to get them for their money or their participation to keep our church going. So we will have to work all that much harder to show them otherwise and pray all that much harder for the Holy Spirit to intercede for us. Because ultimately it is the Holy Spirit that leads us and them together.

I'm looking forward to ways we can experiment together. Maybe it's a neighborhood cookout or Food Truck night in the circle. Maybe it's going to Arlington Park to talk with people and see what we can do for them. Maybe it's a casual worship service after Community Meal. Maybe it's youth choirs. Maybe it's partnering with other churches in the area for youth ministry, parish nurse, or furthering outreach ministry to those in need. Maybe it's enhancing our website with other media or digital relationships. These are just a few of the ideas I've thought of or heard since I've been back. This is the time to really pray and ask for vision for where God is calling us next and how to go about it.

Keep your ears and eyes open for the Spirit leading you and share your ideas. I hope in the coming months that we will have some intentional time together to dream and act like we did when I first got here.

May God bless you always. PrAshley







Prayer request station outside PrAshley's house.

St. Paul Architecture Events

The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation is planning to hold an event on Sept. 28 from 6-7p in the Education Building to highlight the Sarasota Preservation Program and draw attention to the campaign to not only preserve and protect this iconic example of Victor Lundy's work, but to also highlight the importance that it, and the congregation's missions are the fabric of Sarasota. This organization granted St. Paul \$4,000 toward the campaign last May. All are welcome to attend.



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

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Sept. 3	Susan Fisher
Sept. 6	Emilee Miller
Sept. 8	Sharon Wittren
Sept. 8	Tonia Miller
Sept. 17	Ethan Skyes
Sept. 19	JoAnn Jordan
Sept. 20	Joann Flanigan
Spet. 22	Barry Smith
Sept. 22	Nicole Riley
Sept. 23	Tess Vaessen
Sept. 28	Amy Hildreth
Sept. 29	Mathew Skyes
Sept. 30	Ayla Gwatney



Sept. 1 Sue & Jim Fisher Sept 24 Carolyn & Thad Masters



Dear Rev. Nicolls and friends,

June 21st marked the official first day of summer, but here in our community, children started their summer breaks in late May. Thanks to you and the support from others in our community, children can be carefree this summer not having to worry about hungry days ahead. Your gift to our Campaign Against Summer Hunger was instrumental in helping us to build summer food programs.

You made it possible for us to develop a range of initiatives that are providing access to healthy, nutritious food for children while school is out of session. Your gift made these summer programs with over 300 partners possible.

- Extended mobile pantries
- Backpacks of kid friendly food distributed currently at 83 child centered partners including our Sarasota and DeSoto County Public Libraries
- Hot meals available at 49 sites
- Summer family pantries with groceries at 5 locations
- School pantries with groceries for students and families at 9 schools

We are committed to continuing our work to end hunger in our community, and your support has been crucial in making this possible. Once again, thank you for your kindness and generosity.

Best Regards,

Becky Wright

Manager of Special Events & Donor Engagement









Bloomin' 4 Good Program

Welcome back! St. Paul Lutheran Church Food Pantry has been selected by the Store Leadership Team to receive \$1 from every specially marked \$12.99 Bloomin' 4 Good bouquet sold during the month of September 2023 at:

Winn-Dixie, 4230 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota FL



On **Sunday, Sept. 10**, congregations of the ELCA will join together for our 10th annual day of service. "God's work. Our hands." Sunday began in 2013 in connection with the ELCA's 25th anniversary and continues to be a day to celebrate who we are — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. If you would like a bright yellow t-shirt, please let PrAshley know.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 2 Saturday 9:00a Food Pantry Distribution 10:00a Musician Rehearsal

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Sept. 3 Sunday 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Sonday School



Sept. 5 Tuesday 5:30p Community Meal 7:30p Worship & Music

Sept. 6 Wednesday 8:00a Property Ministry 6:00p Bells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal

Sept. 7 Thursday 9:30a Food Pantry Prep 12n Prayer Shawl Ministry 4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom

Sept. 9 Saturday 9:00a Food Pantry Distribution 10:00a Musician Rehearsal Sept. 10 Sunday 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Sonday School 11:00a Sharing & Caring Ministry Meeting

Sept. 12 Tuesday
Ministry Reports Due
11:00a Building Task
Force Meeting Zoom
2:00p Evangelism
Meeting
5:30p Community Meal

Sept. 13 Wednesday 8:00a Property Ministry 9:30a ECLC Board Meeting 6:00p Bells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal

Sept. 14 Thursday 9:30a Food Pantry Prep 12:00p Finance Meeting 1:00p Executive Team Meeting 4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom

Sept. 15 Friday

Messenger Deadline
First Day of Hispanic
Heritage Month

Sept. 16 Saturday 9:00a Food Pantry Distribution 10:00a Musician Rehearsal

Sept. 17 Sunday 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Sonday School

Sept. 19 Tuesday 5:30p Community Meal

Sept. 20 Wednesday 8:00a Property Ministry 6:00p Bells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal

Sept. 21 Thursday 9:30a Food Pantry Prep 4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom 6:30p Council Meeting Sept. 23 Saturday 9:00a Food Pantry Distribution 10:00a Musician Rehearsal

Sept. 24 Sunday 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Sonday School

Sept. 26 Tuesday 11:00a Building Task Force Meeting Zoom 5:30p Community Meal

Sept. 27 Wednesday 8:00a Property Ministry 6:00p Bells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal

Sept. 28 Thursday 9:30a Food Pantry Prep 4:00p Prayer Team Meeting Zoom 5:30p Architecture Alliance Tour

Sept. 30 Saturday 9:00a Food Pantry Distribution 10:00a Musician Rehearsal SEPTEMBER 2023 Pg. II



•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 Pators Khader, Rob C.,Rob R.,and Deacon Connie, 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.

Members

Beetle Family

John Beyer

Henry Blosser

Susan Burmaster

Sue Fisher

Bob Fong

Cecilia Morvick

Jean Panthana

James Paulsson

Rado Family

Susy Scholl

Frank and Joan Scianni

Betty Smowton

Ginger Webb

Karin Zukowski

Homebound Members

Theresa Alger

Sharyn Brodnax

Joan Caddell

Donna Casala

Evelyn Gulliksen

June Manselle Virginia McQuaig

Michael Reiter

Carole Wilson

Friends and Family

Debbie - Scherr's friend

LaShonda - John Beyer's friend

Marilyn - S. Weckwerth's aunt

Susan & Jim - Cindy Paxton's friends

Sandi Acevedo - Acevedos sister-in-

lav

Clinton Allen - *Jim Paulsson's* friend Joan Asplund - *St. Paul attender*

Geri Bandauski - *Dave Smowton's* sister Joyce Benton - *H. Roberts'* sister

Karla Benton - *Roberts'* niece Buete & Pearson family - *Brian*

McCulley's family
Caroline Burmaster - Susan Burmaster's

Garoline Burmaster - Susan Burmaster's sister-in-law

Kathleen Cannon - *Puckhabers'* friend Alice Chanover - *Puckhabers'* friend Jessica Clements - *Kathie Snyder's*

friend

Mike Cunningham - *H. Roberts'* friend Cody Eddleman - *John Beyer's* husband

Gladys Faraone - *H. Robert's friend*Lily Gibson - *Susy Scholl's* neice

Niklaus Heisler - *Irene Felicetti's great-grandson*

Katy Hernandev - M. Acevedo's niece David Jackerson - Susy Scholl's son Jenny Jerrems - Susan Burmaster's

Maryjane Kapela - Janine Dress's cousin Philip Koepke - Irene Felicetti's friend

Kate Kretschmann - *Lindy Lindemann's* family

Karen Kugler - *Marty Hillerich's friend* Kenny Manselle - *June*

Manselle's son

Shirley & Dan Martin - Susy Scholl's friends

Marsha McKinney - former member Pam Mills - Daniel Mills' sister

Logan Nitchie - Irene Felicetti's friend

Becky Nobles - Lindy Lindemann's friend

Muriel Stephenson - JoAnn Jordan's sister

Mark Smith - St. Paul attender Linda & Jim Norris - Doris

Schlotterback's family

Karen Paulsson - *Jim Paulsson's* sister Terry Panthana - *Jean Panthana's* niece Stan Popielarsky - *Ethel Hamilton's*

rian Fopielaisky - Eine riend

Hannah Puckhaver - St. Paul attender Manny Rivas - Cindy Schlotterback's friend

Brian, Kenny & Tommy Schlotterback - Doris Scholotterback's sons

Cynthia Lu Scholl - Susy Scholl's sister

Rob Scianni - Sciannis' son

Donna Shepherd - Gail Seyfarth's sister

Joan Simone - *Puckhabers'* friend Bethany Smith - *Smiths'* daughter

Noel Scott Studenwalt - Smiths' nephew

Martha Swain

Jean Taffe & family - Susan Burmaster's

cousin

Donna Van Ness - *Missy Craig's* neice Elaine & Mark Vanderweight - *Jim*

Paulsson's friends

David Weinberger - *Puckhabers's* friend John & Janet Welther - *Ethel Hamilton's*

family

Dottie Lynne White - Susy Scholl's sister Judith Wismer - Community Meal guest

'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

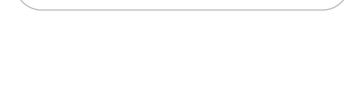
www.StPaulSarasota.org

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.