

# The Messenger



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

DEC. 2024

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran!

Happy December! As the song goes, "It's the most wonderful time of the year". Not only do individuals get ready for Christmas, so does the church. Yes, you'll see Christmas decorations going up little by little. We try to make a progression of decorations at the church. The trees will go up one week, but we won't use the lights until the next week and then add the chrismons (the hand-made symbols of our Triune God that are the decorations for the trees in the sanctuary) the next week; so everything is in full-bloom for Christmas Eve. At the time I was writing this newsletter article (mid-November), we haven't heard from the nursery, where we get the poinsettias, and if they have any to sell this year due to the hurricanes. But if our typical poinsettias aren't available, I'm sure we will come up with a plan to beautify the sanctuary in honor of Jesus' birth.

The church doesn't just decorate to get ready for Jesus' birth, we also have other ministries that happen during this time of year.

Wednesday evening soup supper and worship with Holden Evening Prayer are December 4 and 11. Soup is at 6pm and worship is at 7p. Holden Evening Prayer is one of my favorite worship settings. It focuses on Mary, Mother of her Lord. Some of you may remember, that I was born on Mary, Mother of our Lord Day, (August 15), so her story has always been meaningful to me. I was ordained on my baptismal birthday. I set the ordination date on purpose. October 10, 2007 was a weekday so I needed to have my ordination service in the evening. I chose to use the service of Holden Evening Prayer to be the setting. So Holden Evening Prayer has many special connections for me.

The *Visit with Santa* is Saturday, December 7 from 1-3p in the Fellowship Hall. It's a great way for kids and their families to see Santa, get free pictures with him, and also learn about the reason for the season and get invited to St. Paul's Christmas Eve worship service.

On Wednesday, December 18, we will have the soup supper at 6pm but instead of Holden Evening Prayer at 7p we will have the Blue Christmas service. It is a reflective worship service that recognizes not everyone is joyous during the Christmas season. There are many emotions beyond "It's a wonderful time of the year" and this worship service names those and allows us to grieve, doubt, and question, in a safe place.

On Tuesday, December 24, at 7p we will have our Christmas Eve worship service. It is a family-friendly worship service that includes our vocal and bell choir, candle lighting to Silent Night, and Holy Communion.

And all the while we are getting ready for Jesus' birth and celebrating it, we will be planning for January and February events too. Please see page six for information on our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Homecoming worship services in January and February. And the senior adult Vacation Bible School information is on page six as well. You'll hear more about those events in the January newsletter too.

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas.

-DrAshley

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# Council Report

## September Council Report

(Oct. Council Report can be found on pg. 7.)

- The “Raise the Roof”-“Raise the Kids” campaign has raised \$615,237.00
- The Mid-Gulf Conference fall meeting will be held on Sat., Oct. 26, 2024.
  - An update of the Moravian Church’s presence was shared.
  - The Pastor’s Conference was an Enjoyable and Educational Event.
    - Discussion of needed Oak Tree removal was discussed.
    - The Synod’s Bishop will be on Sabbatical during Lent/Easter, 2025
  - The Constitution Committee will meet in the near future for required update.
  - Approved Advent (Dec. 4, 11 & 18 at 7 pm.) and Christmas Eve Services at 7 pm. with Soup Suppers during Advent. There will be no Christmas Day Service.
  - Approved JoAnn Jordan and Marty Hillerich as delegates to the Mid-Gulf Conference scheduled for October 26th.
  - Approved motion by Executive Committee to set Special Congregational meeting for Sunday, Dec. 8. following worship. Agenda items: Election of Church Council Members, Election of 2025 Nominating Committee and the Adoption of the Spending Plan for 2025.



## 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



Telephone: 941-955-6479 Fax: 941-955-8600  
ECLC Preschool 941-955-6480  
Email: [StPaul-Admin@verizon.net](mailto:StPaul-Admin@verizon.net)  
Preschool email: [StPaul-ECLC@verizon.net](mailto:StPaul-ECLC@verizon.net)  
Council email: [StPaul-Council@verizon.net](mailto:StPaul-Council@verizon.net)  
Pastor email: [prashley1010@gmail.com](mailto:prashley1010@gmail.com)  
Web site: [www.StPaulSarasota.org](http://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

Irene Felicetti, President  
JoAnn Jordan, Vice President  
Don Hillerich, Secretary  
George Hutfilz, Treasurer

### Congregation Council

Irene Felicetti, Carol Grosch, Lori Fountain-Guillaume, Amy Hildreth, Marthe Hildreth, Don Hillerich, JoAnn Jordan, Bob Lariviere, Nanacy Parmakian, Judy Roberts, Alexandra Wise, Pastor Ashley Nicolls

### Ministry Team Leaders

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



Room 2 children are showing they care for the world around them by pulling weeds on the playground with Ms. Rachel.



Children are working on balance and coordination on the balance beam.

# Trike-a-Thon

If you would like to assist in the preparation, during the Trike-a-Thon, or afterward for clean up, please contact our ECLC Director, Lisa McLean. You can leave a message for her at the church office as well.

Rescheduled Date

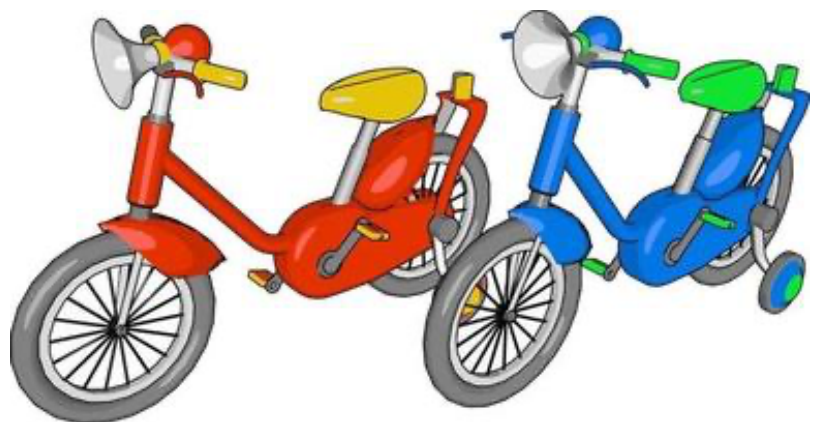
Feb. 4, 2025

9:30-11:30a

Come support our young riders as they go around the circle. You can sponsor a specific child or make a donation to the ECLC Trike-a-Thon to show your support.

Rms 1 & 2 9:30-10:00a

Rm. 3 & VPK 10:00-10:30a





# More ECLC News and Pics



The Gem Fairy came to the ECLC and the children were collecting treasures for over an hour!





## Hope Seeds

Hope Seeds met on November 18 from 1:00-3:00p where fifteen volunteers packed 3,900 eggplant seed packets. Hope Seeds meets once a month on the third Monday of the month. Each time it varies in the type and amount of seeds packaged. You can come when you can and leave when you must. It's a fun time and there are yummy refreshments as well. Please think about joining us next month. We'd love to have more help. Hope to see you on December 16.



## 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.

## 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

# Upcoming & Save the Date

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## 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Homecoming Worship Save the Dates!

Sundays beginning January 19-February 23 St. Paul will focus on the Church of Christ in Every Age.

St. Paul turns 70 years old in 2025, so our special services in January and February will celebrate the anniversary by decade. Each week we will celebrate a different decade. The worship service will be out of the hymnals of each decade. You are encouraged to wear decade appropriate attire. And after worship during coffee hour, bring your favorite food from each decade.

January 19 is the 1950s

January 26 is the 1960s We also plan to have a Dedication of the Education Building this day.

February 2 is the 1970s

February 9 is the 1980s

February 16 is the 1990s

February 23 is the 2000s to the present. Bishop Pedro Suarez will be at St. Paul to bring Anniversary greetings. He will preach and share the children's message (that we will all learn from).

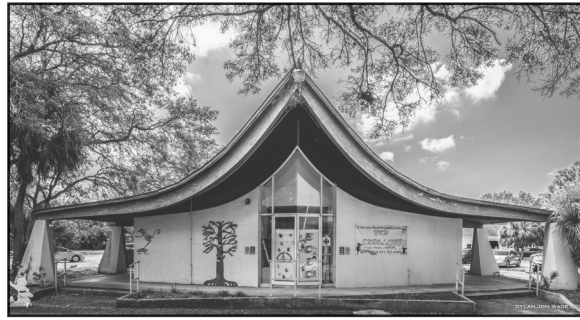



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## Senior Adult Vacation Bible School!

Join Rev. Ed Kilbourne and St. Paul Lutheran Church as we celebrate the old, old story of Jesus and his love in a new way. Rev. Ed uses storytelling, music, and humor to share the good news of Jesus. He'll be in worship on Sunday, January 26 to preach and share the children's message and introduce himself. He'll have a concert in the late afternoon. And then Monday-Wednesday (January 27-29) 9:30a-12 will have his interactive presentation in the Fellowship Hall with a lunch after. This event is for all – but since it is during the day, we realize our audience may be those who no longer work. Invite a friend. It's inclusive and affirming of all God's children. And free! We received a Vision2Action Grant from the Florida-Bahamas Synod to host this ministry. Continental Breakfast and Lunch will be provided.





## Raise the Roof! Raise the Kids!

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>

We are nearly there! Thank you to all who have given, pledged, and prayed as the light is at the end of the tunnel now. Our education building is now complete, but we could still use your help. Our Giving Campaign totals: \$627,339.37 with ONLY a balance of \$38,085.64 to reach our goal of \$665,425.00. Forms for giving are in the narthex, or you may use a pew envelope to give. Please write "R & R Campaign" on it. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of new, second, or more gifts.



## Council Report

### October Council Report

- The "Raise the Roof! Raise the Kids!" campaign has raised \$618,779.00.
- Cost estimate to fix the Fellowship Hall roof due to Hurricane Milton damage is \$13,000.00. Other bids are being sought.
- An update of the Moravian Church's presence was shared.
- The Assembly for SURE will be held on Nov. 18. Everyone welcome.
- Clean Up from Milton continues with lots of volunteers.
- The Life Line Program will be held on March 3, 2025, from 8 to 5 P.M.
- "Adopt a Family" from Alta Vista School was approved with Judy Roberts taking the lead.
- A Special Congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 8 following worship.



The Good Gifts ornaments will be displayed on the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall beginning Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. 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 \$1000.00 by an anonymous donor. We are also anticipating some support from the OMF. What a great way to help our brothers and sisters around the world!

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

- Barnyard animals (cow, sheep, goats, chicks, 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 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>. 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. 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)





Theresa Alger	Dec. 3
John Miller	Dec. 6
Judy Roberts	Dec. 11
Sandy Choquette	Dec. 14
Tyler Riley	Dec. 15
Robyn Wood	Dec. 18
Virginia McQuaig	Dec. 21
Kevin Salvatore	Dec. 23
Wilma Armstrong	Dec. 29
Earleen Ashbrook	Dec. 30



Barry & Brenda Smith Dec. 21

## Ho, Ho, Ho!!



## Christmas Jokes



- What happened to the man who stole an Advent calendar? He got 25 days.
- Who hides in a bakery at Christmas? A mince spy.
- What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations? Tinselitis.
- What's the best Christmas present? A broken drum - you just can't beat it.
- What do angry mice send each other at Christmas? Cross mouse cards.
- Who beats his chest and swings from Christmas cake to Christmas cake? Tarzipan.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Dec. 1 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
11:00a Confirmation  
12:30p Moravian Service

### Dec. 2 Monday

1:00p EvANGELism  
Meeting  
7:30p Worship & Music  
Zoom Meeting

### Dec. 3 Tuesday

5:30p Community Meal

### Nov. 4 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
5:30p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:30p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 5 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
1:00p Executive Team  
Meeting  
4:00p Prayer Team  
Meeting Zoom  
6:00p Moravian Band  
Practice

### Dec. 6 Friday

6:00p Moravian Bible  
Study

### Dec. 7 Saturday

8:00a Adopt-A-Road  
9:00a Moravian Sanc./  
Outside  
9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
1:00p Visit With Santa  
4:00p Moravian Youth  
Group Meeting

### Dec. 8 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
10:30a Special Cong.  
Meeting  
11:00a Confirmation  
11:30a Council Meeting  
12:30p Moravian Service

### Dec. 10 Tuesday

**Ministry Reports Due**  
5:30p Community Meal

### Dec. 11 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
5:30p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup  
Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:30p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 12 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
12:00p Finance Meeting  
Zoom  
4:00p Prayer Team  
Meeting Zoom  
6:00p Moravian Band  
Practice

### Dec. 13 Friday

6:00p Moravian Bible  
Study

### Dec. 14 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
1:30p Face Autism Visit  
With Santa  
4:00p Moravian Youth  
Group Meeting

### Dec. 15 Sunday

**Messenger Deadline**  
9:30a Worship Service  
12:30p Moravian Service

### Dec. 16 Monday

1:00p Hope Seeds  
6:00p Guitar Sarasota

### Dec. 17 Tuesday

9:30a ECLC Board Mtg.  
12:00p ECLC Picnic  
5:30p Community Meal

### Dec. 18 Wednesday

8:00a Property Ministry  
12:00p ECLC Picnic  
5:30p St. Paul Ringers  
6:00p Advent Soup Supper  
7:00p Advent Worship  
7:30p St. Paul Singers

### Dec. 19 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
4:00p Prayer Team  
Meeting Zoom  
6:00p Moravian Band  
Practice

### Dec. 20 Friday

6:00p Moravian Bible  
Study

### Dec. 21 Saturday

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
1:00p Guitar Sarasota  
4:00p Moravian Youth  
Group Meeting

### Dec. 22 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
12:30p Moravian Service

### Dec. 24 Tuesday

#### **Christmas Eve**

5:30p Community Meal  
7:00p Christmas Eve  
Worship Service  
9:00p Moravian Service

### Dec. 25 Wednesday

#### **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

### Dec. 26 Thursday

9:30a Food Pantry Prep  
4:00p Prayer Team  
Meeting Zoom  
6:00p Moravian Band  
Practice

### Dec. 27 Friday

6:00p Moravian Bible  
Study

### Dec. 28 Saturday

#### **Moravian's Deep Cleaning**

9:00a Food Pantry  
Distribution  
4:00p Moravian Youth  
Group Meeting

### Dec. 29 Sunday

9:30a Worship Service  
12:30p Moravian Service

### Dec. 31 Tuesday

#### **New Year's Eve**

5:30p Community Meal





- 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 Pastors Carlos, Derek, Nicole and Rob, Specialists Kim & 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. •Hope Lutheran Church, Gulf Cove (Port Charlotte) •St. Paul members, St. Paul ECLC teachers and students and the Arlington Park neighborhood.

<p><b>Members</b>                  Beetle/O'Hara Family                  Dorothy Boller                  Susan Burmaster                  Sue Fisher                  JoAnn Jordan                  James Paulsson                  Kathie Snyder</p> <p><b>Homebound Members</b>                  Donna Casala                  Evelyn Gulliksen                  Lindy Lindemann                  June Manselle                  Anna Mathisen                  Virginia McQuaig                  John Miller                  Michael Reiter                  Carole Wilson</p> <p><b>Friends and Family</b>                  Alice - JoAnn Jordan's friend                  Bill - Jan Kruse's friend                  Bill - Scherr's neighbor                  Brad - Cindy Paxton's brother                  Cassandra - Irene Felicetti's friend                  Debbie &amp; Frank - Scherr's friends                  Ed - Sandy Choquette's friend                  Gina &amp; Greg - Jan Kruse's friends                  Lucas - Scherr's neighbor's grandson                  Marilyn - S. Weckwerth's aunt                  Mark - Hillerich's friend                  Patty - Cindy Paxton's sister                  Susan - Cindy Paxton's friend                  Tunde - Irene Felicetti's friend</p>	<p>Sandi Acevedo - Acevedos sister-in-law                  Clinton Allen - Jim Paulsson's friend                  Laura Anderson - Roberts' niece                  Doug Benoit - St. Paul volunteer                  Sheryl Brandes - Sue Scherr's sister-in-law                  Buete &amp; Pearson family - Brian McCulley's family                  Caroline Burmaster - Susan Burmaster's sister-in-law                  Todd Couch - Sandy Choquette's son                  Mike Cunningham - H. Roberts' friend                  Bill Davies - regular attendee                  John &amp; Joy Emanuelli - Roberts' friends                  Gladys Faraone - H. Robert's friend                  John Foor - Ryan's friend                  Susan Gallagher - Dorothy Boller's daughter                  Gallagher Family - Dorothy Boller's in-laws                  Vickie Hall - Fonda Davies' sister                  Lois Heisler - Irene Felicetti's family                  Niklaus Heisler - Irene Felicetti's great-grandson                  Katy Hernandez - M. Acevedo's niece                  Kara Johnson - Amy Hildreth's friend                  Nicole Ketter - Susan Burmaster's friend                  Philip Koepke - Irene Felicetti's friend                  Kate Kretschmann - Lindy Linderman's friend                  Karen Kugler - Marty Hillerich's friend                  Kenny Manselle - June Manselle's son                  David McCall - Judy Roberts' brother</p>	<p>Kevin McKinney - Susan Burmaster's friend                  Marsha McKinney - former member                  Becky Nobles - Lindy Lindermann's friend                  Linda &amp; Jim Norris - Doris Schlotterback's family                  Karen Paulsson - Jim Paulsson's sister                  Manny Ribas - Cindy Schlotterback's friend                  Clint Shantz - former member                  Brian, Kenny &amp; Tommy Schlotterback - Doris Schlotterback's sons                  Hailey Schlotterback - Doris Schlotterback's granddaughter-in-law                  Donna Shepherd - Gail Seyfarth's sister                  Bethany Smith - Smiths' daughter                  Noel Scott Studenwalt - Smiths' nephew                  Jolea Swann - Earleen Ashbrook's cousin                  Bill Sweeney - Hutfliiz's grandson                  Jean Taffe &amp; family - Susan Burmaster's cousin                  Bill &amp; Jean Thompson - Dorothy Boller's sister &amp; brother-in-law                  Dan Torrence - Kathy Snyder's friend                  David Van Ness - Missy Craig's brother                  Elaine &amp; Mark Vanderweight - Jim Paulsson's friends                  Curtis Weckwerth - Rick Weckwerth's cousin                  John &amp; Janet Welther - Ethel Hamilton's family</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)

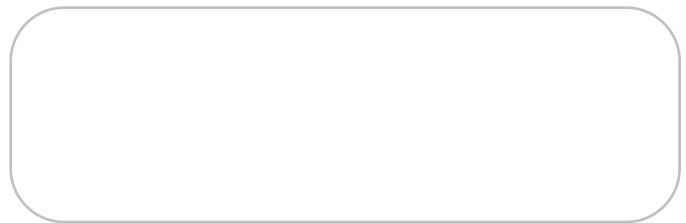
**Rev. Ashley Nicolls, Pastor**

**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.