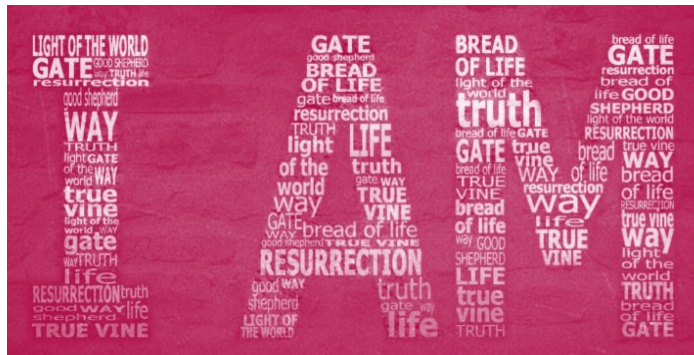


St. Paul's Epistle

"St. Paul's Lutheran Church glorifies God by connecting people to Jesus through teaching, serving, caring, & telling!"

CELEBRATING
125
YEARS

St. Paul's Lutheran Church 1700 Carridale Street SW Decatur AL 35601 256.353.8759 www.StPaulsDec.com



Friends in Christ,

Aren't the "coincidences" in life interesting? Things that coincide, together have a unique connection. I'm sure that you can think of numerous ones that have taken place at times in your life.

This year in the month of February, Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day coincide. And is this a coincidence?

Well, yes, according to the popular use of the term, it certainly is. It "just so happens" that the two occasions occur on the same day. While this is a rather minor, non-consequential, calendrical phenomenon (secularly speaking), if you are planning to celebrate/observe both events, you will nonetheless have to do a bit of coordinating.

From a spiritual and Biblical perspective, though, I think that Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day falling on the same day is pretty neat! Human romantic love is nothing in comparison with God's great love for mankind. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." (John 3:16). We know these words well, and how readily we Christ followers recognize the amazing love of our Savior, that He cared enough about us to redeem us through His suffering and death! Rather than being an inconvenience for church goers, the greatest love in the whole universe is emphasized this February 14th.

Now, switching gears just a bit. On Ash Wednesday at St. Paul's, we will consider in our worship service how Jesus, on His journey to the cross, is clearly portrayed as the powerless "I Am" in John's Gospel. It has been noted by many Bible scholars and teachers that St. John gives us seven "I Am" statements from Jesus: "I am the bread of life" (6:35); "I am the light of the world" (8:12); "I am the door" (10:7); "I am the good shepherd" (10:11, 14); "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25); "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6); and "I am the true vine" (15:1). The number seven represents perfection (God and creation in harmony, to be precise), and these "I Am" statements are key to understanding who Jesus is and what He has come to do. Very importantly, they remind us of the conversation Moses had with the Lord in the burning bush: "I am who I am" (Exodus 3:14). Jesus is the Lord God Himself, who came into this world (out of love!) to redeem us.

While the seven "I Am" statements of Jesus were intentionally recorded for us—for a specific purpose, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit—what's sometimes missed is the number of other times in John's Gospel when Jesus says, "I am." Not "I am something"—"I am the door" or "the way"—but simply "I am." This gets hidden in our English versions, which will translate it, "I am he," to make more sense. But this misses the significance (or you could even perhaps say the "coincidence"). For Jesus is claiming to be God! "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). "Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I Am" (13:19).

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says this again, twice. And two very different things happen. The soldiers come to Jesus. "Whom do you seek?" Jesus asks. "Jesus of Nazareth," they declare. Jesus says (ready for it?): "I Am" (18:4-5). With that word, Jesus reveals the truth of who He is, and He demonstrates the power of His divine majesty. That word knocks them over. But the second time Jesus says it, "I told you, I Am" (v 8), nothing happens. No one falls over. The second "I Am" doesn't move them at all. And you'll have to put your Valentine's Day plans on hold (or coordinate them just right) and join us here at St. Paul's on Ash Wednesday to hear the full explanation, but the bottom line is that Jesus, the great "I Am," God Himself, set aside His divine power while in the flesh (out of His awesome love!) in order to redeem you and me by the cross. So, truly, what a wonderful "coincidence" of love we find this February.

In the love of Christ our Savior,
Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

February 2024

- 8:15am Traditional Worship
In-Church & Facebook Live
- 9:30am Sunday School all ages
- 10:00am WZDK 98.5 FM Radio
- 10:45am CrossLife in the ARC

Holy Communion
February 4, 14 and 18

Staffed Nursery 8am until noon

Bible Study

Adult Bible Study
Book of Romans
Sundays 9:30am

Pastor's Bible Study 9:45am

Bible Study
Wednesdays 10:30

Book of Exodus Bible Study
Wednesdays 6:15pm

Looking Ahead

Stewardship Sunday
January 28

Commitment Sunday
February 4

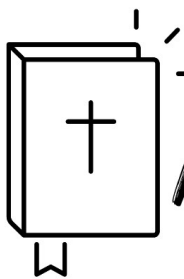
Ash Wednesday
February 14
Two services
12noon & 7pm

Midweek Lent Services
12noon
February 21– March 20

Theme for 2024:
**"Spreading the Gospel of
God's Grace"**

Verse for 2024: "But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24)





Notes from Miss Skylar



St. Paul's Family,

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 NIV

It may only be February but we are already planning for our 2024 Vacation Bible School (VBS) which is happening June 24-28. We will have a daytime VBS from 9-12pm. Our theme this year is **SCUBA: Diving Into Friendship With God**. We will explore what it means to have a friendship with a real, loving, trustworthy God – a friendship that lasts forever!

We will need many people to make this event a success, so please consider volunteering this summer! We will have our first Volunteer Information meeting on Sunday, February 18th, after CrossLife Worship, around noon. This meeting will be a great opportunity to ask questions and see what to expect at VBS this year!

God's Blessings,

Skylar Smith, DCE

2024 VBS



Save The Date!

June 24-28, 2024

**Super Bowl Subs for Sale
as High School Youth Fundraiser
Sunday, Jan 28 and Feb 4**



The High School Youth will be taking pre-orders for Super Bowl Sub Sandwiches starting Sunday 1/28 to Sunday 2/4. The Subs will be ready for pick up between services on 2/11. The Subs are being sold for \$10 each to raise money for their trip to the National Youth Gathering next summer 2025.

THE ANCHOR

St. Paul's Young Adults

Saturday, February 24th | 6:30pm

To receive information and reminders
text "@yaanchor" to 81010

Enduring Faith

February Sunday School Lessons

- 2/4 - The Pointing Prophet: John Points to Jesus
- 2/11 - A Temple Cleansing: Jesus Clears the Temple
- 2/18 - The Born-Again Truth: Jesus Teaches Nicodemus
- 2/25 - Living Water: Jesus Teaches the Samaritan Woman

FAITHLINKS



FAITHLINK ACTIVITIES HAPPENING EVERY WEDNESDAY:

DINNER - 5:30PM - FELLOWSHIP ROOM

CONFIRMATION CLASS - 6:15PM - YAC

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES - 6:15PM - ARC/GYM

YOUTH GROUP - 6:15PM - HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH ROOM

NURSERY - 6:15PM - RM 101

BIBLE STUDY - 6:15PM - RM 317

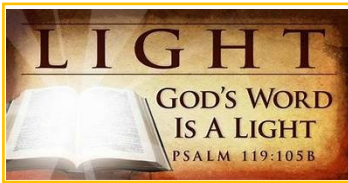
Bible Reading Challenge

February - The Love of God

Join our 2024 Bible Reading Challenge! These daily readings look at verses that focus on a different theme every month. These verses may only take a few seconds to read, but we encourage you to read them multiple times throughout the day and spend time in prayer with God over the verses. We also encourage you, if you have the time, to READ MORE! These verses are a starting point!

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Day 1: John 3:16 | Day 16: John 15:13 |
| Day 2: Romans 5:8 | Day 17: Psalm 136:26 |
| Day 3: Zephaniah 3:17 | Day 18: 1 Corinthians 13:13 |
| Day 4: 1 John 3:1 | Day 19: 1 John 4:9-11 |
| Day 5: 1 John 4:16 | Day 20: Isaiah 54:10 |
| Day 6: Romans 8:37-39 | Day 21: Romans 5:5 |
| Day 7: Galatians 2:20 | Day 22: 1 Cor 13:4-8 |
| Day 8: 1 John 4:19 | Day 23: Colossians 3:14 |
| Day 9: 1 John 4:8 | Day 24: Ephesians 3:17-19 |
| Day 10: Psalm 86:15 | Day 25: Psalm 63:3 |
| Day 11: 1 John 4:7 | Day 26: 2 Thessalonians 3:5 |
| Day 12: Ephesians 2:4-5 | Day 27: Romans 8:28 |
| Day 13: Jeremiah 31:3 | Day 28: Lam 3:22-23 |
| Day 14: Deuteronomy 7:9 | Day 29: Psalm 36:5-7 |
| Day 15: 1 Peter 5:6-7 | |

You can pick up a monthly bookmark at church, like our Church Facebook page to get the daily reading (and be sure to Like and Share the reading for the day so that your friends can see them too!), or text "@stpaulsbrc" to 81010 to get text message reminders.



Here are several studies along with our 2023 Bible Reading Challenge on page 2 to help us be in His Word and in His light!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

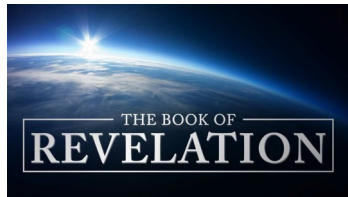
10:30-11:30 am in Room 316

Hope to see you there! If you have any questions, please contact Skylar!

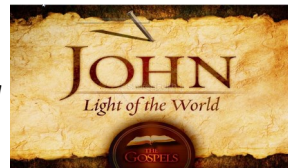


WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY BEGINS A STUDY OF BOOK OF REVELATION

On Wednesday nights from 6-7 pm, in Room 317 (office wing) we are discussing the Book of Revelation. Although seen as being frightening, John's Revelation was written to comfort and assure Christians that, while the world is horrible and cruel (especially to Christians) indeed, believers triumph at the end of this life by living forever in the beauty and peace and joy of heaven. Our class is led by member Mike Widmar and will be using a study prepared by another member, Gary Nagy (Pastor Emeritus), who is also a member of the class.



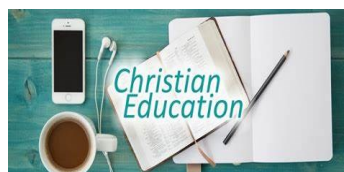
Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study: God With Us—A Study on the Gospel of John



We all believe in something. We all put our faith in what we trust will sustain us and help us move ahead. For some of us, that might be a relationship or a job. For others, it could be an education, a financial portfolio, or a political platform. But the disciple John, in his Gospel, invites us to put our belief in something much more secure. As he states, "These things [in my Gospel] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31). Join us Sunday mornings starting at 9:45 AM in the Fellowship Room as we study the Gospel of John.

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study 9:30am in Room 317

Join us for an interesting and lively discussion.



Adult Confirmation Class
Wednesdays at 8pm
In-person and by Zoom
Talk to Pastor for more info



Lenten Midweek Series: The Passion According to St. John

Ash Wednesday, February 14th
– *The Powerless "I Am"* (John 18:1-11)

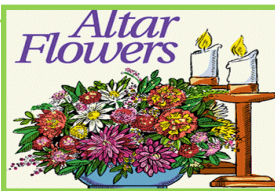
Wednesday, February 21st
– *Two Interrogations* (John 18:12-27)

Wednesday, February 28th
– *What Kind of King Is This* (John 18:28-40)

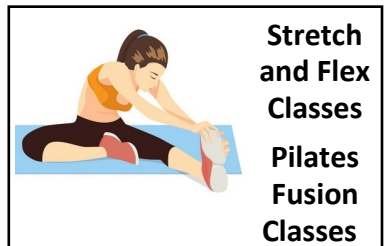
Wednesday, March 6th
– *Whom Do We Follow?* (John 19:1-16a)

Wednesday, March 13th
– *Wisdom Has a Friend on the Cross* (John 19:16b-27)

Wednesday, March 20th
– *Jesus Finishes the Battle for Your Salvation* (John 19:28-42)



The Flower Calendar for 2024 is up in the breezeway. Sign up early for your special day!



All classes are Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Stretch and Flex classes are at 8:30 in the gym and 11:00 in the YAC. This class combines many areas of fitness and is adaptable to many fitness levels. We work around a chair and finish sitting using small weights and resistance bands.

Pilates Fusion meets in the gym at 9:30. This class combines cardio, resistance training and Pilates.

For more information please call Chonita at 256-303-0098.



End-of-year Giving Statements are in your Church Mailbox for you to pick up. Out-of-town and Homebound members' statements have been mailed.

The statements are accompanied by a very encouraging Stewardship Letter from Craig Baker, President of the Congregation. The Lord is certainly blessing St. Paul's!

February 2024

+ denotes Holy Communion celebrated during Worship Church Nursery 8:00am - Noon on Sundays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
28 Stewardship Sunday 8:15am Traditional Worship +FbLive 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	29 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	30 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 9:30am Staff meeting 3:45pm Confirmation	31 10:00am Quilters 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks dinner 6:00pm Bible study 6:00pm Handbells 6:15pm Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm Adult Confirmation	1 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	2	3
4 Blessing of Commitment Cards 8:15am Traditional Worship FbLive+ 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 5:00pm HS Youth Night	5 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 10:00am LWML Meeting (mingle 9:30-10:00) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	6 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 9:30am Staff meeting	7 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks dinner 6:00pm Bible study 6:00pm Handbells 6:15pm Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm Adult Confirmation	8 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 12:00pm PS Mardi Gras parade	9	10 1:00pm KTT "Be U" event
11 8:15am Traditional Worship +FbLive 9:30am Pick up pre-ordered sub sandwiches 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	12 KTT Summer registration open 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	13 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Education meeting 7:00pm Vestry meeting	14 Ash Wednesday Noon & 7pm Worship 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks dinner 6:00pm Bible study 6:00pm Handbells 6:15pm Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm Adult Confirmation	15 Newsletter deadline 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	16	17 9:00am Emergency Response meeting
18 8:15am Traditional Worship FbLive+ 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 12:00pm 2024 VBS Information Meeting 12:00pm VBS Informational meeting 5:00pm HS Youth Night	19 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (Tu-F)	20 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Preschool Board meeting 7:30pm Fellowship board meeting	21 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 12:00pm Lent Worship (+Fb Live) 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks dinner 6:00pm Bible study 6:00pm Handbells 6:15pm Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm Adult Confirmation	22 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	23	24 6:30pm Young Adult Event
25 8:15am Traditional Worship FbLive 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	26 PS celebrate Dr Seuss week 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	27 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 9:30am Staff meeting 6:30pm Elders meeting	28 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 12:00pm Lent Worship +FbLive 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks dinner 6:00pm Bible study 6:00pm Handbells 6:15pm Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:15pm Praise Band 8:00pm Adult Confirmation	29 8:30 9:30&11 Ex Class 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	1	2



- Feb 1 Rebecca Widmar
- Feb 2 Joan Jarvis
- Feb 2 Anna Marie Hamilton
- Feb 4 Gavin Morgan
- Feb 5 Kim Winters
- Feb 5 Joseph Woodbury
- Feb 5 Anneliese Kruger
- Feb 6 Devin Schmelter
- Feb 7 Nikii Asher
- Feb 7 Ally McCay
- Feb 9 Pam Meadows
- Feb 9 Dylan Southers
- Feb 10 Rick Daniel

- Feb 10 Madeline Joiner
- Feb 11 Sara Jones
- Feb 11 Mike Ater
- Feb 11 Chris Covington
- Feb 12 Stephanie Holway
- Feb 15 Kathy Ross
- Feb 17 Paisley Ferguson
- Feb 18 Melanie McNa
- Feb 18 Jennifer Forthman
- Feb 19 Mary Yocom
- Feb 20 Jerica White
- Feb 21 Noah King
- Feb 21 Linda Holcomb
- Feb 25 Mitchell Whiteside
- Feb 27 Dottie Martinson
- Feb 28 Cheryl Baldwin



- Feb 5 Billy & Mary Cox
- Feb 12 Danny & Michelle Smitherman
- Feb 14 Rick & Carol Dubbs
- Feb 14 Ron & Alysia Johnson
- Feb 17 Mike & Glenda Ater
- Feb 20 Tim & Becky Ballentine

God's Blessings on your Special Day!

Serving the Lord in Worship this Month at St. Paul's

	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
Elders 8:15am	Mitchell Whiteside	Mike Johnson	Joseph Woodbury	Bill Darwin
Ushers 8:15am	Graham Peebles James Thrasher Michael Kimmett Mathew Kimmett	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar	Rick Daniel Jack Blaske Tim Nave Oliver Nave	Mike Ater Bob Seibert Mike Johnson
Acolytes 8:15am	Katelyn	Emma	Katelyn	Owen
A/V Techs 8:15am	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant
Readers 8:15am	Jeff Pittman	open	Nancy Neuendorf	Luke Frasher
Sanctuary Flowers	Open	Open	Tootie Johnson	Billie Seagle
Altar Guild for February: Stephanie Holway and Helga Daniel		Counters for February Leesa Pittman and Nancy Neuendorf		
Elders 10:45am	Tim Herfurth	Roy Weiland	Gary Nagy	Roy Weiland
Host families 10:45am	Morgan family	Atkins family	Ballentine family	Burrell family
A/V Techs 10:45am	Rick & Carol Morgan	James Gilchrist	Tim Herfurth	Mike Ringers



CHOIR PRACTICE
Come join the choir
Wednesdays at 7:00pm
in the choir loft.
New members welcome!
For more info contact
Mary Morgan



Handbell Choir
Handbell Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at 6:00pm
in the choir loft.

Thank you
To all the quilters,
What a lovely surprise at
my front door! The colors
are so peaceful and after an
accidental fall I had
yesterday, my quilt was
the perfect comfort! Happy
Holidays to all.
Jan Hooper

Ash Wednesday, February 14
Serving in Worship
12noon A/V: Bob Sullivant
Elder: Bill Darwin
7pm A/V: Rich Maschke
Elder: Tim Herfurth

ATTENDANCE

2023 Year-to-Date Average Attendance
In-church attendees 127
Facebook sign-ins 13

FINANCES

Current Loan Balance: **\$220,902**
Endowment Fund Balance: **\$13,233**

Financial Plan Activity thru December 31, 2023

YTD FirstFruits Giving: \$ 484,027 **PLAN: \$450,000**
YTD Total Expenses: - \$ 477,240 **PLAN: \$491,052**
Plan Activity thru Dec \$ 6,787

The **2023 Stewardship Letter & Financial Summary**
is available at <https://www.stpaulsdec.com/voters-info-1>

THANKS TO ALL for faithful giving in-person and online.
Those giving by mail are GREATLY ENCOURAGED to give online.
Sending checks in the mail is the least safe way to donate.

Currently, 25% of our Givers give safely online;
to join them,

- go to the [website](#),
- snap the QR code,
- download the Mobile app, or
- contact the Church Office for a paper authorization form.

**Online Giving
is greatly
encouraged!**



VANCO



Secure Giving at
www.StPaulsDec.com



Vanco
Mobile app
on
[Google Play](#)
or in the [App Store](#)



Dear Ladies,
I thank you so very much
for the beautiful lap quilt.
The colors are beautiful,
I love it. So proud to be a
part of your group once
upon a time. Thanks to all
of you involved. Made my
Christmas very special to
be remembered.

Betty Parker

Help support fundraising for "The Cross of North Alabama."

Go to the website and buy a brick
and leave a legacy. These will be
placed around the base of the
cross. They are available in 4 X 8
for \$150 or 8 X 8 for \$400. The
landscaping phase is now in
progress. What a blessing it has
already been to many. Thanks to all
who support this symbol of God's
love!!

IN MEMORY
DONNA G. SMITH
1950 - 2020

Outreach Project

Thank you to everyone who contributes and prays
for the visitors to our Blessing Box!

Please help to keep the Blessing Box stocked by
placing non-perishable items in the Blessing Box
or in the collection box under the Portico at the
Sanctuary entrance.





Library News

A number of magazines have been donated to the library recently. Our policy for a number of years has been not to keep magazines for borrowing out of the library. Therefore, we will put out those magazines on tables in the church narthex, the ARC (gym) and the library. Those not taken will be donated to the Decatur Public Library. If you wish, you may make a financial donation to the library by putting an offering in an envelope marked "Library donation."

We have received several new books. Two have been donated by Ron Fritze to the glory of God in loving memory of his parents, Harold and Eleanor Fritze. One is *A Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Containing 2700 entries, it presents the origins, developments, and contemporary look of Christianity from all parts of the world. It contains definitions of classical terms, as well as less common expressions of faith. It is a good summary of topics for an excellent overview of the history of Christianity. Want to know what Monophysitism is? I don't, but I know at least one person who does. (Actually it is a heresy from centuries ago that continues to this day with a different name, claiming that Jesus was only divine and never human). The second book, *Jesus Wars, The Fifth-Century Political Battles That Forever Changed the Church*, describes how political maneuvers by a handful of powerful people protected Christian doctrine from heresy. Check both these books out in the library at the desk by the sign "New Arrivals."



The blood supply continues to dwindle, and we need your help! The winter storms coming through

have forced dozens of blood drives to cancel, causing the already depleted blood supply to drop to emergency levels. If you have a blood drive scheduled in the upcoming week, please encourage all potential donors to give. If you don't, please ask them to find a location. Patients in our community need these donations. You are an essential part of the community blood supply. Every donation counts!

Special Guest Preacher and Presenter

On Sunday, February 25th, St. Paul's welcomes Rev. Dave Buss, the new Mission Executive of the LCMS Southern District. Pastor Buss will preach in worship (8:15 and 10:45) He will present during the Sunday School hour (starting at 9:30 in the Fellowship Room) on Outreach and being an effective Missional Congregation—a critical topic for these challenging post-Christian times in our culture. Please join us on the 25th for both his impactful preaching and Bible teaching



Emergency Response Training Feb 17

The meeting to prepare for medical emergencies during church and Sunday School by Pastor, Elders, Ushers, Volunteer Medical Responders, and Audio/ Visual Techs is scheduled for Saturday, February 17 at 9am. For more information contact Gary Nagy or Bill Darwin.



Help wanted..... if you knit or crochet - we need you!

St. Paul's Prayer Shawl Ministry is looking for new members to help create shawls, prayer squares, and beanies (for those taking chemo). The group has patterns and also plenty of yarn.

Meet us in Room 316 every Thursday at 11am. Bring a friend!

For more info contact Mary Kay Hodges at 256.244.4154.



St Paul's Quilters meet in Room 317 each Wednesday at 10am. Join us!

For more information contact Pete Alvis at 256.616.1774.



You're Invited to FAITHLINKS!

Wednesdays Dinner at 5:30pm
Classes start at 6:00pm



Way to Serve Well

We need donations of gently used clean blankets, quilts, coats, hats, gloves, and mittens. There is a box in the Narthex. All items will be donated to Hands Across Decatur. For more information please call Sue Bosco at 256.350.5876 or 256.565.6300



Registration for KTT Summer Program will open February 12.

For more information contact Charlotte at 256-426-7734

Do you have one hour a week to spare?

Volunteer driver needed for St. Paul's route on Wednesday and Thursday. One hour once or twice a week depending on day/days chosen, 2:15-3:15 start to finish. Must be able to drive a 15 passenger van.

Contact Charlotte for details at 256-426-7734.

2024 Southern District Middle School Youth Retreat

Lake Forest Ranch Macon, MS — January 12-14th





Afterschool
Care

Swamp John's Fundraiser

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

4:00-7:00 \$15.00

Sponsored by Kidz, Tweenz,
& Teenz Inc (KTT)

Located in St. Paul's Lutheran Church
1700 Carridale St. SW
Decatur, AL 35601



For ticket purchases call 256-426-7734/256-666-8601
With each ticket purchased you **WILL** receive a raffle ticket
for a chance to win a NEW 50" Smart TV.

Additional raffle tickets may be purchased for \$5.00 each.
Pre-selling for the Swamp John's dinner will begin on February 4th.

For your convenience we'll have the Fellowship Room open so that you may dine in.

St Paul's Lutheran Preschool 2023-2024

PRESCHOOL
WITH EXTENDED CARE



Registration

Registration for the 2024 Summer and 2024-2025 school year will begin this month. Please contact Bethany Eze, Preschool Director, at 256.353.1353 if you are interested in having your child or grandchild enroll for Preschool.

For more info and pictures of activities, find us on
www.facebook.com/StPaulsDec.Preschool
and on Instagram @st.paulspreschooldec

During month of February, the children will learn about plants, Valentine's Day fun, and Read Across America and Dr. Seuss activities. The shape of the month is the heart and letters Yy, Kk, Vv, Ww. Our Bible stories and study will be "Miracles of Jesus."

CELEBRATING
125
YEARS

October 8, 2023

*Serving God,
Stitch by Stitch*

Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

Psalm 100:2

In 1899, five (5) ladies organized the Ladies Aid Society. Their mission was to support the church and the community. Up until 1916, we know the ladies sold box lunches on the excursion boats on the Tennessee River to help retire the church debt. We don't know much about fund raising between 1916 and 1944. We do know that the ladies paid for new flooring for the sanctuary, replated the candlesticks, purchased paint to paint the church, and raised money to build a garage on the church property for the pastor's car.

In the minutes of the Ladies Auxiliary beginning in 1944, the ladies recorded all donations turned in at a meeting. They sold hangers, sponges, baked goods, fruit, crafts, and quilts. The quilts sold for \$.50 apiece. The minutes record the ladies holding sewing days to piece the quilts and quilting bees to layer and do the quilting.

After World War II the ladies made quilts for Lutheran World Relief and collected clothes and other items to ship to the European refugees. The Men's Club assisted by paying the freight charges. They also adopted an orphan in Finland that they supported for some time after the end of the war.

By the mid-1950's, the ladies quilts sold for \$2.00. When the ladies started holding the bazaars, they sold their crafts, baked goods, and quilts along with other items.

With the move to the Carridale location in 1968, the quilters organized into a Quilting Group to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. They continued to send quilts to that organization until the shipping costs became prohibitive. I am told that Pastor Reinhardt made coffee for the ladies before every meeting and turned up the heat so that the room would be toasty warm.

The ladies earned about \$500 from the quilts sold at the Bazaar for many years. The money they made was used to help the Trustees with projects around the church, support Meals on Wheels, and the Preschool.

One of the longstanding traditions is the blessing of the quilts. One Sunday in November, the quilts are brought into the sanctuary and spread across the back of the pews for the blessing service. It is lovely to have those quilts keeping your back warm or to wrap up in one if the sanctuary is on the cooler side.



Today, St. Paul's quilters make 50-60 quilts a year and they sell 30 quilts a year. The ladies tell me that making these quilts is a labor of love. They make a range of sizes from baby quilts to full size quilts and the prices range from \$15.00 - \$65.00. The quilts are pieced at home, then brought to the church to be layered and quilted, and then taken home to be hemmed. A lot of the fabric used in making the quilts is donated. The ladies always appreciate any donation.

Quilts are given for a variety of reasons or events. At Christmas, quilts are given to the Pastor and Skylar, our DCE. Every child who is baptized is given a baby quilt. 2 years ago, the Young Adults partnered with the quilters to provide baskets of cookies and fruit and a lap quilt to the shut-ins for Christmas.

They also take on special projects when the need arises. Stephanie Holway made curtains for the Preschool classroom doors to provide an extra level of protection. If there is an intruder, the teacher can close the curtain so the intruder cannot see into the room.



For our 125th Anniversary, the ladies made our Anniversary banners. Instead of being sewn, the ladies paid to have the banners printed. One of the banners displays the altar window from the Sherman Street church and the altar window from the Carridale Street church. The other banner displays pictures of the Carridale Street church and the Sherman Street church.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry, the quilters meet on Wednesday morning from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Beth Hornish and Ron Fritze

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www.StPaulsDec.com
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·HAPPY·
Valentine's
Day



Lenten Midweek Series:
The Passion
According to St. John

Ash Wednesday, February 14th
– *The Powerless "I Am"*
(John 18:1-11)

Wednesday, February 21st

– *Two Interrogations* (John 18:12-27)

Wednesday, February 28th

– *What Kind of King Is This* (John 18:28-40)

Wednesday, March 6th

– *Whom Do We Follow?* (John 19:1-16a)

Wednesday, March 13th

– *Wisdom Has a Friend on the Cross* (John 19:16b-27)

Wednesday, March 20th

– *Jesus Finishes the Battle for Your Salvation* (John 19:28-42)



We are transitioning to a new 1Call service in February called Call Multiplier.

The calls you receive will be from (256) 353-8759 on your Caller ID and identified as "St. Paul's Lutheran Church."

If you do not receive a test call on Thursday, February 1 between 6 and 7pm, then contact the Church Office to have your number added to the list.



If you are not currently receiving weekly announcements by email, please call the Church Office to sign up.

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