

St. Paul's Epistle

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

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

And
my God will meet all
your needs according
to the riches
of his glory in
Christ Jesus.
-Philippians 4:19



Friends in Christ,

Can you envision standing there with the children of Israel at the Red Sea? Can you image the conflicting thoughts and feelings they experienced after witnessing the victory that was theirs following the Lord sending the tenth plague, only then to be trapped between an approaching bloodthirsty army and a sea that was (humanly speaking) impossible to cross? It appeared that God had clearly granted His people victory after the ten plagues. But then, as the Israelites left Egypt, the rage of the enemy culminated in a pursuit to seek and destroy God's people.

The children of Israel had seen God act in power for them. But now, they had been led by Moses to a place of hopelessness and despair, it would seem. They were not standing at the edge of a Red Sea bridge, that they could quickly cross and be out of the way before the Egyptian army could catch them. They were at a place that seemed like all was lost. But the Lord was not finished with His deliverance from the hand of the Egyptians. God, who is faithful and just, intervened and parted the Red Sea! And you know the rest of the story. The children of Israel walked across on dry ground, while the enemy was destroyed in the sea.

The salvation of God's people at the Red Sea is a well-known story, with a happy ending for the righteous. But as familiar as that account is, we tend to forget, in our own lives, how the Lord is in the business of rescuing those who look to Him in faith. As fallen people, we so easily forget that when faced with a seemingly impossible situation, our wonder-working saving God is by our side. And His miraculous aid is never late or insufficient, but it is right on time and supplies all our needs.

In the month of February, we begin the season of Lent. Before Christ came into the world, sin was an impossible problem. God had acted in mighty ways to save His people in the Old Testament, but the lasting guilt of mankind's trespasses remained. Yet in the fullness of time, God sent His Son, born of Mary, to redeem us. And during the season of Lent we focus in on Christ's journey to the cross to die for our sins, that we might have forgiveness full and free in Him.

God has taken care of our greatest problem in Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again. We have pardon and peace with God through the shed blood of our Holy Savior. And now, in all we face, God has promised to be with us (Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5). Therefore, we Christians today can have confidence that our Lord will provide for all of our needs (Philippians 4:19). Truly, our gracious Heavenly Father gives us good things, not bad, as we look to Him in faith (Matthew 7:11).

Our Holy God is at work in this world for His people and through His people, who live by His Word and strive to do His will. And today, as we follow God's call by living as those SENT in this world to bring Christ's love and Word to others, shining His light, we meet resistance. Hell has an agenda, and it is to stop the advance of God's kingdom and harm God's people. But Jesus has already told us that "the gates of hell will not prevail" (Matthew 16:18).

We, members of the Church of Jesus Christ, find that time and again God provides for our needs and supplies what is necessary to do His work and carry out His will in this world. Enemies of the cross of Christ despise our efforts. They will try to silence us, and attempt to hinder us from doing God's kingdom work, in every way. The history of humanity has shown this to be true, and there is no reason to think that Satan will begin operating differently in our nation.

But God is faithful. And as we look to Jesus Christ in faith, remembering that we are to live as SENT people, God will uphold us and sustain us in carrying out His mission. So let not your hearts be troubled, but trust in Christ and bring God the glory!

The battle we wage is spiritual. And as we share the Gospel, the fruits of our labor are eternal. The devil hates us when we share Christ Jesus, but the angels in heaven rejoice over even one person who turns from sin and trusts in Him (Luke 15:10). So may the Lord bless you as you bring God's Word into the lives of those around you. Amen.

Supplied and SENT in Christ,

Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

February 2021

Worship on Sundays

8:15am Traditional Worship

In-Church &  **facebook**
LIVESTREAM

9:30am WZDK 98.5 FM Radio

11:00am Drive-in Worship

meeting in the back parking lot
severe weather: by Conf Call

(872) 240-3311

access code 608 586 593

Holy Communion

February 7, 21 all services

Ash Wednesday Worship

February 17 noon & 7pm

Lenten Worship

February 24 noon

Bible Study

Children's Bible Time FB post

Sundays 9:00am

Galatians Study Zoom

Sundays 9:30am

MS Youth Zoom Meet-up

Sunday 2/21 6:00pm

John Bible Study

Wednesdays 6:00pm

Youth Confirmation Live

Wednesdays 6:00pm

Adult Confirmation Zoom

Wednesdays 8:00pm

Looking Ahead

Youth Super Bowl Party

February 7

KTT Online Auction Fundraiser

Facebook Event February 13-14

*St. Paul's THEME VERSE
for 2021:*

*"Jesus said to them
again, 'Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me,
even so I am sending you.'"*

John 20:21

St. Paul's THEME for 2021

We are a SENT people!

February 2021

† denotes Holy Communion celebrated during Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Commitment Sunday 8:15 AM Traditional Worship + Facebook Live 9:00 AM Children's Bible Time 9:30 AM Galatians Zoom Study 9:30 AM Radio 98.5FM Worship 11:00 AM Drive-in Worship	1 7:00 AM PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 AM Preschool (M-Th) 10:30 AM LWML Mtg 2:30 PM Afterschool Care (M-F)	2 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	3 10:00 AM Quilting 4:00 PM God's Place Worship 6:00 PM Book of John study 6:00 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM Band rehearsal	4 10:00 AM PS Chapel 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry	5	6
7 8:15 AM Traditional Worship† + Facebook Live† 9:00 AM Virtual Children's Bible Time 9:30 AM Galatians Zoom Study 9:30 AM Radio 98.5FM Worship† 11:00 AM Drive-in Worship† 5:00 PM Youth Super Bowl Party	8 7:00 AM PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 AM Preschool (M-Th) 2:30 PM Afterschool Care (M-F)	9 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Education Team meeting 7:00 PM Vestry meeting	10 10:00 AM Quilting 4:00 PM God's Place Worship 6:00 PM Book of John study 6:00 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM Praise Band 7:15 PM Choir 8:00 PM Adult Confirmation	11 10:00 AM PS Chapel 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry	12	13 KTT Virtual Auction Fundraiser on Facebook Day 1
14 Transfiguration Sunday Valentine's Day KTT FB Auction Fundraiser Day 2 8:15 AM Traditional Worship (choir) + Facebook Live and Choir sings 9:00 AM Virtual Children's Bible Time 9:30 AM Galatians Zoom Study 9:30 AM Radio 98.5FM Worship 11:00 AM Drive-in Worship	15 Presidents' Day Newsletter deadline 7:00 AM PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 AM Preschool (Tu-Th) 2:30 PM Afterschool Care (Tu-F)	16 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Preschool Mardi Gras Parade	17 Ash Wednesday Worship with Communion In-person + Facebook Live 10:00 AM Quilting 12:00 PM Lenten Worship+FbL 4:00 PM God's Place Worship 6:00 PM Book of John study 6:00 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM Lenten Worship+FbL 8:00 PM Adult Confirmation 8:00 PM Band rehearsal	18 10:00 AM PS Chapel 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry	19	20
21 8:15 AM Traditional Worship† + Facebook Live† 9:00 AM Virtual Children's Bible Time 9:30 AM Galatians Zoom Study 9:30 AM Radio 98.5FM Worship† 11:00 AM Drive-in Worship† 6:00 PM Middle School Zoom Meetup	22 7:00 AM PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 AM Preschool (M-Th) 2:30 PM Afterschool Care (M-F)	23 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	24 10:00 AM Quilting 12:00 PM Lent Worship + Facebook Live 4:00 PM God's Place Worship 6:00 PM Book of John study 6:00 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM Praise Band 7:15 PM Choir 8:00 PM Adult Confirmation	25 10:00 AM PS Chapel 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry	26	27
28 8:15 AM Traditional Worship + Facebook Live and Choir sings 9:00 AM Virtual Children's Bible Time 9:30 AM Galatians Zoom Study 9:30 AM Radio 98.5FM Worship 11:00 AM Drive-in Worship	1 7:00 AM PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 AM Preschool (M-Th) 10:30 AM LWML Meeting 2:30 PM Afterschool Care (M-F)	2 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Elders meeting	3 10:00 AM Quilting 12:00 PM Lent Worship +Facebook Live 4:00 PM God's Place Worship 6:00 PM Book of John study 6:00 PM Confirmation 7:00 PM Praise Band 8:00 PM Adult Confirmation	4 10:00 AM PS Chapel 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry	5 World Day of Prayer	6



Lutheran Women in Mission at St. Paul's THANK YOU !

We would like to thank all of you who purchased quarts of chicken soup during our Soup Sale last fall - the response was overwhelming, and we hope to do it again soon. The proceeds help to fund our mission projects locally and globally! Your support is greatly appreciated, and we pray God's blessings for you and your family.



BIRTHDAYS

Feb 1 Rebecca Widmar
 Feb 1 Carol Alldredge
 Feb 2 Joan Jarvis
 Feb 2 Anna Marie Hamilton
 Feb 4 LJ Alvis
 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 McNamara
 Feb 18 Jennifer Forthman
 Feb 19 Mary Yocom
 Feb 20 Jerica White
 Feb 21 Noah King
 Feb 21 Linda Holcomb
 Feb 22 Selina Salgado
 Feb 22 Gilbert Swanner
 Feb 25 Mitchell Whiteside
 Feb 26 Max Seagle
 Feb 28 Cheryl Baldwin

ANNIVERSARIES

Feb. 5 Jerry & Carol Alldredge
 Feb. 5 Billy & Mary Cox
 Feb. 12 Danny & Michelle Smitherman
 Feb. 14 Rick & Carol Dubbs
 Feb. 17 Mike & Glenda Ater
 Feb. 20 Tim & Becky Ballentine

*God's Blessings
 on your
 Special Day!*

We have included KNOWN birthdays and anniversaries. If yours is not on this list, it is not intentionally left off. please email or call the Church Office at 256.353.8759 and let us know your special day!



Called Home to Heaven

Robert Jarvis Marguerite Hamilton
 January 5, 2021 January 27, 2021



KTT AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

VIRTUAL AUCTION FUNDRAISER
February 13-14



CLICK IT TO WIN IT!

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/kidztweenzteenzinc/>

Crafts, gift cards, and services will be auctioned off at KTT Inc's 1st Annual Virtual Auction on Facebook.

Charlotte Bradley, Director, KTT Inc (256) 666-8601

For info and pictures of activities, please visit
<https://www.facebook.com/KidzTweenzTeenzInc/>



Trustee Report

West Lot Fence: Installation is now complete of the 6-foot high fence encompassing the west end lot on our property. This fence will allow for children to play safely without the constant fear of them playing too close to the street or chasing a ball or something into the street. The enclosed area will be sufficient to allow for both soccer and kickball games. The cost of this fence is shared equally with our faith partners KTT, Inc.

Other: The Trustees are also addressing the sound issues in the Sanctuary, upgrading our Facebook Livestream, and repairing the Digital Sign.

St Paul's Preschool

CELEBRATING OUR NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



1,914 SCHOOLS | 21,655 TEACHERS | 35 DISTRICTS

LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION OF Faithful Christian Disciples

- Experiencing and celebrating God's lavish gifts of love, grace and mercy
- Sharing those gifts with others
- Being transformed by God's Word
- Clinging to the cross of Jesus

PROVIDING EXCELLENT Academic Preparation

- Developing love for and excitement about learning
- Excelling at reading, writing and effective communication
- Training minds for success at the next academic level
- Creating a strong work ethic, critical thinking skills and the ability to relate well with others

SHARING THE LIFE-CHANGING MESSAGE OF JESUS' LOVE WITH MORE THAN

180,000 students, their families and the community

Learn more:
888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
lcms.org/school-ministry
f t i n



Join us in prayer and celebration for our Preschool here at St. Paul's as one of 1,914 schools in the National Lutheran School system.

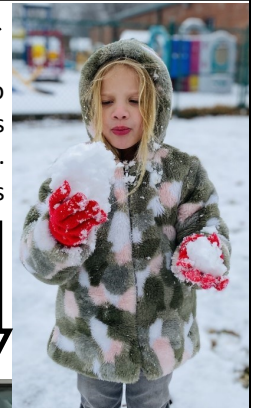
Nancy Neuendorf, Director
(256) 353-1353



Enjoying our snow day on January 11! ➡

Our 4-year-old class showed our appreciation to Mrs. Felicia and Mrs. Carol for the love and kindness shown to us in their service to the Lord at St. Paul's. We are truly thankful for them and will greatly miss them at Preschool and Chapel time!

For more info and pictures of activities, please visit
www.facebook.com/StPaulsDec.Preschool



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

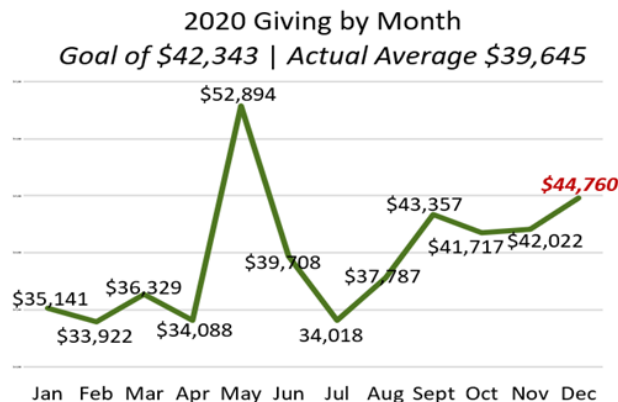
	February 7	February 14	February 21	February 28
Elders 8:15am	Phillip Corlew	Craig Baker	Mike Ater	John Mann
A/V Techs 8:15 am	Rich Maschke	Craig Baker	Rich Maschke	Craig Baker
Sanctuary Flowers	Open	Open	Open	Open
Adult Choir	Mary Morgan, Pete Alvis, Melinda Baker, Celia Faller, Steven Frick, Kellye Jones, Dee Livingston, Pam Meadows, Mitchell Whiteside, Mary Yocom, Mark Blaske			
Altar Guild for February	Helga Daniel, Stephanie Holway	Counters for February		Karin Burtram, Nancy Neuendorf
Elders 11:00am	Mike Widmar James Gilchrist	Mike Ringers Ronnie Atkins	Dave Burrell James Gilchrist	Dave Burrell Mike Ringers
Greeters 11:00am	Jimmy & Carol Mueller	Jimmy & Carol Mueller	Dave & Jane Burrell	Dave & Jane Burrell
Praise Band	Pastor Kretzschmar, Christen Bradley, Maggie Nicholson, Steve O'Shea, Selena Salgado, Doug Thompson			
		February 17	February 24	
		Lenten Elders 12:00pm 7:00pm	Bob Sullivant James Gilchrist	Dave Burrell

FINANCES

Current Loan Balance: \$272,731

Financial Plan Activity thru December 31, 2020

YTD FirstFruits Giving: **\$475,745** Goal YTD: **\$508,120**
 YTD Total Expenses: **-\$512,396** short by **\$31,375**
Fin Plan Shortage YTD -\$ 36,651
 with \$110,247 PPP funds applied:
 Temporary overage is **\$ 73,596** in spite of Giving shortfall!



Let's take time for a Hallelujah Moment coming out of 2020

We have recovered almost \$15,521 in the Financial Plan from -\$52,172 in July to -\$36,651 by year-end.

Following up on what was said in the *Epistle* concerning the pandemic and its impact on our Financial Plan: "In spite of the evils of this pandemic, we have been blessed with generous givers faithfully supporting St. Paul's with FirstFruits Giving alongside the PPP loan funds," we can now truly say:

Our goals to minimize the economic impact of COVID-19 continue to be met! To God be the Glory!

The Lord has blessed our prayers with

- congregational giving almost meeting our Giving Goal by the end of the year -

Giving averaged \$42,033 May - Dec !!!!

- the Preschool operating within the Financial Plan with 53+ students enrolled -

Preschool June-Dec Income of \$113,010 and Expenses of \$114,922 are well-within the Plan!!!



Thanks to all for faithful Giving in-person, by mail, and online!

Online Giving is greatly encouraged!

Currently, 35% of our Givers give securely online by EFT! Simply go to the church website or contact the Church Office for a paper application!



2020 Designated Giving - Gifts Above & Beyond FirstFruits

Adult SS Offerings	\$133
Bible Fund	\$1,200
Children's Offerings from SS, PS Chapel, & God's Place for Children's Bibles in Ethiopia and Indonesia	\$988
Disaster Relief	\$100
Flower Fund	\$257
HS Youth Giving Tree, NYG	\$517
Loan Principle Gifts	\$3,615
Memorial Fund	\$16,925
Preschool Fund	\$1,805
Special Giving to "greatest need"	\$1,390
Thrivent Choice to St Paul's	\$1,364
Thrivent Choice to Preschool	\$417
Total Designated Giving	\$28,711



Photos by Nancy Neuendorf

BLESSING BOX



Outreach Project during the Pandemic

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. We are blessing our neighbors - one can at a time!

