

St. Paul's Epistle

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

St. Paul's Lutheran Church 1700 Carridale Street SW Decatur AL 35601

256.353.8759 www.StPaulsDec.com



Friends in Christ,

As Americans we can give thanks to God for a heritage of faith that has been passed down through the generations. We can read about the faith of godly men and women in the history of our country. Of the 250 people we call Founding Fathers, the vast majority, by their own testimony, were Christians. They believed in the Good News of Jesus Christ. They confessed that He died on the cross for our sins and rose again. These men and women, and millions of their fellow citizens, prayed for their nation and the future of their country. They witnessed to the next generation. And we are the recipients of those answered prayers and faithful witness.

We who have been blessed in the United States with the Good News of Jesus Christ must confess to the Lord that we have often not been faithful in sharing that Good News. For this we must repent. At the same time we give thanks to God for the Good News of His forgiveness, which is ours through faith in Christ. Through His Holy Spirit we can be renewed to the task of spreading the Gospel right here in our community and country. In our prayers we can ask God graciously to allow our Christian heritage to be transmitted to the next generation.

In Deuteronomy chapter 8 the people of Israel were commanded by God to remember that they were set free from slavery in Egypt. The freedoms that we celebrate on the Fourth of July were never free. Many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were hounded and persecuted, and some died for their beliefs.

On Independence Day, and throughout the month of July, we give thanks to God for those who gave their lives so that we may live in a free land. We give thanks to God for those who risked their lives to protect our freedoms. We also give thanks to God for those in the armed forces who are in harm's way so that we continue to enjoy the freedoms we have.

As a free people, we have a God-given responsibility to pray for our nation and leaders. We have the responsibility and calling to participate as citizens at the local, state, and national levels. And as a free people, we have the responsibility to exercise the freedom of worship that God has blessed us with in the United States.

In the month of July especially, we give thanks to God for the many blessings that He has showered upon us through our great nation, the United States of America. We pray to God for our nation, our leaders, and our fellow citizens. And we pray to God for ourselves, that He would keep us faithful always to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

St. Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world" (Romans 1:8). The early church spread to the eastern regions around the Mediterranean Sea—regions that are no longer primarily populated by Christians. For centuries, Christianity found a place of growth in Europe. State-dominated churches, wars, communism, and secularism have taken a severe toll on the faith in Europe. Sadly, much of Europe is Christian in name only.

Here in the United States the Gospel of forgiveness and salvation through Christ alone has been deeply planted. Under the freedoms that we have experienced over the last two and a half centuries, the faith has grown and spread. And we in our day have a great opportunity not only to keep that faith alive, but also to help people of other nations have the opportunity to receive the Good News of forgiveness and salvation through Jesus alone.

Fellow Servant in Christ,

Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

July 2025

Worship Opportunities

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

Holy Communion July 6 and 20

Staffed Nursery 8am until noon

Sunday Bible Studies

Adult Bible Study

Sundays 9:30am

Pastor's Bible Study 9:45am

Weekday Bible Studies

Wednesday 10:30am

Wednesdays 6:00pm

Looking Ahead

July School Supply Drive
for KTT and Preschool

Campus Closed
Friday, July 4

Movie Night
Sunday, July 13

National Youth Gathering
July 18-24

KTT Paint and Sip Fundraiser
Friday, July 25, 6pm

KTT & Preschool Summer
Programs ends
July 25

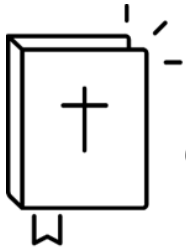
2025

Theme:

Renew our Hearts, O Lord.

Theme Verse: Psalm 51:10

*"Create in me a clean
heart, O God, and renew a
right spirit within me."*



NOTES FROM *Miss Skylar*



St. Paul's Family,

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. - Jeremiah 29:11

We ended June learning to Trust Jesus in a wild world at True North VBS! Children got to learn all about trusting Jesus in all situations in life: when we wonder, when we feel alone, when we feel powerless, when we need hope, when we need help, we can TRUST JESUS!

Being able to serve all of these children from our preschool to 5th grade is only possible because of all our amazing volunteers. This would be impossible without their help and servant hearts so I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who made True North VBS a success! For our volunteers, we will do our annual Thank You Lunch on Sunday, July 13th, at 12pm in the Fellowship Room. This lunch is also a great opportunity to share what you feel went well, what can be improved on, and just any other ideas for VBS in 2026!

Speaking of VBS 2026! Next summer we're heading to the jungle with Group's Rainforest Falls VBS where we will be Exploring the Nature of God! Be sure to join us next summer to experience this amazing event of sharing God's love with our community!

God's Blessings,
Skylar Smith, DCE



VBS Volunteer Thank You Lunch

Sunday, July 13th, at 12pm in the Fellowship Room
All VBS volunteers and their families are welcome to join us for a Thank You Lunch on July 13th! This is our opportunity to tell you thank you for all your hard work with VBS this year and talk about VBS 2026!



VBS 2026

ENDURING FAITH

July Sunday School Lessons

7/6 - All Together

7/13 - Mountain Message: Jesus Preaches on the Mount

7/20 - A Weather Wonder: Jesus Calms the Storm

7/27 - A Life Restored: Jairus's Daughter

Bible Reading Challenge

July - Your Purpose

Join our 2025 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: Jeremiah 29:11

Day 2: Proverbs 3:5-6

Day 3: Romans 12:2

Day 4: Ephesians 2:10

Day 5: Psalm 37:4

Day 6: Matthew 6:33

Day 7: Proverbs 16:3

Day 8: Psalm 139:16

Day 9: John 15:16

Day 10: 1 Peter 2:9

Day 11: Philippians 4:13

Day 12: Colossians 3:23-24

Day 13: Isaiah 41:10

Day 14: 2 Timothy 1:9

Day 15: Proverbs 19:21

Day 16: Ephesians 1:11

Day 17: Psalm 33:11

Day 18: Philippians 2:13

Day 19: James 1:5

Day 20: Proverbs 20:24

Day 21: Psalm 32:8

Day 22: Galatians 1:15-16

Day 23: Isaiah 30:21

Day 24: Acts 13:36

Day 25: Psalm 57:2

Day 26: Micah 6:8

Day 27: 1 Corinthians 10:31

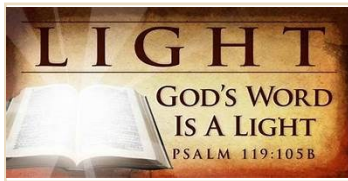
Day 28: Matthew 28:19-20

Day 29: Romans 8:28

Day 30: Isaiah 43:7

Day 31: Luke 22:42

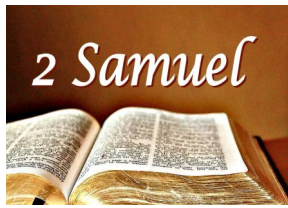
You can pick up a monthly bookmark at church, like our Church Facebook page to get the daily reading (and be sure to Like and Share the reading for the day so that your friends can see them too!), or to receive daily text reminders talk to Skylar to get signed up!



Here are several studies along with our 2025 Bible Reading Challenge on page 2 to help us be in His Word and in His light!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Wednesday mornings we are reading 2 Samuel! We hope you can join us at 10:30am in Room 318! Talk to Skylar if you have any questions!

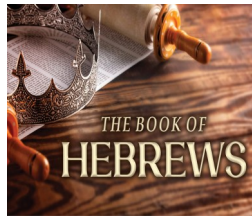


The Gospel of Matthew

Wednesday evening in Room 317: Continuing with the Gospel of Matthew at 6pm. We will continue to meet during the summer.

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

Join us for an interesting and lively discussion. This class will continue through the summer.



Men's Bible Study
Saturday July 12 and 26
at 7:30am
in the Fellowship Room

Daniel Bible Study
Saturday, Date TBD
11:00am
in the Fellowship Room



Jane Burrell leading children on rhythm instruments during Worship closing song



FM 98.5 WZDK

Hear St. Paul's Worship Service on the radio every Sunday at 10am
Also hear great hymns of the church Sunday Mornings

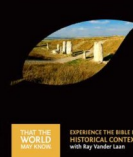
Talk to James Henderson for more information!



Adult Confirmation Class
Wednesdays at 6:15pm
In-person and by Zoom
Talk to Pastor for more information!

PROMISED LAND

3 LESSONS ON
Living for God Where Culture Is Influenced

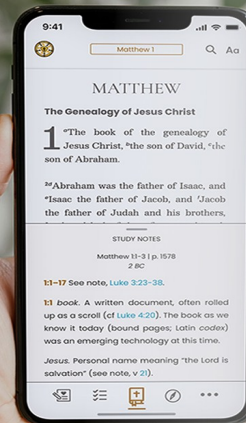


Adult Bible Study
Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study –
In the Fellowship Room at 9:45am

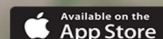
That The World May Know:
Promised Land

In this video enhanced Bible study, historian Ray Vander Laan illustrates how God guided His people to a specific place – the Promised Land – to impact the world both in ancient times and today. Just like the time and place of our birth shapes our journey, so the land and culture of the Hebrew people shaped their story. Filmed on location in Israel, this study provides wonderful context to the stories of that time.

INTRODUCING The Lutheran Study Bible App



Get started at
\$9.99/year or \$2.99/month



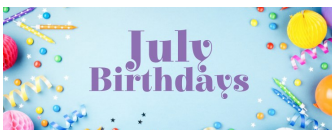
Your Favorite Study Bible
Now Fits in Your Pocket

July 2025

† denotes Holy Communion celebrated during Worship

Church Nursery 8:00am - Noon on Sundays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
29 8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship 1:15 pm Bldg Usage	30 7:00am KTT (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 6-8pm Gym use	1 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise	2 10:00am KTT Chapel 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 6:00pm Bible study 6:15pm Adult Confirmation 7:30pm Praise Band	3 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6-8pm Gym use	4 campus closed	5 8:30am Set up for CrossLife
6 8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 1:15 pm Bldg Usage	7 7:00am KTT (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 10:00am LWML Meeting (mingle 9:30-10:00) 6-8pm Gym use	8 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Education Bd 7:00pm Vestry	9 10:00am KTT Chapel 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 6:00pm Bible study 6:15pm Adult Confirmation 7:30pm Praise Band	10 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6-8pm Gym use	11 6:00pm Wedding rehearsal	12 7:30am Men's Bible study 8:30am Set up for CrossLife 4:00pm Wedding
13 Beignet Sale between services NYG Commissioning 8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship 12:00pm VBS Volunteer Thank You Lunch 1:15 pm Bldg Usage 5:30pm Movie Night - <i>Unsung Heroes</i>	14 7:00am KTT (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 6-8pm Gym use	15 <i>Newsletter deadline</i> 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Preschool Board 7:00pm Fellowship Board	16 10:00am Quilters 11:00am Men's G.O.S.P.E.L lunch 6:00pm Bible study	17 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6-8pm Gym use	18 NYG	19 NYG Bldg use 4-10pm 8:30am Set up for CrossLife
20 National Youth Gathering 8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 1:15 pm Bldg Usage	21 NYG 7:00am KTT (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (T-Th) 6-8pm Gym use	22 NYG National Youth Gathering 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 5:30pm Elders meeting	23 NYG National Youth Gathering 10:00am Quilters 5:30pm KTT End of summer program 6:00pm Bible study 6:15pm Adult Confirmation 7:30pm Praise Band	24 NYG 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6-8pm Gym use	25 Last day for Preschool and KTT Summer Programs 6:00pm KTT Paint and Sip	26 7:30am Men's Bible Study 8:30am Set up for CrossLife
27 8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship 1:15 pm Bldg Usage	28 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 6-8pm Gym use	29 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise	30 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 6:00pm Bible study 6:15pm Adult Confirmation 7:30pm Praise Band	31 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6-8pm Gym use	1	2 LWML sponsored Free Bingo Night 6-8pm 8:30am Set up for CrossLife



July 1 Asher Nicholson
 July 2 Sue Bosco
 July 4 Bonnie Mann
 July 4 Nolan Holway-Jones
 July 5 Katherine Plunkett
 July 6 Bailey Bauer
 July 6 Celia Gilchrist
 July 6 Randy Harville
 July 6 Amber Parson
 July 7 John Campbell
 July 10 Dale Carlson
 July 10 Jaida Terry
 July 11 Bruce Burch
 July 11 Gavin Cevallos
 July 12 Shari Jones
 July 14 Vicki Huddleston

July 16 Scott Pitts
 July 16 Karby Schmelter
 July 17 Heather Reardon
 July 17 Heidi Holder
 July 18 Meghan Carroll
 July 19 Mary Terry
 July 20 Joyce Weiland
 July 21 Rick Morgan
 July 21 Craig Baker
 July 22 Leesa Pittman
 July 23 Maeve Aplin
 July 23 Charlene Lechner
 July 23 Sarah Mitchell
 July 24 Cindy Hamilton
 July 24 Rich Maschke
 July 26 Kathie Beach
 July 26 Ron Switzer
 July 28 Wanda Parrotta
 July 29 Linda Armentrout
 July 29 Nicole Ringers

God's Blessings
 on your
Special Day!



July 9 Michael & Nicole Ringers
 July 9 Scott & Diane Pitts
 July 9 Jimmy & Carol Mueller
 July 10 Jordan & Vladi Herrarte
 July 10 Jeff & Maribeth Morgan
 July 10 Brian & Joceyln Mitchell
 July 12 Mark & Val Blaske
 July 13 Craig & Celia Faller
 July 16 Ken & Cindy Hamilton
 July 17 Raymond & Heather Asher
 July 19 Tim & April Nave
 July 19 Mike & Michelle Parson
 July 19 T.J. & Wanda Parrotta
 July 20 Joel & Lana McCay
 July 22 Blake & Meghan Carroll



National Youth Gathering

St. Paul's is sending three high school youth to the National Youth Gathering in Houston this July 18-24. They will be spending the week in classes, servant events, and worship along with 35,000 other Lutheran youth from around the World.

Please keep an eye out for all the fundraisers they have planned to help fund their trip. Most importantly please remember them and their leaders in your prayers.



**Join us
Friday, July 25 from 6-8pm
in the Fellowship Room**

This fun night of instructed painting is hosted by KTT in order to purchase books and supplies for the "Earn to Learn" program for our next school year.

Ticket price of \$25 covers cost of all art supplies, a lightly sketched canvas and light refreshments.

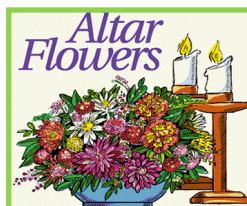
Tickets can be purchased from Mrs Charlotte at KTT or Mrs Raven of "Earn to Learn."



Handbell Choir rehearsal
on summer break.
See you in September!



Choir rehearsal
on Summer break
See you in September!
New members welcome!
For more info contact
Mary Morgan



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



During the month of July , we're having a school supply drive for St Paul's Preschool and KTT. There will be a donation board of needed items. Please choose items you would like to donate and return to the designated boxes in the narthex and lobby.



**Stretch
and
Flex
Classes
Pilates
Fusion
Classes**

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.



**LWML sponsoring
Free Baked Goods
Bingo Night
August 2 from 6-8pm**

In appreciation to the congregation for all their support.

**Baked Good prizes will
be awarded!**



We had 19 at The Brick Deli for Guys Of St. Paul's Eating Lunch (G.O.S.P.E.L.). They reserved our tables with our name.

**Next Men's G.O.S.P.E.L.
Lunch
Wednesday,
July 16 at 11am
Restaurant TBD**



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

		July 6	July 13	July 20	July 27
Elders	8:15am	Micky Whiteside	John Campbell	Mike Johnson	Bill Darwin
Ushers	8:15am	Bob Seibert Rick Daniel Tim Nave Oliver Nave	Owen Blaske Jack Blaske Mike Johnson Jeff Pittman	Graham Peebles Michael Kimmett Mathew Kimmett Mike Ater	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar
Acolytes	8:15am	Ben	Oliver	Ben	Oliver
A/V Techs	8:15am	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant
Readers	8:15am	Jeff Pittman	Pam Meadows	Gary Nagy	Micky Whiteside
Sanctuary Flowers		Belinda Campbell	Open	Peebles	Debbie Kleri

Altar Guild for July: Melinda Baker and Melanie McNa

Counters for July: Patrick Helpingstine and Don Olson

Elders	10:45am	Tim Herfurth	Gary Nagy	Tim Herfurth	Gary Nagy
Host families	10:45am	Ballentine family	Burrell family	Herfurth family	McRae family
CL setup	8:30am Saturday	Rich Maschke	Men's Bible study	Rich Maschke	Men's Bible study
A/V Techs	10:45am	Rick & Carol Morgan	James Gilchrist	Mike Ringers	Tim Herfurth



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

For more information contact Pete Alvis at 256.616.1774.



Come and Knit or Crochet with us!
Work on your own project or special church projects. We have patterns and yarn galore!

Meet us in the Parlor every Thursday at 11am.
For more information contact MaryKay Hodges.



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



Come join us for a night of fellowship !

MOVIE NIGHT
July 13 at 5:30pm
Unsung Hero

When David Smallbone's music company collapses, he moves his family from Australia to the United States to search for a brighter future. Struggling to make ends meet, the couple soon realize the talents of their children, who go on to become two of the most successful acts in contemporary Christian music.

Fellowship Board Members Needed

Help with fellowship activities like the one listed above for our members at St. Paul's, and reach out as well to Preschool and KTT families, along with others. The board meets, and facilitates activities, about once a month. So please prayerfully consider being a part of this board that aims to connect both members and non-members in a greater way to our wonderfully blessed congregation. For answers to questions, or to say that you're interested in serving, please talk to June Asher or Pastor.



Save your pull tabs



2025 Year-to-Date Average Attendance
In-church attendees 130
Livestream sign-ins 25



Current Loan Balance: **\$195,456**
Endowment Fund Balance: **\$ 15,175**

Financial Plan Activity

YTD FirstFruits Giving: **\$ 179,030** **PLAN: \$200,000**

YTD Total Expenses: **- \$ 197,531** **PLAN: \$226,912**

Plan Activity
- \$ 18,502 more expenses than income



Don't miss an important call from St Paul's

The calls you receive are from
(855) 248-7295

Please add this number to your
Contacts and label it "St Paul's Calls."



Please let the Church Office know if you would like to receive our 1Call announcements and are currently not signed up.

ChurchOffice@StPaulsDec.com



2025 VBS

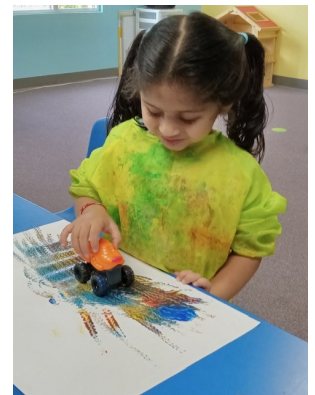
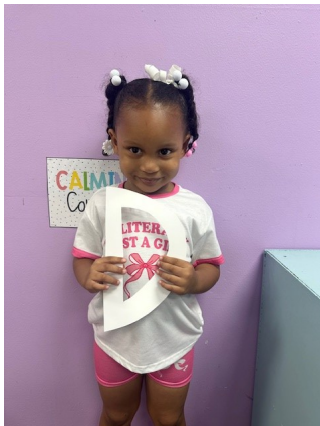
Find more pictures on our
Facebook Page!

Preschool Mission Statement

St Paul's Lutheran Summer Preschool 2025

St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool with Extended Care provides a quality early childhood education program guided by Christian philosophy and doctrine and acts as a mission outreach of this congregation to the community.

Philosophy Statement The Preschool at St. Paul's Lutheran Church will help meet the spiritual and educational needs of our member families and serve as an outreach to families in our community. It will teach and make disciples of the children God has entrusted to us. We believe children are valuable gifts whom God has forgiven through death and resurrection of his Son. Children learn best when they are taught in a Christ-centered environment that includes interaction with others, various learning experiences and a variety of educational methods.

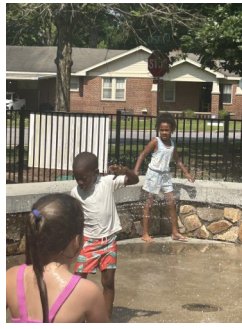


For more info and pictures of activities, please visit
www.facebook.com/StPaulsDec.Preschool



Afterschool Care

Summer Fun



KTT will be Closed on July 4

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

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

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

www.StPaulsDec.com
www.Facebook.com/StPaulsDec



During the month of July , we're having a school supply drive for St Paul's Preschool and KTT. There will be a donation board of needed items. Please choose items you would like to donate and return to the designated boxes in the narthex and lobby.



Come join us for a night of fellowship as we watch the movie

Unsung Hero

The true story of the band,
For King + Country

July 13 at 5:30pm

- Popcorn and cookies
- Kids' movie for younger children



DCE Appreciation Day, June 26

The Elders &
Board of Education
show St. Paul's'
appreciation
for our DCE,
Skylar Smith!!!!

Thank you
for all you do!!!



If you missed ordering a

St. Paul's T-shirt \$25

a 2nd order will be made
if there is enough interest!

email Rich.Maschke@gmail.com or
June Asher at dobbie3304@gmail.com