

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



Friends in Christ,

Today, people need hope. Some say we currently live in a "hopeless" society. There are few people with positive expectations right now. After all, we hear bad news constantly, and we are told by some to expect things to get worse. Many have come to the realization that our world, including our own personal lives, are (from a secular perspective) not getting any better. Therefore, despair, rather than hope, reigns.

But, God calls us to a sure hope. And the hope that God gives is more than wishful thinking. We often use the word hope to mean "maybe" or "there is a fair chance that it will take place," or "if we are lucky." But Christian hope is not based on the weather or on circumstance, like saying "I sure hope it doesn't rain on our picnic." And neither is it based on chance.

Also, true and lasting hope cannot be based on anything that we can accomplish, for on our own we humans "fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and we deserve God's wrath and punishment, because of our sin. Thankfully, however, as Christ followers, the hope that our lives are based on is founded on our eternal triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—who has promised us grace and blessing in every need, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). And the hope that we have is eternal, for we read in Romans 5:2, "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God".

We Christians live with eternity in view, and our true hope will never be completely realized here on this earth. Yet, because Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose for us, the crown of glory will indeed be ours. Our sure hope in life eternal comes through our connection to Christ and gives us a great anticipation in sharing in glory with our loving God.

Yes, life now in this world often seems hopeless. And St. Paul says in Romans 5:3 that "we also rejoice in our sufferings." For suffering is supposed to produce in us perseverance and character and hope (Romans 5:4). But indeed often it seems and feels that the opposite happens.

Paul knew what it was like to suffer. He experienced sickness, beatings, stoning, shipwrecks, and a host of other terrible things. The people in Rome to whom Paul was writing in his epistle, also knew about hardships. Living conditions in the city of Rome were not good, especially for those who professed to be Christians. The Roman Emperor Nero persecuted Christians in a vicious manner.

Today, circumstances pull us down. As we look around we soon realize that even those of us with the most positive outlook on life can become consumed with the problems around us. We consider world events, and we become fearful. And in our own local area with the prices of necessities going up and up, many are struggling.

Also, people we know well can have an impact on us. It is sad when those around us let us down. We think and hope that we can count on them. But people are fickle. They can't always be trusted. So human sin erodes our confidence and hope.

Plus, the sin within us pulls us down. And in the end, it is our own sin which causes us to lose sight of the hope God gives to us. Instead of placing our faith and confidence in the Lord, we often depend merely on our own strength to pull us through.

But, by God's grace, as the Lord works in our hearts and minds by His Word, we hear and believe our Lord's promises (Romans 10:17). Our triune God is truly the God in whom we have hope (Romans 5:2). He gives us hope as a gift, and He will not disappoint us! The Spirit of God says that we can trust Him now, in the midst of all that we face, and we can trust our Savior forever, for Jesus lives and reigns eternally (John 14:1; Revelation 11:15). God has poured out His love for you in Christ, and you are His (Romans 5:5).

In Christ our Risen Savior,

Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

June 2023

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
June 4 and 18

Staffed Nursery 8am until noon

Bible Study

Adult Bible Study
Heroes of the Bible
Sundays 9:30am

Pastor's Bible Study 9:45am

Book of Matthew Bible Study
Wednesdays 10:30

Gospel of Luke Bible Study
Wednesdays 6:15pm

Looking Ahead

Memorial Day—Campus closed
May 29

Father's Day
June 18

Vacation Bible School
June 19-23

CELEBRATING 125th Anniversary
125 Homecoming
YEARS Celebration
October 8

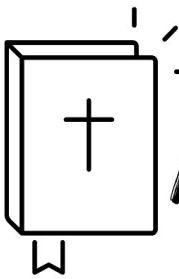
2023 Theme

"Through the years,
the Lord is faithful!"

*For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures
forever, and his faithfulness
to all generations.*

Psalm 100:5





Notes from Miss Skylar



St. Paul's Family,

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9 NIV

June is here, children and youth are out of school for the Summer, and we have lots of exciting things happening here at St. Paul's! Our biggest event being Vacation Bible School which is happening June 19th through the 23rd from 9-12pm! Our theme for this year is Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light! I hope you can join us for this fun week of learning all about Jesus and shining His light for everyone to see! You can register your child at www.stpaulsdec.com/vbs or find a paper form in the lobby or narthex!

In order for VBS to be a success we need lots of volunteers! And we are still in need of some volunteers for this year! We especially need someone to lead our Imagination Station and KidVid Cinema plus we can always use more crew leaders! If you are available to help out this year, even if it's just one day, please let me know! We'd love to have you on our Stellar Team! This is also a great opportunity for any middle and high school youth who need service hours!

Also happening in the month of June, we are beginning our Youth Swim Nights again! Anyone entering the 6th grade through a graduating senior is welcome to join us every Wednesday in the month of June from 5:30-8pm at the Gilchrist House for swimming! You can contact me if you have any questions! We'd love to have you join us!

Our high school youth will also be having a fundraiser this month! In honor of Father's day they will be selling Snackle Boxes, a tackle box filled with snacks! You can preorder your Snackle Box starting Sunday, June 4th. Small Boxes are \$7 and Large Boxes are \$15. You will be able to pick up your Snackle Boxes on Father's Day Sunday, June 18th! If you have any questions, contact Heather Asher!

God's Blessings,
Skylar Smith, DCE



Vacation Bible School

June 19th - 23rd, 2023

Register Online at stpaulsdec.com/vbs

Youth Swim Nights



All Middle and High School Youth are invited to Youth Swim Nights every Wednesday in June from 5:30-8pm at the Gilchrist House! Contact Maribeth Morgan, Heather Asher, or Skylar Smith with any questions! Hope to see you there!



Enduring Faith

June Sunday School Lessons

- 6/4 - The Unlikely Ally: Rahab Believes
- 6/11 - The Downfall Wall: The Fall of Jericho
- 6/18 - The Palm-Tree Judge: Deborah
- 6/25 - The Weekend Judge: Samson

THE ANCHOR

St. Paul's Young Adults

Saturday, June 17th | 6:30pm

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

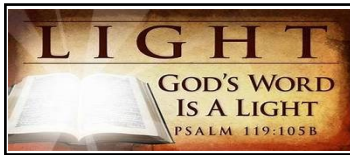
Bible Reading Challenge

June - Take Heart!

Join our 2023 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: Galatians 6:9 | Day 16: James 4:10 |
| Day 2: Colossians 3:23-24 | Day 17: Revelation 22:12 |
| Day 3: 1 Corinthians 15:58 | Day 18: 2 Corinthians 4:17 |
| Day 4: Matthew 25:21 | Day 19: John 15:7 |
| Day 5: Proverbs 3:3-4 | Day 20: 1 Corinthians 9:25 |
| Day 6: Psalm 101:6-7 | Day 21: Matthew 6:6 |
| Day 7: James 1:12 | Day 22: John 15:5 |
| Day 8: 1 Corinthians 2:9 | Day 23: Hebrews 10:23 |
| Day 9: Deuteronomy 5:32-33 | Day 24: 2 Timothy 2:11-13 |
| Day 10: Proverbs 22:4 | Day 25: Proverbs 3:5-6 |
| Day 11: Luke 6:38 | Day 26: Proverbs 28:20 |
| Day 12: Lam. 3:21-26 | Day 27: Psalm 31:23-24 |
| Day 13: Philippians 3:14 | Day 28: 2 Timothy 4:7-8 |
| Day 14: Hebrews 11:6 | Day 29: Psalm 101:6 |
| Day 15: Proverbs 11:18 | Day 30: 1 Thes. 5:23-24 |

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!

The Gospel of Matthew



Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Wednesday nights beginning at 6:15 pm in Room 317. Please join us!



Sunday Morning Bible Study

9:30 am Room 317

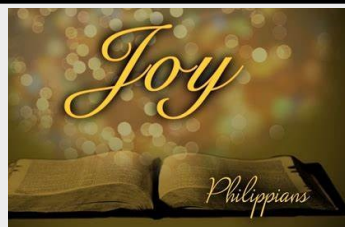
Join us for a interesting and lively discussions



New Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study – *Philippians: Embracing Joy*

Do you need a shot of joy or a boost of holy optimism in your life? If so, you will be encouraged by Paul's emotional words to the Philippians.

Even though the apostle was writing from a jail cell, he could still speak of the joy, purpose, and belonging that he had found in Christ. In this short letter, he reveals how you can likewise fix your eyes on Jesus in spite of your circumstances and know that you can do all things through Christ because the tomb is empty! Please join Pastor Kretzschmar on Sunday mornings starting at 9:45 am in the Fellowship Room.



Adult Confirmation Class

Wednesdays at 8pm

In person and by Zoom

Talk to Pastor for more info



Vacation Bible School

June 19th - 23rd, 2023

Register Online at stpaulsdec.com/vbs

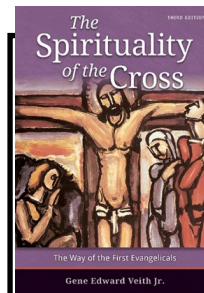
St Paul's Quilters meet in Room 317 each Wednesday at 10am. Join us! For more information contact Helga Daniel.



Save the Date!

CELEBRATING
125
YEARS

St Paul's Lutheran Church
Celebrating 125 Years
Sunday, October 8, 2023



The topic of spirituality in Christianity is muddled with mysticism rather than the mysteries of Christ: the Sacraments and His resurrection. With the rise of people identifying as "spiritual but not religious" and moving away from "institutional" religion, this book offers a bridge to bring people to Christ. More importantly, Spirituality of the Cross brings people to Lutheranism and its teachings of the cross and Christ's sacrifice for our salvation.

Topics covered: Justification, Means of Grace, Theology of the Cross, Christology, Vocation, Living in Two Kingdoms, and Worshiping God.

"Indeed, the teaching that we are justified by faith in the atoning work of Christ on the cross is considered 'the chief article'—the underpinning of every aspect of Lutheran theology and, indeed, of the Christian faith." -Gary Nagy



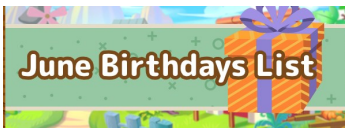
FATHER'S DAY

Moms are amazing but let's not forget about our Dads! Surprise your Father or Father figure with a little gift to show you care about him. The Prophets will be selling Snackle Boxes starting June 4 up until Father's Day. Pre order or purchase day of from any High Schooler in the Lobby between services.

Small boxes will be \$7 and larger boxes will be \$15.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
28 8:15am Traditional Worship & FB 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	29 Memorial Day - campus closed 7:00am PS Ext Care (T-F)	30 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 9:30am Staff meeting	31 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise band	1 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	2 10:00am Sanctuary use	3
4 8:15am Traditional Worship & FB† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 5:00pm HS Youth Night	5 KTT Summer Program (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 PS Summer Program 10:00am LWML Meeting (mingle 9:30-10:00)	6 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 12:00pm Choir rehearsal	7 10:00am Quilters 5:30pm Youth swim nights 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise band	8 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	9	10 2:00pm KTT "Be U" event
11 8:15am Traditional Worship & FB 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship 12:00pm VBS meeting 1:30pm Porch Visits by Elders	12 KTT Summer Program (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 PS Summer Program	13 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Education meeting 7:00pm Vestry meeting	14 10:00am KTT Chapel 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Youth swim nights 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise band	15 Newsletter deadline 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	16	17 6:30pm Young Adult Event
18 Father's Day 8:15am Traditional Worship & FB† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 5:00pm HS Youth Night	19 Juneteenth Day KTT Summer Program (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 PS Summer Program 9:00am Vacation Bible School	20 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 9:00am VBS 6:00pm Preschool board meeting 7:30pm Fellowship board meeting	21 9:00am VBS 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Youth swim nights 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise band	22 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 9:00am VBS 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	23 9:00am VBS	24 Building use 12-6
25 8:15am Traditional Worship & FB† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	26 KTT Summer Program (M-F) 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45 PS Summer Program	27 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 6:30pm Elders meeting	28 10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Youth swim nights 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise band	29 8:30 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	30	1



- June 2 Evelyn Helpingstine
- June 6 Emma Locker
- June 7 Karen Bullen
- June 7 Marsha Disher
- June 7 Beverly Redwanz
- June 8 Lydia Firpo
- June 8 Luke Frasher
- June 8 David Sidley
- June 9 Sara Love
- June 9 Mark Blasko
- June 10 Megan Appleton
- June 11 Bob Strom
- June 12 Hannah Miller
- June 13 Paula Brown
- June 15 Jeff Pittman
- June 17 Tyler Nitchen
- June 18 Betty Parker
- June 19 Jeff Morgan
- June 20 Tootie Johnson
- June 20 Hugh Morgan
- June 23 Jerry Welch

- June 24 Rana Crumpton
- June 24 Mason Livingston
- June 24 Celia Royer
- June 24 Katrina Cox-Smith
- June 25 Melinda Baker
- June 26 Marian Paradise
- June 27 Wendy Duffey
- June 28 Steve Frick
- June 28 Richie Sautter
- June 28 Marilyn Tidwell
- June 29 Joy Franco
- June 29 Bruce Newton
- June 30 Ashley Braswell
- June 30 Beth Hornish

God's Blessings on your Special Day!

The Flower Calendar for 2023 is up in the breezeway. Sign up early for your special day!



- June 2 Dan & Shari Jones
- June 2 Ben & Emily Carlson
- June 3 Michael & Jennifer Kimmett
- June 4 Rana & Stephen Crumpton
- June 8 Mike & Beth Hellebrand
- June 9 John & Mary Nelson
- June 11 Larry & Charlene Lechner
- June 12 Philip & Gail Pisani
- June 15 Rick & Kathy Sautter
- June 17 Bob & Genevieve Strom
- June 18 Graham & Penny Peebles
- June 22 Nathan & Lisa Miller
- June 25 Jeff & Paula Brown
- June 25 Glenn & Mary Kay Hodges
- June 29 John & Chris Covington
- June 29 LJ & Pete Alvis
- June Gerald & Janet Hooper

Meet us in the Parlor every Thursday at 11am. Bring a friend!



Called Home to Heaven
Max Seagle
May 13, 2023

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

	June 4	June 11	June 18	June 25
Elders 8:15am	Woodbury	Darwin	Nave	Herfurth
Ushers 8:15am	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar	Rick Daniel Jack Blaske Tim Nave Oliver Nave	Ron Neuendorf Mike Ater Bob Seibert	Graham Peebles James Thrasher Michael Kimmett Mathew Kimmett
Acolytes 8:15am	Katelyn	Owen	Emma	Katelyn
A/V Techs 8:15am	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant	Rick Maschke	Bob Sullivant
Readers 8:15am	Jeff Pittman	Rhonda Reece	Gary Nagy	Luke Frasher
Sanctuary Flowers	Dan and Shari Jones	open	Linda Hyde	open

Altar Guild for June: Belinda Campbell & Pete Alvis

Counters for June: Tim Herfurth and Beth Hornish

Elders 10:45am	Nagy	Whiteside	Fritze	Weiland
Host families 10:45am	Atkins family	Ballentine family	Burrell family	Herfurth family
A/V Techs 10:45am	Morgan	Gilchrist	Ringers	Herfurth



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.

Are YOU Receiving CALLS from St PAUL's?



You will now see calls from the number
(855) 248-7295

Be sure to "create a new contact" with the
(855) 248-7295

number and name it "St Paul's Calls"
or something you will recognize!

- - - EVERYONE - - -

Customize your Communication Preferences by clicking on:

<https://stpaulsdec.360members.com/communications/access-preferences>

Follow the instructions to choose your preferences;

If you have any questions, please email the Church Office!



2023 Year-to-Date Average Attendance

In-church attendees 121
Facebook sign-ins 14



Current Loan

Balance: \$232,400

Financial Plan Activity thru April 30, 2023

YTD FirstFruits Giving: **\$ 160,077** *PLAN: \$ 150,000*

YTD Total Expenses: **- \$ 143,257** *PLAN: \$150,000*

Plan Activity thru April + \$ 16,820 Great start to 2023!!!

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, 35% of our Givers give safely online; to join them,

- go to the [website](#),
- download the Mobile app,
- snap the QR code, 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](#)

2023 VBS Mission Project

Our Mission Offering at Stellar VBS this year will go towards Because International's "The Shoe That Grows!"

This shoe is made from a durable material that lasts and grows 5 sizes to grow with the child wearing it! It costs \$20 to create this stellar shoe!



CELEBRATING
125
YEARS

St. Paul's is Celebrating its
125th Anniversary

October 8, 2023

Memories, Memories

Do you have a favorite memory of your time at St. Paul's?

Do you have favorite memories of your time at the Sherman Street church?

The Anniversary History Committee is collecting memories for the 125th Anniversary and want to include yours!

We would like to preserve these memories for the future. If you have memories that you are willing to share, please send them to Beth Hornish at emhornish@gmail.com or put them into my mailbox at the church. We will collect them and you will be able to see everyone's memories at the Anniversary celebration on October 8, 2023. Thank you for sharing!

Beth Hornish

Memories
are special moments
that tell our
Story

Attention St. Paul's members, past and present, men and women, Preschool, KTT and all groups:

Share Your Recipes



As part of our 125th anniversary, we are requesting not only historical information to be provided to Ron Fritze or Beth Hornish, we are requesting submission of your best and favorite recipes!

Please include the name of the recipe, ingredients, directions along with your name and telephone number. Your number will not be published; it is for the cookbook/history book committee in case of questions.

Place the information in Joyce Weiland's church mailbox, mail to her at 2301 Mud Tavern Road SW, Decatur, Alabama 35603 or email to Campanula19@aol.com with subject line: St Paul's recipes. If you are home bound and need her to come to you, you may call her at 409-256-5797.

Deadline for submission is July 31 in order to have completion in time for the October 8th celebration. Information regarding presale to follow. All proceeds will go to the church.

St. Paul's Safety and Security Team

This team has just been organized. A plan is in place already for an armed intruder during church. A plan for our school has been developed. Now we are widening our scope to include all kinds of threats: manmade, natural, technological, and hazardous material. We will develop plans for when the campus is in use and when it is vacant. We will develop responses and train people (or engage people who are already trained).

We have had two meetings. Current members are Craig Baker, David Burrell, Dale Carlson, Gary Nagy, and Don Olson.

If you would like to become involved, contact one of us. If you are interested in offering concerns or advice, contact one of us. You will not be required to attend meetings. You will always be informed so that you can have input. All decisions will be approved by the Vestry and made public.

Our goal is to have as much of our work done as possible by the start of the school year in early August.



A summer kids' event called Stellar VBS will be here at St Paul's from **June 19-23 from 9am-12noon**

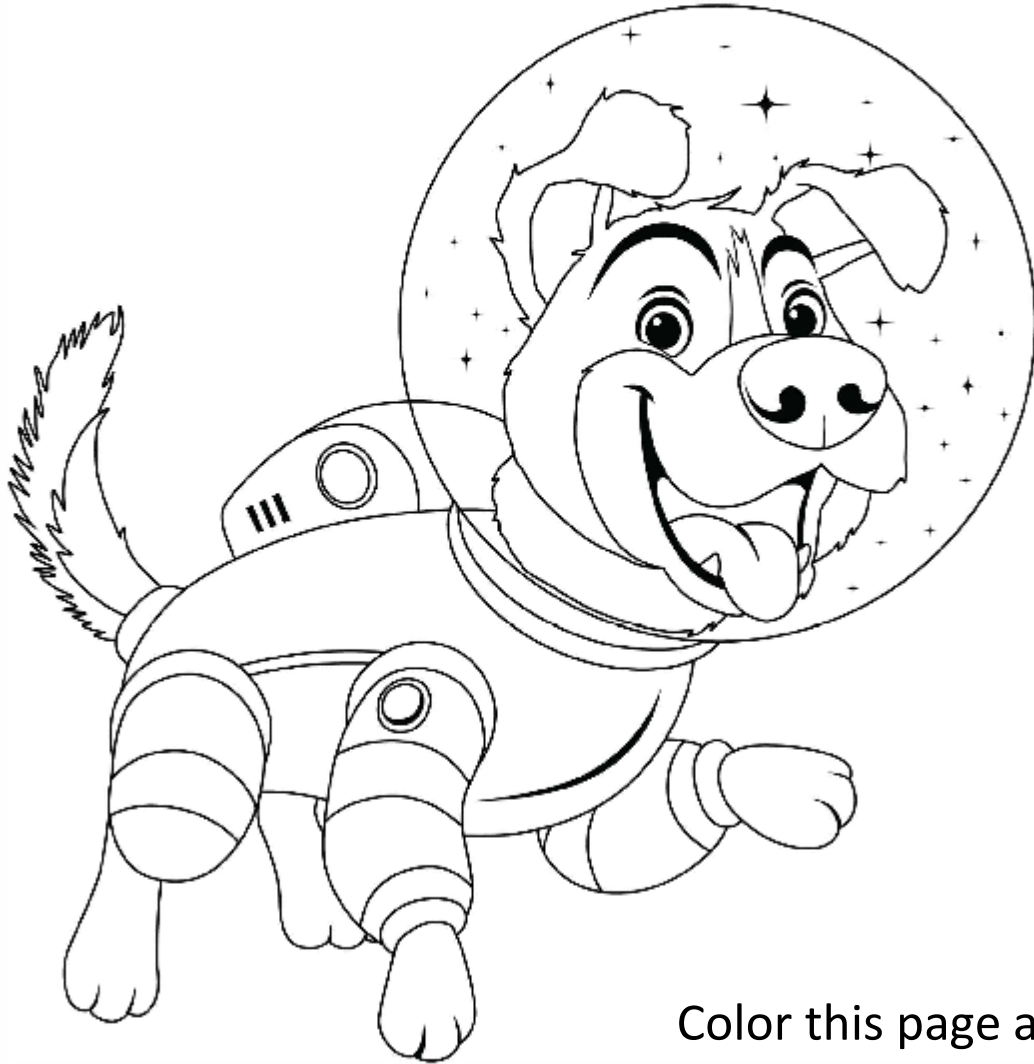
At Stellar, kids discover how they can shine Jesus' love and hope in everyday life! Kids participate in memorable Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, make and devour yummy treats, experience one-of-a-kind Bible Adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies to remind them of Jesus' light, and test out Sciency-Fun Gizmos they'll take home and play with all summer long. Plus, kids will learn to look for evidence of God all around them through something called God Sightings. Each day concludes with a Cosmic Closing that gets everyone involved in living what they've learned. Family members and friends are encouraged to join in daily for this special time at **Cosmic Closing.**



Come to Vacation Bible School

June 19-23 from 9am-12 noon

ASTRO



Color this page and give to a friend to join you at St Paul's Vacation Bible School! June 19-23

1700 Carridale St SW

Decatur, AL 356601

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

www.StPaulsDec.com

www.Facebook.com/StPaulsDec



Vacation Bible School

June 19th - 23rd, 2023

Register Online at stpaulsdec.com/vbs



The Elders will focus on calling all our members who haven't been at worship recently with the goals of:

- Letting members know that we care
- Finding out how they are doing
- Gathering prayer requests
- Letting the members know about the activities going on at St. Paul's
- Encouraging members in the life of the church (worship, Bible study, fellowship, service, caring for others)
- Reaching out to the shut-ins with a devotion & communion.

Since making contact with many of our members is difficult, Pastor and the Elders will be making "porch visits" to our inactive members sharing our goals with them. The Elders will be working with Pastor and the committee planning for the celebration of SPLC's 125th anniversary.