



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,

We are all familiar with the profound statement "Freedom isn't free!" And especially during the month of July, with the celebration of Independence Day, we are mindful of the many who sacrificed their lives to secure the freedom that we have in our nation. We thank God for all those who have served in the armed forces, and especially for those who made the ultimate sacrifice, that we might live in a nation founded on freedom. Historically, it is overwhelming to consider the vast number of men and women who willingly chose to risk, and then give up, everything so that future generations would not live under tyranny.

Our nation's founding fathers, who were predominately committed Christians, understood well the notion of individual self-governance, the idea that people in a free society could live their lives in the manner in which they best saw fit, according to the dictates of one's own conscience. The conscience (or moral compass), while residing even within unbelievers, would continually be calibrated, so to speak, as the Christian would use his or her freedom to gather publicly for worship or privately for the study of the Word of God. Certainly laws would have to be established to curb the intensions of evil doers. And when sinful people are unwilling to let justice and equality reign for all of God's children, then the government (along with churches faithful to God's Word) should work to promote respect and peace.

The success of the great American experiment, as it has been called, was understood by the framers of our nation to be dependent on a moral people rooted in faith in Almighty God. Specifically, Christianity was recognized as True, salvifically and also practically. Despite what many hear today, America's founding fathers by and large did truly believe that Jesus was the Savior, and that following God's commandments was the way of a free and blessed (though not trouble-free) life.

In our day, though, is it commonly understood that true freedom is the ability to worship God, trust in Him, grow continually in knowledge of Him and His commandments, and live according to the dictates of one's conscience? Unfortunately, this Christian perspective on freedom is not nearly as wide-spread as it once was. In fact, it seems that in many places a completely opposite understanding is promoted.

The world tells people of all ages through media of all sorts that freedom is living according to your sinful flesh (and they won't word it that way, but that's what it really is). The world says that God's Word is wrong, and the words of sinful humans are right. Freedom, therefore, according to the world, is to not let yourself be "bound" by God's Word but rather to think, say, and do what is right in your own eyes.

Now, at this point, before we become overwhelmed, let me just say that we should remember that the devil, the world, and the sinful flesh have always been hard at work. Christ is victorious, however, as He died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead! So even though there is a truly twisted view of freedom prevalent in our culture today, we Christians can use it as an opportunity.

When people live selfishly they eventually feel bad about it (guilt, hopelessness, despair). And this is when we can share the forgiveness, peace, hope, love, and joy of who? Yes, Jesus Christ! The One that so many today are ignoring, hiding from, and openly denying. The One who willing paid for our sins with His holy precious blood, out of love. So use your freedom to share Him, that those in bondage would be free indeed. Amen.

Free in Christ Jesus,

Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

July 2022

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 July 3, 17
Staffed Nursery 8am until noon

One Blended Worship Service
Sanctuary July 24 10:45am

Bible Study

Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
Adult Bible Study
Sundays 9:30am
Pastor's Bible Study 9:45am

Acts Adult Bible Study
Wednesdays 10:30

Adult Bible Study,
1 Samuel
Wednesdays 6:15pm

Looking Ahead

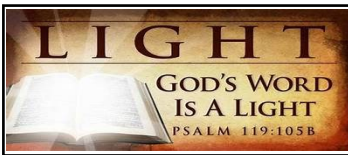
National Youth Gathering
(NYG)
in Houston TX
July 8-14

Combined Blended Worship
Potluck Lunch and
Voters Assembly Meeting
July 24

Vacation Bible School (VBS)
July 25-29

2022 Theme
"Blessed in Giving!"
2022 Verse
Acts 20:35

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

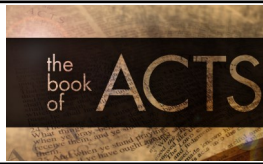


Here are several studies along with our 2022 Bible Reading Challenge to help us be in His Word and in His light!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

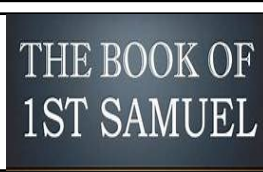
10:30-11:30 am in Room 316

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



Wednesday 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 as we study the book that describes God's sovereign majesty and redemptive love for his people.



Sunday Morning Pastor's Study

9:45 am in the Fellowship Room

Pastor's current study, *Foundations of Faith*, Please join us for an engaging study on Sunday mornings!



Bible Reading Challenge July – Standing on the Promises

These daily readings look at verses that focus on our theme of "Standing on the Promises." 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: Deuteronomy 31:6
- Day 2: 1 Chronicles 28:20
- Day 3: Joshua 1:9
- Day 4: Exodus 14:14
- Day 5: Psalm 91:9-10
- Day 6: Psalm 91:11-12
- Day 7: Psalm 91:13-14
- Day 8: Psalm 91:15-16
- Day 9: Isaiah 54:17
- Day 10: Isaiah 43:1-2
- Day 11: Jeremiah 29:11
- Day 12: Isaiah 41:10
- Day 13: Isaiah 41:13
- Day 14: Psalm 27:1
- Day 15: Psalm 34:17
- Day 16: Psalm 50:15

- Day 17: Matthew 6:25-26
- Day 18: Matthew 6:31-33
- Day 19: Matthew 7:7-8
- Day 20: Matthew 7:9-11
- Day 21: Philippians 4:19
- Day 22: Isaiah 1:18
- Day 23: John 3:16
- Day 24: 1 John 1:9
- Day 25: 2 Chronicles 7:14
- Day 26: Acts 2:21
- Day 27: Romans 10:13
- Day 28: John 14:13-14
- Day 29: Hebrews 13:5-6
- Day 30: Romans 8:28
- Day 31: Revelation 3:5

Want daily reminders for your Bible Reading Challenge?

- You can pick up a monthly bookmark at either of the services or the church office.
- Like our Facebook page and you will get in your daily newsfeed the current day's reading!
- And be sure to Like and Share the reading for the day so that your friends can see them too!

Join us on July 24

for Bible Study, Worship, Fellowship Potluck Lunch and the Quarterly Voters Meeting



Sunday School for All Ages at 9:30 am



One Blended Worship at 10:45 in the Sanctuary



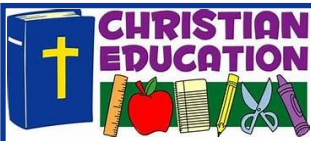
Potluck Lunch at Noon



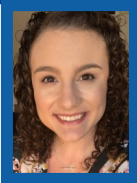
July Voters Assembly Meeting at 12:45pm

Let's Gather Together!





notes from
Skylar



"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Deuteronomy 31:6

God is big on keeping promises. "God is not human, that he should lie...Does he promise and not fulfill?" (Numbers 23:19). Joshua answers this rhetorical question in his farewell speech to Israel's leaders. "...You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed" (Joshua 23:14). The Bible is full of promises God has kept. Jesus was the fulfillment of God's best promise of saving us from our sins, and someday, we will see the ultimate, final promise of receiving eternal life with Him in heaven.

This month's readings for the Bible Reading Challenge are focused on Standing on the Promises. Who's promises? The ultimate promise keeper, God! God has made so many promises and He has kept every single one. The verses we will read this month will remind us of these promises, but also will remind us of what we can do because of God keeping all of His promises; for example, Deuteronomy 31:6 reminds us that God has promised to always be by our side and because we know this is true we can be strong and not be afraid!

Join us this month in our Bible Reading Challenge, you can grab a monthly bookmark either in the Narthex, the Lobby, or by my office. You can also receive daily reminders from our church Facebook Page or receive a daily text message with the readings by texting "@stpaulsbrc" to 81010.

God's Blessings,
Skylar Smith, DCE

Enduring Faith Sunday School Curriculum July Sunday School Lessons!

- July 3rd – All Together – 4th of July Weekend
- July 10th – Mountain Message: Jesus Preaches on the Mount
- July 17th – A Weather Wonder: Jesus Calms a Storm
- July 24th – A Life Restored: Jairus's Daughter
- July 31st – Fish-and-Bread Sign: Jesus Feeds 5000

Youth Swim Nights

Swim Nights start Wednesday, July 6th, for all middle and high school youth! Swim Nights will be at Mrs. Alison's house, starting at 5:30pm! Contact Mrs. Alison or Mrs. Maribeth with any questions!

National Youth Gathering

Please continue to keep our Youth in your prayers! We have 6 youth and 2 brave adults attending the National Youth Gathering this month from the 8-14 in Houston Texas. The NYG is held every three years for the youth of LCMS to provide them the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people and be encouraged in their walk with Jesus Christ. Youth will spend the week in Bible studies, servant events, lectures, worship and fellowship with thousands of youth from across the United States and several other countries to learn about the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity. Congregation members are encouraged to connect on social media through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to help see and hear what the event is like. Search for lcmgathering.com and you can view pictures and videos and watch the evening mass events live!



Giving kids a grand-new perspective!

We're going off-road for a Monumental adventure through the colorful canyons and sunbaked trails of the southwest. By exploring God's awesomeness, kids form a rock-solid faith for the road ahead.

Register your kids today to attend!
Register to volunteer in some way -

Lead, assist, crafts, recreation, snacks, audio-visual, clerical

www.stpaulsdec.com/vbs

Youth Night Fun!




Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
3 LWML Sunday and Mite Collection 8:00am Nursery open 8:15am Traditional Worship & Facebook Live† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 3pm Pastor installation/Cullman 5:00pm HS Youth Night		5 7am PS ExtCare (Tu-F) 7am Summer KTT (Tu-F) 8:30 9:30 & 11am Exercise Class 8:45am Summer PS (TuTh) 9:30am Staff meeting	6 Skylar & Youth to NYG 10:00am KTT Chapel 5:30pm Youth Swim Nights at Gilchrist house 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise Band	7 8:30am 9:30 & 11AM Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30pm Elders meeting	8 NYG Youth to National Youth Gathering in Houston	9 NYG 10:30am – 1:30pm Bldg use 2:00pm KTT "Be U" event
10 NYG Skylar & Youth to NYG 8:00am Nursery open 8:15am Traditional Worship & Facebook Live 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	11 NYG Pastor on vacation Skylar & Youth to NYG 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 7:00am Summer KTT (M-F) 8:45am Summer PS (MTuTh)	12 NYG Pastor on vacation Skylar & Youth to NYG Susan out 8:30 9:30 & 11am Exercise Class 6:00pm Education Team	13 NYG Pastor on vacation Skylar & Youth to NYG Susan out 10am Quilting 5:30pm Youth Swim Nights at Gilchrist house 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise Band	14 NYG Pastor on vacation Skylar & Youth to NYG Susan out 8:30am 9:30 & 11AM Exercise Class 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	15 Newsletter deadline Pastor on vacation Susan out	16
17 VBS Orientation time tba 8:00am Nursery open 8:15am Traditional Worship & Facebook Live† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship† 4pm Pastor Installation/Madison 5:00pm HS Youth Night	18 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 7:00am Summer KTT (M-F) 8:45am Summer PS (MTuTh)	19 8:30 9:30 & 11am Exercise Class 9:30am Staff meeting 7:00pm Vestry	20 10:00am KTT Chapel 5:30pm Youth Swim Nights at Gilchrist house 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise Band	21 8:30am 9:30 & 11AM Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	22	23
24 9:15am –10:15am Nursery open 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am One Blended Worship Service - sanctuary 11:45pm Fellowship Lunch & Voters Meeting	25 Vacation Bible School 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 7:00am Summer KTT (M-F) 8:45am Summer PS (MTuTh)	26 VBS 8:30am 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class	27 VBS 10am Quilting 5:30pm KTT Summer closing program 5:30pm Youth Swim Nights at Gilchrist house 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise Band	28 VBS 8:30am 9:30 & 11AM Exercise Class 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	29 VBS Last day of KTT	30
31 8:00am Nursery open 8:15am Traditional Worship & Facebook Live 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM Worship 10:45am CrossLife Worship	1 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 10:00am LWML Meeting (mingle 9:30-10:00)	2 8:30am 9:30 & 11 Exercise Class 9:30am Staff meeting	3 10:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Youth Swim Nights at Gilchrist house 6:00pm Adult Bible study 7:15pm Praise Band	4 8:30am 9:30 & 11AM Exercise Class 10:00am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	5	6



- July 1 Asher Nicholson
- July 2 Sue Bosco
- July 4 Bonnie Mann
- July 4 Nolan Holway-Jones
- July 5 Katherine Baker Plunkett
- July 6 Bailey Bauer
- July 6 Celia Gilchrist
- July 6 Randy Harville
- July 6 Amber Parson
- July 10 Dale Carlson
- July 10 Jaida Terry
- July 11 Bruce Burch
- July 11 Gavin Cevallos
- July 12 Shari Jones
- July 13 Rick Sautter
- July 13 Ron Neuendorf
- July 16 Scott Pitts

- July 16 Karby Schmelter
- July 17 Heather Reardon
- July 21 Rick Morgan
- July 21 Craig Baker
- July 22 Leesa Pittman
- July 17 Heidi Holder
- July 18 Meghan Carroll
- July 19 Mary Terry
- July 20 Joyce Weiland
- July 23 Charlene Lechner
- July 23 Sarah Mitchell
- July 24 Cindy Hamilton
- July 24 Rich Maschke
- July 25 Peggy Kauffman
- July 25 Brianna Staudt
- July 26 Brigitte Gust
- July 28 Wanda Parrotta
- July 29 Linda Armentrout
- July 29 Nicole Ringers



Congratulations to
Rana (Herfurth)
 and
Stephen Crumpton
 Married June 4, 2022



- July 6 Cynthia & Dallas Southers
- 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 Joceyln & Brian Mitchell
- July 12 Mark & Val Blaske
- July 13 Craig & Celia Faller
- July 16 Cindy & Ken Hamilton
- July 17 Raymond & Heather Asher
- July 19 Tim & April Nave
- July 19 Mike & Michelle Parson
- July 19 T.J. & Wanda Parrotta
- July 20 Lana & Joel McCay
- July 22 Max & Billie Seagle
- July 22 Meghan & Blake Carroll

*God's Blessings on your
 Special Day!*

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

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24– one service at 10:45am	July 31
Elders 8:15am	Sullivant	Nave	Mann	Nave / Burrell	Pittman
Ushers 8:15am	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar	Rick Daniel Jack Blaske Tim Nave Kody Asher	Ron Neuendorf Joseph Woodbury Mike Ater Bob Seibert	Graham Peebles James Thrasher Michael Kimmitt Mathew Kimmitt	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar
Acolytes 8:15am	Grace, Katelyn	Owen	Katelyn	Matthew	Emma
AV Techs 8:15 am	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant	Bob Sullivant	Bob Sullivant	Rich Maschke
Readers 8:15am	Open	Rhonda Reece	Open	Nancy Neuendorf	Open
Sanctuary Flowers	Open	Open	Open	Open	Bakers
Altar Guild for July and August: Melinda Baker and Melanie McNa			Counters for July: Patrick Helpingstine and Rusty Nicholson		
Elders 10:45am	Widmar	Fritze	Herfurth	Combined Worship	Widmar
Host families 10:45am	Atkins family	Ballentine family	Burrell family	Herfurth family	McRae family
AV Techs 10:45am	Gilchrist	Morgan	Ringers	Herfurth	Herfurth

ATTENDANCE

2022 Year-to-Date Average Attendance
 In-church attendees 118
 Facebook sign-ins 26

We are seeing a 20% increase in in-church attendance in the first Quarter of 2022 over last year at this time - It is great to see our people coming back in church again! Our Easter celebration was a great time of worship and fellowship on April 17 with many familiar faces and some new ones too!

FINANCES

Current Loan
 Balance: **\$249,334**

Financial Plan Activity thru May 31, 2022

YTD FirstFruits Giving: \$ 131,364 **Goal YTD: \$165,500**
 YTD Total Expenses: -\$ 169,767
 - \$ 38,403
 PPP funds applied + \$ 1,913
 Plan Activity thru May - \$ 36,490 **Giving is behind YTD**

Thanks to all for faithful giving in-person, by mail, and online.

Online Giving is greatly encouraged!

Currently, 35% of our Givers give safely online; to join them, go to the [website](#), download the app, or contact the Church Office.



Secure Giving [on the website](#)
www.StPaulsDec.com

Welcome

New Members

Gerald Hooper

Ariel Holway-Jones; Henley & Nolan

Leann Thompson

Drew and Becky Reichenbach; Lily, Leo, & Caden

Jen Ciesielski; Ben, John, Cru, & Jack



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



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

amazon smile

You shop. Amazon gives.

**Support
 St Pauls Lutheran
 Church.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
 Amazon donates.

Go to smile.amazon.com

amazon smile

Before shopping at Amazon,
[START HERE!](#)

This link will take you right to our
 donation site where

You shop. Amazon gives.



Outreach Project

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!

St Paul's Preschool

Summer Preschool is Underway!!



Class of 2022



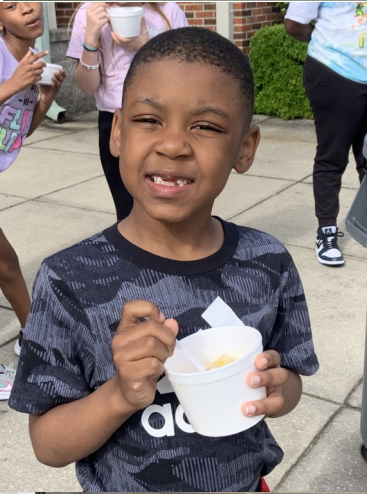
For more info and pictures of activities, please visit www.facebook.com/StPaulsDec.Preschool

Nancy Neuendorf, Director
(256) 353-1353



Afterschool Care

Icy Does It



Icy Does It is a delicious treat that KTT looks forward to having. There are so many yummy flavors to create your masterpiece.

Oakville Indian Mounds Park and Museum



KTT drummers had an amazing time at the Native American Festival



FUN TIMES



After a fun -filled afternoon, the drummers enjoy an icee.

*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

St. Paul's 2022 THEME VERSE - Acts 20:35

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

2022 Theme - "Blessed in Giving!"

**VBS NEEDS
VOLUNTEERS!**

**Contact Skylar Smith!
(256) 353-8759**

