

The Messenger

A monthly publication of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
& Early Childhood Learning Center

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Congratulations to our 2019 graduating class of the St. Paul Early Childhood Learning Center



Our ECLC students are smart, ready to move on to the next chapter of their education, and very, very cute!

Witness • Share • Encourage • Sewe



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



July 29—August 2

5:30p-7:30p

Save this date in your calendar.

Let Pastor Ashley know you are willing to help in some way... there are lots of volunteer opportunities. All week or whatever you can do is great.

Let's make a difference in a child's life! Stay tuned for more details and registration information!



Summer Bible Trivia

With bible study on and off for the summer, I thought I would offer some bible trivia of my own and some shared by a Cindy Schlotterback email from 2003.

The email was titled, *The center of the Bible*. It began by asking the questions below then supplied answers based on modern Bibles (the NIV, NRSV, and the original English KJV). Since the range of words in each translation varies from a total of about 728,000 to 807,000, they are all longer than most novels and were adapted long ago into chapter sections, and even verse. Therefore, any questions asked about specific findings occur in variance, especially questions from this email, which have relative, but relevant answers.

For the shortest chapter – Psalm 117, which praises (glorifies/blesses) the Lord. Note that *the Lord* is a central theme to the entire Bible. This Psalm has but 29 words, and is thought prophetic.

The shortest verse is technically John 11:35, "*Jesus wept.*" This is in context to hearing about the death of Lazarus, whom He raises (new life). We all hope for that salvation and resurrection.

For the longest chapter – Psalm 119, which is given by starting each section with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and illustrates the need of divine grace by mankind. It contains key concepts of many common Bible themes; prayer, praise, reverence, law, mercy, lovingkindness, truth, glory, guidance, testimony, purity, obedience, submission, rebuke, knowledge, refuge, devotion, judgment and light.

Another Psalm – 118 is considered the center chapter of the Bible. It instructs that God is at work in us to make each day special, His love endures forever, and we should be

thankful. Also it is better to trust in *the Lord* than trust in man, Psalm 118:8 the center verse. Another version argues that the center verse is Psalm 103:1-2, based on even numbers. This verse again has the focus of *the Lord* to be blessed and thanked. It is expressed in the popular song *10000 Reasons, Bless the Lord*.

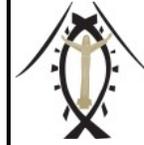
Some other trivia and more; there are 66 chapters in the Bible, from about 40 authors and over 31,000 verses. The gospels cover four books from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The historical early church growth is one book – Acts. There are 21 sections of Epistles, many attributed to Paul and one of God's plan – Revelation. The total in the New Testament is 27 books. Again, some discovery and interpretations may reveal a different number accepted.

Indeed, Martin Luther influenced some of the books of the Bible by criticism of sections as less than biblical cannon. This came at a time when the scribes were trending towards writing for the people, not just the elite, and somewhat became part of the Protestant movement, intended or not. He best liked John, Romans and 1 Peter, but did not interpret James, Ester, and Jonah as favorable.

He also found fault with Revelation, Jude, Ecclesiastes and others for a total of 18. The Council of Trent and Florence overruled his rejections for the most part. This was in an era where salvation was heavily believed connected to works, as opposed to faith alone.

I hope and pray each of you has a blessed summer of faith, worship, health, fun, and whatever else is your priority agenda. **Perhaps renewed Bible study and prayer can make it high on your list.**

Grace and peace, Brian McCulley



The Messenger is the newsletter of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

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St. Paul Lutheran Church is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Florida-Bahamas Synod, ELCA.

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Synod Parish Deacon: Michele Hilton

Executive Committee

George Hutfilz, president
Sandy Tull, vice president
Sharon Wittren, secretary
Marty Hillerich, treasurer

Congregation Council

Marty Hillerich, George Hutfilz, John McAuliffe, Brian McCulley, JD Miller, Daniel Mills, Debi Rado, Colleen Ryan, Gail Seyfarth, Sandy Tull, Sharon Wittren, Pastor Ashley Nicolls

Ministry Team Leaders

Sharing & Caring – Betty Smowton
Christian Education – **Seeking volunteer leader**
Communications – Debi Rado
Early Childhood Learning Cntr – Marilyn Hutfilz
Evangelism – Marty Hillerich
Fellowship – **Seeking volunteer leader(s)**
Finance – John McAuliffe
Food Pantry – George Hutfilz
Outreach Ministry Fund – Curt Swenson
Property – **Seeking volunteer leader**
Social – Cindy Paxton
Stewardship – George & Marilyn Hutfilz
Worship and Music – Sharon Wittren
Parish Secretary – Dorrie Parsons
Director of Music – John Ferreira

The Messenger is published monthly and distributed without charge to St. Paul Lutheran congregation members and friends.

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OUR MISSION AT ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we are called through Baptism to proclaim and bear witness to God's reconciling grace in Jesus Christ to all; so that by joyfully sharing God's Word and encouraging each other to service for the sake of others, our lives together make a difference for Christ and His kingdom.

Evangelism Team news



This committee promotes the growth of membership, welcomes new members and integrates them into the life of the congregation; stimulates fellowship within the congregation; and shall also conduct programs of outreach to the community and seek to increase public awareness of this congregation.

Following on the heels of last month's successfully completed **Action Items**, the following projects were discussed and/or initiated:

- **Doggy Potty Stations**—two are planned to welcome the many dog walkers that use our campus. A Thrivent Action grant will be applied for to purchase one and the other will go on the wish list, or a donor(s) will be sought.
- **St. Paul branded Tote Bags**—These canvas beach or shopping type bags will be branded with our logo and name and be given to new members to hold their prayer shawl and other items; also useful for advertising. They will be available to members to purchase also with the money going back to purchase more Totes.
- **God's Work Our Hands T-Shirts**—We will be ordering more of the yellow shirts for participants of our outreach and event teams. See order form in the newsletter and after Sunday worship.
- **Outreach event at Arlington Park**—Details to be announced. It's planned for God's Work Our Hands Sunday - September 8.
- **VBS**—Scheduled for Jul 29—Aug 2 from 5:30p to 7:30p. A team is being put together for this year's program which will involve the parents and children. Volunteer help is needed for planning and implementation!
- **Summer Potluck**—to be held after worship on August 11. We'll supply the meats and beverages. The plan is to make this a scheduled monthly Evangelism event sponsored by this team.

The next meeting is Aug. 7 at 4:30p. All are welcome to attend the meetings; come and add your ideas.

Adopt-A-Road

The new Evangelism Team has renewed it's application to be a part of this great project to show St. Paul's commitment to the neighborhood by picking up trash to beautify our street.

Our new project coordinator is **Gail Seyfarth**, who will be giving temple talks and **recruiting volunteers** for this project. And the good news is we have been assigned a one mile stretch of Bahia Vista St. right in front of our church. The target start date will be September. This project also qualifies for teens who need community service hours.

If you do not have a God's Work Our Hands T-Shirt, order one now using the form in this newsletter. For your safety you will be required to wear one of these or the brightly colored county volunteer T-Shirts to participate.



65th Anniversary of St. Paul (1955—2020)

A team is forming to begin planning and organizing the events and celebrations for our anniversary next year. We will need hands and ideas! We'll let you know when the next planning meeting will be.

If you're a party planner and are task oriented, this group is for you! Get in touch with Pastor Ashley.

Property Committee in the Years B C

An article about the Property Committee appeared in the May edition of The Messenger. I would like to add a few words of past history of this group.

About 19 years ago, Conrad and I joined the Property Committee which consisted of Judy Pope and Earle Johnson. We thus increased the committee by 100%.

There was no cart in those *Before Cart* days, and every weed, clipped branch, broken limb, and dead palm frond was carried or dragged to the dump. A major innovation was a tarp onto which we placed the above mentioned items and then dragged them to the dump. High tech!

There were no breaks at 10:00 for the delicious items now placed before us. Now our break is a tasty and relaxing addition to our weekly routine, and a wonderful time for fellowship with sweating coworkers.

Throughout the years, the need for new equipment was seen and the stuffed garage is proof of many additions. Not one, but two carts have been invaluable.

Our members give their time and energy to improve the physical condition of St. Paul and have fun doing it. We welcome new members!

~ By Joan Hellwege

Back-to-School Project helps kids & teachers

The Social Ministry team will be collecting items for Alta Vista Elementary for the upcoming school year. Principal Dr. Barbara Shirley and the teaching staff are so appreciative of the help we give them each year. 90% of the students come from families with limited resources, so our donations make a difference in the learning experience for these young lives.

Look for the *Supplies Bins* placed in the Fellowship Hall beginning July 14 for the school supplies listed below. If you cannot shop for the items but would like to help, please consider a monetary donation. We will be glad to shop for you. You may place your monetary donations in the offering plate or drop off to the church office. Please note on your offering envelope or check: *Back to School Supplies*.

Items to purchase

- **Glue sticks** (package of 12)
- **Regular #2 pencils** (package of 24)
- **Hand sanitizer**—large bottles with pumps
(available at Sam's Club, Cosco)
- **\$25 Walmart gift cards** (Distributed to parents for the purchase of school uniforms. Parents must show receipts of proper purchase.)
- **Kindergarten "fat" pencils** (package of 4)
- **Kleenex boxes** for classroom use
- **Dry erase markers all colors** – *not Magic Markers*
- **One subject wide ruled spiral notebooks**

We hope to deliver the items to the school before August 12, when school begins again.

God bless you for your kindness in helping these teachers and students.



Fantasy Football

The NFL is in preparation for the next season, and so are we. **The St. Paul Fellowship Fantasy Football League** is ready to gear up.

If you are interested in joining our league, please see Barry Smith or call 941-726-9276. We had eleven teams last season and invite anyone interested to join us. I think this league makes watching the NFL more fun!

~ Commissioner Barry Smith



Pr Ashley's Page

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

It is an exciting time to be a part of St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are coming up on our 65th Anniversary in 2020. We are not retiring though. Our congregation is ALIVE! (Alive was the theme for the Florida-Bahamas Synod Assembly June 6-8, see pictures on page 6.) The council has met to discuss where St. Paul wants to focus its mission. While we have many mission foci, the one I want to highlight in this month's article is the neighborhood and community.

Many of you know already that I have changed rental houses (again). I've been here just over a year and a half and this is my third place. I hope this place will be for longer than a year. The reason I mention this is because one of the reasons I moved this time was to be closer to the church. My last place was north of University. As I was hearing the conversations about St. Paul's focus to be active in the neighborhood, I started thinking I was kind of far away. I was technically in Manatee county even though I had a Sarasota address. I was very happy with my rental though and thought I would be renewing my lease when it was up at the end of April. Then a few things

started to go wrong at the house, the commute was getting long, and I focused some prayer time on where I should live. More and more conversations continued about being active in the neighborhood. More things started to go wrong with the house. I started looking again for new rentals available. Lo and behold, a rental house with a heated swimming pool, inground hot tub, and whirlpool in the guest bathroom, a mile away from the church (that was also cheaper) came available, so I moved after Easter. It was kind of unexpected, but I believe it was a Spirit-thing, not only for my pocket book, miles on my car, my sanity with a quicker commute, but most importantly to be in the neighborhood of St. Paul. I look forward to where God is leading St. Paul in ministry to its neighborhood.

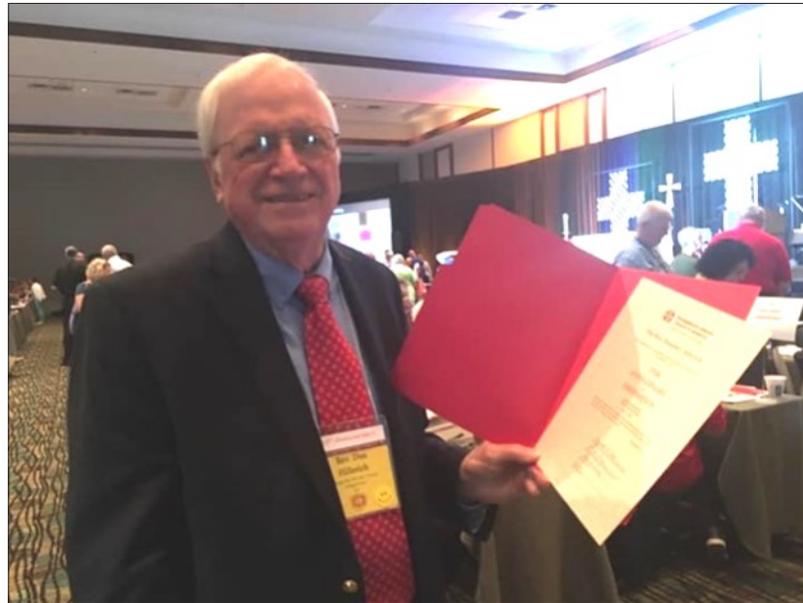
One of the ways that St. Paul has already answered the call to ministry in the neighborhood and community is through SURE. I am happy to say that St. Paul has rejoined the SURE organization. *Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity* is a justice ministry comprised of many churches in Sarasota. Their Executive Director, Brandon Henshaw, spoke to the congregation in May. In August, they expect to have a new assistant organizer on board to



help congregations partner with them. Keep your ears and eyes open for ways St. Paul will be working with SURE in the coming months. Please pray about your personal involvement with this ministry. There will be many opportunities to join in varying levels of participation with this vital ministry in Sarasota. Once the new organizer is on board she or he will be contacting St. Paul members individually to talk about the ministry. In October we will have house meetings at St. Paul to hear the concerns of the community. All will be encouraged to attend at least one of them. If you want more information on the ministry, please check out their website www.suresarasota.org

Take care and God bless,

~Pr Ashley



Reverend Don Hillerich, DD, was recognized at this year's Synod Assembly for the 55th Anniversary of his Ordination. Wow! Congratulations Pastor Don!

Our Synod Assembly delegates from St. Paul, prayerful, and also having some Synod fun!
L: Gail Seyfarth, Marty & Don Hillerich R: PrAshley, Marty Hillerich, Gail Seyfarth



The Handcrafters Guild of St. Paul is back making prayer shawls. Next gathering is Aug. 8 @ 11:30a. Grab your needles or hook and come on!



Our musicians were honored and celebrated on Pentecost, June 9. Thanks for all you do to bring the hymns and songs alive!



Memorial Day worship included a visit from Linda Evans and Susy Scholl who, using American Sign Language (ASL), *signed* along with hymns. Both have been studying ASL put to music for over a decade now.

Our goal is to see if St. Paul Lutheran would be interested in having a group like this, with these two ladies offering beginner lessons in creative signing.



Monday, July 29

Sponsored by Manatee Memorial Hospital, Life Line Screening will be at St. Paul to offer a 5-test package to thoroughly check you for risk of stroke, cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions.

For more information, to register, and receive a \$10 discount call **888-814-0416** or online at www.LifeLineScreening.com/community-partners.

Office Security Alarm

The alarm and security monitoring system recently installed to protect the church office area will go live on July 1.

When no office staff is present, the reception area, Parish Administrator, and PrAshley's office will be locked, alarm set, and inaccessible.

Certain church members will have a special code and key for access if needed.

FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Report for year-to-date as of May 31, 2019

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income received:	\$ 124,699.04	\$ 116,265.52
Expenses:	\$ 129,570.72	\$ 138,195.64
St. Paul net	\$ (4,871.68)	\$ (21,930.12)
ECLC net position	\$ 38,388.09	\$ 16,512.50

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Operated by a subsidiary of NRT LLC



Brian's movie corner

Offered by Brian McCulley, film critic

Summer Movies

Hopefully, many of you enjoyed the movie alternative to bible study in June, which was a split showing of *Paul the Apostle*. As mentioned previously, a similar style film impressed me at an Easter viewing with my family, titled *The Gospel of John*. Both draw largely on dramatization of the featured names, as well as bible verse, and include many secondary characters. There are films of the other Gospel writers: Luke, Mark and Matthew available, but be discerning if you choose to view any. I recommend you Google **faith based films** to find and review movies you might enjoy.

Meanwhile, I offer two reviews of other films that I've watched and enjoyed. Both are based on true events of the recent past and are therefore somewhat serious in nature, but very watchable for most adult viewers. I do not recommend either for teens or children, unless parents first view for sensitive content.

Heaven Is For Real is a movie based on a child named Colton Burpo, from a small Nebraska town who has a near death experience, and in child-like innocence reveals his brief journey to unsuspecting parents. The film has grossed almost \$100 million, ranking in the top ten for this category. The event occurred in 2003, inspired a book in 2010, a movie in 2014, a traveling ministry, and created a social media phenomenon.

We each have our own hopes and beliefs about heaven, and of course the movie only explores the mind of one very small child, as well as how his family and people around them react. It stars Greg Kinnear as the father, is well done, without firmly making any one definitive statement. It leaves it to the viewer just as reading a translated bible does, to form their own conclusions.

SPOILER ALERT: Colton and his family have had their troubles, just like any other person and family.

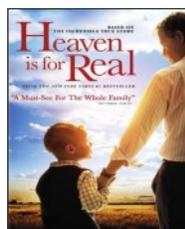
The topic of Christian salvation can be a heated conversation among believers, non believers, fake and altered social media exploiters, haters, and well meaning defendants. My research is brief, and was mostly a while back, after first being curious about the veracity of the event. I prefer not to print any unsupported details.

The Cokeville Miracle is also a movie that is controversial, but not as well known. It takes place in a community in Wyoming in 1986. It's perhaps difficult to watch in the beginning, as dread of the future events unfold, but I found the suspenseful conclusion worth the agony. A miracle is needed as 136 children, 18 teachers, two terrorists and one bomb take over the town. If you start watching, or preview this film, be strong. It is life changing, but not all is tragedy. Of most importance, is to also view the behind the scenes interviews and commentary following the film.

Finally, I offer that both films are faith affirming, if you can be a little open minded about the opinions you may have formed from your life experiences, and try not to be too skeptical of the movie experience.

Enjoy!

Brian



Church Council Meeting

June Synopsis

Renewed the approval of the Alta Vista Back-to-School initiative and authorized a special appeal for supplies and cash gifts for this cause.

Approved designating October 9, 2019 as Global Mission Sunday and authorized a special appeal on that Sunday.

Approved replacing one air conditioner unit in the sanctuary with the cost not to exceed \$20,000.

The May minutes, pastor's report, and financial information may be found in the binder in the narthex. The June minutes will be available after approval at the August 8, 2019 meeting.

The Congregation Council does not meet in July.

God's Work Our Hands apparel order form

GWOH Sunday is approaching soon (Sept. 8). If you are participating in any of the service projects, you'll want to order a shirt if you do not have one already. If you need a new one, here is your chance! You may also order one after worship on Sundays.

St. Paul GWOH Service Projects T-Shirt or Cap

Yes, I want to be the Hands doing God's work!

Order yours now. A new one or a replacement one.

Cost: \$9.00 each

Deadline is July 31

SIZE	HOW MANY
Youth Small	
Youth Medium	
Youth Large	
Adult Small	
Adult Medium	
Adult Large	
Adult XL	
2XL (add \$2)	
3XL (add \$3)	
4XL (add \$4)	



Sizes for Basic T-shirt

	Small	Med	Large	XL	2X	3X	4X
Width	18"	20"	22"	24"	26"	28"	30"
Length	28"	29"	30"	31"	32"	33"	34"

Sizes for Youth T-shirt

	Small	Medium	Large	XL
Width	16"	17"	18"	19"
Length	20"	22"	24"	26"

I would like to *Be The Hands* but don't have the funds for a shirt. (Check the box and indicate your size above.)

Name: _____

Contact email: _____ Phone: _____

I would like to purchase an additional t-shirt(s) for someone who can't afford one: _____

I would like to purchase a GWOH baseball cap @ \$23.00 each: _____ (non-personalized, Velcro back)

How many T-Shirts? _____ (@ \$9.00 each)

Total amount of check/cash: \$ _____

St. Paul Mission Prayer

Pray with us,

God of grace and love, you created us as your children and have brought us to St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are not perfect people, but this church is the perfect place for imperfect people. Thank you for your grace through Christ given to us. You call us to proclaim to everyone we meet that your grace is for them too. As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we ask you to help us joyfully share your word and serve your people, so that together our lives make a difference in your kingdom here on earth. Strengthen us in our mission together; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. *Amen*

Cut out this calendar - post on your fridge!
Don't miss out on anything-join something new!

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS • JULY 2019

JUL 1 MON 1:00P SHARING & CARING	JUL 11 THURS 3:30P EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS	JUL 23 TUES 5:30P COMMUNITY MEAL
JUL 2 TUES 5:30P COMMUNITY MEAL	JUL 12 FRI 9:30A FOOD PANTRY PACKING 1:00P MAH JONGG	JUL 24 WED 8:00A PROPERTY MINISTRY MEETS
JUL 3 WED 8:00A PROPERTY MINISTRY MEETS	JUL 13 SAT 9:00A FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION 10:00A MUSICIAN REHEARSAL	JUL 26 FRI 9:30A FOOD PANTRY PACKING 1:00P MAH JONGG
JUL 4 THURS 4TH OF JULY OFFICE CLOSED	JUL 14 SUN 11:00A CONFIRMATION CLASS	JUL 27 SAT 9:00A FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION 10:00A MUSICIAN REHEARSAL
JUL 5 FRI 9:30A FOOD PANTRY PACKING 1:00P MAH JONGG 6:30P DOMINOES NIGHT	JUL 15 MON MESSENGER DEADLINE	JUL 28 SUN 11:00A CONFIRMATION CLASS
JUL 6 SAT 9:00A FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION 10:00A MUSICIAN REHEARSAL	JUL 16 TUES 5:30P COMMUNITY MEAL	JUL 29 MON 8:00A LIFE LINE SCREENING 5:30P VBS—DAY 1
JUL 9 TUES MINISTRY REPORTS DUE 5:30P COMMUNITY MEAL	JUL 17 WED 8:00A PROPERTY MINISTRY MEETS	JUL 30 TUES 5:30P COMMUNITY MEAL 5:30P VBS—DAY 2
JUL 10 WED 8:00A PROPERTY MINISTRY MEETS 3:30P FINANCE TEAM MEETS	JUL 19 FRI 9:30A FOOD PANTRY PACKING 1:00P MAH JONGG	JUL 31 WED 8:00A PROPERTY MINISTRY MEETS 5:30P VBS—DAY 3
	JUL 20 SAT 9:00A FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION 10:00A MUSICIAN REHEARSAL	



Happy Birthday

- Jul 1 - Cliff Flanigan
- Jul 2 - Carol Chambers
- Jul 3 - Susan Goddard-Barry
- Jul 7 - Elvira Scheb
- Jul 7 - Barbara Wattman
- Jul 8 - Sharyn Brodnax
- Jul 10 - Chuck Armbrecht
- Jul 10 - Robert Masse
- Jul 11 - Ryan Masse
- Jul 12 - David Smowton
- Jul 15 - Keith Hildreth
- Jul 18 - Gage Fournier
- Jul 24 - Carolyn Mele
- Jul 24 - Joyce Swartzbaugh
- Jul 28 - Edward Hahne
- Jul 30 - Sarah Foster

Happy Anniversary

- Jul 27 - JD and Tonia Miller



We want to thank everyone so much for the prayer shawl, cards, phone calls, visits, and most of all, for your prayers.

Thank you Pastor Ashley for your hospital and home visits.

The last six months have been surreal; from the cancer diagnosis, chemo, and the major surgery Terry underwent.

God has a plan for all of us and this was His plan for us.

We have been truly blessed with this wonderful church family.

Blessings & Peace,

Terry & Joyce Finke

Mah Jongg

The **Friday Mah Jongg Group** will be meeting through the summer from 1– 4:00p. There are two excellent teachers, other experienced players, and some new recruits playing.

Some weeks we have three players and other weeks we have 12 or more. Those attending donate \$2 per week with the proceeds funding at least two luncheons each year, purchasing four sets of tiles and four special tables. In addition, the group has been able to donate a total of \$1,700 to St. Paul.



Although not all players are members of St. Paul, meeting on our campus has added a couple of persons to serving at our Community Meals ministry and has brought forward one of the ASL signers to enhance our worship experience.

You are invited to join us Fridays, no reservations required. If you haven't played before, we have talented teachers, and whatever your level is, if you do play, you will be welcomed.

~ Anna Mathisen and Sharon Wittren

St. Paul Lutheran Church

& Early Childhood Learning Center

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Preschool 941-955-6480

Website www.StPaulSarasota.org

Rev. Ashley Nicolls, Pastor

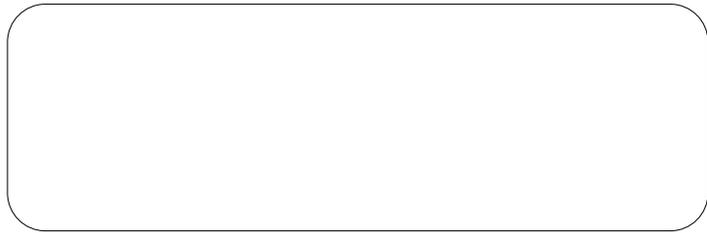
Sunday Schedule

9:30a Service of Worship

with Children's Message

10:30a All-ages Bible Learning Games

& Coffee and Social Hour



Have a safe
and joyous 4th
of July
celebration!
All honor and
glory to God
and our
country!