# 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 Church1700 Carridale Street SW Decatur AL 35601

256.353.8759 www.StPaulsDec.com



Friends in Christ,

During this season of Lent leading to Holy Week and then finally Easter Sunday, we remember that Christ has won the victory over all our enemies for us. For Jesus Christ—true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary—came to redeem us, to set us free from the powers of sin, death, and the devil. In the apostle John's first epistle, he puts it this way: "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

And how did Christ destroy the devil's work and set us

free? By redeeming us with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. By paying for our sins in full and reconciling us to the Father, Jesus took away the devil's right to lay any claim on us. Jesus came and shared in our humanity "that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Hebrews 2:14–15).

The victory came at a tremendous cost to our Redeemer, as Satan struck Him a cruel, painful, and deadly blow. But in His very death on the cross, Jesus utterly defeated Satan by saving all of us from him. And Christ publicly demonstrated that victory in His resurrection from the dead.

All this does, though, raise some significant questions. If Jesus has already won the victory over the devil for us, why do we still see the influence of the devil in this world, and why does God call on us in Scripture still to be sober-minded and watchful, resisting the devil who prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8–9)? Why does it feel like the war is not over, and why does it often feel like we're not faring so well in the battles we face daily in our hearts and lives?

To understand this, it can help to consider an example from the Second World War. When the Allies were victorious on D-Day and had successfully landed a massive army back on the European continent, the outcome of the war in Europe was certain. The decisive blow had been dealt. The Allied army would push irresistibly toward the enemy German homeland. But the war in Europe didn't actually come to its completion until eleven months later, on V-E Day. The enemy fought tooth and nail until the end.

In a similar way, in His death and resurrection, Christ has already dealt Satan the decisive, fatal blow that guarantees the outcome of the war. But the war won't come to its final completion until Judgment Day, when Christ's victory will be complete. Meanwhile, we live in the gap between the "already" and the "not yet"—the period when the decisive battle has already been won but the fighting is not yet over. Satan and his forces will fight until the bitter end.

As we wait, though, we do so with full assurance of the final result. Though life can feel like a battle as we continue struggling against the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature, we know how it all ends. We know that, in the end, we win because Christ has won the victory for us, and He shares His victory with us. By God's grace, through faith in Christ Jesus, victory is ours.

So thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57). Amen.

In Christ our Savior,

Pastor Aaron Kretzschmar

April 2025

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 April 6, 17, 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**

**Summer & Fall Registration** NOW OPEN for Preschool & KTT

Wednesday Lent services, March 12 – April 9 at noon

#### **Seder Potluck**

Christ in the Passover Sunday, April 6 at 5:30pm

Voters meeting Sunday, April 27 at 9:30am

Maundy Thursday Worship

April 17, 12 noon & 7pm

Good Friday Worship April 18, 12noon & 7pm

Easter Sunday Worship
April 20,

8:15 & 10:45 in Sanctuary Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt April 20, 9:30 and 9:45

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."

Sunday Morning and Wednesday Lenten Worship Livestream on YouTube: www.youtube.com/stpaulsdec





St. Paul's Family,

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The wonderful celebration of Easter is fast approaching! We have so many things coming up for everyone of all ages. We will have our annual Easter Egg hunt for the children, please donate candy to fill the eggs for this fun activity. Candy can be dropped off in the lobby, narthex, or church office.

Our High School Youth have their annual Egg Your Yard fundraiser happening! Contact Heather Asher or me if you'd like the youth to egg your yard for Easter! Fund will go towards their trip to the 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

Looking ahead to the Summer, our 2025 VBS will be June 23-27th from 9-12pm! We hope your children can join us as we learn to trust Jesus in a wild world at True North VBS! And we need many volunteers to make this event a success so please talk to me about how you can volunteer!

God's Blessings, Skylar Smith, DCE

#### Egg Your Yard Fundraiser

For \$30 a yard the youth will hide 80 plastic eggs filled with candy and toys in your yard in the evening of April 19.

Let Heather Asher 256-476-0415 or Skylar 256-353-8759 know you want your yard to be Egged!



#### HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR RECOGNITION

Join us Sunday, May 18th, at both services as we celebrate our High School Seniors graduating this year! Please submit pictures of your graduating senior to Skylar for a special presentation to be shown at both services! If you have any questions, contact Skylar or Heather Asher.



Save the Date for VBS

June 23-27, 2025



APRIL 12 | 6:30PM | RM 317 Game Night! Bring food to Share!

## **ENDURING FAITH**April Sunday School Lessons

4/6 - A Prophet Serves: Samuel
4/13 - A Crushing Truth: Jesus is Crucified
4/20 - Easter Egg Hunt
4/27 - A Living Truth: Jesus Rises

## Sible Reading Challenge

### April - Prayer Power

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: 1 Thess 5:16-18
Day 2: Philippians 4:6-7
Day 3: Matthew 6:9-13
Day 4: James 5:16
Day 5: Ephesians 6:18
Day 6: Jeremiah 29:12
Day 7: Matthew 18:20
Day 8: Luke 11:1
Day 9: Mark 11:24
Day 10: Psalm 17:1
Day 11: 1 John 5:14-15
Day 12: 2 Chronicles 7:14
Day 13: Romans 12:12

Day 14: Colossians 4:2

Day 15: Psalm 145:18

Day 16: 1 Timothy 2:1-2 Day 17: John 15:7

Day 18: Proverbs 15:29 Day 19: Acts 2:42 Day 20: Psalm 102:17

Day 21: James 1:5 Day 22: Matthew 21:22

Day 23: Luke 18:1

Day 24: Psalm 32:6 Day 25: Hebrews 4:16

Day 26: Daniel 9:18 Day 27: Mark 1:35

Day 28: Acts 1:14 Day 29: Psalm 141:2

Day 30: 1 Kings 8:28

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 2024 Bible Reading Challenge on page 2 to help us be in His Word and in His light!

#### Wednesday Morning Bible Study

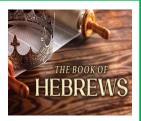
Wednesday mornings we are reading 1 Samuel! We hope you can join us at 10:30am in Room 318! Talk to Skylar if you have any questions!



Wednesday evening in Room 317 has completed Hebrews. Now studyng topics from Lutheran Hour Ministries that are each 4 weeks long; so watch the Friday announcements week to week for updates on what the topic will be.

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

Join us for an interesting and lively discussion.



Men's Bible Study Saturday April 12 and 26 at 7:30am

Men will set up for church after class.

Daniel Bible Study Saturday, 11:00am April 19





#### Adult Bible Study 1st & 2nd Thessalonians: Keep Calm & Carry On

Have you ever wondered if your faith has wandered off track in the midst of life's challenges? The church in

Thessalonica did, so Paul sent them letters to strengthen them. Join us for a Bible study that will encourage you to remain diligent as you look forward to Jesus' return. Come on a journey through Paul's letters to the Thessalonians that encourages you to keep calm, remain faithful, and work hard until Jesus returns. Understand what the apostle's words meant to his original readers, and how they apply to us today. Be encouraged in areas you need to grow in your faith, and recognize that many times it takes tribulation to get to jubilation. Sunday mornings at 9:45 in the Fellowship Room.



## **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



Good News from the Beginning: The Gospel in Genesis

Wednesdays at 12 noon

#### Wednesday, March 26th

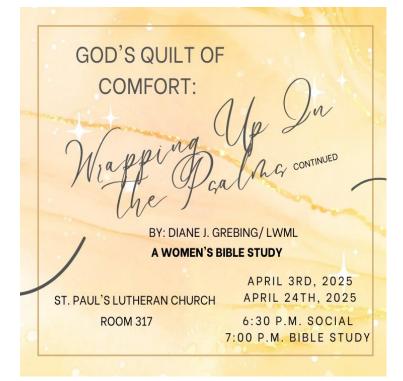
- The Good News of a Savior Who Gives Himself in Our Place (Gen. 22:1–18)

#### Wednesday, April 2nd

The Good News of a Savior Who Unites
 Heaven and Earth (Genesis 28:10–22)

#### Wednesday, April 9th

– The Good News of a Savior Who Brings Good from Evil (Genesis 50:15–2)



#### St. Paul's Ladies!! Save the Date!!



#### LWML WOMEN'S PRAYER BRUNCH Saturday, April 26, 2025 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Please plan to attend. There is No charge and childcare is Available. An invitation will be Arriving soon in your mailbox. RSVP to Judy Nagy or Sue Bosco by April 19



#### **Library News**

Just in time for Tax Day (April 15), a book from the Hornish Family Library donated to St. Paul's Library to the glory of God and in honor of Beth Hornish.

Germaine Copeland's "Prayers that Avail Much for the Workplace" (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 20021) contains such prayers as, a prayer for "Communi-cation with Co-Workers," "Integrity," and "When Persecuted at Work." Some of the prayers are from another point of view other than Lutheran and therefore not Bible based, but they are to be ignored and the other Scriptural prayers are to be used instead. Find it in the library on the desk under "New Arrivals.



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.



Save your pull tabs



Registration for the 2025 Summer and 2025-2026 school year has begun. Please contact Bethany Eze, Preschool Director, at 256.353.1353 if you are interested in having your or a friend's child or grandchild enroll for Preschool.





#### The Seder Meal

The Seder Meal, Christ in the Passover, will be held on Sunday, April 6, from 5:30 to 7 PM in the Fellowship

**Room.** There is no cost, but a free will love offering will be taken. Since seating was limited, and since all the seats have been reserved by people who signed up by March 23, the only thing we can do if you want to come put haven't signed up is put your name on a waiting list in case someone cancels. Call the church office at 256.353.8759.

If you have signed up, you will have been contacted about what you are bringing to the potluck portion of the evening.

The "Missionary" from Jews for Jesus, Bob Mendelsohn, will walk us through the parts of the seder meal, which is a meal a modern-day Jewish family would celebrate. He will describe how Christ is pictured in each part. During his presentation, he will invite you to sample the foods from the Seder (hard boiled eggs, salt water/parsley, onion—not to be eaten, charoseth-sweet apple mixture, and horseradish, and wine). Again you do not have to partake if you don't want to. You are simply invited to a tasting of each item. You can simply watch and listen and still gain wonderful insights.



Thank you so very much for all the cards, calls and prayers & received during this time of grieving.

In Christ,

Karin Burtram

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live	31 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	1 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting	10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 12:00pm Lent Worship (+YouTube) 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks Dinner 6:00pm Bible study Handbells 6:15pm Adult Confirmation 7:00pm Choir 7:30pm Praise Band	Ministry 6:30pm Women's Bible study	4	5 8:30am Set up for CrossLife
& YouTube Live† 9:30am Sunday School 10:00am Radio 98.5FM	8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 10:00am LWML Meeting (mingle 9:30-10:00) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	8 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Education Bd 7:00pm Vestry	•	10 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	11	12 7:30am Men's Bible study 8:30am Set up for CrossLife 6:30pm Young adult game night
Bake Sale and Ham Raffle	8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-Th)	15 Newsletter deadline 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 6:00pm Preschool Board 7:00pm Fellowship Board	10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 4:00pm KTT Chapel <b>No FaithLinks dinner</b> 6:00pm Bible study Handbells	17 Maundy Thursday Worship† 12noon and 7pm 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 12:00pm PS Egg Hunt	18 Good Friday worship 12noon and 7pm PS closes at noon	19 11:00am Daniel study
8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live†	21 7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th) 2:30pm KTT Afterschool (M-F)	22 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise	10:00am Quilters 10:30am Bible Study 4:00pm KTT Chapel 5:30pm FaithLinks Dinner	24 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30pm Women's Bible study	25	26 7:30am Men's Bible study 8:30am Set up for CrossLife 10:00am Ladies Breakfast Brunch (set up 8am)
8:15am Traditional Worship & YouTube Live	7:00am PS Ext Care (M-F) 8:45am Preschool (M-Th)	29 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 9:30am Staff meeting 5:30pm Elders meeting	10:30am Bible Study	1 8:30 9:30&11am Exercise 10:30am PS Chapel 11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry	2	3 8:30am Set up for CrossLife



Lisa Miller Apr 1 Apr 1 Rhonda Reece MeyMey Baker Apr 2 Apr 2 Nancy Whiteside Apr 3 Miranda Jordan Apr 3 **Becky Ballentine** Apr 6 Tracy Stoudnour Apr 9 Becky King Apr 12 Kellye Jones Apr 12 Britt McRae Apr 13 Nell McMinn Apr 15 Sierra Bauer Apr 17 Leo Reichenbach

Apr 18 Kathy Sautter

Apr 18 Jo Whetsel

Apr 19 Pastor Kretzschmar

Apr 19 Michael Ringers

Apr 19 Leann Thompson

Apr 20 Pam Newton

Apr 21 Craig Faller

Apr 22 Maddox Maples

Apr 22 Zana Michelfelder

Apr 22 Jerry Morris

Apr 24 Jennifer Frick

Apr 24 Ariel Holway-Jones

Apr 24 Parker Smith

Apr 25 Michael Kimmett

Apr 26 Bryce Carroll

Apr 27 Mary Kay Hodges

Apr 27 Raymond Asher

Apr 29 Jackson McCay

Apr 29 Carol Bullen

## Voters Meeting



Spring
Voters Meeting
Sunday, April 27
9:30am

in the Fellowship Room



Apr 6 Mike & Nell McMinn Apr 9 John & Regina Smith Jason & Wendy Duffey Apr 13 Apr 18 Ron & Twylia Fritze Apr 20 Doug & Amy Hamilton Kent & Farrah Locker Apr 24 Apr 24 Conner & MeyMey Baker Apr 28 Doug & Vicki Anderson

God's Blessings

Apr 2

Special Day!

Devin & Christina Schmelter





### How to reuse plastic bags and make sleep mats for the homeless.

Donate your plastic bags from grocery stores, Target, Walmart etc. We are going to turn them into "plarn" (plastic yarn) and crochet/weave them into sleeping mats for the people that are homeless. It takes about 700 bags to make a single mat. So bring in your bags and put in the waiting containers in the lobby and Narthex. If anyone wants more information about this project contact Sue Bosco at her home # 256-350-5876.



#### **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!

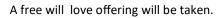
Apple Lane Farms raffle tickets on sale now thru April 13. A \$5. ticket could win you an Apple Lane gift certificate worth \$100.





LWML Bake Sale and Raffle Drawing April 13

**Seder Meal Demonstration** And Potluck Sunday, April 6 at 5:30pm





Bob Mendelsohn will walk us through each part of the seder meal, demonstrating how Christ is pictured in each part. We will then enjoy a fellowship potluck dinner and Holy Communion.



Handbell Choir rehearsal Wednesdays at 6:00pm in the choir loft.



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

## Wednesday **Night Dinners** 5:30pm





Choir rehearsal Wednesdays at 7:00pm in the choir loft. New members welcome! For more info contact Mary Morgan



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.



Serving the Lord in Worship this Month at St. Paul's								
		April 6	April 13	April 20	April 27			
Elders	8:15am	Mitchell hiteside	Mike Johnson	8:15 All Elders 10:45 All Elders	Bill Darwin			
Ushers	8:15am	Jim Disher Ken Hamilton Micky Whiteside Mike Widmar	Bob Seibert Rick Daniel Tim Nave Oliver Nave	8:15 Owen Blaske 10:45 Jim Disher Jack Blaske Ken Hamilton Mike Johnson Micky Whiteside Jeff Pittman Mike Widmar	Graham Peebles Michael Kimmett Matthew Kimmett Mike Ater			
Acolytes	8:15am	Oliver	Ben	8:15 Oliver 10:45 Ben	Ben			
A/V Techs	8:15am	Rich Maschke	Bob Sullivant	8:15 Rich Maschke 10:45 Bob Sullivant	Bob Sullivant			
Readers	8:15am	Jeff Pittman	Pam Meadows	8:15 Gary Nagy 10:45 Gary Nagy	Mitchell Whiteside			
Sanctuary Flowers		Mark & Joy McMinn	Open	Mike Johnson	Open			
Altar Guild for April: Melinda Carlson and Leesa Pittman Counters for April: Tim Herfurth and Rusty Nicholson								
Elders	10:45am	Tim Herfurth	Gary Nagy	Easter Sunday—both services	Tim Herfurth			
Host families CL setup 8:3	10:45am 0am Saturday	Burrell family Rich Maschke	Morgan family Men's Bible study					
A/V Techs	10:45am	Rick & Carol Morgan	James Gilchrist	Easter Egg Hunt at 9:45 Tim Herfurth				



## FASTER!

Join us Sunday, April 20th, for our Easter Services and Annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt!





Current Loan Balance: \$200,054 Endowment Fund Balance: \$15,259

Financial Plan Activity thru February 28, 2025

YTD FirstFruits Giving: \$ 63,438 PLAN: \$80,000 YTD Total Expenses: - \$ 80,157 PLAN: \$90,765 Plan Activity thru Feb -\$ 16,719 more expenses than income

#### Serving at the Lenten Midweek Services

March 26

AV: Bob Sullivant Elder: Bill Darwin

April 2

AV: Bob Sullivant Elder: Bill Darwin

April 9

Elder: Gary Nagy AV: Bob Sullivant

April 17 Elder:

12noon:Mitchell Whiteside

7pm: Johnson

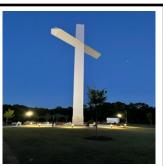
ΑV

12noon: Bob Sullivant 7pm: Rich Maschke

April 18 Elder

12noon: Gary Nagy 7pm: Tim Herfurth

12noon: Bob Sullivant 7pm: Rich Maschke



Help support fundraising for "The Cross of North Alabama."



Go to the website and buy a brick and leave a legacy. These will be placed around the base of the cross. They are available in 4 X 8 for \$150 or 8 X 8 for \$400. The landscaping phase is now in progress. What a blessing it has already been to many. Thanks to all who support this symbol of God's love!!



## St Paul's Lutheran Preschool 2024—2025



















































April is sponsored by the number 9, the color purple, and oval. This month the children will learn about Easter, Palm Sunday, Butterflies and Earth Day. We will learn about letters Yy, Zz and review. Our Bible stories and study will be Jesus Rides into Jerusalem, Good Friday, Easter and Jesus Ascension.

On Thursday, April 17th we will have an Easter Egg



hunt at Noon. We are asking parents to donate at least a dozen candy filled Parents who would like to volunteer to help contact your child's teacher.

On Good Friday, April 18th, we will be closing at Noon.





## Afterschool Care

### **Ash Wednesday**

KTT members participated in St. Paul's annual Ash Wednesday's ceremony, directed by Skylar in our weekly chapel session.

















Special thanks to Britt McRae for volunteering two days a week tutoring in Math and reading. He and the kids are getting along so well, that he now hangs out with them after tutoring. Thanks Britt, you're a keeper!





KTT will be Closed on this date

April 18—Closed
Professional Development/Work Day

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







ChurchOffice@StPaulsDec.com



Join us for Easter Sunday services at 8:15 and 10:45am in the Sanctuary

Easter Breakfast at 9:30 and Egg Hunt at 9:45am

Calling All
Thrivent Members!!!

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!



You can see the number of Choice Dollars you have to direct by logging in to Thrivent.com and scroll to the bottom of your Account Overview page to see your available Choice Dollars, or call 800-847-4836.

The deadline to direct 2024 Choice Dollars is March 31.