

# ST. PAUL connections

## The God of Surprises

God seems to be one who delights in surprises. Mary must have been more than a little astonished when she discovered she was carrying the Messiah. Moses was rather startled when God spoke to him through a burning bush. And who knows what the disciples were thinking when Jesus appeared to them in the midst of a storm, walking on water? God must find some joy in surprising us.

So as we celebrate the "Reign of Christ" this weekend, we might be surprised to discover it looks nothing like royalty or dictators. Instead — surprise! — God's reign is found among the homeless and the hungry. God is revealed through vulnerability and mercy, not power or pomp and circumstance. The Reign of Christ invites us to experience the surprising presence of God, right here on earth.

### today at st. paul

#### November 25 & 26 - Reign of Christ

Preaching:

5:30/11:45 Josh Kestner  
8:00/9:20 Ryan Bailey

Worship notes:

9:20 am Chorale

Communion served at all services

Readings: Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24;  
Ephesians 1: 15-23;  
Matthew 25: 31-46

### next weekend

#### December 2 & 3 - Advent 1

Preaching:

5:30/8:00 Sara Olson-Smith  
9:20/11:45 Katy Warren

Worship notes:

9:20 am Chorale

Communion served at all services

Readings: Isaiah 64: 1-9; 1 Corinthians 1:  
3-9; Mark 13: 24-37

Privacy laws prevent hospitals from automatically informing churches of members admitted. You can easily notify our pastoral care staff of a hospitalization: 563-326-3547 x211 or becky@stpaulqc.org.

**Hospitalized:** (\*released as of Nov. 21)

Tyler Lamp  
Elaine Meinert

**With sympathy:**

Jay & Katy Johnson, his mother  
Margarette Johnson  
Alex & Zach Johnson, grandmother  
Margarette Johnson

## WOVEN together

**St. Paul members:** Have you pledged for 2018? Thank you for taking care of this commitment as soon as possible. With hearts of faith, we enter the coming year enthusiastic for serving in Christ's name. The financial pledges of every St. Paul household make 2018 possible. Think as generously as your faith and blessings allow.

To pledge yourself to St. Paul's Daily Ministry, please direct your purple pledge card in envelope to Marcia Robertson, stewardship coordinator, or make your pledge online at [stpaulqc.org/pledge-2018](http://stpaulqc.org/pledge-2018).

### staff connections

#### PASTORS

Peter W. Marty *Senior pastor*  
Sara Olson-Smith *Associate pastor*  
Katy Warren *Associate pastor*  
Kelsey Fitting-Snyder *Pastor in residency*  
Joshua Kestner *Pastor in residency*  
Ron Huber *Visitation pastor*

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Ann McGlynn *Director of communication*  
Lauren Brown *Artistic director*  
Becky Harper *Adm. asst. to sr. pastor*  
Karen Holden *Book Corner manager*  
Griffin Rasche *Communications intern*

#### OPERATIONS

Todd Byerly *Operations director*  
Paula Durham *Business manager*  
Jennifer Garvey *Receptionist*  
Tessa Hahn *Business office assistant*  
Marcia Robertson *Stewardship coordinator*  
Harris Schneekloth *Campus and grounds*  
Matt Spencer *Building manager*  
Jim Akright *Custodial/Maintenance*  
Paul Caldwell *Weekend host*  
Ron Mullen *Weekend host*  
Joe Wollett *Evening host*

#### LEARNING

Ryan Bailey *Director of faith formation*  
Joanna Roland *Preschool director*  
Andy Langdon *Director of youth ministries*  
Michelle Juehring *Director of children's ministries*  
Dana Welsler *Neighborhood schools*  
Tammy Hermanson *Residency administrator*  
Teresa Whitbeck *Childcare team leader*  
Michelle Henry *Youth ministries intern*

#### MUSIC

Chris Nelson *Director of music ministries*  
Bill Campbell *Contemporary music*  
Linda Allebach *Assistant organist*  
Nathan Windt *Chorale director*  
Dan Pepper *Youth choir director*  
Katie Casey *Children's choir director*  
Sara Harless *Children's choir director*  
Margaret Thompson *Children's choir director*  
Kyle Schneider *Contemporary worship assistant*

## A Simple Christmas

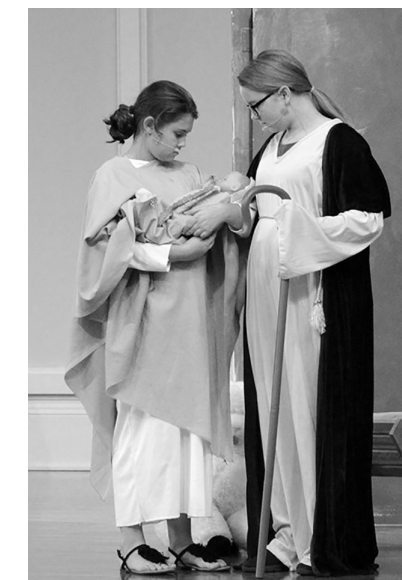
Christmas Pageant, Sunday, Dec. 10, 4 p.m.

The costumes are ready. The lines are prepared. The singing voices are all warmed up.

The 2017 St. Paul Christmas program, *A Simple Christmas Pageant*, will be held on Sunday, Dec. 10, 4 p.m., in the Sanctuary.

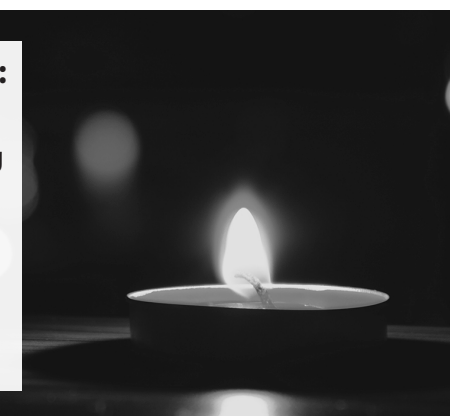
Written by Cindy Sterling and Sheldon Curry, the pageant tells the tale of Jesus' birth. It includes the singing of traditional Christmas carols with help from the congregation, guidance by the Storyteller and Saint Nicholas, and familiar words that tell the story of this extraordinary birth so many years ago. The program, the authors say, is reminiscent of *A Prairie Home Companion* and *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.

Led by Margaret Thompson, Chris Nelson, and Michelle Juehring, St. Paul children invite you to come along on the journey to Bethlehem with Joseph and Mary.



### LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS: ADVENT DEVOTIONS

The December season of waiting and watching is near. Beginning on Dec. 3, read short stories and meditations written by St. Paul people. Sign up to receive these daily devotions by email at: [www.ow.ly/TGYC5](http://www.ow.ly/TGYC5).



## THIS SUNDAY

### LEARNING FOR KIDS & YOUTH (10:45-11:30 AM)

- ▶ Advent Learning Event: In place of regular learning, in Fellowship Hall. See "Season of Advent" box for more details.

### SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE (SNL), GRADES 9-12 (7:15-8:30 PM)

SNL gathers most Sunday nights at St. Paul. It's a strong framework for high school youth to live, grow, and serve joyfully. It's also a fun place to get recharged before school on Monday morning. Andy Langdon, [andy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:andy@stpaulqc.org), 326-3547 x228

### LEARNING FOR ADULTS (10:45-11:30 AM)

- ▶ *Nurturing an inclusive workplace through strengths*: The city of Davenport's inclusion & equity administrator will discuss efforts within the city to create and nurture a strengths-based environment. This includes a commitment to building an environment, a workplace, and a community in which everyone is valued and everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Scott J. VanDeWoestyne, city of Davenport. In the Chapel.
- ▶ *Advent Learning Event*: In Fellowship Hall. See "Season of Advent" box for more details.
- ▶ *The Bible project*: Using just one page of creative illustrations and diagrams, discover the key themes of each book in the New Testament. Pastor Peter Marty. In Room 208.

## NEXT SUNDAY

- ▶ *The Sun Will Be Darkened*: Dana Taylor, St. Paul member. In the Chapel.
- ▶ *The Songs of Luke (1 of 3)*: Judy Schroeder, St. Paul member and Valparaiso deaconess. In the Luther Loft.
- ▶ *The Bible project*: Using just one page of creative illustrations and diagrams, discover the key themes of each book in the New Testament. Led by Pastor Sara Olson-Smith. In Room 208.

**SUNDAY MORNING FELLOWSHIP**: Please join others for coffee, doughnuts, juice, and conversation in the gathering areas on the main level.

**A BLUE BOOK, "Welcome to St. Paul,"** is situated in every pew near the aisle seat. Please take a moment to share your name and pass the book. As it returns to you, glance at other names and look for your chance to greet one another after worship. The warmth of your greeting can brighten the whole day.

**NURSERY**: We believe children belong in worship. But if your child needs a break, please assist other worshipers and seek out our staffed nursery in the "Kid's Corner" in the Library Commons. Silent pagers available. For nursing moms, a designated room is available to you, just 20 feet left of the elevator.

**CHILDREN**: Children's messages are a part of our Sunday services at 9:20 and 11:45 a.m. Special bulletins are available from an usher. Worship bags for children are at entrances to the Sanctuary.

**COMMUNION**: The Lord's Table is open to believers of all Christian traditions. Adults and children who do not commune are invited to come forward, crossing arms upon the chest for a blessing. Communion is distributed by a practice called intinction; please touch your wafer lightly to the wine. Gluten-free wafers are available at all stations. Grape juice is available on Sundays in the pottery chalice at the station furthest left.

**FAITH RESOURCES**: A library and the nonprofit Book Corner on the main level provide wonderful resources for growing your faith. Check them out.

**MEMBERSHIP**: A one-session Membership Inquiry Class is offered once each month for those interested in exploring what membership at St. Paul involves. The next opportunity will be on **Saturday, Dec. 9, 9-11:30 a.m. OR Thursday, Jan. 11, 6:30-9 p.m.** Childcare is available on request. Sign up online at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups), at the Info Center, or call 326-3547.

## DISCOVER & CONNECT

### youth

**678 NIGHT**: Wednesday, Nov. 29, 6:30-8 p.m., in the Library Commons. High-energy games + fun + togetherness + great Bible studies + campfire-style worship = 678! For youth in grades 6, 7, 8, this group meets periodically throughout the year. Andy Langdon, [andy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:andy@stpaulqc.org)

### YOUTH CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT

Dec. 8, 4 p.m. – Dec. 9, 4 p.m. at St. Mary's Monastery in Rock Island. Spend 24 hours embracing the stillness of nature, tradition, and contemplation. Guided group experiences, worship with the sisters, walking the trails, deeper conversations and intentional slow free time make this a different sort of youth retreat. Cost is \$50. Sign up online by Nov. 26 at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups). Andy Langdon, [andy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:andy@stpaulqc.org)

### adults

**FRIENDS & FAMILY**: Fourth Monday of each month, 6 p.m., in the Church House Living Room. A drop-in group for people whose loved ones are impacted by mental illness, next gathering Nov. 27. Led by mental health professionals and Pastor Sara Olson-Smith. No need to sign up, just come. Pastor Sara, [sara@stpaulqc.org](mailto:sara@stpaulqc.org)

**QUILTERS**: Tuesday, Nov. 28, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. This devoted group of caring quilters, beginners and experts alike, gather monthly to sew, tie, cut, and piece together quilts that are donated to those in need. Contact

Cathy Hagglund, [crh4quilts@msn.com](mailto:crh4quilts@msn.com) or Karin Hanson, 528-2064.

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**: St. Paul volunteers will swing hammers, create new friendships, and serve in various ways at 901 Farnam St., Davenport. Anyone 16 years of age or older is invited to be part of the work crew on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 5-8 p.m. Sign up online at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups). Pastor Katy Warren, 326-3547 ext. 232, [katy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:katy@stpaulqc.org)

**ADVENT LUNCHEON**: All women of St. Paul are invited to gather for an Advent celebration Saturday, Dec. 2. Advent service of hymns and a Bible study led by Pastor Kelsey will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel, followed by a salad luncheon in the Library Commons. Sign up at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups) or the Info Center, indicating if you can bring a salad, quick bread, or dessert. All women are welcome; bring a friend! Childcare will be available. Jan Lloyd, [cmijml@aol.com](mailto:cmijml@aol.com) and Judy Skogman, [djskog@aol.com](mailto:djskog@aol.com)

**CC CONVERSATIONS** is a first Thursday of the month discussion opportunity open to all, 6 - 7:15 p.m. Discuss faith, politics, and culture with Peter Marty through ideas inspired by articles and news in *The Christian Century* (CC) magazine. Pre-readings for Dec. 7 session are: "Wilderness," especially essay selections 3, 4, 6 and 9 in the series (pp. 22-27) and, "After the glass factory" (pp. 28-31), both in the 11.8.17 issue of CC. Also read "Side by side with Islam" (pp. 26-29) in the 11.22.17 issue of CC. Onsite copies on a special shelf in the library are available for reading.

## OF SPECIAL NOTE

**A BRIEF HEALING LITURGY** will be offered at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2, in the Church House Living Room. Each month, on the first Saturday, we provide an opportunity for individuals in need of physical, spiritual, or emotional healing to come and seek God's goodness and care.

**HOLY BAPTISM**: Two children step into the embrace of the Christian faith through holy baptism this weekend during 5:30 p.m. worship: Parker Mirocha, son of Dana and Thomas Mirocha, and Quinn Strickler, daughter of Hana and Brian Strickler. We welcome them into the Lord's family.

**CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS** will decorate the front of the Sanctuary as Christmas approaches. If you would like to donate a plant in memory or in honor of a loved one, orders may be placed in the church office or by mail no later than Sunday, Dec. 10. The cost for each plant is \$10. Forms are available at the Info Center. Payment is due at the time of order.

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**, a new position at St. Paul for 10-hours/week (10-months/year) is now open. This individual will have a gift for working with volunteers, a love for children and their faith lives, and a willingness to commit one weekday and two hours on most Sundays for work with children's ministries. Send letter of interest and resume to: [SPLCchildrensministries@gmail.com](mailto:SPLCchildrensministries@gmail.com). Applications and interviews will be reviewed as they arrive.

**JOANNA ROLAND TO RETIRE FROM ST. PAUL PRESCHOOL**: Joanna will be retiring at the end of this month. She's led the St. Paul Preschool for nearly two decades and has also played a key role in St. Paul's children and family ministries, as well as congregational hospitality. If you'd like to donate to a retirement gift for Joanna, please write a check to St. Paul clearly marked for "Joanna Gift." You're also invited to send individual cards or notes to the church, or drop a written expression in the basket on her farewell weekend, Dec. 2-3.

**NOMINATION FORMS** to recommend yourself or others for several 2018 elected leadership spots are available at the Info Center. The Nominating Committee looks forward to receiving all suggestions by Dec. 1. Please leave the form at the receptionist's desk or mail it to the church office c/o the Nominating Committee.

## SEASON of ADVENT

**Advent Learning Event | Today, Sunday, Nov. 26, 10:45-11:30 a.m.**

During the learning hour, people of all ages are invited to Fellowship Hall to join Pastor Kelsey Fitting-Snyder to make a Jesse tree. Kick-off the Advent season with songs, a Bible story, and family craft.

**Sunday school Advent gathering | Sundays, Dec. 10 & 17**

Children & youth are invited to participate in the Wash & Brush ingathering to be distributed to families at Family Resources. On Dec. 10, bring soap and shampoo. On Dec. 17, bring toothbrushes and toothpaste. Collection tables will be placed in the Education Wing.

**Youth Advent Event | Sunday, Dec. 3, 6:30 p.m.**

High school small groups will gather at Target in Davenport to shop for Christmas gifts for residents at the Handicapped Development Center.

**Youth Christmas caroling | Sunday, Dec. 17, 5:30-8 p.m.**

Students in grades 6-12 will gather at church for a pizza dinner followed by an evening of Christmas caroling around the community.

