

journey



Do you believe in ghosts?

Ghost stories must sit near the top of the list of irrational pastimes. Why do we insist on scaring ourselves?

Somehow, certain situations prompt us to explore the unknown realm of ghosts: the darkness surrounding a crackling campfire, the spooky spirit of Halloween, or the creaky floors of a historical landmark somewhere on the East Coast. All of the above can leave us with a hyperactive imagination and a sleepless night. And yet, ghost stories continue to entertain.

Many cultures around the world hold on to detailed beliefs about ghosts. Some groups have more involved, amicable relationships with their dead ancestors. Others are indifferent or afraid. Whether or not you believe in ghosts, the common curiosity about what happens to individuals when they die is interesting.

We hardly hear about ghosts in church. We verbally profess a belief in eternal life. We cling to ancient promises that death does not ultimately have power over us. And we find solace in the expectation of resurrection. But we are left with very few details of what all of this looks like.

That leaves us room to ask questions. Perhaps we find paranormal explanations for doors that close on their own. Or we find comfort that our loved ones might still be with us though their physical bodies are gone. Whatever the rationale behind belief or unbelief in ghosts, it encourages a deeper look into our notions about death.

In our culture at least, the phenomenon of death impacts almost everything we do. We are controlled by our primal, human instincts to stay alive as efficiently and as indefinitely as possible. Even if we believe that death is not the end, it is difficult to shake our insecurities about leaving behind the life that we know. So, we avoid it at all costs, and we rarely even bring it up in conversation.

There is a story in the Bible that fits the mood of this interrogation about ghosts. In Matthew 14, Jesus rejoins his disciples, who have gone ahead of him in a boat on a lake. To their surprise, he walks on the water to get to them. They see him coming towards them in the dark, and they cry out, "It's a ghost!" Shaking in their sandals, they realize that it is only Jesus, who calmly tells them, "Take courage! Don't be afraid."

Coming face-to-face with a ghost, with the embodiment of death itself, the disciples are immobilized with fear. That is when Jesus steps in with the reassurance of faith. With the life-giving truth that Jesus has given them, they no longer need to be afraid of death. And the same promise is true for us as well. Living fully

in God's daily love and grace is more powerful than timidly avoiding unavoidable catastrophes.

People still die. Loved ones are lost too soon. Our lives will eventually come to an end. Even in the ecstasy of the good news that God has an unyielding grip on death, we still have to face its permanent and untimely effect on our lives. But there is something more powerful than this pain.

Maybe we tell ghost stories because they help us to regain some control. As long as we are the ones forming the narrative around death and what lies beyond (no matter how daunting it might seem), then we can protect ourselves to some extent. In that story from the gospel of Matthew, though, Jesus tries to tell us that our fear is not necessary.

We do not have a lot of answers. What will the resurrection look like? When our bodies are gone, are we left to fend for ourselves as souls? Are ghosts real? But if we take faith seriously, then maybe we do not need many answers. What we know for sure is that God's love never ends. God promises to care for us in life and in death. And if we believe that to be true, then hopefully we can face death with confidence (albeit irrational) and peace.

We are free to focus our worries and energy on the world today even though we might not see tomorrow.



Josh Kestner

JOSH KESTNER
pastor in residency



ON THE COVER:
Left to right: Mason Herrington, Keaton Braack, and Jacob Ellsworth

journey

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MISSION

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a faith community, shaped around five core values: radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith formation, adventurous mission and service, extravagant generosity.

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Help make homes warmer, safer, drier, in rural Appalachia

Each year, St. Paul volunteers travel to rural central Appalachia to make homes safer, warmer, and drier for low-income families.

Volunteers stay in centers of the Appalachia Service Project, an organization that works throughout the region to build relationships and repair homes. This fall's trip will be Oct. 13-20 to Jonesville, Virginia, led by Pastor Katy Warren.

An informational meeting will be held on Sunday, Aug. 12, 10:30 a.m. in Luther Loft.

The trip cost is \$325. As of press time, some spots remain open. To sign up before or after the informational meeting, visit stpaulqc.org/signups.



MiSFITS SUMMER LUNCH SERIES

Habitat for Humanity build continues

This summer, St. Paul people will help build a Habitat home with Komi and Akouto Denou and their children in Davenport.

St. Paul volunteers will swing hammers, create new friendships, and serve in various ways. Anyone 16 years of age or older is invited to be part of the work crew. No construction experience is necessary. To sign up, visit stpaulqc.org/signups.

Available shifts:

- Saturday, July 14, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., morning & afternoon crews, lunch crew
- Wednesday, July 25, 5-8 p.m., work crew or supper crew
- Saturday, August 4, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., morning & afternoon crews

Why does St. Paul support the efforts of Habitat for Humanity? Habitat for Humanity knows that safe, decent, and affordable shelter plays an absolutely critical role in helping families to create a new cycle outside of poverty, one filled with possibilities and progress.

For five Tuesdays this summer, July 3-31, 12 noon-1 p.m. in the Library Commons, St. Paul pastors and staff will lead a lunch-time series about misfits of the Bible and of today. Bring a sack lunch, meet new friends, and settle in for some good conversation.

July 3: Bartimeus, Moses, Jacob, & people living with disabilities – Pastor Sara Olson-Smith and Tammy Hermanson, pastoral residency administrator

July 10: Ehud & Leonardo Da Vinci – Pastor Katy Warren and Andy Langdon, youth director

July 17: Rahab & rescuers – Pastor Josh Kestner and Ann McGlynn, director of communication

July 24: Legion & the mind of mental illness – Pastor Peter W. Marty and Todd Byerly, operations director

July 31: The Syrophenician Woman & Emma Gonzalez and David Hogg – Pastor Kelsey Fitting-Snyder and Karen Holden, book corner manager

Youth head to Omaha to serve

St. Paul youth will head west in July, serving and learning in Omaha, Nebraska.

The crew departs on Wednesday, July 18, and will check into a college dorm. They will be grouped into teams and assigned a variety of projects, working with people experiencing homelessness, hunger, and other significant challenges. In the evening, they will explore the city. They will return home on Sunday, July 22.



St. Paul Book Corner features new additions

The St. Paul Book Corner has new selections for adults and children. Every book is carefully selected by St. Paul pastors, staff, and avid St. Paul readers. The new selections can also be found in the St. Paul Library. Among the new additions are:

- *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship*, by Gregory Boyle
- *The New Jim Crow*, by Michelle Alexander
- *Faith: A Journey for All*, by Jimmy Carter
- *How to Grow a Dinosaur*, by Jill Esbaum
- *Wish Tree*, by Katherine Applegate
- *Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality*, by Jonah Winter



With games, snacks, crafts, music, and visits from Suzy Sloth and Jim No-Land each day, kids ventured onto an uncharted island during VBS 2018. They were anchored in the trust that Jesus carries them through life's storms.

Middle and high school kids volunteered, cheered, spent a day serving, and took quite a few rides down a pretty monumental water slide.





BEYOND GOLF

As superintendents and golf pros, these St. Paul people choose golf as a profession

Every single one of them experienced golf as a child. No matter the exact age or circumstance, Eric Drane, Ike Hurning, Alex Stuedemann, and Erin Wikoff all encountered and fell in love with the game of golf during their growing up years. Then they went to work, learning the ins and outs of the game they now call their profession.



Wearing lots of hats

Eric Drane, golf professional, Oakwood Country Club

Eric Drane says he started playing golf “later,” around the age of 12. His best friend and his best friend’s dad played quite a bit, and they invited him along to the Black Hawk Run golf course near Stockton, Ill.

When Eric turned 16, he got a job at that course during the summers. At Loras College, he played golf and studied sports management, including an internship at TPC Deere Run. That’s also where he landed his first job. He worked at Crow Creek before he got the opportunity to work at Oakwood.

“Some days I’m a tournament organizer. Sometimes I’m a teacher so that members get the most enjoyment out of their game. Today was a junior golf day, getting kids interested in golf. Some days it’s merchandising. Other days, it’s spending time talking with people on the course.

“As a golf professional, you have to wear a lot of hats,” he said.

Oakwood, he said, is an old-school, treelined golf course. It’s not an overly long course, but has difficult greens. “Our superintendent does a great job.”

The course, he noted, is one of the first designed by Pete Dye, a famous course architect. In addition to Oakwood, one of his favorite courses to play on is Whistling Straights in Wisconsin.

Eric values the friendships he’s built over the course of time. Golf, he said, is a good way to get away from the stresses of life, relax, and be with friends.



An office of 110 acres

Ike Hurning, superintendent, Springbrook Country Club

He first remembers playing golf around the age of 8, and had his first job in golf at the age of 13 at Crow Valley as a bag boy. That first job happened to be with Butch Harmon, one of the most-known and well-respected golf coaches of all time.

Nearly 40 years later, Ike remains in golf. He’s been at Springbrook in DeWitt since 1995. “I’ve never left the industry.”

Ike attended horticulture school in Australia, where he also worked for the Royal Sydney Golf Club. As superintendent at Springbrook, it’s his job to maintain the greens, change out the holes, manage weeds, and put his training as an arborist to use in caring for the course’s trees – among many other tasks.

He hires young people to work at the course, just as he did when he was a teenager, teaching them good work habits that he hopes they use for the rest of their lives.

“That’s one of the most rewarding parts of the job for me,” he said, noting that getting kids involved in the game of golf will ensure a thriving future for the sport.

When asked if he’s ever gotten a hole in one, he noted that he nearly got two holes in one back-to-back. It was at Springbrook, and he got a hole in one, followed by a score of two for the next hole.

“I love the game of golf,” he said. “I love that my office is 110 acres of outside.”



'I just love being outside'

Alex Stuedemann, superintendent, TPC Deere Run

Alex started golfing around fifth or sixth grade. He didn't really think about making it his profession – he saw working at a golf course as a good way of playing for free. He started working at Bunker Hills in Minnesota, trimming trees, changing out cups, and other similar duties.

"I went to college thinking I would be an engineer. That didn't work out. My report card made that very clear," he said.

A co-worker asked if he had ever thought about working in the world of golf. With the help of his parents, he found his local university had a turf grass program. He switched gears in the middle of his sophomore year. He graduated in 2000 from the University of Minnesota.

He is now the director of golf course maintenance at TPC Deere Run. His job involves the maintenance and preservation of the golf course and grounds. It brings in components of soil science, agronomy, chemistry, and a little bit of weather forecasting too.

Preparing for the course's most-watched event, the John Deere Classic, he said, begins at the end of the previous year's event.

Alex's favorite hole on the course is the 18th hole. "It always seems to be where the tournament is won or lost," he said. "It's a beautiful hole that epitomizes what the property is. It's where my wife and I are on the final day of the tournament."

"I just love being outside and the variety of my job," he said. "No day is the same around here."



A game of confidence

Erin Wikoff, golf professional, Pinnacle Country Club

When she was 12 years old, Erin (Strieck) Wikoff's dad brought home a set of golf clubs. Her first time playing, she scored a 107 on nine holes at Duck Creek. "I remember it like it was yesterday," she said.

Playing the game became a time to spend with her dad. As she grew up, she and her friends would con their parents out of \$20 to go play golf. At 16, she got a job at Crow Valley with people like Mike Nedelcoff and Butch Harmon.

"At 16, my decision was made," she said. "I was like a sponge."

Erin went on to play golf at the University of Iowa, and then on to study in a PGA program for golf professionals. Courses focused on teaching, budgeting, tournament operations, and merchandising.

After several years working in Galena, she is now the head golf professional at Pinnacle Country Club, the first woman to hold such a position in the Quad Cities. "I couldn't ask for a more amazing place to work," she said, while overlooking the hilly green course. The club has about 275 members.

Erin loves golf because people can play the sport their entire lives. It's something a family can do together, and is a great way to keep active.

"I teach a lot," she said. "I encourage people to not get frustrated by the process. Trust in yourself. Golf is a game of confidence."



At the 18th hole: Ken Sanyi, John Deere Classic volunteer

He might have one of the best seats in the house for the John Deere Classic.

Ken Sanyi is a long-time volunteer at the JDC, on the scoring committee. He is one of a team of people who measure the yardage of drives and the length of putts. It's a rather technical endeavor involving lasers and photography, GPS and backups with duplication, through a company called ShotLink.

Statistical information on every shot by every player is recorded in real time.

"It's pretty tight," Ken said. With the equipment used, "you can read the writing on the ball from off the green."

According to ShotLink, each golf course is mapped prior to the event. A digital image of each hole is used as background information in order to calculate exact locations and distances between any two coordinates (e.g. tee box and the player's first shot or the shot location and the location of the hole).

Ken's appreciation for his time at the JDC runs deep, he said. "You get an insight into the tour players, seeing a lot of the first-time winners, seeing that on the 18th green, watching that transpire. It's a lot of people putting in a lot of work. You're there for a good, long day. You see a lot of behind-the-scenes stuff. They do a really nice job of coordinating it."

PRESERVING A wetland

Environmental alliance cares for, improves 58-acre piece of habitat

The 38 acres of land and 20-acre pond, tucked away along Highway 5 in East Moline, needed a new owner.

A wetland, the family who owned it knew they could no longer take care of it. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wanted to find an organization that it knew was up to the task.

The offer was this: Take the land for \$1. Make sure it is well taken care of.

That's where the people of the Quad City Conservation Alliance came in. You might recognize the name – they are the group that owns and operates the QCCA Expo Center in Rock Island. The alliance is a group of conservation-minded organizations that banded together to create a nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving natural resources.

“We have lots of volunteers interested in a piece of property like this,” said Dick Riddell, who is one of the people who guides the work at the organization's wetland. They are a couple of years into ownership. “The goals are preservation and education.”

A big part of the group's efforts are focused on eliminating invasive species that have taken over, Dick said. Improving bird habitat also is important. Fifty new bird houses just went up to try to encourage birds to come and thrive there. A Boy Scout is working on becoming an Eagle Scout with a bird project, as well.

The wetland is home to at least 500 species, including red fox, coyotes, bobcat, deer, and all kinds of birds like the kingfisher, warbler, tree swallows, Dick said. For plants, one in particular stands out – “we've got huge expanses of cattails.”

“If you don't like snakes, you might not like it here,” he added. “Wetlands are a really bio rich piece of land. The only animal we try to keep out of there right now is the beaver. On one little corner of the lake, there were 13 muskrat houses.”

Dick also noted the difference between a wetland and a marsh. A marsh dries up. A wetland never does.

The alliance now invites groups out to enjoy the area, learn about and identify the species living there, and to work. The Riverdale Environmental Club came out earlier this summer, the Boys & Girls Club will be bringing out groups, and science teachers love it, too.

Members of any of the organizations that make up the QCCA can get a pass to come out to kayak, hike, fish, or otherwise enjoy the wetland.

“It's a really unique area,” Dick said. “It's a real gem.”



“

WETLANDS
ARE A REALLY
BIO RICH PIECE
OF LAND.

— Dick Riddell

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ABOUT THE QUAD CITY CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

The alliance was founded in 1984 as a non-profit by five local conservation clubs who recognized that they could accomplish more through joint action. The QCCA owns and operates the QCCA Expo Center, which is used for consumer trade shows and special events. Money raised through the Expo Center is directed to conservation activities in a 90-mile radius of the Quad Cities. More than \$1.2 million has been invested in the Quad Cities for conservation activities since 1984 through the efforts of the QCCA.

Projects include:

- Development of Wapsi River Environmental Center near Dixon
- Reintroduction of peregrine falcons near Muscatine
- Kids' fishing clinics in Moline, Davenport, Rock Island, and Galesburg
- Waterfowl and raptor habitat enhancement projects along the Mississippi
- Research equipment for state biologists in Iowa and Illinois
- Handicapped fishing dock at West Lake Park, Scott County

St. Paul kids tackle autumn olive at wetland

On a hot and bit buggy day in June, St. Paul middle-school students traveled to the QCCA wetland and helped tackle the invasive species, autumn olive.

They put on long pants and gloves, and helped cut away a plant that is deceptive in its beauty. Pretty flowers do not always mean something is good for its surroundings.

According to The Nature Conservancy, autumn olive is a shrub that can grow as tall as 20 feet. Its cream to pale yellow flowers bloom in early spring and bring on an abundance of pink to red berries.

The autumn olive is a native plant of China, Japan, and Korea that made its way to the United States in 1830, the conservancy says. In the 1950s, it was widely promoted as a great way to provide wildlife habitat and erosion control in environmentally disturbed areas. Although it did make available habitat and food for wildlife, it soon became a major problem as it began to rapidly spread.

Autumn olive is an invasive species that out-competes and displaces native plants by creating a dense shade that hinders the growth of plants that need lots of sun. It can

produce up to 200,000 seeds each year.

A few adult volunteers with chainsaws helped out. Dick Riddell says there's a crew of 10 who tend to the wetland on a regular basis – mostly retired people who like to be outside working.

"We want to introduce kids to the invasive species, and have them come out and help – throw it on the wagons and bring it out," Dick said. He's a St. Paul member who is leading the effort to clear the wetland of invasive species.



A blockbuster summer

Midsummer mental health movie series seeks to raise awareness, spark discussion

FOR FOUR WEEKS beginning Wednesday, July 11, St. Paul Lutheran Church's Mental Health Awareness Team will host a midsummer mental health movie series. Come and watch a movie and join in discussion afterwards. Movies begin at 6:30 p.m., popcorn included. The series is free and open to the public.

The Mental Health Awareness Team works to expand awareness, banish stigmas, love others, share stories, and discover support. This movie series is one of their many efforts throughout the year.



JULY 11, HELLO, MY NAME IS DORIS

Academy Award winner Sally Field stars in this witty and compassionate film about a 60-something woman who is a hoarder living alone following the death of her mother, whom she has lived with for her whole life. After a lifetime of being overlooked and ignored, Doris finds her world turned upside down by a handsome new co-worker and a self-help seminar that inspires her to take a chance on love.

JULY 25, IT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY

After contemplating suicide by jumping off the Brooklyn Bridge, 16-year-old Craig Gilner decides to go to the hospital to seek help. Unfortunately, the youth mental health wing is closed, so he must spend his mandated five-day stay with adults. One of them, Bobby, quickly becomes his mentor – and protege, while Craig finds himself drawn to a fellow teen, Noelle.

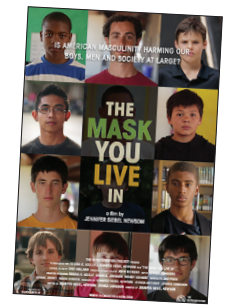


JULY 18, WONDER

Based on the *New York Times* best-seller, *Wonder* tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences who enters fifth grade, attending a mainstream elementary school for the first time. As the people around him struggle to find their compassion and acceptance, Auggie's journey unites them and proves you can't blend in when you were born to stand out.

AUGUST 1, THE MASK YOU LIVE IN

This award-winning documentary follows boys and young men as they struggle to stay true to themselves while negotiating America's narrow definition of masculinity. The film's protagonists confront messages encouraging them to disconnect from their emotions, devalue authentic friendships, objectify and degrade women, and resolve conflicts through violence. These gender stereotypes interconnect with race, class, and circumstance, creating a maze of identity issues boys and young men must navigate to become "real" men.



Council Notes

At its June meeting, the Congregational Council heard and approved of three actions by the committee that oversees the Endowment for Mission Outreach. The committee voted to support a social worker at Madison Elementary, as well as a mother and daughter who will attend separate seminaries in different capacities this fall.

The social worker position will be buoyed with a grant of \$8,000. The money will allow continued employment of this key staff member at St. Paul's Neighborhood School Partnership site, as previous grants are no longer available. Dana Welser, the St. Paul coordinator of the Madison Elementary School partnership, articulated the significant presence this person

provides. "The Families Matters position changes lives and allows for Madison families to be connected to social services in a way provided by no other social service agency," she said.

The Endowment committee also approved financial support for a mother and daughter who will attend two different seminaries in the fall. Vicki Hall will enroll at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, with a goal of training for chaplaincy ministry. Hannah Griggs will attend Union Theological Seminary in New York to pursue a master of divinity degree, eager to follow her calling to social justice work.

TAMMY HERMANSON LOOKS FORWARD TO 'GREAT PLAY & GREAT PURPOSE' Farewell weekend set for July 14-15

The beginning of Tammy Hermanson's time on staff at St. Paul started with the dream of a pastoral residency program.

St. Paul was invited to apply for a grant from the Lilly Endowment to begin an initiative to provide two years of residency to newly ordained pastors.

The year was 2005. Tammy took a leap of faith and left her job as a physical therapist in October. St. Paul learned in November that the congregation was awarded the grant. By January, three residents were selected. By July 2006, St. Paul welcomed Elizabeth Lerohl, Lorin Darst, and Lowell Michelson.

Since then, St. Paul has welcomed five more groups of pastoral residents. Josh Kestner and Kelsey Fitting-Snyder are the current residents. They will be at St. Paul until July 2019.

"It isn't easy to leave a program I've invested myself in for 13 years, but the time is good to let someone else take over this unique ministry opportunity," Tammy said. "I will always be grateful to the Lilly Endowment Inc. and to St. Paul Lutheran Church for this incredible opportunity."

Instead of the word retirement, Tammy prefers to use the word "refocus."

"I still have a lot of energy and passion for many things in life. I see this next phase of life as one of purpose, creativity, and fun," she said.

Family and Friends: Grandchildren, husband, siblings, friends. Grandchildren add a wonderful and sacred dimension to life, but I'm not totally defined by it. But, I look forward to enjoying more time to attend their activities and actively engage in their lives. I also intend to spend more time with my siblings, hike, bike, and ski with my husband, and share my passion for hospitality by cooking for friends and family as we gather around the table for rich conversations.

Writing: We recently completed a 15-year journey of caring for our aging parents. A 10-year journey with Alzheimer's disease, as I accompanied my father, was one of the darkest, yet most enlightening decades of my life. I'd like to write something that might offer a glimmer of hope to others who find themselves on this tough journey.

Medical Mission Work: Surveys indicate that two professions with the highest levels of job satisfaction include physical therapy and ministry. I have been blessed to spend my life working both as a physical therapist and in ministry. I would like to combine my experience from both worlds to do some medical mission work, a ministry of presence.

Play: Our daughter and her family live in Colorado. I also enjoy outdoor photography, so there's nothing better for me than long hikes in the Rocky Mountains with my camera. Mark and I also enjoy discovering new places and people through travel. We look forward to a bicycling trip in Italy with friends and family within the next year.

"Although I don't know the details of the future, I'm confident God has more good things in store for a life of continued fulfillment and joy."



UPCOMING worship

JUNE 30 & JULY 1

Season after Pentecost

PREACHING

5:30 Kelsey Fitting-Snyder

7:45 Sara Olson-Smith

9:00 Sara Olson-Smith

11:15 Kelsey Fitting-Snyder

JULY 7 & 8

Season after Pentecost

PREACHING

5:30 Katy Warren

7:45 Josh Kestner

9:00 Katy Warren

11:15 Josh Kestner

JULY 14 & 15

Season after Pentecost

PREACHING

5:30 Peter W. Marty

7:45 Kelsey Fitting-Snyder

9:00 Peter W. Marty

11:15 Kelsey Fitting-Snyder

JULY 21 & 22

Season after Pentecost

PREACHING

5:30 Peter W. Marty

7:45 Peter W. Marty

9:00 Peter W. Marty

11:15 Peter W. Marty

JULY 28 & 29

Season after Pentecost

Jazz worship at 9 & 11:15 a.m.

PREACHING

5:30 Sara Olson-Smith

7:45 Sara Olson-Smith

9:00 Peter W. Marty

11:15 Peter W. Marty



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52803



Jazz Sunday Worship

JULY 29, 9 & 11:15 AM

