

THE MAGAZINE OF ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

August 2021

# • journey





# Shared Faith



**ON THE COVER:**  
Anna Thorne

## journey

**AUGUST 2021**  
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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, courageous service, extravagant generosity.

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During high school, I went on a mission trip with my church youth group to a town called San Luis, Colo. San Luis is an old Colorado town anchored in the Catholic parish that's been there since its founding, when the land was still Mexico. Much like our St. Paul youth and the mission trip they just took to Chicago, we spent our days doing service and learning, and our evenings reflecting, praying, and playing.

On our last day in San Luis, we joined the congregation for worship in their beautiful old mission church with worn wooden pews and a vibrant community. I will never forget how loud that community prayed the Lord's Prayer, a bit chaotic as we prayed in at least two languages and multiple versions. But I felt embraced by the sound. I experienced in my body how this prayer, spoken by Christians throughout time and place, is truly shared. It is never "My Father in heaven," but always, "Our Father in heaven."

The very same feeling came over me earlier this summer as we gathered for worship on the first day of our full re-opening. I stood at the altar, tears already in my eyes as I prayed over the bread and wine of communion for the first time in months. As the congregation joined with me to pray the Lord's Prayer, I was yet again embraced by the fullness of sound. It was the sound of not just my voice trying to cling to faith alone, but the sound of our voices, bolstering one another in our faith, our hope. After months of praying these words from separate couches and rooms, we were praying them together again, echoing together in synchronicity. No longer my God, my prayers, my hope, but Ours.

There is something powerful that happens when we pray and sing aloud in community. In a recent essay, psychologist Adam Grant writes about the joy and harmony that comes when we gather with other people around a shared purpose. It's a concept sociologists call "collective effervescence." We feel it when we do things like dance the hokey pokey together or sing during the 7th inning stretch at a baseball game, or laugh with strangers at something delightful, or partner with others on a task. And this collective effervescence happens when we gather, in person, to worship. (Though what sociologists call "collective effervescence," I also like to call the work of the Holy Spirit.)

This congregation has continued faith and community over these long pandemic months in creative and beautifully loving ways. You've shown up for one another in handmade cards and grocery deliveries. There have been phone calls and video chats and more.

We've even found ways to worship. And even so, it hasn't been easy to sustain faith and to hold onto hope. That's because faith is never meant to be something we do alone. We've missed the collective effervescence. Adam Grant wrote in that essay that, "shared joy is joy sustained." And I think it is also true that shared faith is faith sustained. Shared faith is faith that endures.

We are yet again being embraced by the community to which we belong. We can sing together and pray together. We can take delight in the kids down the pew figuring out church, and smile with graciousness at parents teaching a whole new practice to those little ones. We can learn the name of an unfamiliar face beside us. We can sing with extra strength for the sake of the person next to us silenced by the tears running down her cheeks. Our God in heaven has held us together through all of it, and now we can embody that community again, and experience the bolstering power of our shared faith.

I remember visiting one of our homebound members years ago. I held her thin hands and we prayed together the Lord's Prayer. And after our amen, she said something like, "I always feel like I am surrounded by all of our church and everyone I love when I pray this prayer. It's never just my prayer alone." Shared faith is faith sustained.

**SARA OLSON-SMITH**  
*associate pastor*



# LIVES OF NOTE

## Films by Martin Doblmeier

In this four-week series of 1-hour films, meet remarkable 20th-century leaders of note from varied backgrounds. Gather on Thursday evenings, Aug. 5-26, 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel, to view and discuss each movie.

Martin Doblmeier has produced some of the most compelling films profiling people whose lives of religious commitment and social impact deserve our close attention. No need to sign up, just come! Contact: Peter Pettit, [ppettit@stpaulqc.org](mailto:ppettit@stpaulqc.org).



### Aug. 5 | Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is a young German theologian who refused to ride out the Nazi years by taking asylum in England or the U.S. He was a leading voice in the Protestant resistance both as leader of a “protesting” seminary, an activist in trying to thwart Adolf Hitler, and a political prisoner of the Nazi government.



### Aug. 12 | Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day is an American journalist who was a well-known political radical among American Catholics. She was a co-founder of the Catholic Worker magazine. The related Catholic Worker movement carried her voice into the causes of workers’ rights, social justice, the environment, and other social issues.



### Aug. 19 | Howard Thurman

Howard Thurman is a Black theologian who encouraged the search for common ground among diverse people in a society. Both deeply personal and persistently communal, the search became a touchstone of the civil rights era, echoed in Martin Luther King, Jr.’s pursuit of the blessed community. Thurman’s articulation of common ground also laid a foundation for many of his more well-known contemporaries in interfaith engagement.



### Aug. 26 | Abraham Joshua Heschel

Abraham Joshua Heschel escaped from Europe on the eve of the Holocaust and became a leading philosopher and public intellectual in the United States. He brought his voice and Jewish heritage to bear on nearly every significant moral issue in 1950s and 1960s America.

▶ A children’s activity program for elementary-age kids will be offered, and child care for the younger set can be provided, if needed. Please sign up for these options no later than Tuesday evening each week at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups).



# August HAPPENINGS

## Women of St. Paul fall gathering slated for Aug. 28

The annual fall gathering for the women of St. Paul will be Saturday, Aug. 28, 9-11:30 a.m. Come to connect, grow, and serve together — with old and new friends. Learn about a wide variety of St. Paul ministries and meet St. Paul's new resident pastor, Megan Eide.

Refreshments will be served. Child care is available upon request. Sign up at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups) or at the Info Center. Contact Doris Mack, 563-332-6054, [dori3120@aol.com](mailto:dori3120@aol.com) or Artie Simms, 563-359-1303, [ardith.simms@gmail.com](mailto:ardith.simms@gmail.com).

## Little ones to celebrate milestones

Three-year-olds and kindergartners at St. Paul will mark important faith milestones this month. They are special times along the growing-up journey. Sign up online at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups).

**Three-year-olds | Sunday School Milestone:** This event on Sunday, Aug. 22, 12:15 p.m. welcomes 3-year-olds and their parents into Sunday-morning learning. Gather for pizza and conversation with other families. It's a big step into a growing faith at church. Each child receives a colorful storybook Bible. Meet on the North Lawn, weather permitting. Otherwise, we'll gather inside.

**Kindergarten | Discovering Worship Milestone:** Kids ask questions and explore St. Paul worship during this interactive session on Sunday, Aug. 29, 12:15 p.m. Gather for pizza and conversation with other families. A monogrammed worship bag for each child adds to the fun. Meet on the North Lawn, weather permitting. Otherwise, we'll gather inside.

## 7th-graders: Sign up for confirmation

Students entering 7th grade this fall are encouraged to sign up now for St. Paul's confirmation ministry. Meeting on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8 p.m., September through April, confirmation is key to shaping the faith of middle school students.

Teenagers and parents are asked to attend a family orientation session in August before confirmation begins next month. Families can sign up for one session by going to [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups). For more information and registration materials, contact Katy Warren, [katy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:katy@stpaulqc.org), 563-326-3547 ext. 232.

## IN AUGUST, FOOD EXPRESSES LOVE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS:

### Aug. 14 & 15: Food Pantry gathering

Fill a bag with nonperishable food items, diapers/wipes, and feminine hygiene products. and bring it to church for St. Paul's annual back-to-school ingathering.

The food goes to the Friendly House Food Pantry in Davenport and the women's and baby products go to families served by Madison Market.

What's needed? Soups, mac & cheese, canned meat (chicken & tuna), cereal, peanut butter, jelly, toilet paper, bar soap, laundry soap, diapers (sizes 5 and 6), wipes and feminine hygiene products (tampons and pads). You can also write a check to St. Paul with "Food Pantry" in the memo line.

Please, no expired items. Contact: Katy Warren, [katy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:katy@stpaulqc.org).

### Sunday, Aug. 15: Garden Share

Too many tomatoes? Not enough squash? St. Paul people can bring bounty from their gardens and take what they can use or share with others. The harvest left over will be donated to Café on Vine.

### Sunday, Aug. 29: Kids Against Hunger meal packaging

St. Paul people will have the opportunity to help package meals to help others through Kids Against Hunger. Kids and adults are welcome. Sign up for a half-hour shift at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups).



## Habitat for Humanity build dates set for summer

Put on a tool belt and help build simple, decent houses through this ecumenical ministry. Each summer, St. Paul volunteers work alongside families who dream of owning a home – and do the work necessary to make that dream a reality.

The Quad Cities Habitat chapter has built more than 100 homes, including those constructed with St. Paul funding and labor. No previous building experience is necessary. To help, visit [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups).

► **Saturday, Aug. 28:** The morning shifts are 8 a.m.-12 noon, the afternoon shifts from 12 noon-4 p.m. Lunch is provided; help is needed to provide lunch as well.

► **Saturday, Sept. 11:** The morning shifts are 8 a.m.-12 noon, the afternoon shifts from 12 noon-4 p.m. Lunch is provided; help is needed to provide lunch as well.

For more information, contact Katy Warren at [katy@stpaulqc.org](mailto:katy@stpaulqc.org).

## Neighborhood cleanup set for Aug. 21

The St. Paul corner of the world is a beautiful place. On Saturday, Aug. 21, 10 a.m.-12 noon, gather to pick up trash and debris in the blocks surrounding the campus. It's called the *Make It Yours* Neighborhood Cleanup.

The Environmental Team is a band of earth-minded St. Paul folks. They pick up litter each week on campus, and a few times a year in the neighborhood. They encourage new behaviors: conserving resources by riding a bike to church, considering choices big and small. No need to sign up, just come! Supplies and snacks are provided. Contact: Jules Irish, [julesi@mchsi.com](mailto:julesi@mchsi.com).

## St. Paul social worker/counselor available for in-person and telehealth appointments

Angie Vaaler, the St. Paul social worker/counselor, is available to St. Paul members and the Madison Elementary School community. Counseling services are offered free of charge. Angie is able to assist those who are struggling in relationships, experiencing depression or anxiety, working through trauma, or in need of a listening ear.

On staff part-time, Angie is available for telehealth appointments over both audio and video and is available for in-person counseling services. Contact Angie at 563-326-3547, ext. 312.



## Eleventh graders prep for adventure trip milestone

Students and leaders will depart for Wisconsin in early August for an adventure trip — preparing them for leadership in our community and exploring their faith stories. With oars flying while white water rafting, and a bit of climbing, the crew will talk faith, friendship, and futures on the four-day trek.

## The Bible for Worship to continue on YouTube

This brief weekly video offers background to the scripture reading to which the sermon will be related. Posted each week on Thursday at noon on the St. Paul YouTube channel ([youtube.com/c/stpaulquadcities](https://youtube.com/c/stpaulquadcities)) and linked in the Thursday eNews. Questions or comments? Contact: Peter A. Pettit, [ppettit@stpaulqc.org](mailto:ppettit@stpaulqc.org).

## Ushering Hospitality

If you enjoy greeting people, and are willing to contribute to the comfort and ease of others in worship, please consider ushering. We'd love your help as we rebuild teams. "Must I do it every week?" Of course not. The more helpers, the more periodic your service. "Is there some training?" Yes. We'll send a funny and informative 9-minute video your way. "Does helping out on Sunday mean an end to vacations in my life?" Don't be silly.

Call or contact Becky Harper (563-326-3547 ext 211, or [becky@stpaulqc.org](mailto:becky@stpaulqc.org)) to offer your willingness to explore.

## Sunday morning drop-in family activity center to continue through August

On Sunday mornings during the summer, come as a family to Friendship Hall (upper level) for a fun, faith-focused, family activity, 9:30-11 a.m. Stay as long as you like; come after worship or before; leave when you choose. Activities will be designed for 20-30 minutes, and families will be able to do them at their own tables. Maddy Carroll leads the fun.





# FAITH

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

St. Paul youth express their faith stories

Graduating seniors stand in front of their peers to discuss their difficult, differing, and diverse faith stories. Anna Thorne and Owen Schmidt share their journeys.

Written by **ANNA THORNE**

Sorry. It's a word that is used to apologize for a mistake, a misinterpretation, an emotional outburst, or when someone accidentally bumps into you. It is a common word used in everyday vernacular, and for most people, it is not a word that prompts more than a two-second thought. For me, it means much more than that.

I was so unsure of how to go about expressing years of faith and years of emotion into one story. Putting everything I've ever felt and every struggle I've failed to talk about into words felt impossible. I didn't even know where to begin.

I met with Andy Langdon and Haley Rhoads to talk about just that, and through a two-hour emotional conversation, I realized I didn't necessarily need to find the "right" words because, as they emphasized to me, any words that have meaning to me are sufficient.

All of my life I have been the textbook definition of a people pleaser. Living for others can be a complicated thing. For me it means that I always choose others over myself, often to my own detriment.

I could never get past this feeling deep inside me that my only good quality was my kindness. To no fault of my twin brother Alex, I had always felt like the background twin. Living every moment of life with someone who is as intelligent, hilarious, bold, and outgoing as him was hard for me. Alex was always the first one to be invited to the big social gatherings and the one that made everyone laugh. In comparison, it felt as though what I had to offer wasn't enough.

I was obsessed with remaining true to the one good quality I knew everyone around me saw: my kindness. When someone would ask for help, I would drop every-

thing to give it to them. When someone was upset and needed advice, I would console them, regardless of how I was feeling. I gave my all to others to the point where I had nothing left for myself.

When I was struggling and felt as if I had no one around me, I didn't tell anyone. I had to be the happy, bubbly, sweet person that everyone knew me as. I found every ounce of validation in the way others perceived me. If I wavered from the person everyone thought I was, who would I be? This mentality caused me to confuse the true definition of kindness. It became my weakness, and that weakness created an image of myself that was a stranger to the person I wanted to be.

I mentioned the word "sorry" because it is a polite, kind gesture to let someone know you recognize a mistake and take responsibility for it.

Sorry became the most used word in my vocabulary. To remain kind, I apologized for every mistake. I aimed to please others and end "conflict" by saying sorry. It became what felt like an apology for simply existing.

When high school youth group began, I was the epitome of the person I just described. This realization came during Summer Stretch. I met and bonded with many impactful people during that week of church, but two people stuck out to me. The second I saw the ways in which Mary Baril and Ellie Lindmark immersed themselves in the church, I knew I had been blessed with something special. That was the first time I had seen two people be unapologetically themselves. They were true to themselves, and when I saw the positive reassurance they got from the church when they didn't try to be anything but genuine, that was the first time I saw the chance for me to do the same. They showed me the value in surrounding yourself with people that lift you up, and the value in finding a community that does not ever make you feel as though you aren't worthy.



Anna Thorne

As the years went on and I continued to involve myself in church, I started to see the person I had been hiding for so long. When I went through struggles in my friendships and I dealt with people taking advantage of my kindness, I remembered that I was in control of who I surrounded myself with.

When quarantine hit and everything that had been distracting me from my own struggles was suddenly gone, I fell into darkness. I was torn between losing who I was and also trying to be the support for everyone else who was struggling.

Eventually, it became too much for me to handle. I broke, and I was at the lowest of lows. I continued to tell no one that I was struggling because when everything in my life felt out of control, the one thing I could control was the version of myself that I let people see. It wasn't until I started immersing myself in church again that I separated myself from this toxic way of living.

When I thought about who I was when I was at youth group, I realized that the one person I never needed to apologize to was God. When I remembered every embrace, every smile, and every laugh I shared with the people at this church, I felt a wave of relief fall over me. It was a realization that was long overdue.

Although leaving and not being able to see all of the incredible people every Sunday will be my hardest goodbye, it was also my most important hello. The day that I made this church and these bonds my priority was the day that I was no longer a stranger to myself, and the day that I finally felt enough peace to let God take control. It was the day that I realized I didn't need to apologize for who I was. I will never be just the kind girl to God.

Written by **OWEN SCHMIDT**

My family is one that comes to church when we can, but if something would conflict we would pick that event over coming. We would listen to The Message or K-Love while driving and call that enough. Because of that upbringing I would say I had a strong faith life but I never felt fully connected to God. When I compared it to others I felt like it could be stronger.

I was in the second half of my junior year when Betendorf went fully online, soccer got canceled, and Sunday Night Live (SNL) got suspended before going online. It took me a while to adjust but I made it through the summer with the help of service projects and 678 week but I could feel my faith weakening. I went to SNL once school started again but it wasn't my top priority anymore.

Then on September 28th I tested positive for COVID-19 and the next two weeks were the worst ones of my life.

After those weeks of physical symptoms my connection to God was the lowest it will ever be and I thought my experience with COVID couldn't get any worse. I was wrong about

both. The physical symptoms had been going away but one symptom remained — brain fog. The symptoms include fatigue, short term memory loss, lack of concentration, and slower processing speeds along with other brain-related problems.

During the time I needed God the most, I rejected him. I decided to go at the biggest challenge of my life alone. I didn't tell my parents, my sister, or my friends what I was going through.

After a few weeks, my brain function started to come back but my faith didn't.

Faith wasn't in my life but then I received a text from Andy (Langdon). "Wanted you to know that SNL starts again this Sunday. Some fun games, good conversation, and a little bit of worship. Hope you can make it!"

I responded, "I will be there." Only four words but those four words were a start.

Then I was at home alone one night when I remembered Andy had said he needed volunteers to paint the youth room. I could have done something with my friends or watched TV, but for the first time in a long time, I chose the St. Paul community.



Owen Schmidt

**“WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT WHO I WAS WHEN I WAS AT YOUTH GROUP, I REALIZED THAT THE ONE PERSON I NEVER NEEDED TO APOLOGIZE TO WAS GOD.”**

**— Anna Thorne**

My initial motivations might not have been ideal but I enjoyed that day so much that I got up early the next day to do it all again. That weekend, in combination with Andy reaching out all those times and the other great people at SNL, brought me back to my faith.

Since then I have been prioritizing my faith and my faith has been building back up. One thing I know is that my faith is the strongest it's ever been because for the first time I have made it my own.



# Summer at St. Paul

The church building was filled with music, learning, and happy faces during VBS Week. Youth gathered inside and outside for summer fun and contemplative worship. Groups of all shapes and sizes met for shared community and friendship. Happy summer!



*Note: During the week of VBS, mask-wearing was required inside the St. Paul building to protect unvaccinated kids.*







# new members / SUMMER 2021



**AUSTIN ANDERSON** is a medical student at the University of Illinois at Rockford. He was attracted to St. Paul by the contemporary worship service and community outreach. His parents are also new members (see below).

## **DWAYNE AND PAM ANDERSON**

(pictured above with their children Austin and Alyssa) spend their free time with family and farming. Dwayne is a real estate broker and farmer. Pam works as a supervisor at a Genesis hematology lab. Their daughter Alyssa Anderson is also a member.

## **CINDY AND MARK BROWN** (not pictured)

have two adult children. Mark works at John Deere as a tool and die maker. Cindy takes an interest in crafting and volunteer work. They come to St. Paul through friends.



**PAUL AND BARB JOHNSON** are passionate about social justice and mental health issues. Paul is a retired engineer. Barb works at Heart and Solutions Counseling in mental health therapy.



**STEVE AND K.D. KALBER** like to golf, read, and spend time with their golden retriever. Steve is a registered nurse and specializes in mental health. K.D. is retired from human resources. What brought them to St. Paul? "Our many shared values and mission."



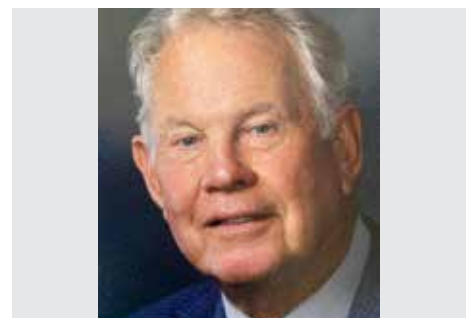
**JOEL AND ANNA KOLANDER** have three kids — Quinn (6), Dean (3), and Calvin (10 mo.). Joel is in marketing with Rock Island Auction while Anna manages the homefront. They enjoy kids activities and singing. They come to St. Paul through friends.



**SHERYL KRESS** loves the outdoors and spends her free time gardening, reading, and helping friends. She has enjoyed helping with the QC Symphony fundraiser "Symphony in Bloom." Her son and family, Bryan and Darcy Kress, are St. Paul members.



**SHERYN LEVINGS** is retired from the healthcare industry. She takes an interest in volunteer work and quilting and cares about feeding and clothing the less fortunate. She comes to St. Paul through friends.



**DON PEDERSEN** is a retired industrial engineer with two sons, one local and one in Spokane. Don is an enthusiast of the QC Symphony and Marriage & Family Counseling Center.



**JULIE SCHESKIE** is a physician assistant with Genesis. She enjoys biking, skiing, hiking, and traveling. She is passionate about social justice, homelessness, and the environment. She has two children.



## Council Notes

Council met on a warm Thursday night in July. June's council minutes were approved unanimously. The council spoke of the bitter-sweet goodbye to Pastor Hayden Kvamme and his family as they depart for Rochester, Minn. Hayden completed his two-year term call as pastoral resident on July 15. The new pastoral resident, Megan Eide, arrives at the end of August.

Council gave thanks for the congregation's continued commitment to organizations and causes that depend on our support. The Safer Foundation, which aims to reduce recidivism among ex-cons and parolees, was highlighted. Council noted the relocation of the Madison Market food pantry from St. Paul's building back to the JB Young Opportunity Center a few blocks

away. The return to four in-person worship services each weekend has been well-received. A lot of good energy is back among congregation members and staff.

A proposal to replace the 14-year-old projector and screen in the sanctuary with a new LED video wall was unanimously approved. A smaller screen will be added to the rear wall. The Greatest Needs Bequest Fund, a fund that receives estate gifts, will cover the cost. Hope for installation is early fall.

The financial situation remains steady and strong thanks to faithful giving and significant underspending as the church looks to come out of the pandemic.

## Family with St. Paul connection receives aid to rebuild

Pastor Jeff Corson and his wife Sarah Weissenbuehler and their three daughters all managed to escape a dramatic house fire in Golden, Ill. in early June. Jeff serves Immanuel Lutheran Church next door to where they live. The parsonage and contents were deemed a total loss. Jeff, whose seminary tuition expenses were partially underwritten by St. Paul Lutheran Church more than 20 years ago, is the son of St. Paul member Fonda Corson. St. Paul recently contributed \$3,000 to assist with the Corson family's rebuilding of life.



Source: WGEM News

## NEW MEMBERS CONTINUED



**HILARY SWORTWOOD** has three kids - Cyrus (4), Phineus (3), and Lydia (3). She is employed as a paralegal and spends her free time with family. She was drawn to St. Paul by the children's ministries.

### Membership Inquiry Classes:

Learn more about the faith expressions that ground us, the mission commitments that inspire us, and the program life that can grow your faith. Come to an upcoming class on Saturday, Aug. 28, 9-10:30 a.m., or Thursday, Sept. 23, 6:30-8:15 p.m., in the Library Commons. Sign up online at [stpaulqc.org/signups](http://stpaulqc.org/signups).



## UPCOMING worship

### August 7 & 8

Season after Pentecost

**Preaching:**

All services: Peter W. Marty

**Liturgical tradition:**

5pm/8:30 & 9:30am

**Contemporary Open Spirit:**

11:15am

### August 14 & 15

Season after Pentecost

**Preaching:**

All services: Peter A. Pettit

**Liturgical tradition:**

5pm/8:30 & 9:30am

**Contemporary Open Spirit:**

11:15am

### August 21 & 22

Season after Pentecost

**Preaching:**

All services: Sara Olson-Smith

**Liturgical tradition:**

5pm/8:30 & 9:30am

**Contemporary Open Spirit:**

11:15am

### August 28 & 29

Season after Pentecost

**Preaching:**

All services: Peter W. Marty

**Liturgical tradition:**

5pm/8:30 & 9:30am

**Contemporary Open Spirit:**

11:15am



ST. PAUL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street  
Davenport, IA 52803

# BACK-TO-SCHOOL BLESSING

Sunday, Aug. 22

Bring your backpacks and  
school bags for a blessing  
during worship at all services,  
Aug. 21 & 22.

