

The right pressure



ON THE COVER: Clockwise: Pam Crowe, Godja Adjafi, Joel Adjafi, Jeff Adjafi

journey

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EDITOR Jessica Taylor

DESIGNER Lauren Brown

ADDRESS

St. Paul Lutheran Church 2136 Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa 52803

CONTACT

journey@stpaulqc.org Phone 563.326.3547

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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his summer, my older brother and I went for a bike ride. In lots of ways, it was just like when we were kids. We were given a beautiful summer day, nothing to do but ride. But this time, we had our spouses with us, and our destination was no longer the 7-Eleven in our Denver suburb, but a brewery in central Minnesota. What our bikes have gained in fancy mechanics, they've lost in handlebar decorations and clicking beads on the tire spokes. As adults, we wore helmets, mapped the ride out on a little computer that was a thing of science fiction in the mid-1980's, and spent a lot of time getting our tires correctly inflated.

The attention to tire pressure came because, while we mostly would ride along a converted train rail line, part of our route included gravel roads. And so — according to my cycling siblings — we needed to lower our tire pressure a bit. A higher pressure is great for a paved road, for speed and smoothness. But for a longer ride, on gravel, too much air would make for a bouncy and rough ride. A little less pressure would give us some shock absorption and traction. Eventually, on that June day, after getting our tire pressure just right, we hopped on our bikes, to ride with the same kind of freedom and joy as when we were little.

Along the way, as I settled into an easy cadence, I thought about our own internal pressure gauges. While we don't keep track of our PSI (pound per square inch), our hearts and spirits hold their own kind of pressure.

We have times when we are utterly deflated. Those moments of exhaustion and weariness, when life feels hard, and we've got nothing left in us to give. As is true for tires, going too long in this state not only makes it near impossible to move, but can cause permanent damage to the rims, to our lives, and bodies and hearts.

There are also times when we are over-inflated, the pressure way too high. When we are ready to burst with rage or frustration or worry. Living in this overwhelmed state means we feel every bump, notice every bounce, and could explode at any moment.

Many of us have felt a combination of these pressures in the past months. And while we can't pull



out a bicycle pump to make instant adjustments to our internal pressures, we can pause to pay attention and to take care of ourselves. As Christians we are given practices of faith, tools of sorts, that can be a release valve or an air pump for our heart's well-being.

In worship and in moments of quiet prayer, in stillness and in play, through acts of generosity and service, in connection with other people, God tends to our hearts. We are filled up, with peace and assurance of God's presence and reminded of our belovedness. And we can let things go, handing over to God the weight of worry, the poison of our fury, and speed of our busyness. As we are filled and rest in God's goodness, we can, "know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that we may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:19)

We can't always choose what kind of road we'll be given to ride, but we can breathe in deeply the Spirit of God to fill our hearts, so that the bumps are bearable and shocks absorbable. With the Spirit's inflation, we can move down whatever road we encounter with the wonder, adventurousness, and freedom of a handful of kids going out to ride bikes on a summer's day.

SARA OLSON-SMITH associate pastor

St. Paul Preschool receives expansion grant

In September, St. Paul Preschool received a notable grant from Investing in Iowa Child Care (IICC) to expand and enhance the two-year-old classroom. The first of its kind, this grant is geared toward keeping early childhood education up and running during the pandemic. Because of Covid, St. Paul Preschool hasn't had a two-year-old classroom since March 2020.

"Funding provided through this IICC grant allows us to enhance our learning environment with ageappropriate experiences and activities for our two-year-olds," said Karen Strusz, preschool director. "We firmly believe that children learn best through hands-on play and experiences guided by nurturing and loving teachers who inspire a love of learning."

Funds will be used to purchase updated furnishings, puzzles, games, and sensory tables. Preschool leaders hope to create a reading corner in the classroom, as well as add an outdoor drum set to the playground.

The grant is the most recent way the preschool is responding to meet community need. St. Paul offers a free 4-year-old program in connection with the state of Iowa's efforts to ensure access to high quality preschool for all kids. In 2019, the preschool added a B4K (Before Kindergarten) classroom designed for students who are eligible to start kindergarten, but could benefit from an additional year of preschool.

In the early days, a small group of parents organized an informal "mothers day out" program. By 1967, St. Paul Preschool was founded around a Christian curriculum, utilizing the cooperative gifts of dedicated volunteers. Over the years, the preschool moved from volunteers to paid, certified teachers. In 2021, St. Paul offerings provided \$65,830 to the preschool for staffing, facility improvements, and scholarship assistance.

St. Paul Preschool is devoted to integrating the love of God into a developmentally appropriate setting for young kids. The program shines with weekly chapel services, art, music, language, science, and math. Special events wrap in family, friends, and honored guests.

With a highly trained staff leading the way, St. Paul Preschool is solidly constructed with Christ's love. In this pandemic time, 84 children are enrolled in four programs: two-year-olds (two-day program), threeyear-olds (two- and three-day programs), four-year-olds (four-day program), and five-year-olds (four-day program).







Coffee Chats to meet on Oct. 5 & 19

Bring a beverage of your choice and settle into a conversation on faith, health, and wholeness. This group meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month, 10:30 a.m., on the North Lawn (weather permitting). No need to sign up, just come! Discuss a different topic each month — October's topic is Personality Types. Contact: Dave and Dortha DeWit, dorthamdw@aol.com.

Golden Agers worship planned for Oct. 13

The Golden Agers worship and luncheon is a joy-filled annual tradition at St. Paul. For those who are age 75 and older, this year's Golden Agers event will be Wednesday, Oct. 13, beginning at 10:30 a.m. While the shape of the day may change, mark your calendars for worship, music from the staff choir, and refreshments. With a bit of entertainment and great conversation, it's a beautiful day of fellowship.

Please RSVP by contacting Jennifer Garvey at 563-326-3547, or jennifer@stpaulqc.org.

Give the gift of life on Blood Donor Day

Volunteer to help others battling serious injury and illness at the fall Blood Donor Day on Wednesday, Oct. 27, 1:30-6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Blood donation is a simple procedure that takes about 45 minutes to one hour. Enjoy conversation and treats afterwards. Donations are utilized by the health care facilities in the region that receive blood from ImpactLife. Sign up online at **stpaulqc.org/signups**. Contact: Pastor Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.



Pack your bags for Germany in 2022

Three Passions in Germany is a study trip scheduled for June 20 – July 2, 2022, designed and led by Pastor Peter A. Pettit. A few spaces remain available as this Journey goes to print. For more information, contact Peter Pettit, **ppettit@stpaulqc.org**.



Blessing of the animals

On Sunday, Oct. 3, 1 p.m., gather with the beloved creatures of St. Paul and their owners, for a celebration of creation and companionship. The sounds of barking, mewing, cawing, and snuffling will join our prayers as we give thanks to God for our pets and all that God has made. On the Feast Day of St. Francis, we'll meet on the North Lawn, some on lawnchairs or picnic blankets, others on leashes or in cages. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Nova Singers to perform fall concert at St. Paul

Nova Singers, led by conductor Laura Lane, is a 20-voice ensemble with a nation-wide reputation for expressiveness, virtuosity and innovative programming.

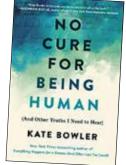
After more than a year apart, Nova Singers is thrilled to gather together and sing songs about singing(!), and favorites personally requested by the singers on Sunday, October 17, 4 p.m. at St. Paul. Come celebrate the exuberance of singing and listening to beautiful music, together. Tickets are available online at **novasingers.com** or at the door.

Occasional Tuesdays Book Group

Gather for conversation centered around a good book on Tuesdays, Oct. 19-Nov. 2, 6:45-7:30 a.m., in the Library Commons. In *No Cure for Being Human (And Other Truths I Need to Hear)* author Kate Bowler asks, how do you

move forward with a life you didn't choose? It's hard to give up on the feeling that the life you really want is just out of reach. A beach body by summer. A trip to Disneyland around the corner. A promotion on the horizon. Everyone wants to believe that they are headed toward good, better, best. But what happens when the life you hoped for is put on hold indefinitely?

The book is available in the Book Corner. Sign up online at **stpaulqc.org/signups**. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.



Gather for CC Conversations on Oct. 7

CC Conversations is a monthly opportunity to discuss religion, culture, and social issues of the day using news and articles from the *Christian Century* magazine as conversation starters. On Thursday, Oct. 7, 6-7:15 p.m., bring personal perspective, passion, and openness to others. See the church website calendar for advance reading assignments. Those without a print or online magazine subscription can pick-up onsite copies of the articles on a rack in the church library. Have a mask handy in case we're in a tough stage of the pandemic. Pastor Peter Marty facilitates discussion. Contact: Peter Marty, peter@stpaulqc.org.

Better Choices, Better Health

Are you an adult with a chronic condition like diabetes, arthritis, or heart disease? This six-week workshop on Tuesdays, Oct. 19-Nov. 23, 1 p.m., is designed for adults who what to take charge of their ongoing health conditions.

Better Choices, Better Health is an evidence-based program developed by Stanford University for people with chronic health problems. You will find practical ways to deal with pain and fatigue, discover better nutrition and exercise choices, work effectively with healthcare providers, and much more.

Sign up to participate at **stpaulqc.org/signups**. Contact: Beth Laureijs, beth@stpaulqc.org.

Walking the Grief Journey begins Oct. 24

Gather on five Sundays, Oct. 24-Nov. 21, 10:20-11:05 a.m., for a supportive, compassion-filled series for those who have experienced the recent loss of a loved one. Explore anger, depression, fears, acceptance, and new strength for a hopeful future. Meet in the Church House Living Room. Led by Pastor Sara Olson-Smith and Joel Moore, deacon and registered nurse. Sign up online at **stpaulqc.org/signups**. Contact: Pastor Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.





Mobile giving to St. Paul — New app!

Thank you for giving to St. Paul. Vanco, our secure online provider, has launched a new mobile app called Vanco Mobile. This new app will replace the GivePlus app. The Vanco Mobile app includes tightened security and is more user friendly. The current GivePlus app was discontinued on September 30, 2021.

Download the free app "Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement" from the App Store or Google Play. Find St. Paul Lutheran Church by typing in "Davenport," then follow the prompts to give. Online giving information and passwords for existing Vanco users automatically transfer over to Vanco Mobile. New Vanco users can easily set up the app for one-time donations or recurring gifts.

Vanco Mobile is just one easy way to give. St. Paul people can still mail their offerings to 2136 Brady Street, Davenport, IA 52803. Or, they can give online at **stpaulqc.org/give-online**.

Questions? Contact Paula Durham, business manager, at paula@stpaulqc.org.



It means independence. Home is where I get to live with my kids." - GODJA ADJAFI

A home of their own

The path to homeownership through Habitat for Humanity isn't one you take alone. The community and friendships formed last long after construction ends.

or Pam Crowe, it all started with a simple question as she waited for choir rehearsal to begin in the lower level of St. Paul. Sitting next to her was Belinda Holbrook, a long-time volunteer at Habitat for Humanity. "Would you ever be interested in volunteering as a mentor for a Habitat family?"

Pam was familiar with the work of the organization and thought the concept sounded interesting. She said she'd take time to give it some thought, but by the end of rehearsal that evening she had her answer: "Sure! Let's try it!"

As she would come to learn firsthand, a mentor is a dedicated support person to an individual or family in the process of obtaining a Habitat home. "We walk alongside them every step of the way," Pam says. There's a lot to navigate for a first-time homeowner. So a mentor is there to answer questions, help problem solve, and offer encouragement throughout what is often a multi-year process before the family finally moves into their new home.

Pam has partnered with three families since first volunteering in January 2016, and is currently a mentor to Godja Adjafi. She and Godja first met in January of 2020 and then, because of the pandemic, didn't see each other face-to-face again until March of 2021. They texted and talked on the phone. Pam tried to offer encouragement as construction nearly came to a halt last year. "We really lost a whole year of being connected," Pam says, "so it's been really exciting to see her house begin to come together this summer."

Godja immigrated to the Quad Cities from the African country of Togo 11 years ago and has two young sons, Joel and Jeff. When she learned her Habitat application was accepted, she was thrilled — and overwhelmed. So she's turned to Pam for guidance and support along the way. "Pam's help, it's a gift," Godja says.

We're there to encourage

Belinda Holbrook's connection to Habitat has spanned several decades and a variety of interests. She, too, initially connected with the organization following a friend's invitation. Since first volunteering in 1995, she has served as a family mentor, partici-

pated in the family selection committee, helped build houses from start to finish, and volunteered at the Habitat ReStore.

Belinda is currently serving as a mentor to Marcia Ellingsworth, who also happens to be a St. Paul member. Marcia has worked as a special education para at Truman Elementary School for the last 15 years. She looked into applying for a Habitat home years ago but didn't meet all the criteria. After a few people nudged her to consider applying once again, she's grateful to now be just a few months away from owning her own home.

Marcia and Belinda knew of each other at church, but they've become well acquainted over the last few years since being paired up through Habitat.

"Belinda just cares about people," Marcia says. "She makes sure I know what I'm supposed to be doing and takes good care of me. She's nurturing and caring and wants a positive outcome for my family."

As a mentor, Belinda sees her primary role as a cheerleader. "We're there to encourage, to answer questions as families walk through the process of owning their own home." She enjoys the excitement of helping a family pick out siding colors or choosing what flooring or cabinetry will complete the space.

One of the greatest gifts Belinda sees in the program is the educational component. Each family is required to take part in classes that provide critical knowledge about being a homeowner — all sorts of topics including budgeting, understanding escrow, predatory loan practices, and how to maintain your home.

Affordable — not free — homes

One of the most common misconceptions about Habitat for Humanity is that the organization simply gives away homes to those in need. But anyone connected to Habitat will be quick to tell you that these homes are anything but free. Instead, each house is offered with a no-interest loan to make mortgage pay-





Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization that helps families build and improve places to call home. They believe affordable housing plays a critical role in strong and stable communities. The Quad Cities Habitat chapter has built more than 100 homes, including those constructed with St. Paul funding and labor.

In 2021, St. Paul supported Habitat for Humanity with \$24,000, and is sponsoring the construction of Godja's house.

ments much more affordable. Habitat works closely with each family to ensure no mortgage payment is more than 30 percent of their monthly income.

Future homeowners don't simply receive a house, either. There are a number of expectations of their own involvement. Each homeowner first must apply to be accepted into the program, meeting certain income and need-based requirements, and be willing to attend educational classes. In addition, every family puts in hundreds of "sweat equity" hours, volunteering to help build their home or others currently under construction.

Most Habitat applicants have little construction experience starting out. But they are present on the work site nearly every Saturday their schedule allows, willing to learn new skills and excited to watch their house come together.

Along the way, both homeowners and mentors will tell you they're greatly changed by this experience. "I'm a better listener now," Pam says of being a mentor. "It's helped me understand different cultures and backgrounds."

For Godja and Marcia, the gift of homeownership is almost hard to put into words. "It means independence. Home is where I get to live with my kids," Godja says.

"I'm just thankful to stop renting and own a home at an affordable price," Marcia adds. "Owning a home means safety. Security. Comfort. Not having to worry about my surroundings."

Marcia and Godja will soon be neighbors along 6th Street in Davenport, with a view of the Mississippi River from their bedroom windows. Among the many people who will be there to celebrate their home dedications later this year will be their mentors, Belinda and Pam.

ON EXHIBIT AT ST. PAUL:

Art by He Qi

Five pieces of vibrant religious art now hang in the Library Commons at St. Paul. Painted by Chinese artist, He Qi, these works tell beloved stories from the Bible using bold colors, geometric shapes, and Chinese motifs. The art display was funded by the Memorial Committee of St. Paul. This fund receives memorial gifts (usually honoring lives or anniversaries) that support special projects or acquisitions outside of the church's budget.



Losing paradise Genesis 3:23

Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden. God's disappointment over their decision to eat of the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden sends them packing in shame — Eve to be cursed with labor pains and Adam to till the soil.



Do not hold on to me John 20:17

Mary has been weeping in the garden, distraught over the disappearance of Jesus. When the resurrected Christ calls out her name, she realizes that the one she thought was the gardener is actually her Lord. In an attempt to keep him close, she grabs him and holds on. That's when Jesus says to her, "Do not hold on to me."



Jesus appears to his disciples John 21:12

The resurrected Christ invites his disciples, who have spent the night fishing on the Sea of Galilee, to "come and have breakfast." Peter, depicted with paddle in hand, and Jesus' beloved disciple stand beside the fire that Christ has prepared for them on the beach.



Good Samaritan Luke 10: 33-34

The Good Samaritan shows mercy to a robbery victim who had been attacked on the steep and winding road between Jerusalem and Jericho. After bandaging the man's wounds, the Samaritan places him on his donkey and takes him to an inn for healing. The priest and Levite, who refused to attend to the victim, can be seen in the distance.



The Ten Commandments Exodus 32:19

Moses, with Ten Commandments in hand, gets angry with the Israelites for turning to idolatry. As he comes down the mountain from his meeting with God, stone tablets of the commandments in hand, he discovers that the Hebrew people have melted down their gold jewelry and are worshiping a golden calf made from it.

ABOUT THE artist

He Qi [pronounced Huh Chee] is a contemporary Chinese artist. Qi uses vibrant color blocks, intersecting lines, and geometric shapes to create compelling compositions of well known Bible stories. His imagery reminds us of stained glass windows, but incorporates bold colors and Chinese themes reminiscent of Chinese folk art.

As a teenager, He Qi found Rafael's Madonna and Child painting in an old magazine. This sparked an interest in Christianity, and he began painting to escape laboring in the fields of China. He went on to study medieval art at the Hamburg Institute of Art, Germany, and received his doctorate from the Nanjing Art College in 1993. Qi was the first person from China after the Cultural Revolution to earn a Ph.D. in religious art. Religious art from the Middle Ages has always depicted biblical scenes with European-looking people. This inspired him to paint these stories with a Chinese background, and Chinese characters.

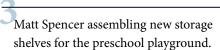
He Qi is currently an Artist-in-Residence at Fuller Theological Seminary, CA and a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Art Institute of RUC (Renmin University of China, Beijing).

AROUND THE BUILDING

Taking care of concrete: Resurfacing of 70 year old steps on the north side of the church.



Mudjacking the sidewalks and steps surrounding the 129 House and north lawn.







Each week, Jim Akright cleans and sanitizes the Sanctuary, Chapel, Preschool, and other gathering areas.

Jules Irish and Karen Wolfe are just a few of the volunteers who clean up trash around the St. Paul campus.





The south lot parking lines get a fresh coat of bright yellow paint.

new members



Sue Alpen works as a clinic manager at Genesis in DeWitt. She enjoys volunteering, sports, and is passionate about mental health. The friendliness, warmth, and service opportunities are what attracted her to St. Paul.



Josh Baez is employed as a talent acquisition interviewer with Goodwill. He's also pursuing a graduate degree through Purdue Global. He takes an interest in caring for his houseplants, cars, and reading. He finds St. Paul to be a very welcoming and open community. He's engaged to St. Paul member, Maddie McKelvey.



Martha Bakeris is retired from MidAmerican Energy as a senior regulatory analyst. She's married to her husband Steven and likes reading, fishing, and walking. Martha is passionate about mental health and helping those with food insecurities.

Pat Baldwin (not pictured) works as vice president of WHBF. He's married to his wife Cindy, and has three young adult children. He enjoys the outdoors, gardening, cycling, and hunting.



Bob & Karen Brooks consider St. Paul to be "open-minded and welcoming." They're both retired — Bob as a band director and Karen as an English teacher. They spend their free time baking, reading, and traveling. They're passionate about promoting reading and music.

Dave Capper (not pictured) is employed at a metal bending company, CML USA, as vice president. He likes spending time with family and his dog, camping, and being outside. He's engaged to St. Paul member, Kris Magiera.



Casey & Christine Haas have three children — Grace (6), Annelise (5), and Maeve (2). Christine works as a speech language pathologist with the Mississippi Bend AEA. Casey owns his own construction company. They enjoy being together as a family and working on home projects.



Dave & Nancy Hoppes are retired — Dave from engineering and Nancy from interior design. They're the parents of St. Paul member, Angie Normoyle.



Brian Kling is employed as band director at Pleasant Valley High School. He is passionate about music, the outdoors, and running. He comes to St. Paul through friends and is excited about the musical opportunities.



Linda Tank is a retired vice president and district manager with US Bank. She loves the Hawkeyes.



Roger and Jane Wiese enjoy exercise, reading, and puzzles. Jane is a retired business sales analyst with Liberty Mutual, and Roger is a retired farmer. They have four adult children between them.



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 Monday, Oct. 25, 6:30-8:15 p.m., or Saturday, Nov. 13, 9-10:30 a.m. Sign up online at **stpaulqc.org/signups**.

Council Notes

The church council met on a Thursday evening in September to review St. Paul's ministry and the start of fall programming. While the pandemic continues to create uneven church participation, especially among families with children where there are unvaccinated health concerns, the congregation is navigating its program life with creativity and flexibility. Between 650 and 800 people, on average, attend worship each weekend. Mask wearing is prevalent because of the Delta variant, although worshipers at the 8:00 service specifically, and all choirs and kid programming, plus all unvaccinated individuals, are asked to wear a mask.

The council heard updates from the nominating committee that met recently to fill several committee vacancies and from the personnel committee that is working toward the hiring of a person to lead children's ministries. Facility and property projects were reviewed, some of which are featured on p. 9 in this issue, as were some larger projects, including new video screens for the sanctuary that have had installation dates necessarily pushed back.

The council complimented the staff for its creativity and resilience in a hard time, and thanked the church's membership for doing everything it is to support the church's work.

Fall in the Book Corner

Soup's on in the Book Corner, just in time for autumn simmering. Choose from Ten Bean and Lentil — and receive a golden cornbread mix free during the month of October. Your purchase supports the Women's Bean Project, helping women break the cycle of poverty and unemployment.

The Book Corner is also stocked with fall gifts, new books, and confirmation gifts. Come and browse on Sunday mornings, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., or the first Saturday of the month, 4:30-5:45 p.m. Or, order for curbside pickup by messaging Karen Holden at bookcorner@stpaulqc.org.





WORSHIP

at St. Paul

October 2 & 3

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Katy Warren

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

October 9 & 10

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

5pm & 8am: Sara Olson-Smith 9am: Peter W. Marty 11:15am: Andy Langdon

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

October 16 & 17

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

5pm & 11:15am: Katy Warren 8 & 9am: Megan Eide

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

October 23 & 24

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Peter W. Marty

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

October 30 & 31

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

5pm, 8 & 11:15am: Peter W. Marty

9am: Sara Olson-Smith

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am



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