

FEBRUARY 2024

The magazine of St. Paul Lutheran Church

journey



Cross-shaped love



ON THE COVER:

Two members of the Affordable Housing Team: Carol Burton and Keith Kutzbach

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, courageous service, extravagant generosity.

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POSTMASTER

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Years before she created the blockbuster movie *Barbie*, Greta Gerwig wrote and directed a coming-of-age movie called *Lady Bird*. It depicts a high school kid, known as Lady Bird, navigating the turbulence, joy, and complicated relationships that come with being a teenager. There's a beautiful scene where Lady Bird sits down with the vice-principal at her Roman Catholic high school to talk about her college essay describing their hometown. Sister Sarah Joan says to her, "You clearly love Sacramento." Lady Bird responds with a very teenagerly shrug of an "I do?" The nun responds, "You write about Sacramento so affectionately and with such care."

"Well," Lady Bird replies, "I was just describing it."

"Well, it comes across as love."

"Sure," Lady Bird says, unconvinced. "I guess I pay attention."

To which Sister Sarah Joan says, "Don't you think maybe they are the same thing — love and attention?"

Perhaps these things are the same, love and attention. When we think about the people who have loved us, most often they were the ones who paid us attention. So many times, I've listened to grieving people talk about their beloved one who died. They describe how it felt: "when I was with them, it was like I was the only person in the room."

This year, Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day are on the same day. While we had this rare occurrence in 2018, it has happened only twice in the last century, in 1923 and 1934. We mark this day, as Christians, by receiving an ashen cross on our foreheads. Some people have joked that, since Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day this year, we should put ash hearts on people's brows instead of crosses.

It's unlikely that'll happen. But, if that cross tells us anything, it tells us that we are loved. Loved in our living and our dying, despite all our failings, along with this whole world. Being marked with that cross means that we get to follow Jesus into his particular and radical way of loving others.

The kind of love that Jesus demonstrates is not

a Valentine's Day thing of chocolate and roses, but a much harder cross-shaped way of loving — doing stuff like paying attention. It's noticing the presence of God in unlikely places; showing up in ways that cost us something; making time for the people who

matter to us; and even more importantly, seeing and opening our hearts to the ones who matter to God, but who the rest of the world ignores.

Our attention might just be our most valuable asset. There's a billion-dollar economy that exists to try to take it, to distract us from the stuff we claim to care about, that God cares about. These weeks before Easter, the season we call Lent, are a perfect time to pay attention to how we pay attention. We can ask ourselves if we are investing that precious gift of our attention in the stuff that gives us life and aligns with our values.

There's this line in the gospel of Mark, when a man asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, to experience the fullness of God's abundant life now and forever. Before responding, Jesus "looked at him and loved him," (Mark 10:21). Jesus then invites that man to leave everything behind and follow him.

Still now, our Savior looks and loves, that is, he pays attention. And then he invites us to turn from everything that distracts us, so that we, too, would pay attention and love, which might just be the same thing.



SARA OLSON-SMITH
associate pastor

This Other Eden:

Paradise found and paradise lost

This Other Eden by Paul Harding is the 2024 All St. Paul Reads book.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Harding takes readers on a deep dive into the lives of the families living on Apple Island, just a few hundred miles off the coast of Maine. Spend time with three generations of Honeys, the Lark family, Zachary Hand to God Proverbs, a set of twin sisters raising three adopted children, and the missionary who helps educate the island's extraordinary children. These few families have lived on the island for generations, all beginning with the two Honeys who first arrived with a pocketful of seeds and a dream.

As tourism becomes a focus in Maine and the idea of eugenics is on the rise, the state turns its sights to Apple Island, envisioning a hotel and other tourist destinations. But what to do with the current inhabitants of the island? What happens when those from the mainland step in to "help" the Apple Island inhabitants they know little about?

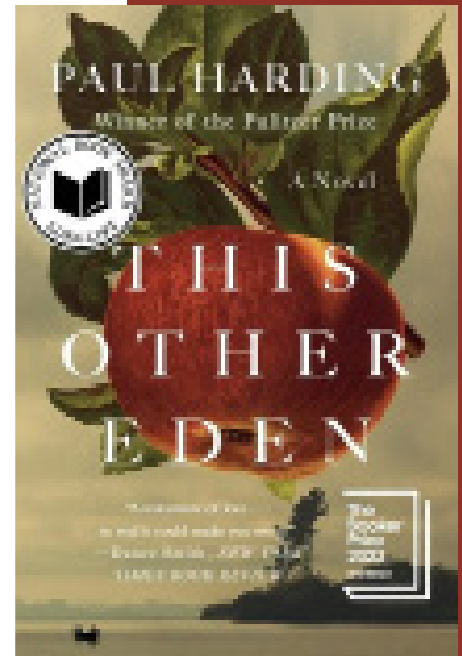
This historical fiction centers on the real-life Malaga Island, whose inhabitants, a mixed-race fishing community, were forcibly removed by state order beginning in 1911. Visible from the coast of Maine, the small Malaga Island, only half of a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, now sits as a public reserve and important historical site. To this day, it remains undeveloped and uninhabited.

Author Paul Harding weaves elegant prose and vivid descriptive passages together to bring readers right onto the island, becoming closely acquainted with the community. You'll celebrate the joys of a farewell dinner and ache over the losses experienced by these families. You can practically feel the ground beneath your feet, smell the breeze as it blows through the apple trees, and hear the rushing of water and the songs of the women as they work. You may even find yourself holding your breath as the waters rise higher and higher during a storm of Biblical proportions.

Book Corner team member Marcia Robertson knew quickly that *This Other Eden* would be a perfect fit for the Book Corner.

"This is one of the few books that as soon as I put it down, it didn't leave my mind. I wanted to know more. The writing is beautiful and flows like poetry. When I was reading, I was on the island and part of that community. There are also elements of suspense throughout the storyline. The narrative didn't move in the direction I originally anticipated," Marcia said. "What stands out to me about the story is this community's acceptance of each other exactly as they are and the relationships that develop from that. They aren't trying to change each other to be something else. Like any compelling story, you get snippets of the characters here and there, of how they relate to each other, and the life of the characters, your familiarity with them keeps growing throughout the story, allowing you to get to know them as people more fully."

For All St. Paul Reads, the committee looks for titles that speak to a wide variety of ages and experiences, a compelling story, and a faith message. The committee is committed to honoring both fiction and non-fiction titles and selecting works that explore a contemporary issue and broaden perspectives.



All St. Paul Reads will be held on Sunday, Feb. 25, 3-4:30 p.m.

This dessert and discussion event is an invitation for all to read and talk about a single book title in the same year. *This Other Eden* is available for \$14 in the St. Paul Book Corner. To help with planning, please RSVP at stpaulqc.org/signups. Questions? Contact Andrea Spencer, bookcorner@stpaulqc.org.

february

HAPPENINGS



Faith milestones in February

Faith milestones are special markers along the growing-up journey.

First grade | Lord's Prayer Milestone: Children and parents learn together about the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray. This milestone is set for Sunday, Feb. 11, 10:15-11:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall.

Fourth grade | First Communion: Lessons, discussions, and an art project culminate in First Communion on Maundy Thursday. Meet Sundays, Feb. 18 and 25, March 3, 17, and 24, 10:15-11:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall.

Sign up online for milestones at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Maddy Carroll, maddy@stpaulqc.org.

Annual meeting set for Feb. 4

St. Paul's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4, at 10:10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. This meeting includes items of important business such as approving the 2024 budget and review of 2023 financials and annual report. Pastor Peter Marty will report on the state of the church. The church leadership candidates to be considered at the annual meeting are:

- **Church Council:** Deb Kretschmer, Matt Lee, Ron Mullen
- **Mission Board:** Steve Evans, Kelly Janoski
- **Endowment Committee:** Christa Orfitelli, Marcia Willi
- **Memorial Gifts Committee:** Nancy Hoppes, Cheryl Seyb
- **Nominating Committee:** Jeff Bass, Aryn Lloyd

Camp Shalom registration now underway

Summer camp registration for kids, youth, and families is now underway. Camp Shalom is a Christian camp, founded by the St. Paul congregation, which offers outdoor experiences in faith community for children, entering grade two through high school youth. For all the details, visit the camp website: campshalomia.org.

Support Women's Bean Project in the Book Corner

For the entire month of February, buy any two Women's Bean Project products in the Book Corner (soup or cookie mixes, chocolate-covered espresso beans) and the Book Corner will donate one Women's Bean Project soup mix to Madison Market.

Women's Bean Project provides job training and employment to women facing significant barriers to work.

Madison Market is a food pantry that serves Madison Elementary families who need just a bit more. Madison Market is about people caring deeply for one another, and is another way St. Paul honors "so all may eat." Taste good, share good. Contact Andrea Spencer, bookcorner@stpaulqc.org.

Racial Awareness Team

The St. Paul Racial Awareness Team exists to expand awareness of our world, love our surrounding community, deepen empathy, advocate for change, celebrate justice, delight in diversity, and partner with neighbors in our city. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 6:30 p.m., in the Library Commons. Anyone is welcome. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.



Quilters weave together care

In 2023, the St. Paul quilting ministry lovingly completed 89 full-sized quilts, 22 tweeners (or in-between size), and 69 baby quilts to be shared with those in need. These handcrafted creations were donated to Christian Family Care Center in Moline, Lutheran World Relief, Child Crisis Center, Edgerton Women's Health Center, those facing housing insecurity, and even local business owners who share them with neighbors in need.

The quilting group expanded its ministry through a new partnership with Ridgecrest Village. St. Paul quilters gather and provide materials to a group within the retirement community that ties quilts for newborns.

Thank you to all who helped make this possible. From cutting squares, piecing together quilt top kits, and sewing quilt tops to tying quilts, finishing bindings, and cutting batting — it takes many hands to wrap others in loving care!

Interested in quilting? This group gathers monthly and also welcomes those who like to cut squares or sew quilt tops at home. Contact: Belinda Holbrook, belinda@holbrook.fm.

Men's Spiritual Journey

Meet with other St. Paul men twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m. Guided by the book *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality* by Ronald Rolheiser, this is a place for men to explore their spiritual journeys in a safe environment without expectations or judgment; a chance to walk through daily life as a compassionate and caring community.

Contact Ken Winter, kjwinter25@gmail.com.

Life Group Ministry

St. Paul has wonderful members, yet it can be challenging to connect with others who attend a different service, or who are only around for worship on the weekends. Life Groups aim to expand the St. Paul small group ministry and bring members together around similar topics, activities, or life stages.

Have you always wished St. Paul had a woodworking group? Do you want to connect with other individuals or couples in the same life stage as you? Perhaps you've always wanted to participate in a study or reading group around a particular topic. Whatever your topics, activities, or life-stage group interests might be, Life Groups serve as a way to connect people whose paths may not otherwise cross at church. It's for people who share a desire to deepen their connections and sense of community at St. Paul.

Life Groups consist of 3-15 people who will meet in members' homes or at other locations that fit the group's interests. Shared group prayer, an impulse for service, and a commitment to the group are highly encouraged but each group will decide what works best for them. An online sign up will help you get started at stpaulqc.org/signups. Questions? Contact Max Franks, max@stpaulqc.org.

February retreat planned for young adults at Camp Shalom

Spend time together at beautiful Camp Shalom with the Young Adult ministry Friday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.-Sunday, Feb. 18, 12 noon. Create deep bonds and meaningful connections while building a life with God. Explore practices like personal Bible devotions, bringing silence into our daily lives, and more.

Registration is \$70 per person payable to St. Paul. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups or contact Mac Mullins, mac@stpaulqc.org.



Help feed the hungry at Zion Lutheran meal site

Five nights a week, 52 weeks a year, people gather at Zion Lutheran Church at 8th and Marquette streets in Davenport for a warm meal. Several times a year, St. Paul people participate in So All May Eat by helping prepare and serve a homemade dinner to people experiencing hunger.

One crew shops for ingredients ahead of time. One crew cooks in the St. Paul kitchen (3-5 p.m.). One crew transports and serves the food (5-7 p.m.). Needed are shoppers, cooks, and servers for Tuesday, March 5. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.

Making a home

One of the many mission commitments of St. Paul is to help provide affordable housing to those in the Quad City community. The St. Paul Affordable Housing Team is a significant part of making that mission a reality.



Caring for the community

In early November 2023, this group reconvened for the first time since 2019. St. Paul pastor Katy Warren offers support to group members Clayton Lloyd, Margaret Haas, Kathy Schutman, Keith Kutzbach, and Carol Burton. Each group member brings unique insights, and both work and personal experiences to help support those with housing insecurities. For Affordable Housing team member Carol Burton, a personal connection drives her passion for the St. Paul housing ministry.

“My oldest brother was associated with what was at the time the Handicapped Development Center (recently renamed Empowering Abilities). He benefited from an affordable housing ministry like what St. Paul has at 2025 Main Street,” Carol notes. “That opportunity provided a normal life for him. He lived in a home with roommates and was able to be more independent. That always meant a lot for

us as a family, so I want to be part of making that happen for others.”

Carol is very community-focused, believing in working together for the betterment of the Quad Cities.

“St. Paul is a part of the solution. At some point our community leaders will have to create more initiatives and, hopefully, St. Paul can be part of an example of what works,” Carol said. “That’s another aspect I admire about St. Paul; we are an example of how to treat people and make a difference in the community.”

The housing team didn’t anticipate the purchase of a new property so quickly after reconvening, but when the opportunity arose, the group knew it was the right property and the time to act. In early January, the group brought a proposal in front of the church council and then that proposal moved to a congregational vote. A few weeks later, the congregation voted to purchase a new property, not too far from St. Paul, on Carey Avenue in Davenport.

When looking for a new house to provide affordable living solutions, the team focused on location. Finding properties with accessibility to a bus route, providing transportation solutions for those without their own form of transportation, close to a grocery store or drug store like Aldi or Walgreens, the possibility of handicap access, should it be needed, and something not too far away from the church.

“We discussed the pros and cons of a few properties before deciding on the Carey Ave home. It has everything we were looking for regarding being close to public transportation and close to stores,” Carol remarked. “We also wanted a property near St. Paul to establish a personal connection with the people who would be living there. It’s important to us to establish a connection and a relationship with those in our community.”



“The team brings together people with distinct experience levels and diversity, which is a positive for the community.”

— CAROL BURTON

Carol and her husband Lance joined St. Paul in 2022, following their return to the Quad Cities. This team has been a way for Carol to connect with other St. Paul people and become active in the community.

"I've gotten to know other members of the group and created new relationships and friendships. My background is in Human Resources, I know little about housing, but my family connections to safe and affordable housing are part of my contribution to the group. The team brings together people with distinct experience levels and diversity, which is a positive for the community."

A proven example

The large brown brick house sitting on the corner of Main and High Street appears to be just another home on the block. Its walls and doors keep the residents warm and safe inside on wintery days. But there is much more going on inside the home than first meets the eye.

This house has been a home for individuals living with long-term mental illness for more than 25 years, since St. Paul first started this mental health ministry. Right here on the St. Paul campus, residents live independently, with supportive

services provided through Vera French Housing. St. Paul has enjoyed a successful partnership with Vera French over the past two decades and will be looking to duplicate a similar model with a community partner as this commitment to affordable housing expands. Affordable Housing Team member Keith Kutzbach, and his wife Dixie, were drawn to St. Paul by the congregational support of the church's missions.

"St. Paul actively supports safe and affordable housing for the Quad City community and supportive services for those who need a little extra support. The Affordable Housing Team has had discussions about long-term goals for the housing ministry and I'd like to see something like the 2025 Main Street model continue to expand," Keith said. "We have an incred-

ible partnership with Vera French Housing and that program supports St. Paul's mission in both the housing and mental health ministries."

That Main Street house is much more than just housing for four residents, it's peace of mind and comfort for the men's families. Each resident in that home may be a son, brother, uncle, father, or friend whose safety and wellness impact their loved ones.

"If you look at it, St. Paul is not just helping four individuals; we're helping four families. It's a wide circle of care," Keith said. "Each of those men come from different families who are also impacted by their loved ones having safe housing and long-term mental health care. At some point in our lives, we know someone who needs help. If we don't do it, who is going to do it?"

"We have an incredible partnership with Vera French Housing and that program supports St. Paul's mission."

— KEITH KUTZBACH



St. Paul housing initiatives

Safe, affordable housing for people in need is a consistent St. Paul priority. Sturdy walls, shingles, and supportive services are all tangible signs of God's immense, protective presence.

► Affordable housing

St. Paul partners with One Eighty, a nonprofit social enterprise, to renovate abandoned houses in the city of Davenport. A family from Madison Elementary was chosen to become owners of a safe and affordable place to call home.

► Habitat for Humanity

Strap on a tool belt and help build simple, decent houses through this ecumenical ministry. Volunteers work alongside families who dream of owning a home. The Quad-Cities Habitat chapter has built more than 100 homes, including those constructed with St. Paul funding and labor.

► Mission Appalachia

St. Paul people travel to rural Appalachia to make homes safer, warmer, and drier for low-income families. The church's partnership with Appalachia Service Project (ASP) translates into serving experiences for adults and teenagers.

One of the passions of St. Paul is housing. It takes shape in the ways above and in financial support given to organizations like Luther Properties, Vera French Housing, Christian Care, and Family Resources Domestic Violence Shelter. St. Paul continues to make a significant commitment to housing ministries and organizations.

SEASON OF LENT 2024:

RINGS OF FAITH

Connections between play & purpose

The St. Paul community of faith gathers for worship services and meal fellowship on five Lenten Wednesdays, Feb. 21 — March 20.



Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 14

Christians gather on Ash Wednesday to mark the beginning of the Lenten journey to Easter. Pastor Peter Marty preaches for these services of Holy Communion in the Sanctuary.

On this solemn day you'll receive, if you'd like, an ashen cross on the forehead, a powerful reminder of mortality and sin. It's an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness.

12 noon: This 45-minute service is a meditative respite in the work day.

7 p.m.: The evening service includes music by the Chorale, along with a message for children.

Choir rehearsals

Wednesdays, Feb. 21-March 20, 6 p.m.

All choirs will rehearse on Wednesdays during Lent. Children's and Youth Choir will be from 6-6:45 p.m.; Chorale will gather from 6-6:55 p.m.

Wednesdays in Lent:

○ Noontime Worship | 12 noon-12:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Breathe deeply in the midst of your workday for these contemplative noontime gatherings. Half-hour services include music, silence, a pastoral reflection, and Holy Communion centered on the same themes as Wednesday evenings.

○ Suppers | 5:30-6:55 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

A hungry throng gathers each Lenten Wednesday for catered meals, planned with busy folks in mind. You won't need a reservation. Just bring your freewill donation to help cover the per-plate cost (\$8/person or \$25/family is suggested). Those inspired to contribute more are welcome to do so (actual food costs are 20-percent higher).

○ Adult learning | 5:30-6:15 p.m. in Lower Commons

This discussion will focus each week on the book *We Survived the End of The World: Lessons from Native America on Apocalypse and Hope* by Steven Charleston. Pandemics and war, social turmoil, natural disasters and environmental collapse — it's hard not to watch the signs of the times and feel afraid. But we can learn from others who have journeyed through that fear to find hope and purpose. Pastor Peter A. Pettit leads in the Lower Commons. The book is available in the Book Corner for \$21.75.

○ Confirmation | 6:30-7:35 p.m.

Teenagers will meet onsite in Lower Commons for games, a brief Bible study, small group discussion, and Lenten worship each week.

○ Evening Worship | 7-7:35 p.m., Sanctuary

The beautiful *Holden Evening Prayer* liturgy fills the Sanctuary on Wednesday nights in Lent. *Rings of Faith: Connections Between Play and Purpose* is the unifying theme. Each week, discover common threads that connect play, sports, and our lives of faith. Children encouraged to worship; childcare also available. Come, bless your winter-weary spirit. You'll be on your way home by 7:35.

Special offerings: World Hunger

By providing immediate relief to those who are hungry, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) World Hunger organization meets basic needs and recognizes the universal human right to food. But ending hunger is about more than food. By connecting people with education, health care, and sources of income, long-term, sustainable change can be accomplished.

All midweek Lenten offerings at St. Paul will be given to fight hunger. St. Paul aims again to exceed \$20,000. If you would like to make an additional Lenten offering toward this cause, please earmark your check memo line with “Lent — World Hunger.”

Adult Learning: Ministries Addressing Hunger Around the World

John Eggen, senior director of Annual Giving, ELCA

Sunday, Feb. 18, 10:15-11 a.m., Chapel

Each year, St. Paul's midweek worship services gather offerings dedicated to the ELCA World Hunger ministries. Some of those ministries are as local as the Quad Cities; others reach around the world. In this 50th year of the World Hunger emphasis, John Eggen will bring us stories of the difference that we continue to make by these ministries.

Devotional book: *Gathered Into One*

Gathered Into One: Devotions for Lent 2024 provides daily devotions for each day from Ash Wednesday to Easter with an image and passage from First Corinthians. Explore Jesus' journey from baptism to the cross and the empty tomb.

This accessible and colorful format makes it easy to incorporate a simple Christian observance into your Lenten journey. The pocket-sized book is available in the Book Corner for \$3, large print for \$5.

The St. Paul Book Corner also carries many other books, devotionals, and resources for your Lenten practices.



Lenten supper helpers needed

Lenten suppers are returning to St. Paul this year! There is nothing quite like sitting around a table and sharing a meal in community with others. And these Lenten gatherings simply could not happen without St. Paul people. Would you consider joining the Red Apron Hospitality crew or the Green Apron clean-up team? It's a simple way to share yourself.

Sign up for one or more weeks at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Jessica Taylor, jessica@stpaulqc.org.



Following the road to Easter

Palm/Passion Sunday

March 24 | 8, 9, & 11:15 a.m.

Saturday worship at 5:00 p.m.

With festive palm branches waving, the mood turns somber as we realize that Jesus goes on to die.

Maundy Thursday

March 28 | 12 noon & 7 p.m.

In scripture, liturgy, and song, we mark Jesus' last meal with his disciples. Our fourth-graders culminate a period of preparation with their First Communion at the evening service.

Good Friday

March 29 | 12 noon, 4, & 8 p.m.

The church gathers to remember the suffering and death of Jesus. The 4 p.m. service will be a children's service.

Easter Sunday

March 31 | 6, 8, 9:30, & 11:30 a.m.

No Saturday worship

With shouts of *Alleluia!*, rumbling timpani, triumphant trumpets, and song, we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Holy Communion is included at all services.

A servant heart

A group of St. Paul volunteers provide loving care and comfort to families during funeral luncheons.

Sitting around a table filled with family, friends, and food is a way to help heal deep sorrows, lift others up when they are down, and nourish bodies, souls, and hearts. St. Paul is blessed to have a strong network of funeral luncheon volunteers who feed families and provide peace of mind on difficult days.

In 2023, these St. Paul funeral luncheon volunteers served nearly 1,200 people.

Team leaders Jan Bush, Chris McGlynn, Pam Crowe, and Barb Orfitelli oversee this ministry. From the moment these four receive a luncheon notification until the counters and silverware are clean and food is packaged for the families, this team of service-minded individuals and a group of dedicated volunteers make sure the families and friends are well cared for. This caring ministry works closely alongside St. Paul staff like Matt Spencer and Jim Akright to accommodate seating, table placement, and set-up while coordinating with pastoral staff to identify luncheon needs.

Jan Bush has been serving others through funeral luncheons for more than ten years. Jan notes that the funeral luncheon volunteers provide much more than just food for families.

“The biggest service we want to provide is peace of mind for the family. Knowing that when these families walk into St.

Paul for the celebration of life for their family or friend, they don’t have to worry about anything. We provide a warm, familiar place of comfort for them. If they need a drink of water, a cup of coffee, or if they have a question, it’ll all be taken care of,” Jan said. “You never know who is going to be in attendance at that luncheon or what their needs are going to be, but you just might be the key for them on that day.”

Jan began volunteering with this ministry after retiring, looking for a way to serve that had a flexible schedule, minimal time-commitment, and focused on serving others. Jan noted that having a servant heart is just a way of life for these volunteers.

“When you volunteer for a funeral luncheon, you see compassionate service in action. It’s as simple as helping a person carry their plate of food to the table. It’s serving a cup of coffee and chatting to get to know new people or create stronger bonds with those you know. Striking up conversations is a chance for us to make a connection with someone we wouldn’t otherwise get to know, even if it is for just that afternoon,” Jan said. “The rewards of this type of service are immense. Deeper friendships form while volunteering alongside others. There are opportunities to get to know one another better while washing dishes or folding tablecloths.”



“

Striking up conversations is a chance for us to make a connection with someone we wouldn’t otherwise get to know.

Jan Bush

”



Volunteers Needed

One goal for 2024 is to expand the volunteer list. Anyone is welcome to volunteer. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and serve alongside others and provide a much-needed service for the St. Paul community and beyond.

Interested in learning more or getting involved? Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups or on the St. Paul app and a team leader will connect with you.

Council Notes

The church council opened its January meeting with personnel committee representatives providing an update on compensation and benefits. This was followed by business manager, Laura Scott, outlining the proposed 2024 daily ministry budget for the church.

Thanks to strong pledge commitments of the congregation's households – the average annual pledge amount increased – the 2024 budget is able to grow by 1.2%. The council was reminded that PLEDGING is how we create a budget; GIVING is how we pay for the budget. This expectation of every member household making a financial pledge commitment allows us to enjoy a balanced budget ministry. The council approved the \$3,081,739 budget for 2024 and forwarded it on to the congregation for a vote at its Feb. 4 Annual meeting (see pg. 4).

The council expressed appreciation for the congregation's enthusiasm on Jan 7, as it voted to purchase a house on Carey Ave to expand St. Paul's affordable housing ministry.

Two appointments were made for new three-year terms on the finance committee: Jennifer Josund, a CPA with Collins and Associates, and Dwayne Anderson, owner of Anderson Family Farms. Two appointments were also made to the personnel committee: Darrel Peck, co-owner of the Jackson and Peck Financial Group, and Tony Runkle, recently retired Pleasant Valley teacher and administrator.

In staff news, Mackenzie Griffin began her role as administrative assistant in mid-January, following the retirement of Becky Harper. St. Paul social worker/counselor Angie Vaaler will conclude her service to St. Paul people in April, as she relocates to North Carolina with her husband John's job transfer. The council expressed profound thanks for these outgoing staff members.

Council bid farewell and expressed deep gratitude for the dedicated work of Craig Hellyer, Lynne Kearns, and Jeff Bass as their terms on the church council conclude with the upcoming annual meeting of the congregation.

coming up in adult learning

Feb. 11: Spiritual Journaling

Katie Hanson, Augustana College

Recent studies suggest there are health benefits related to intentional, focused reflection. Learn how to journal meaningfully and why you may want to add this practice in 2024.

Feb. 18: See pg. 9

Feb. 25: The Spirituality of Native American Peoples

Josie IronShield, Native American Coalition of the Quad Cities

What are some of the perspectives of Native American peoples on the issues of human spiritual life? How do people and nature and the universe relate to one another?

Mission Spotlight: Good Stewards

St. Paul and the Environmental Awareness Team work together to be good stewards by taking minimally from the Earth, making wise choices, and considering consequences.

- ▶ Recycling and waste reduction: note those large silver and blue bins throughout the church, making paper disposal simple.
- ▶ Compostable coffee cups
- ▶ Online giving, reducing paper envelopes.
- ▶ The Green Apron team washes dishes at church events, limiting disposable plastic tableware.
- ▶ Providing space for community gardens that improve the soil and provide produce locally.
- ▶ The Book Corner carries titles about earth care and understanding nature
- ▶ Regular neighborhood volunteer trash pickup
- ▶ High-efficiency, low-energy-use lightbulbs throughout the building and an energy-efficient furnace

WORSHIP at St. Paul

February 3 & 4

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Preaching:

5pm/11:15 am: Max Franks

8/9 am: Peter W. Marty

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

February 10 & 11

Transfiguration of our Lord

Preaching:

All services: Katy Warren

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

February 14

Ash Wednesday

Preaching:

12/7 pm: Peter W. Marty

February 17 & 18

First Sunday of Lent

Preaching:

5pm/8 am: Peter W. Marty

9/11:15 am: Sara Olson-Smith

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

February 21

First Wednesday of Lent

Preaching:

12/7 pm: Katy Warren

February 24 & 25

Second Sunday of Lent

Preaching:

5pm/8 am: Mac Mullins

9 & 11:15 am: Peter W. Marty

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

February 28

Second Wednesday of Lent

Preaching:

12/7 pm: Peter W. Marty



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52803

Ash

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 14
WORSHIP AT 12 & 7 P.M.