

APRIL 2024

The magazine of St. Paul Lutheran Church

journey



Now boarding



ON THE COVER:
Samantha Stahle

journey

APRIL 2024
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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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A few months ago, I was sitting in the airport, getting ready to board a flight. Soon enough, the announcements began. I'd honestly never given much thought to how many different categories of boarding there are until I was trying to corral an eager two-year-old who couldn't wait to get to his seat.

First up — there were the frequent fliers. But even those were divided into certain subgroups. The gate attendant announced: "Those who are Advantage Perks Sky Mileage Gold Circle Club Rewards members may now board" (or something like that...). Then, a few minutes later, came the next announcement: "Those who are Advantage Perks Sky Mileage Gold Circle Club Rewards PLUS members may also now board" ... though I was unable to decipher the difference between those two groups.

Then came first-class passengers. Followed soon after by business class. Next up—those sitting in an exit row. A few minutes passed and anyone needing extra assistance was asked to board. After a while, I'm pretty sure the gate attendant said something about how people with purple shoes or blue shirts were allowed to board next. All I know is that by the time she got to the "Group 3" boarding that was listed on my ticket, I looked around and there were only about a dozen or so of us left to still get on the plane.

I honestly didn't mind. I believe that it's better to be among the last on the plane anyway. The less time you have to sit with your knees cramped up against the seat in front of you, the better. But the whole boarding process struck me as sort of funny.

Where else would anyone put up with such a slow and segregated process of engagement? Can you imagine what a similar scene would be like at the grocery store? If you had to stand in a crowd and every few minutes someone said over the intercom, "If you're purchasing milk, you can now step in line. Now those who have any frozen items are welcome to check out."

When I was growing up, my family almost always traveled by train. That boarding process seems much more egalitarian. Everyone has a ticket. Everyone walks out on the platform. Everyone gets on

the train and finds their seat at more or less the same time.

The more I think about it, the more grateful I am that being part of a community of faith is nothing like trying to board a plane. At St. Paul, everyone steps through the same doors at whatever time they choose. There's no first-class or reserved seating (though some may have their preferred seats to return to from one week to the next). You just show up and are welcomed in. There's no preferential treatment.

As far as I can tell, that's pretty close to how Jesus chose to go about life, too. There's nothing in scripture that says he invited certain disciples to board the boat first before others. When large crowds gathered around, Jesus looked up in the tree to spot Zacchaeus or invited those who looked lost in the chaos to move a little closer. Everyone mattered. Everyone was welcome.

These days, I only find myself on an airplane every now and then. I'm thankful to step inside a church much more frequently. Not only is there no turbulence and more elbow room, but more importantly, there's no ticket required for entry at all. No waiting to be allowed in or to see if there will be room for you. Every person receives the same warm welcome. And no one has to wait their turn to hear the good news of God's love.



Katy Warren

KATY WARREN
associate pastor

From One Year to a Lifetime

What Dr. Jim O'Connell thought would be just one year of his life turned into his life's work. Tracy Kidder, in his book *Rough Sleepers: Dr. Jim O'Connell's Urgent Mission to Bring Healing to Homeless People*, takes readers into the life of Dr. O'Connell and this work with Boston's homeless population. Dr. O'Connell will speak at St. Paul on April 21.

Dr. Jim O'Connell was about to finish his residency. He had just received a prestigious fellowship in oncology at Sloan Kettering in New York and knew the opportunity would change his life. Yes, his life was about to change, but not in the way he had envisioned.

In the 1980s, homelessness was quickly on the rise. When Boston received a grant from the Robert Johnson Wood Foundation to create a program to bridge the gap between medical treatment and Boston's homeless population, Dr. O'Connell was

the doctor approached to manage and maintain the program. He chose to defer his fellowship with Sloan Kettering for one year, and the day after he completed his residency, after three years of

110-hour work weeks, he started what he believed would be just one single year, only 365 days, of running this program.

After that first year was done, Dr. O'Connell realized he wasn't ready to leave

this work or this community behind. Instead, he packed his essential items into a knapsack, hopped into an outreach van, and took to the streets of Boston, armed with medical treatments and supplies, food, blankets, and a listening and empathetic ear to the city's 'rough sleepers,' those who chose to sleep outside instead of in cramped and crowded shelters.

"This is what I was trained for. I wanted to take care of people who were sick. And, oh, my God, have I landed in a world where people are sick," he said.

Led by the practical guidance of the dedicated nurses at Pine Street Inn, Boston's largest homeless shelter, Dr. O'Connell developed a different approach to engaging with those who would become his patients, one that was outside of the typical doctor's approach. Those first 365 days turned into more than 14,600 days, and during this time, Dr. O'Connell explored the changing medical landscape, navigating the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Last year, Pulitzer-prize-winning author Tracy Kidder chronicled the unparalleled work of Dr. O'Connell and his mobile outreach clinic in his book *Rough Sleepers: Dr. Jim O'Connell's Urgent Mission to*



"This is what I was trained for. I wanted to take care of people who were sick. And, oh, my God, have I landed in a world where people are sick."

Bring Healing to Homeless People. Kidder explores the beginning of Dr. O'Connell's career, the first 'temporary year' of this doctor's unexpected work, the retraining it took to find unconventional approaches to connecting with these rough sleepers, and how that one year turned into 40. Kidder outlines the five years he spent observing Dr. O'Connell and his team of devoted medical personnel and shares the stories of Dr. Jim and the people of Boston who changed this doctor's life. *Rough Sleepers* is available in the Book Corner for \$17.50.

From head to toe: Caring for unhoused people

Sunday, April 21, 4 p.m., St. Paul Sanctuary

Dr. O'Connell will share his experiences and stories with St. Paul and the Quad Cities community. The event is free and open to the public. Sponsored by St. Paul and Augustana College.

april

HAPPENINGS



St. Paul to host two April concerts

Welcome spring by coming to hear two delightful ensembles perform at St. Paul.

The Augustana College Choir will wrap up their spring Midwest tour with a home concert at St. Paul on Saturday, April 6, 2 p.m. Conducted by Jon Hurty, the 52-voice ensemble will sing a selection of traditional and contemporary choral works. A freewill offering will be taken at the concert.

The Nova Singers will perform *Mother Earth* on Sunday, April 14, 4 p.m. at St. Paul. Tickets will be available at the door or online at novasingers.com. Nova Singers is a 20-voice ensemble with a nationwide reputation for expressiveness, virtuosity, and innovative programming. Contact: Chris Nelson, chris@stpaulqc.org.

Come and sing: 'Hallelujah Chorus'

On Sunday, April 7, the 9 a.m. service will include a magnificent expression of Easter faith: *The Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's *The Messiah*.

Singers of all types and descriptions (middle school age and older) are invited to sing. Come rehearse with choir director Nathan Windt on that day, April 7 at 8:30 a.m. in the Music Room. Lots of fun! Contact: Chris Nelson, chris@stpaulqc.org.

Blessing of the keys: 9th grade milestone

At St. Paul, faith milestones are special markers along the growing-up journey. Each milestone is grounded in the Bible and nurtures faith in everyday life. Ninth graders and their parents come together on Sunday, April 21, for conversation about new responsibilities in life, including the ability to drive, 10:15-11:00 a.m., in Fellowship Hall. A blessing is said over car keys. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Liz Franks, liz@stpaulqc.org.

Support & Connection for LGBTQ Families

Join others in the safety of a gracious community where shared experience and open conversation cultivate compassion, friendship, and support for everyone involved in the journey of acceptance and love. Meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month, beginning April 15, at 6:30 p.m. Contact: Dawn or Jason Nickles, jnick1120@msn.com.

Spring cleaning in the St. Paul neighborhood

The St. Paul corner of the world is a beautiful place. On Saturday, April 20, 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, and is a great service project for families of all ages. Supplies and snacks are provided. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Jules Irish, julesi@mchsi.com.

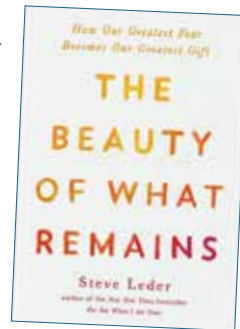


Walking the Grief Journey begins April 21

Gather on five Sundays, April 21-May 19, 10:15-11:00 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.

Occasional Tuesdays Book Group starts in May

Connect over a touching book on the first two Tuesdays in May, 7 & 14, 7-7:45 a.m., Library Commons. In *The Beauty of What Remains: How Our Greatest Fear Becomes Our Greatest Gift*, author and rabbi Steve Leder provokes laughter and tears, the wisdom of millennia and modernity, and, most of all, an unfolding of the profound and simple truth that in loss we gain more than we ever imagined. The book is available in the Book Corner. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.



Upcoming summer trips for youth

Summer Service Trip: This year's summer service trip will take teens to Madison, Wisconsin, June 24-27. Youth will complete a number of service projects in the surrounding area and explore the city, its culture, and enjoy activities Madison has to offer! The student cost is \$250 and spots are limited.

Junior Adventure Trip: This adventurous trip celebrates the milestone of completing 11th grade and takes students to northern Wisconsin July 28-31. The goal is to prepare these incoming seniors for leadership in our community and exploring their faith stories. Students embark on adventures including whitewater rafting and high ropes to push them out of their comfort zone and try new things!

Sign up for either trip at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Liz Franks, liz@stpaulqc.org.

Poverty simulation to be hosted at St. Paul

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. But unless you've experienced poverty, it's difficult to truly understand. On Tuesday, April 23, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., the University of Illinois will host a poverty simulation to help bridge that gap from misconception to understanding. The event will be held in Fellowship Hall.

During the SocioEconomic Differences and Poverty Simulation participants will live in the role of a low-income family member on a limited budget where you must provide for your family — ensuring the basic necessities are met. Then learn how people who live in poverty make decisions based on their culture, what they value, and what rules they live by.

The event is free and open to the public, but please register online at <http://go.illinois.edu/PovertySimulation2024>.

National Faith and Climate Forum at St. Paul

On Tuesday, April 16, 11 a.m.-4:15 p.m., St. Paul will livestream a national faith and climate forum featuring national faith leaders. In addition, come engage with in-person breakout sessions and hear from local organizations.

This unique event allows St. Paul people and the greater Quad Cities community to come together for a day charged with inspiration, learning, and action. Dive into a program rich with national speakers, engaging discussions, practical workshops, and dynamic sessions.

Please register at nationalfaithandclimateforum.org/register. Questions? Contact Becky Wiese, r1awmd@yahoo.com.

WELCA Spring Gathering

On Saturday, April 13, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. gather in the Chapel and Library Commons for **Recognition, Restoration, Recreation: Making a difference in water quality**.

The program begins with a short business meeting and worship service. Kathy Wine of River Action will speak on the impact of the Mississippi River on the Quad Cities and the impact individuals can have on local water quality.

The gathering is open to all St. Paul women and guests. The morning will include refreshments and fellowship. Contact: Linda Allebach, lindajallebach@gmail.com. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups.

Faith, health, and wholeness coffee chats

Settle into a conversation on faith, health, and wholeness. This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, 10:30 a.m. No need to sign up, just come!

April 2, the topic will be why it's so hard to say no. On April 16, talk about the abundant life — what is it? Contact: Dave and Dortha DeWit, dorthamd@aol.com.

Do what you LOVE what you do

St. Paul member Samantha Stahle surrounds herself with the things she loves, and dance is at the forefront.

Do what you love, love what you do is a phrase Samantha lives by. It's on the shirt she wears to work. Similar positive messages adorn the walls of her job at Studio A Dance Company. She found her love of dancing at an early age, and it carried on into her adult years, providing her with deep, lasting friendships and new refreshing challenges.

"I started dancing at five years old. My mom put my two sisters and me (we're triplets) in dance to help build our confidence as we got older," Samantha said. "She didn't expect us to stick with it, but I fell in love with going to dance. I couldn't wait for dance day. It was the highlight of my week."

When she and her family moved to the Quad Cities in 2001, it wasn't long before she found her way to Studio A. Samantha has been with the company for the nearly 20 years it's been in business, first as a dancer and later as an employee.

Samantha studied Kinesiology and Health with minors in Dance and Athletic Coaching at Iowa State University, continuing her education to receive her master's in Clinical Exercise Physiology at the University of Iowa. She likes to stay busy, and busy she stays. She doesn't just teach dance at Studio A; she also choreographs a staggering 60 dance routines a year, oversees 160 dancers, and runs the general day-to-day of Studio A. Outside of Studio A, Samantha is the head dance coach for the Davenport West High School Diamond Dancers, disciplining herself to wake up for 6 a.m. dance rehearsals during the school year.

"I didn't imagine myself becoming a

dance teacher but, I thought, this is what I should be doing. Teaching comes naturally to me and I'm able to use what I learned in my education in the studio. Dance is a big interaction between the mind and body. It helped me excel in school because there is a big memory component with it. You must be aware of what your body is doing, be on time with music, remember what's coming next, and know what is happening around you, all at the same time. Dance requires you to be always engaged. It's a powerful tool for these young dancers."

As a choreographer, Samantha's role is much bigger than teaching steps.

"One thing we work on in the studio is negative self-talk. My least favorite phrase is 'I can't do that.' We work on saying 'I can't do that...yet.' We take the time to work through students' belief in themselves and find the positive in challenges. I try to be intentional in addressing more than just steps. The important part of this experience is not how these kids dance. It's how they grow as people. I want to build them up as individuals, not just dancers. When we go to a competition, we have a rule that when you come off the stage, you're positive only. We can talk about how it went and work through the difficulties, but right now, we're positive about the work we just did."

It's evident in the way Samantha speaks that her love of dance, and the care for her students, runs deep.

"I love working together toward a common goal. We go on an uphill trek together every time we're learning a new piece. Yes,



we're competing but we're creating art in the process. You can't top the collaboration and inspiration that comes from that. Finding the emotion that's required for a piece and working together to achieve that goal. There's not much else like it."

When not in the studio, pulling 12+ hour days at dance competitions, or watching dance to get inspiration for her next routine, Samantha spends time with her husband Tom, and their families. She is also a devoted 8 a.m. worship attendee, cheerfully walking through the doors early on Sunday mornings.

"6 a.m. dance practice conditioned me for that," Samantha laughs.

adult learning

▶ April 7: The Book of Exodus in Abolition and Civil Rights

Prof. Matthew Coomber, St. Ambrose University

Scripture has been said to function “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). Americans in the abolitionist movement of the 19th century and the civil rights movement of the 20th century certainly turned to the book of Exodus for guidance and argument. How did it function? What do we learn from that use of the Bible?

▶ April 14: The Civil Rights Story in Davenport

Ryan Saddler, St. Ambrose University and the Friends of MLK, Inc.

Every city in the United States has its own story about civil rights and race relations. Davenport’s story has fascinating and unexpected dimensions to it, which Ryan Saddler will explore with us. Hear, too, how this story will be told more and more fully by the Friends of MLK in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Interpretive Center and Park located at 5th and Brady in downtown Davenport.

▶ April 21: US — The Resurrection of American Terror

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Wheeler, retired ELCA minister

Emancipation in 1863 and the gains that Blacks made in American politics and society during Reconstruction drew significant backlash. A variety of resentments and fears, some of them vio-

lent, fostered different expressions of White supremacy. Lutheran pastor and theologian Kenneth Wheeler wants the church to be active and effective in countering signs of that violence rising again today. His recent book, *US: The Resurrection of American Terror*, is available in the St. Paul Book Corner.

▶ April 28: The Glories of Music and Music of Glory

Claire Kuttler, lyric soprano

From the operatic stage to the sanctuary of cathedrals to our own shower stalls, music carries some of our highest and deepest emotions. Lyric soprano and St. Paul family member Claire Kuttler will share with us her experience making that music and let us in on the world of the NY Metropolitan Opera and other music communities in which she performs.

▶ May 5: Peter W. Marty on a stool

Peter W. Marty, senior pastor

Enjoy an open forum with Peter, as he retires from 28 years of ministry at St. Paul. Bring your questions and curiosity. Every topic is welcome — from theological subjects to hot potato issues, from St. Paul history to how Peter’s mind works.

Beginning May 12, Sunday morning learning & adult learning are on summer break and will resume in September.



Faith BasiX: Living, Feeling, and Thinking in Faith

Sundays, Apr. 7-28, May 12 & 19, 10:15-11 a.m., Luther Loft

Faith BasiX is an opportunity to dive in and learn more about the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. Gain a deeper understanding of your faith and our relationship with God. This session begins April 7.

The first six-week session is an introduction to how we talk and think about God. Theology can be a big word, but it doesn't have to be. Learn about and explore your personal theology. How does how we think about God relate to how we think about the gospel, the human condition, and who God calls us to be?

This session of Faith BasiX is guided by the book *How to Think Theologically* by Howard Stone and James Duke. Weekly gatherings are led by Mac Mullins and Duane Larson. Duane is a retired ELCA pastor and teaching theologian, having taught at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg and served as President of Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque.

The book is available in the Book Corner for \$17. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Mac Mullins, mac@stpaulqc.org.

Spring has sprung at St. Paul

As winter turned into spring, and Lent into Easter and beyond, St. Paul people came together to share in the joys of community. "I adore the sense of aliveness and vitality that comes with spring. As if I could feel it actually turn on with the vernal equinox, everything feels endlessly full of hope." -Mary Oliver





new members



Andrew & Jacklynn Foelske are parents to one-year-old Gordon. This couple both teach in the Davenport School system – Andrew in physical education and Jacklynn as a second-grade teacher. They enjoy spending time outside and watching Hawkeye football. They were attracted to St. Paul by the size and values of the congregation.



Tom Koch is a retired OB/GYN physician who delivered more than 6,000 babies through his Macomb, IL practice. He has traveled extensively in Europe and elsewhere, often paying visits to see hospital practices elsewhere. Tom grew up in Eldridge, Iowa, and came upon St. Paul in the last year through his friend, Virginia Telsrow (*pictured above*).



Courtney & Ben Tinsman enjoy spending time with friends and family and are passionate about their community and education. Courtney works as an interior designer with Heart of America. Ben is a controller at Twin State Technical Services. The inclusive atmosphere and involvement in the community are what attracted them to St. Paul.



Naomi Hoeck & Eric Manson are engaged to be married. Naomi is self-employed as a mental health counselor and likes to garden, read, and travel. Eric is in technical sales with HA International and spends his free time farming, fishing, and welding. The young adult presence is one of the things that drew them to St. Paul.



Norm & JoAnn Mest are both retired – Norm from sales at US Foods and JoAnn from finance at Lee Enterprises. They care a lot about spending time with their grandchildren. JoAnn's sisters, Dee Hillyer and Christal Thiel, are members at St. Paul.



Explore membership, anchor your faith life

Have you been looking for a vibrant church home where you can anchor your spiritual life and grow with others?

Come to a Membership Inquiry Class on **Monday, April 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** or **Monday, May 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** and explore the St. Paul community. Hear about the faith expressions that inspire our ministries and outreach and take a tour of the church building.

Childcare is provided on request. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/sign-ups. Contact: Pastor Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Council Notes

Council opened the March meeting with a trip across the parking lot to tour the 2025 Main Street home, owned by St. Paul. That house, operated in partnership with Vera French, has provided housing for men who live with chronic mental challenges. The residents have been relocated to St. Paul's Carey Ave house as extensive renovations to 2025 are being undertaken.

Early planning is underway for the design of a church sign that will grace the southwestern-most corner of the St. Paul property. That corner of the church's property is best known for the community gardens, soon to be expanded in partnership with Tapestry Farms.

A celebration will be held for Peter and Susan Marty on Sunday, June 2 from 4-6 p.m. on the North Lawn. Save-the-date postcards will be mailed out in early April. The event is open to

the entire St. Paul community. A light reception will be held following each service on Peter's final weekend, June 8 and 9.

A special staff retreat will take place in early May. Dr. Wendy Hilton-Morrow of Augustana College will work with the staff on transition and change. Staff are currently completing personal strengths assessments as part of that retreat. In the next month, St. Paul will give thanks for the work of Angie Vaaler (social worker/counselor), who is moving; and Harris Schneekloth (campus groundskeeper), who is retiring.

Equipment for an entirely new HVAC chiller system for the older portions of our building was ordered this month. Installation of this major system is anticipated for early 2025.

St. Paul continues to be in a healthy financial position at the beginning of the year.

Senior Pastor Call Committee Update

The Senior Pastor Call Committee continues to meet faithfully and often, actively reviewing candidates to fill the role of senior pastor, given Peter Marty's retirement on June 9. While there are not many details to share yet, please be comforted that we are keeping busy with meaningful activity with a great team, and we are optimistic!

The Call Committee continues to be open to questions or ideas you have throughout the call process. Please feel free to contact Amy Lovig, call committee chair, at stpaulqccallcommittee@gmail.com. Continue to hold this call process in prayer throughout the journey ahead.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: campus groundskeeper

Harris Schneekloth recently announced his retirement after 33 years of working for St. Paul, first as building supervisor and later as campus groundskeeper. We'll honor this beloved servant briefly at services on the last weekend in April.

St. Paul has opened the application process for a part-time grounds keeper. This individual would oversee and maintain the 5-acre grounds of the St. Paul campus, April thru October each year, 20 hrs/week. For details, go to stpaulqc.org/employment.



WORSHIP at St. Paul

▶ April 6 & 7

Second Sunday of Easter

Preaching:

5pm/8 am: Max Franks
9 & 11:15 am: Mac Mullins

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

▶ April 13 & 14

Third Sunday of Easter

Preaching:

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

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

▶ April 20 & 21

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Preaching:

All services: Katy Warren

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

▶ April 27 & 28

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Preaching:

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

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52803



Camp Firelight

A SUMMER CAMP

Psalm 56:3

ADVENTURE WITH GOD

At St. Paul VBS, June 10-14, 2024, campers learn ways to connect with and put our trust in God. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups.

Vacation Bible School

Age 4-Fifth grade,
8:30-11:30 a.m.

678 Week

Grade 6-8,
8:30-11:30 a.m.

Volunteer

There's a job to fit your gifts,
8 a.m.-12 noon