

JANUARY 2025

The magazine of St. Paul Lutheran Church

journey



Recombobulation



ON THE COVER:
Carolyn Chester

journey

JANUARY 2025

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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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There's something pretty special about General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee. It isn't architecturally interesting like Denver's airport. It doesn't have a pedestrian tunnel full of colorful dancing lights like O'Hare. But it does have something that has drawn attention. It can be found just on the other side of the TSA screening zone in Concourse C.

As happens in every airport, passengers wait in a long line for the opportunity to remove their shoes, take off their jackets, and pull out their laptops. As the people and their belongings are screened, they check their watches and become more and more frazzled, worried about running late, getting pulled aside for extra screenings or leaving something behind in the bins.

But in Milwaukee, as the harried travelers exit the screening area, now deemed safe to fly, they step into an open space. A sign hangs above this place full of benches that says, "Recombobulation Area." It's a place for passengers to put themselves back together, put on their shoes, repack their stuff, and take a deep breath.

Recombobulation isn't recognized as a word in standard dictionaries, but that didn't stop Barry Bateman, the airport director in 2008, from having the sign made. He hoped to bring a little fun into the stressful experience, to make his airport's patrons chuckle a bit. The word itself helps to bring about what he hoped the space would create – a lightening of spirits, a way to regain composure, a loosening of tension. Humor has an ability to break through anxiety, almost as much as having a quiet place to sit, to take some deep breaths helps when we are feeling discombobulated.

There are moments, situations, or even seasons in our lives that discombobulate us. The demands of the present and worries for the future have a way of making us feel frazzled. And yet, every week, we are gifted with an opportunity to step into a "Recombobulation Area," or as it is more commonly known: worship.

Instead of benches to sit while we put on our shoes, there are pews on which to rest and to, metaphorically, take off our shoes to honor the holy

ground of God's presence. Singing together regulates our racing hearts and pulls us into a sense of shared purpose. Prayer grounds our thinking, helping us to breathe, orients us back to what is most important. Community holds us and carries us. The gifts

of grace pour life-giving goodness into us. The stories of our faith in scripture remind us of who we are, and, more importantly, who God is. All of it places us right where we need to be, alongside one another in praise of God, who is not us, whose love permeates every situation, who is bigger than the most discombobulating experience. And then, centered and ready, we head back out into the world.

In his Message translation of Matthew 11:28-29, Eugene Peterson names how Jesus offers us a way that grounds us. "[Jesus said], Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

In Jesus, we find the rest we need, and learn the rhythms of grace, the gift of recombobulation.

SARA OLSON-SMITH
associate pastor



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

At the end of January, the United States celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day. King, a Baptist minister, was the most influential leader of a non-violent approach to end racial segregation during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 60s. As a country, we've made strides, but there is much more work to be done.

One of our core values is radical hospitality and that means everyone counts, everyone matters, and everyone is welcome at St. Paul. We value people of every racial identity, ethnicity, citizenship, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity. We celebrate diversity as a gift from God. Inclusivity enriches this congregation as we become a more vibrant reflection of the larger community.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Church and Race in America: A Workshop

SATURDAY, FEB. 1, 3-4:30 P.M.

Pastor Kenneth Wheeler and St. Paul's Racial Awareness Team explore the challenges that America's history of slavery and race relations pose for churches. How does the church serve as an agent of reconciliation and justice? Dig into the issues with a veteran church leader and compelling author while exploring ways in which St. Paul as a congregation and we as individuals can move toward ever more faithful Christian life in relation to our society's racial divides. For background, you can find Pastor Wheeler's book, *US: The Resurrection of American Terror*, in the St. Paul bookstore.

Sign ups for this workshop are helpful, but not required. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

The Church and Race in America: Sunday morning learning

SUNDAY, FEB. 2, 10:15-11 A.M., CHAPEL

Pastor Kenneth Wheeler has reflected deeply on the American church and its place in the country's racial history. As St. Paul seeks to live faithfully in the central city of Davenport, where more than 1 in 6 residents is Black or Brown, what can we learn from his experience and theological insight? Engage in a conversation that aches to spark action.

Racial Awareness Team

THIRD TUESDAYS OF THE MONTH, 7 P.M.

When there is a deep commitment to help shape a world where all people are treated as God's beloved, prejudice and hate can be transformed into love and respect. St. Paul's 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. Anyone is welcome. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Resources in the Book Corner

The St. Paul bookstore is dedicated to showcasing diverse voices and providing thought-provoking literature centered around contemporary issues. The bookstore features many social justice resources by celebrated writers.



Kenneth Wheeler is an author, retired ELCA pastor, and synod staff member.

january

HAPPENINGS



New! Cinema and Spirituality

Let's go to the movies and explore life's meaning from beginning to end. *A Whole Life in Twelve Movies* is a reflection on various stages and moments of life by Kathleen Norris and Gareth Higgins through the story-telling of a dozen movies.

Each month of 2025 on the third Tuesday (beginning Jan. 21, 6:30 p.m.), come to The Last Picture House in Davenport (325 E. 2nd St.) to screen one of the films and discuss its impact on our relationships to birth, childhood, selfhood, vocation, success, generosity, conflict, death, and more. Discounted tickets, superb popcorn, comfortable seating, and taking in stories together on the big screen make this series a unique community experience. Pick up the book in the St. Paul bookstore. Bring a friend. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

Faith milestones planned for January and February

Faith milestones are special markers, grounded in the Bible and nurturing faith in everyday life. We discover God's presence in seemingly ordinary happenings.

► **6th Grade | Digital Identity:** On Sunday, Jan. 12, 10:15-11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, gather to talk about creating and maintaining an identity that reflects God in our daily and digital lives. Explore the responsibilities carried with each interaction and share practical tips for navigating decisions that accompany digital independence.

► **One-year-olds | Faith forming beginnings:** Connect and share in the joy and exhaustion of life with a newborn. Learn what it means to form a child's faith. A gathering for parents of children born in 2024 will be Sunday, Jan. 26, 10:15-11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Each child receives a colorful Bible. Pastor Sara Olson-Smith leads a discussion.

► **1st Grade | The Lord's Prayer:** On Sunday, Feb. 2, 10:15-11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, children and parents learn together about the Lord's Prayer, a prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

To sign up for milestones, visit stpaulqc.org/signups.



Sing in the choir!

At St. Paul, voices soar gracefully in praise. All have a place in one of St. Paul's five choirs from four-year-olds to adults.

Rehearsals for all ages resume in the new year on Wednesday, Jan. 8, 6 p.m. There's a place for you! Questions? Contact Chris Nelson, chris@stpaulqc.org.

Youth choir alumni ring in the New Year

Celebrate the new year at St. Paul with a beloved annual event. All former Youth Choir singers are invited to sing alongside the current Youth Choir for worship on Sunday, Jan. 5. Gather to rehearse a favorite anthem, "Who Is the Lamb?," at 8:30 a.m. in the Chapel. The choir sings during the 9 a.m. service. Questions? Contact Dan Pepper, pepper@stpaulqc.org.



Conversations of faith and culture

A new iteration of CC Conversations has arrived. Beginning on Jan. 9, 6-7:15 p.m. and continuing on the first Thursday of each month following, come together with Pastor Mark for a discussion of select articles from the *Christian Century* magazine and other similar publications and blogs. Articles will be available in the library two weeks prior to each gathering. Meet in the Library Commons. Contact Mark Niethammer, mark@stpaulqc.org.

Youth mission trip informational meeting

On Sunday, Jan. 19, 6 p.m. in Library Commons, come to an informational meeting about the 2025 Youth Mission Trip to St. Louis. Attending the meeting is not a commitment to the trip, but a chance to hear more about what it entails. All parents and youth interested in participating are welcome to attend. SNL will follow the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.

Faith BasiX: Worship

Faith BasiX is an opportunity to dive in and learn more about the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. Whether you're new to Christianity or have been in the pews your whole life, here you can gain a deeper understanding of your faith and our relationship with God.

This six-week session, beginning Sunday, Jan. 12, 10:15-11 a.m., focuses on how and why we worship as Christians. Is there something deeper happening on Sunday mornings when we break bread and are washed in water? Why do Christians love singing so much? Explore these questions with us as we dive deeper into our life together as we worship our God. Weekly gatherings are led by Mac Mullins and Duane Larson. Contact: Mac Mullins, mac@stpaulqc.org.

2025 Main Street house furnishings requested

The affordable housing team requests furniture and other home goods to furnish the remodeled Main Street home for incoming residents. New or gently used items in good condition are requested. To access the list of items needed, head to the St. Paul app, tap on Connect, and select Public Needs. Items may be dropped off at the house or the church from Jan. 20-26. Please contact Miles Thompson, miles@stpaulqc.org, regarding gently used items.

The Main Street home is part of the affordable housing ministry and, in partnership with Vera French, helps residents with long-term mental illness live independently with supportive services.



Millikin University Choir to perform at St. Paul

Listen to the sounds of beautiful music on Monday, Jan. 13, 7:30 p.m. as the Millikin University Choir stops at St. Paul. The University Choir features 43 upper-class students from a variety of majors. The choir has gained national recognition, due in part to six invitations to perform at national and regional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). Their performances have fostered new conversations in response to their tone, style and programming approach. Contact Chris Nelson, chris@stpaulqc.org.

Preschool registration to open in February

St. Paul Lutheran Preschool provides a rich variety of age-appropriate developmental activities in a Christian atmosphere. The program shines with weekly chapel services, art, music, language, science, and math. Special events wrap in family, friends, and honored guests. Opportunities abound for growth and learning for kids ages 2-4.

Registration for new families begins the first week of February. To learn more about the preschool visit stpaulqcpreschool.org, or contact Karen Strusz, 563-326-3547, or karenstrusz@stpaulqc.org.



Combating the winter blues

By Steve Kalber, *St. Paul counselor*

The winter days are becoming colder and darker. The holiday festivities are further removed. A melancholy feeling begins to creep in. Everyone experiences a little winter funk and St. Paul counselor Steve Kalber has some tips to lessen those winter blues.

It is early January in the Midwest. Fresh and wonderful memories of the holiday festivities linger, reliving the joyful moments we will forever cherish. Friends and family gathered, set aside trivial differences and celebrated the birth of Jesus and their love for one another. The weather grew chillier and flurried a perfect dusting of snow on the Christmas Eve landscape. Gifts were shared and treasured. It was a Christmas filled with spiritual meaning, relational growth, and joy.

But now it is early January in the Midwest. The holiday decorations are carefully stored away; family has returned to distant homes and friends to their dutiful routines; chilly has turned to freezing, snow and ice blanket the neighborhood and the first day of Spring seems completely out of sight. You begin to feel the energy and pleasure of the holiday slipping away. A melancholy mood creeps in and begins to blur the good things in your life. Negative thoughts start appearing from nowhere. You feel stuck. And then you realize you are confronting the winter blues.

One way to recognize this vague dysphoria is by attending to our behaviors. When we are in the grip of the winter blues (or more seriously, Seasonal Affective Disorder) we withdraw by paying less attention to ourselves and others. We remain huddled under the blankets in our PJs all day. We bathe and groom ourselves with less frequency and interest. We don't move

around as much. Our diet contains gratifying but unhealthy foods. We stay inside. We don't reach out to offer help or to ask for it either. Familiar and unstimulating routines dominate our day, and we become increasingly passive and averse to taking risks.

Do you want to live like this? You don't have to. I suggest, at least for right now, you *fake it*.

Sometimes it is best to avoid overthinking and not become trapped in the deep weeds of psychoanalysis. One way to battle the winter blues is by confronting and changing specific unhealthy behaviors. You've heard of "fake it 'til you make it." It's the same idea. Act like you are joyful and eventually you will feel joy. This technique, known as Behavioral Activation, has been shown to change brain chemistry.

So, what behaviors can you think of? What self-care options can you practice? How can you fill your senses with pleasurable stimulation? What risks can you take? Think of yourself as an actor on the stage. What does a 'happy you' act like?

Here are some ideas:

CARE for your person: Bathe and groom every day, whether you're stinky or not. Enjoy hot showers, warm baths, steamy towels followed by clean shaves. Apply soothing lotions, fragrant oils and aftershave. Good hygiene absolutely enhances self-esteem.

DO a do: Shampoo, condition, comb, brush, trim, style, curl, braid, color, go

natural. And guys – change that face with a mustache or beard. Do a man bun. Balder guys – grow a ponytail or shave it all off. Take a risk. It will grow back.

DRESS like you are someone special: Take those holey, ratty, comfy jeans and sweats and put them at the bottom of the pile. Save them only for dirty work. Dig out those threads that you have saved for "special occasions" and experiment with your wardrobe options. Expand your duds at thrift stores or after Christmas sales. After all, every day *is* a special occasion.

EXPERIENCE your senses. Connect with the sounds, images, smells, flavors and textures in your life. Hear the bold and the delicate qualities of music, the crackling of a fire, the wind chimes on your porch. See the graceful silhouettes in the clouds and snow drifts. Smell the fresh bread and fresh air. Taste the hot chocolate, bourbon, spiced tea. Pet your dog or cat.

MOVE it. There is little evidence to support the benefits of 10,000 steps, but there is absolute proof that regular physical movement promotes physical and mental health. Whether it is running a marathon, hopping in your Silver Sneakers, taking the steps instead of the elevator or walking outside, seize any opportunity to move whenever it is a safe alternative for you.

HELP someone. Reach out to someone in need. Volunteer. Offer your presence, your concern, your talents, your labor, your love. It does not need to be a big



“You’ve heard of ‘fake it ‘til you make it’ — it’s the same idea. This technique, known as Behavioral Activation, has been shown to change brain chemistry. STEVE KALBER”

commitment, just an authentic act of interest and empathy. Be assertive because often you will hear “No thanks, I’m OK”. Persevere with kindness.

BE HELPED by someone. Take a risk and openly share your needs. There is no shame in caring for yourself and asking for help. Think of how good you feel when you help someone else. By appealing to others, you are saying that you recognize and value all they have to offer. You will forge new connections and solve problems. Resist being one of those “No thanks, I’m OK” people. None of us are totally OK.

CREATE. Express yourself. Tap into your imagination and make something new. Create something fresh and uniquely expressive of who you are. It can be anything; the artistic media are endless. Consider the ordinary materials in your daily life. Take them apart, rearrange them, and put them back together in a way that reveals your passion.

EAT better. No drastic changes here! Just try for improvement. You know what to do: less processed food, more fruits and veggies, healthier fats. It often helps to connect healthy eating habits to important milestones and people, like living longer to enjoy graduations and grandchildren.

DECLUTTER. It may sound like work but think about how you felt the last time you cleaned out that junk drawer or got rid of those paint cans in the basement. By disposing of unnecessary stuff in our envi-

ronment, we unburden our minds. We have greater mental capacity to challenge irrational thoughts and generate healthy new ideas.

LEAN into the season of renewal.

Winter is a time of natural quietude. Don’t fight it. Immerse yourself in it. Savor the solitude. Read good books, practice yoga, meditate, contemplate nature and become more aware of the relaxing rhythms of your body.

Before you know it, the calendar tells you that Spring has arrived. You have faked it, and you have become a genuinely healthier person. The calmer, happier you goes to the window and throws open the curtains to see ... piles of ashen snow, trees bent in the wind and mud where your front lawn once flourished.

Disappointed? Sure. Depressed? Not you. The elements will not control your mood. You know exactly what to do.

Counselor services available

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, holiday-fatigued, or just need a listening ear, reach out to staff counselor, Steve Kalber. His services are free of charge to the St. Paul community. Contact Steve at 563-326-3547 or steve@stpaulqc.org.

self-care checklist

Care for your physical self

- ☐ Take a hot shower or bath
- ☐ Use a lotion or aftershave you enjoy
- ☐ Change your hairstyle or add a mustache or beard
- ☐ Dress up and experiment with wardrobe options
- ☐ Connect with the sounds, images, smells, flavors, and textures of your life.
- ☐ Get moving!
- ☐ Eat better: Just try for improvement

Care for your mental self

- ☐ Volunteer or be of service to others
- ☐ Reach out to someone in need
- ☐ Share your needs with others
- ☐ Express yourself through creativity
- ☐ Declutter to expand your mental capacity
- ☐ Savor the solitude in winter
- ☐ Read, practice yoga, meditate, or contemplate nature

sharing a good book

Meet 13-year-old Carolyn Chester, the St. Paul Book Corner's first youth to join the reading team.

With a selection team, readers, and the many people who recommend books, the items on the St. Paul Book Corner's shelves are carefully chosen. It takes a team of dedicated people, and the bookstore is happy to welcome its first young adult to the reading team.

Thirteen-year-old Carolyn Chester fell in love with reading early on. Six years ago, she found herself transported to a new world when a young orphan wizard took her on a journey from which she's never looked back. After completing the Harry Potter series, all seven books are a serious undertaking, Carolyn found herself in love with the world of literature. For her, it's the careful way authors describe the details of the world and the characters that draw her in.

Carolyn loves the library. Her family even had to instill a "no books at the dinner table rule" when she was so enthralled with Harry Potter she couldn't put it down, not even to eat. She is currently in an honors English class at Bettendorf Middle School. For many years she has participated in her school's Battle of the Books competition where students form teams, read books from a selected list, and compete against other students to test their book knowledge. Carolyn still uses this and resources like the Iowa Teen Choice Awards list to find new book recommendations.

Earlier this year, Carolyn had a part in helping to bring a love of reading to another younger person.

"I was in the Book Corner one Sunday morning looking at bracelet ideas and inspiration for my bracelet business. (Book Corner manager) Andrea Spencer was chatting with a woman about a book for her ten-year-old granddaughter and I recommended a few books off the shelf," Carolyn said. "While reading a book, I often envision a specific person to whom I'd recommend it so after asking a few questions about what the woman was looking for, it was easy to make a recommendation."

Some of her current choices are:

"*Bluebird* by Sharon Cameron is one of my favorites. I would recommend this one most. I love the way the book plays with time, flipping through past and present when describing the story," Carolyn said. "I recently selected *Letting Go of Gravity* by Meg Leder for a school book presentation. It's about a young girl going to college. Her brother has a type of leukemia but is finally



in remission. She wants to be a doctor because of her brother's illness but it seems like she's only choosing that path because others want her to. I find wisdom and advice in books and sometimes take their words to heart more easily than I would another person."

Carolyn is a storyteller by nature. When asked about what an ideal weekend day would look like for her, she adds in every minute detail from what time she would wake up to what she would see, hear, smell, where she would go, and those who would go with her. The day concludes with warm, bubbly Stouffer's mac and cheese for dinner.

Book Corner manager Andrea Spencer remembers her first interaction with Carolyn.

"I was helping a woman find a book for her granddaughter. I recommended one about which I'd

heard great things but hadn't yet read. Carolyn had read it and offered her thoughts on the book. She was very knowledgeable about what she was recommending," Andrea said. "She asked what the woman's granddaughter was currently reading and what authors she liked. The way Carolyn entered the conversation and spoke about these books was the most natural thing for her. I was blown away by her confidence, her intelligence, and professionalism; the way she carried herself and interacted with me and this congregation member showed a maturity beyond her years."

Andrea believes Carolyn's recommendations to the book selection team are important because of her life stage. The juvenile literature section needed some fresh new titles and who better than a thirteen-year-old to help fill the shelves?

"I can only have my own perceptions about what young people experience today. The beauty is that we have someone like Carolyn to offer feedback on what is needed, what's current, and what's interesting," Andrea said. "There are so many new books and new topics to delve into. It's getting harder to stay current which is why I have the Book Corner team. They stay on top of all the latest reads. It's not just me finding and selecting these books. There is a huge team of volunteers who support the bookstore and make this place function."

In addition to her love of reading, Carolyn is also quite entrepreneurial. She's taken leadership courses and is a member of Junior Optimist International, her school's Student Council, and St. Paul acolyte. She has been a dancer and involved in theater for most of her life. She loves playing volleyball and in her free time, runs multiple small businesses.

"I've always been motivated to run small businesses. My first business was picking up sticks when I was young. I think I only made \$5," Carolyn laughed. "My parents give me a lot of advice and help me as much as they can without doing it for me. Volunteering with the Book Corner is exciting for me. I've been waiting for an opportunity like this my whole life."

"I find wisdom and advice in books and sometimes take their words to heart more easily than I would another person."

— carolyn chester

A few staff-inspired current book recommendations

The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes (audiobook)

Andrea Spencer, bookstore manager

A breathtaking story of five extraordinary women and their remarkable journey through the mountains of Kentucky and beyond in Depression-era America.

The Eyes and the Impossible by David Eggers

Jessica Taylor, director of communication

The Eyes and the Impossible tells the story of a brave and charismatic dog appointed by three elderly bison to be the "eyes" of the park in which they live. A wonderful selection for all ages.

Shakespeare: The dog with a broken brain by Borghild Stranden

Paul Caldwell, host

Borghild Stranden runs a small rescue in France. A visit to a dog named Shakespeare will change both of their lives. This memoir follows their magical, heartbreaking, and uplifting journey.

carolyn's

book corner

picks

The Book Corner has a variety of books for all ages. A copy of each new book is also donated to the church library.



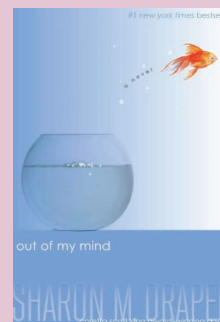
Attack of the Black Rectangles
by A. S. King



Swim Team
by Johnny Christmas



A Soft Place to Land
by Jessie Mueller



The Out of My Mind Trilogy
by Sharon Draper

new members



Amanda & RL Aldridge are parents to Harper and Willow. Amanda is a teacher with the Pleasant Valley School District. RL works as a financial representative for Northwestern Mutual, and coaches swimming at North Scott High school. They like to spend their free time with family. The preschool and welcoming atmosphere are what attracted them to St. Paul.



Jade & Matt Lommen have two girls, Bella and Nora. Jade works as a designer at Showplace Cabinetry. Matt is an engineer with John Deere. They like to exercise and spend time outdoors and with their kids. The core values and beliefs of St. Paul are what drew them to membership.



Matt & Liz Seeley have three daughters, Bri, Ari, and Cora. Matt is employed as an outage scheduler with Constellation Energy. Liz spends her free time volunteering with Humility Homes and other places. They enjoy bonfires with friends and traveling. What drew them to St. Paul? "Love for all and a commitment to the community."



Mary Gabel enjoys reading, taking care of her farm animals, camping, and gardening. She coordinates the Agape Center Food Pantry and is passionate about mentoring women in recovery. She has one young adult daughter.



Sara Morby works at the Figge Art Museum as the development officer. She enjoys movies, reading, and her pets, and cares a lot about food insecurity. She is married to Keith and has two young adult children. Acceptance of all people is what attracted her to St. Paul.



Kristin Stegall is mom to Olivia and Sidney (*not pictured*). Kristin is a contracts manager with Estes Construction. She is married to Michael and likes attending her children's sporting events. She came to St. Paul through the invitation of a friend.

Warm monthly options to explore membership

Greet the new year with a warm welcome for exploring St. Paul life. Come discover the goodness of this congregation and our mission to the world. Upcoming membership inquiry classes include Saturday, Jan. 11, 9-11 a.m. or Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Pastors Mark Niethammer and Sara Olson-Smith lead these one-session introductions to St. Paul life, and the faith expressions that inspire it all. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups.





Drew & Natalie Wayne have three boys, Karter, Karter, and Kolton. Drew works in cost management with John Deere while Natalie manages the home front. They are Cyclones fans, but especially love cheering for their kids in whatever sport they're involved in.



Steven & Sharon Wildemuth are retired – Steven from John Deere as a designer and diagnostic author and Sharon from Palmer College. They are passionate about nature and caring for “God’s beautiful creations” including their beloved cat.

Council Notes

Council reflected on the past year and highlighted the expansion of the affordable housing ministry and the impact of that ministry on members of the community. The Carey Ave house was purchased earlier this year and the male residents from the Main Street house relocated to that residence. The Main Street property has seen significant renovations thanks to the work of St. Paul people and volunteers. St. Paul is expanding the mental health ministries and its partnership with Vera French to make the Main Street home a residence for females. St. Paul will be seeking home items to furnish the property for the incoming residents. (*See more on pg. 5.*)

In December, a mission brainstorming session was held on a Sunday morning to discuss and discern where St. Paul may be needed next in the community. This discussion led to the initial formation of a leadership committee. Follow up and continued discussion will take place in the new year.

The pastoral residency program has re-

freshed the webpage and supplemental materials while actively recruiting incoming pastoral residents. Maddy Tyler, our newest resident pastor, will begin her ministry at St. Paul this month.

St. Paul is in the process of replacing the chiller system which has been in the plans for a year. The replacement work began earlier this winter. The chiller will be removed from the building in January.

The St. Paul annual congregational meeting is one week later in the calendar for 2025. The meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 9, 10:10 a.m. (*see below for more information*).

Thanks to the extravagant generosity of St. Paul people, 2024 has been another strong year financially and pledge cards continue to be received for the 2025 fiscal year. For 2024, 21% of the budget went to organizations and institutions that support the many missions of this church. Thank you, St. Paul, for your generosity and continued commitment to this beautiful community and the ministries and missions.



The St. Paul annual meeting will be held Sunday, Feb. 9, at 10:10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. This meeting includes items of important business such as approving the 2025 budget and review of 2024 financials. Pastor Mark Niethammer will also present a report and candidates for church leadership positions will be voted on.

WORSHIP at St. Paul

► January 4 & 5

Second Sunday after Christmas

Preaching:

All services: Sara Olson-Smith

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► January 11 & 12

Baptism of our Lord

Preaching:

All services: Mac Mullins

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► January 18 & 19

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Preaching:

All services: Katy Warren

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► January 25 & 26

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Preaching:

All services:

Mark Niethammer

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52803

coming up in adult learning

Sunday mornings, 10:15-11 a.m.

- ▶ **Jan. 5: Boundaries in Personal Relationships**
Derek Ball, Family Therapist
- ▶ **Jan. 12: Religion in America Today**
Peter Kivisto, emeritus, Augustana College
- ▶ **Jan. 19: Lincoln and the Better Angels**
Peter A. Pettit, teaching pastor
- ▶ **Jan. 26: Living in the In-Between Spaces Faithfully**
Chaplain Melinda Pupillo, Augustana College

