

SEPTEMBER 2025
The magazine of St. Paul Lutheran Church

journey

FALL GUIDE



Beginnings—again



ON THE COVER:

Jake and Melissa Taylor,
Christopher and Benjamin

journey

SEPTEMBER 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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Tommy Fleetwood is a professional golfer from Southport, England, with a distinction. He has played the most tournaments and won the most prize money among all the pros who have never won a tournament. Fleetwood has teed it up on the first day 161 times and doesn't have a trophy. That's a lot of beginnings to count on the way to yet another unplanned outcome.

September marks a beginning for lots of people in many ways. Although actual start dates have crept earlier over the years. We still typically think of September as the beginning of the school year. For professional teachers, that brings the beginning of a new year in their careers. Many organizations and activities take a summer hiatus, with September beginning the new program year. Even in activities that ramp up during the summer—like St. Paul's youth ministry—September is when the new seasonal pattern begins. New school, new sport, new club, new job, new hobby, new resolutions—this Fall Guide arrives as a lot of beginnings are underway.

Each one comes with heightened dynamics. Expectation, hope, anticipation, and curiosity climb on the positive side; anxiety, uncertainty, discomfort, even fear—on the negative. Few, if any, beginnings come with any guarantee beyond the reality that the outcome is unknown.

Embracing the unknown in faith rings out time and again throughout the Bible. That's not just wishful thinking or blind trust. The biblical writers all tell the story of God and God's people with the advantage of hindsight. They tell the stories to encourage later generations to embrace uncertainty because of the blessings that came when the ancestors embraced it.

Abram and Sarai didn't know the land to which they were travelling; then they had to escape a famine there before they could really settle. Moses and Miriam and the Israelites left Egypt in the Exodus and only two people in that generation made it to the promised land forty years later. Ruth commits to her mother-in-law, Naomi, that "wherever you go, I will go." Paul sets out for Damascus to arrest followers of Jesus and winds up being "The" Apostle. As Luke tells it, even after Jesus "set his face to go to Jerusalem"

(9:51), there was a lot more for him to do and to teach along the way. These people all stepped into their beginnings and found the twists and turns of daily life and human foible in the story. The witness of faith also shows that they lived the story as God's people and lived out the story with God's abundant blessings.

Tommy Fleetwood is neither naïve nor resigned about his long stretch of beginnings without trophies. He can speak frankly of disappointment, discouragement, and frustration. Along his journey, he has learned to take each beginning for what it is: the opportunity to take the professional game that he knows intimately and plays very well into the next arena. He knows that he cannot guarantee the outcome, yet he embraces the uncertainty for the sake of his relationship with the game and with his peers.

The beginnings to which God is bringing us this fall come with abundant uncertainty. Ignoring that would be dishonest, but succumbing to it in self-defeat or disengagement would be foolhardy. This is the arena to which God has brought us, and we do not enter it alone. Not only God as creator and empowering spirit, but also the body of Christ that is our community of faith, journeys with us. Everyone in the body faces similar uncertainty; in the commonality of our not-knowing we can bind ourselves to one another for mutual support. Together, we will discover what these beginnings bring and, in turn, what new beginnings they will yet bring us.



PETER A. PETTIT
teaching pastor

CENTERED IN WORSHIP & MUSIC

Worship anchors this community. We gather to hear God's call, raise voices in praise, uncover hope, celebrate gratitude, and welcome every soul.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Start-up Weekend

Saturday, Sept. 6 & Sunday, Sept. 7

Fall Start-up means we return to the fullness of our Sunday morning learning for all ages and worship life. Learning for all takes place from 10:15-11 a.m.

Healing Liturgy

First Saturday of the month, Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, & Dec. 6, 6 p.m.

Once a month, a healing liturgy is held after 5 p.m. worship. The gathering seeks God's goodness and care for those seeking physical, spiritual, or emotional healing.

Upcoming Concerts

Talented ensembles and acclaimed choral performances. Music events are a gift from St. Paul to the community, welcoming area music lovers.

- ▶ **Nova Singers:** Sunday, Oct. 19, 4 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m.
- ▶ **QC Symphony Orchestra Holiday Brass Concert:** Sunday, Dec. 14, 3 p.m.
- ▶ **Big River Brass Band Holiday Concert:** Sunday, Dec. 21, 3 p.m.

CHOIRS

For age 4 through adults, St. Paul choirs sing songs of faith, with practices beginning Sept. 3.

Alleluia Choir | Ages 4-K

Wednesdays, 6-6:45 p.m., Room 206

Director: Sara Harless

Cantate Choir | Grades 1-5

Wednesdays, 6-6:45 p.m., Room 009

Director: Margaret Thompson

Youth Choir | Grades 6-12

Wednesdays, 6-6:45 p.m., Chapel

Director: Dan Pepper

Chorale | College & Adults

Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m., Room 011

Director: Nathan Windt

Open Spirit contemporary ensemble

Thursday rehearsals

Director: Brian Schou



Wednesday evenings at St. Paul, 5-7:30 p.m., choir members sing, littles enjoy age-appropriate activities, families connect, and a Bible study takes place. The first Wednesday of each month, kick off the evening by sharing a meal together—skip the drive-thru and dine with others at St. Paul instead.



SPECIAL DATES

All Saints Weekend

Nov. 1 & 2, all services

Joy Weekend

Nov. 8 & 9, all services

Thanksgiving Eve

Nov. 26, 7 p.m.

Choral Advent

Dec. 7, 9 a.m.

Blue Christmas

Dec. 22, 6 p.m.

Christmas Eve

*Wednesday, Dec. 24
12, 2, 4, 6, 8, & 10 p.m.*



A SPIRIT OF MISSION & SERVICE

At St. Paul we give away more than 21 percent of our annual budget to people in need. St. Paul people also find great joy in volunteering for the benefit of others. Take a look at some of the opportunities available this fall and get involved where you can.

MENTAL HEALTH

NAMI Walk

Saturday, Oct. 4, 9:30 a.m.,
The Bend XPO, 922 Mississippi Parkway,
East Moline, IL

Lace up your sneakers and join the St. Paul crew who walk each year to encourage understanding, reduce stigma, and support programs for people affected by mental illness. Registration is free; everyone gets a T-shirt. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups.

Friends and Family of Suicide Loss

First Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Library
Conference Room

A space of healing for anyone grieving the loss of a loved one to suicide. This gathering provides a place to find understanding, comfort, and hope alongside others with similar experiences. When the first Monday falls on a holiday, we'll meet the second Monday instead. Simply show up—no sign up required. Contact: Deb and Joe James, joedeb1984@gmail.com.



EARTH CARE

Make It Yours Neighborhood Cleanup

Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 a.m.-12 noon

The St. Paul corner of the world is a beautiful place. St. Paul people gather to pick up trash and debris in the blocks surrounding the campus. It's called the *Make It Yours* Neighborhood Cleanup. A great service project for all ages! Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Jules Irish, julesi@mchsi.com.

Environmental Team

The Environmental Team is a band of earth-minded St. Paul folks. They pick up trash every week on the St. Paul campus, scrub dishes at church meals, and support recycling initiatives. Think globally and act locally as a steward of this Earthly home.

► **Recyclers needed:** Twice a month volunteers gather all the items from the recycling bins at church. Wash, flatten, bag, and prepare items to be picked up by Scott County Recycling. Contact: Jan Lloyd, cmjljml@q.com.

Soil Stewards

Interested in caring for the grounds of St. Paul while finding fellowship with others? The Soil Stewards are looking for earth-minded individuals to help keep the grounds looking beautiful. Interested in lending a green thumb or two? Open to anyone. Contact: Peg Iglehart, peg.iglehart@gmail.com.





“

I volunteer for So All May Eat because it may help someone physically, mentally, and even spiritually just by being a friendly face or sharing a smile. It's a minimal amount of time for what could change a life.”

STEPHANIE CANTERBURY

”

St. Paul diaper ministry

Led by Sara Harless, this ministry collects and distributes diapers and wipes for families connected to Tapestry Farms' work with immigrant and refugee communities. The diaper ministry is currently seeking donations of diapers and wipes to help grow their supply. Contact Sara, saraharless@stpaulqc.org, to learn more about donating.

FOOD

So All May Eat meal serving

Monday, Sept. 29, Wednesday, Oct. 29, and Tuesday, Dec. 2, various times

People assemble meals at St. Paul and serve those meals at Zion Lutheran Church, Davenport. The initiative is called *So All May Eat*. Needed for the dates above are shoppers, cooks, and servers. Providing a warm meal to those who are struggling is one way we show God's grace to others. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.

Thanksgiving food and care collection

Thanksgiving Eve worship, Nov. 26, 7 p.m.

Stock a paper bag with nonperishable food and personal care items and bring it to church Nov. 26-30 to serve those who are food insecure. The items gathered are used to fill the shelves at the Friendly House Food Pantry and St. Paul diaper ministry.

What's needed? Soups, mac & cheese, canned meat (chicken & tuna), cereal, peanut butter, jelly, toilet paper, bar soap, laundry soap, tampons, menstrual pads, baby wipes, and diapers. Help sort the donations on Sunday, Nov. 30, 12 noon. Contact: Jessica Taylor, jessica@stpaulqc.org.

Tapestry Farms Partnership

St. Paul has an active partnership with Tapestry Farms, a Quad-Cities nonprofit dedicated to walking alongside refugees and strengthening access to resources in this community. Together, St. Paul and Tapestry operate a hands-on ministry that meets an increasingly urgent need: delivering fresh produce and essential care items to refugee families navigating difficult transitions and challenging circumstances.

Volunteers are needed monthly to help load and deliver produce and essentials boxes to families on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Contact Allison Winter, allison@stpaulqc.org.

Spontaneous Serving

Spontaneous Serving is a group whose mission is to connect those with the time and a desire to help St. Paul members or community organizations in need. Commitments are one-time and less than two hours, such as taking someone to a medical appointment, staying with a family member, run errands, or helping with tasks. Requests are distributed through the St. Paul app, or by calling the church office, 563-326-3547. Volunteers and service requests are welcome. Contact Lori Byerly, iabyerlyt.l@gmail.com.



THE JOY OF COMMUNITY

Connection lies at the heart of faithful living. At St. Paul, we come together in circles both intimate and expansive, weaving our lives together in meaningful ways. Here's a glimpse of the welcoming groups ready to welcome all with open arms.

Faith, Health, and Wholeness Coffee Chats

First and third Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m., Luther Loft

Bring a beverage of your choice and settle into a conversation on faith, health, and wholeness. No need to sign up, just come! Each month features a different subject. Contact: Dave and Dortha DeWit, dorthamdew@aol.com.

Women of the ELCA

Women of the ELCA creates space for women to connect monthly through shared friendship, mutual support in faith, scripture exploration, and meaningful service projects. Contact: Dixie Kutzbach, kdkutzbach@gmail.com and Linda Kern, lindak12@hotmail.com.

► **Advent by Candlelight:** On Tuesday, Dec. 2, 6-8:30 p.m., begin your Advent experience by attending this holiday event! Enjoy holiday-themed tables, delicious desserts, carol singing, and an Advent meditation. All women of St. Paul and their guests are welcome. Sign up to host a table and invite friends! Childcare available upon request. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups or at the Info Center. An informational meeting will be held Sunday, Oct. 19, 10:10 a.m. in the Library Conference Room. Come learn more about volunteer roles including decorating and logistics. There's a spot for every talent and helping hand.



Golden Agers luncheon

Wednesday, Oct. 8, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary

St. Paul senior adults, 75 years and older, come together for the Golden Agers worship and luncheon. RSVP by calling Jennifer Garvey at 563-326-3547, or sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Rides are available upon request. If you need a ride, please RSVP by Sept. 29 to help with coordination.

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, Oct. 5, 4 p.m., North Lawn

On the Feast Day of St. Francis, gather with the beloved creatures of St. Paul and their owners. The sounds of barking, mewing, cawing, and snuffling join our prayers as we give thanks to God for our pets and all that God has made. Gather on the lawn, some on lawn chairs or picnic blankets, and others on leashes or in cages. No need to sign up, just show up with your furry, fuzzy, feathered friends. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Documentary Shorts with the Racial Awareness Team

*Fourth Tuesdays of the month, 6:30 p.m.
(Sept. 23, Oct. 28, and Nov. 25)*

Expand your awareness, advocate for change, delight in diversity, and partner with neighbors in the city. Each month we'll watch and discuss a short documentary film, then wrap up our time engaging ways we can work to diminish prejudice and build a more just community. In September, we'll watch *The Quilters*, the story of men in a Missouri maximum-security prison who design and sew quilts for foster children. Contact Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.



SUPPORT & CARE

Blood Donor Day

Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2-6 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Give the gift of life. Blood donation is simple and takes about 45 minutes with conversation and refreshments afterward. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Care Companions

Care Companions are not experts or counselors, but those who walk alongside other church members and share their journey for a time. Friendship, presence, and prayer are their tools. Those interested can join at any time throughout the year. Interested in learning more? Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Dementia Caregivers Group

Second and Fourth Tuesdays, starting Sept. 9, 1-2 p.m., Church House Living Room

Caring for someone with dementia can be overwhelming. All who walk this journey are welcome to gather to share ideas, gather resources, support one another, and learn how to nurture one's own needs while supporting a loved one. Guest speakers share every fourth Tuesday. All caregivers are welcome. Steve Kalber and Kathy Becker facilitate. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Living With the Loss of a Child

Second Monday of the month, starting Sept. 8, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

As parents who have lost a child, this group gathers together to share, learn, and grow together in faith and wholeness. For any parent who has experienced the loss of a child and looks for connections and shared experiences with others. Contact: Teresa Keller, teresak@stpaulqc.org.

KnitWits

First and Third Wednesdays of the month, 5:30 p.m., Elevator Commons, starting Sept. 3

Knitters, crocheters, handweavers, and more are invited to share time over yarn as we work on service and individual projects and meet new people. Don't know how to knit or crochet? We'll be glad to teach you. If you don't knit, bring your wit! Contact: Beth Johnson, bajohnson5674@gmail.com and Susan Macksey, smacksey@gmail.com.

Prayer Team

The Prayer Chain works quietly and steadily behind the scenes. Prayers rise for illness or challenges, and in praise or thanksgiving. No request is too small. Requests are worded for confidentiality. For a prayer request or to volunteer as one who prays, contact the church office at (563) 326-3547 or email Paula McPherson, mcph-paula@msn.com with "Prayer Team" in the subject line.

► **Prayer Team Gathering:** Meet up on Tuesday, Sept. 23, 9:30-10:30 a.m. for coffee and cookies. This gathering is for current Prayer Team members and those curious about joining.

Quilters

Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16, Fellowship Hall

This devoted group of caring quilters, beginners and experts alike, gather monthly to sew, tie, cut, and piece together beautiful works of art that are donated to those in need. They also welcome those who would like to cut squares or sew quilt tops at home. Contact: Belinda Holbrook, belinda@holbrook.fm.

Walking the Grief Journey

Sundays, Oct. 26-Nov. 23, 10:15-11 a.m., Church House Living Room

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. Led by Pastor Sara Olson-Smith and Joel Moore, deacon and registered nurse, sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Men's Spiritual Journey

Second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 6:30-8 p.m., beginning Sept. 9, Church House Living Room

Guided by the book *From Wild Man to Wise Man* by Richard Rohr, facilitator Ken Winter guides the group to explore and reflect on male spirituality. 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.

LIVE THE QUESTIONS:

ADULTS

As Lutheran Christians, we consider our lives to be unfinished products. That's why we regularly seek ways to grow in faith and deepen the meaning of our days. At St. Paul, we cultivate a community of lifelong learning.

SMALL GROUPS

College + Christ

College-aged adults (18-22) gather to deepen their faith and journey through life together. Contact: Adrianna Blackwell, blackwelladrianna@sau.edu.

Young Adults

The young adult ministry is designed to give those in their 20s and 30s fun social events and meaningful service opportunities. Contact: KarrieAnne Burke, karrieanne16@gmail.com.

- **Fall kick-off:** On Tuesday, Sept. 23, 5:30 p.m., bring a dish and a chair and gather around a fire to celebrate friends and fall. Meet on the North Lawn. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups.

St. Paul Birders

St. Paul members actively birdwatch at various locations throughout the QCA. Contact: Duane Haas, dhaas.dh@gmail.com.

Guys Coffee Group

You are invited to gather with a great group of Christian men for coffee and conversation. Meeting on the second and fourth Mondays, 10 a.m., Library Commons. Contact: Dave McPherson, davemcph@msn.com.

Parents of tweens and teens

Parents with kids ages 8-18 meet regularly to socialize and journey through life together. Contact: Rachael Suddarth, suddarthrachaelm@sau.edu.

A community of people

Small groups are a great way to get connected at church. Scan the QR code to view active groups and learn how to join.



Tech team

Do you have an interest in all things tech? If you are interested in running slides, audio/visual equipment, and other technology located in the sanctuary tech hub during Saturday and Sunday worship services and special events, learn the ins and outs of worship tech with Miles Thompson. This group is open to anyone high school-aged and above. Contact: Miles Thompson, miles@stpaulqc.org.

Tee Time Golfers

This group of St. Paul golfers, of all ages and skill levels, meets for casual games and socializing on the greens. This is a relaxed opportunity to enjoy golf and build community, with no pressure to attend every outing. To learn more or to get on the list to play, contact Duane Haas, dhaas.dh@gmail.com.

- **Upcoming golf outing:** Hit the course on Sunday, Sept. 21, 3 p.m., with other St. Paul golfers of all abilities. This fellowship event promises great conversation, friendly competition, and a chance to strengthen bonds while enjoying a beautiful day on the course.





FAITH EXPLORATION

Bible Study: Heart|Soul|Mind

Three weekly sessions beginning Wednesday, Sept. 3

The Book of Psalms (Sept.-Nov.): The 23rd Psalm, “the Lord is my shepherd,” has been called an American secular icon. Psalm 46 is familiar to Lutherans in the great Luther hymn paraphrase, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” What of the other 148? Are there extended themes? Is there an overall structure to the book? How can these ancient gems of religious poetry inspire us and give expression to our faith today? Wednesdays, 12 noon on Zoom; Thursdays, 9:30 a.m., and Saturdays, 11 a.m., at the church. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

Faith BasiX: The Life of Faith

Sundays, Oct. 5-Nov. 9, 10:15-11 a.m., Luther Loft

The language of faith often sounds like so many theological propositions and philosophical fine print. Behind that language lies the reality of faith: a relationship that God creates with people as a foundation for all of life. Designed for people with no background and lots of questions, this series will unpack and translate the jargon while illuminating the life that is the church’s treasury of faith. Led by Peter Pettit and Duane Larson. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

★ New! Fed on Scripture lunchtime series

Mondays, 12 noon, beginning Sept. 8

Spend your lunchtime in conversation about Jesus and his teachings. Using a contemplative practice of Bible study called *Lectio Divina*, we will read, share and pray through Jesus’ words from the Gospel of John. No experience necessary, just an open heart and your own lunch if you want it. Each week will cover a new passage, so come when you can! Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Conclave film screening

Thursday, Sept. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Last Picture House, Davenport

In advance of Prof. M. Wolff of Augustana College speaking at the Chapel Forum on Sunday, Sept. 28, attend St. Paul’s private screening of *Conclave*. Admission is \$5 with discussion to follow. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

Conversations of faith and culture

First Thursdays of the month, 6 p.m.

Gather 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.

Theology Pub

Third Thursday of the month, 6 p.m.,

Mac’s Tavern, 316 W. 3rd Street, Davenport

Word has it that some of the best theology has been fashioned over tables loaded with good food and drink, and an atmosphere of strong friendship. Come to enjoy a rich mix of people and perspective, as we informally explore the many ways in which our faith intersects with our lives and the world. Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.

Cinema and Spirituality

Third Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m.,

The Last Picture House, Davenport

Each month of 2025 screen a film from the book *A Whole Life in Twelve Movies* by Kathleen Norris and Gareth Higgins. Upcoming films include:

- ▶ **Sept. 16:** *Babette’s Feast* (Generosity)
- ▶ **Oct. 21:** *Wonder Woman 1984* (Transforming conflict)
- ▶ **Nov. 18:** *After Life* (Death and beyond)
- ▶ **Dec. 16:** *Into Great Silence* (Waiting in silence)

Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. \$5 tickets (cash preferred). Contact: Peter Pettit, ppettit@stpaulqc.org.



BOOK LOVERS

Occasional Tuesdays Book Group

Tuesdays, Oct. 7, 14, & 21, 7-7:45 a.m., Library Commons

Read and discuss Gregory Boyle's *Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times*. The book describes Boyle's vision for building loving communities based on two principles: everyone is unshakably good and we all belong to each other. Discuss his call to cherish and nurture the connections that are all around us and live with radical kindness. The book is available in the Book Corner. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.

Faithful Readers

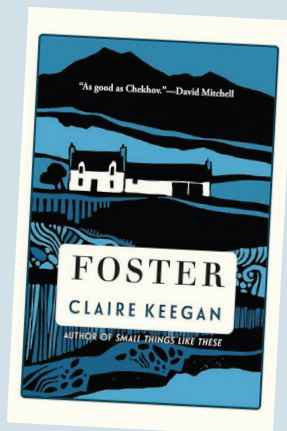
Thursdays, Sept. 11 and Oct. 9, 7 p.m., Luther Loft

At the fall meeting of this literature discussion group conversation focuses on *I Shall Not Want* by Julia Spencer-Fleming. The October meeting is *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan. All books are available in the Book Corner. Contact: Katie Hanson, katiehanson@augustana.edu or Dave Crowe, david-crowe@augustana.edu.

All St. Paul Reads: Foster

Sunday, Sept. 28, 3-4:30 p.m., Library Commons

All St. Paul Reads is encouragement for the congregation to read and talk about a single book title in the same year. Enjoy desserts and conversation with a guest presenter focused on foster care. Childcare will be available. The book is available in the St. Paul Book Corner. Sign up online at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Andrea Spencer, bookcorner@stpaulqc.org.



PARENTING

Family Dinner and Parenting Conversations

Second Tuesdays of the month, beginning Sept. 9; 5 p.m. family dinner, 5:30 parenting conversations, childcare provided

Gather with other families for food, play, and conversation. After sharing a simple meal together, parents will discuss a recent podcast episode, a chapter of a book, or another parenting topic while the kids are in the capable hands of our childcare and children's ministry leaders. What could be better than connecting with parents for mutual support and understanding while the children play?! A free will donation received to help cover the cost of food. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Mom's Morning

Second and fourth Thursdays, 9-10:30 a.m., Church House Living Room

Friendships form when mothers of young children get together. Mom's Morning is a gathering that celebrates parenthood with laughter, prayer, and mutual support. In our time together, we study the Bible, explore parenting topics, and sometimes just hang out and drink coffee. Childcare is provided. Contact: Sara Olson-Smith, sara@stpaulqc.org.

Dads' Group

Monthly gatherings

A gathering of guys hoping to strengthen some connections in the QCA. The group gathers for food and beverages, games, discussions, and other opportunities. Search the "St. Paul Dad's Group" on Facebook, the St. Paul app, or contact Mike Koepp, michael.koepp@gmail.com.

Mom's Night Out

Monthly gatherings

Gather with other moms for a monthly night out. Activities range from dinners to yoga in the park, and escape rooms to backyard gatherings. Email Chelsea Clark to be put on the Mom's Night Out email list at chelseamclark12@gmail.com.

SUNDAY MORNING LEARNING

On Sunday mornings, you'll find a variety of presenters and topics for adult classes, 10:15-11 a.m. Meet up with God's word, some riveting ideas, and interesting people. No need to register in advance. Grab your cup of coffee and settle in.

SEPTEMBER 7

From Dubuque to Selma and Beyond

Doug Markward

After retiring as an Iowa public school administrator, Doug Markward traveled to Selma, Ala. in 2018 to mark the 53rd anniversary of Bloody Sunday by walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where it took place. The experience changed his perspective on race in America, leading to his publication of *From Dubuque to Selma and Beyond* in 2024. Dr. Markward will discuss his insights and sign books; all proceeds from book sales will go to the Davenport Community School District, at his request.

SEPTEMBER 14

Preparing for the Elder Years

Barbara Edmondson, Iowa Legal Aid staff attorney

The network of laws and services that impact our lives in our "elder years" (which may be sooner than we think) can be confusing, leading to complications and missed opportunities. Barbara Edmondson offers an overview of the matters that are at issue and the ways we can best prepare for and navigate them.

SEPTEMBER 21

Human Powers, God, and Lutheran Teaching

Duane Larson

Christian theology understands that God has two hands with which to rule creation. That presumes that God rules creation, including creation's social and political character, which many people now question. How do we understand God's relation to the powers that we exercise in nature and in political life? What might each of God's hands be doing and how can we align our powers with God's?

SEPTEMBER 28

"This Is My Body"

Prof. M. Wolff, Augustana College

The body is a central image in Christian tradition, from the bread of Holy Communion to the church as the body of Christ. Based on research for a recent book, Prof. Wolff explores spiritual and ethical implications of the body and of particular bodies. As background, the Oscar-winning film, *Conclave*, will be screened with Prof. Wolff hosting a discussion. (*Learn more on page 9*).

A full season of learning

Curious about what's coming next at St. Paul?

Scan the QR code to discover our exciting lineup of learning opportunities exploring topics that matter to your daily life. Don't miss out — scan now and see what's waiting for you!



EXPLORE FAITH:

KIDS & FAMILIES

Kids and families can find a wonderful second home at St. Paul. Staff and volunteers bring big hearts for sharing faith, and the congregation seeks to be a loving sign of God's grace for all families.

SUNDAY MORNINGS FOR KIDS

Learning for kids

Sunday mornings, 10:15-11 a.m. starting Sept. 7

On Sept. 7, Sunday morning learning begins for the school year. Look for friendly St. Paul faces on that day to guide you. Registration and weekly check-in take place in Lower Commons for 3-year-olds through 5th grade. Contact: Abbey Cathelyn, abbey@stpaulqc.org.

Childcare

Staffed childcare for infants through kindergarteners is available every Sunday morning. Children are always welcome in worship, but the childcare service helps families who need assistance during the worship hour and at other times. Parents can stay in touch with childcare workers via text.

- **Join the St. Paul childcare team!** St. Paul is looking for individuals age 16 and older to help care for infants and toddlers during Sunday mornings, weekday evenings, and special events. It's a great way to support families in the life of the church—plus, flexible hours make it easy to fit your schedule. Contact: Brittany Guy, brittany@sptaulqc.org.

Nursing Moms' Room

A room for nursing moms, located next to the elevator area near the central staircase, is available. Find rocking chairs, a changing table, supplies, and a video feed from the Sanctuary during worship.



“As a couple, we were initially drawn to St. Paul by the welcoming and inclusive community. Now as a family of four, we love the many opportunities for each of us to grow in our faith individually and together as a family.”

JAKE & MELISSA TAYLOR

FAMILY FUN

Trunk or Treat

Sunday, Oct. 26, 5-7 p.m., South Parking Lot

Gather for St. Paul's spook-tacular family celebration! The night includes pizza and short worship service, followed by candy collecting and an epic parking lot dance extravaganza. Come dressed in your favorite costume and get ready for a night of fun. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Abbey Cathelyn, abbey@stpaulqc.org.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, Dec. 14, 10:15 a.m.

Calling all stars, angels, shepherds, and sheep! Children delight in sharing the story of Jesus' birth through the singing of traditional Christmas carols and speaking parts. Placements for roles takes place on Nov. 9, during the learning hour. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, Nov. 12 & 19, Dec. 3 & 10, at 5:30 p.m., and Dec. 13, 8-11 a.m. Contact: Abbey Cathelyn, abbey@stpaulqc.org.

MILESTONES

Milestones are foundational faith moments that shape our spiritual lives. Families gather for these celebrations; they mark moments in the rhythm of the congregation.

Third Grade: Explore the Bible

Sunday, Oct. 12, 10:15-11 a.m.

Students and the adults who accompany them learn together about the written word of God. Each child receives a personal Bible and a blessing from the congregation at 9 a.m. worship. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Abbey Cathelyn, abbey@stpaulqc.org.

Tenth Grade: Share. Save. Spend.

Sunday, Nov. 9, 10:15-11 a.m.

This is a moment to pause and talk about money intentionally. Families begin the conversation about money and examine our hopes and values. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.



PRESCHOOL

St. Paul Preschool is a loving community for children, ages 2-4. The church's classrooms fill with light and life on Monday through Friday mornings, 8:45-11:45 a.m., September through May. With a professional staff leading the way, this little village for preschoolers is solidly constructed in Christ's love. Questions? Contact preschool director Karen Strusz, karen-strusz@stpaulqc.org, or visit the preschool website at stpaulqcpreschool.org.

Welcome Abbey Cathelyn!

Abbey Cathelyn (pron: catta-line) settled into her new role as director of children's and family ministries at St. Paul early this month, bringing with her a contagious enthusiasm and deep passion for nurturing young faith.

The Atkinson resident lives on five acres with her spouse Ryan, 14-year-old son Kane, and 4-year-old daughter Juniper. Half of their property is dedicated to Juniper Sky Farms, where they raise sheep and goats—a venture they started about a year ago.

"People always comment that I have a bubbly personality and lots of energy," Abbey said. "People have always told me I have a smile on my face more often than not. I enjoy making people laugh."



That energy stems from her work with children. With a degree in Early Childhood Education from Illinois State University and 13 years as a Jazzercise instructor, Abbey has built her career around engaging with young people.

Growing up on a Geneseo farm with her parents and two younger brothers, Abbey developed strong family connections that continue today. She still lives in Geneseo and is a member of First Lutheran Church there.

St. Paul's reputation for support drew her to the position.

"I was originally drawn to St. Paul because of administrative assistant Mackenzie Griffin. She has commented on the supportive and caring staff," Abbey said. "I am drawn to the radical hospitality this congregation believes in, and I think I could grow leaps and bounds in this ministry."

Her focus centers on birth through fifth grade programming.

"I am most excited about continuing my work in the field of children's ministry, especially in the birth-5th grade age group," she said. "My faith is very important to me, and I am lucky to be able to share that with others, especially kids and their families. The sky is the limit for children's ministry. I am excited to share the love of Jesus with these amazing young people! I want children to know that they are loved and that God's grace is for everyone."



GOD-INSPIRED ENTHUSIASM: YOUTH

This is the place for off-the-charts fun, faith, and friendship. But it's so much more. Every encounter is aimed at nurturing and strengthening the faith of young people and their families in powerful ways.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

678 Daybreak

Sundays, 10:15-11 a.m., Youth Room

Sunday gatherings are offered each week for students in grades 6-8. Kids develop a devotional pattern of asking questions, reading the Bible, and wondering and sharing about God. Most seventh- and eighth-graders also serve as acolytes during worship, or sing in the Youth Choir. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.

Confirmation

First three Wednesdays of the month, beginning Sept. 3, 6:30-8 p.m.

For youth in grades 7 and 8, St. Paul's confirmation ministry is a creative, Spirit-enlivened experience, built on relationships with God and others. To sign up, or for more information, contact Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.

The fall confirmation retreat for seventh-graders will be Sept. 12-13, and for eighth-graders on Nov. 7-8. Both retreats take place at church and around the QCA.

678 Night

Wednesdays, Sept. 24 & Oct. 22, 6:30-8 p.m.

High-energy games + togetherness + great Bible studies + camp-fire-style worship = 678 Night. This group for those in grades 6, 7, and 8 meets periodically throughout the year. Watch for 678 announcements. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.

678 Goes to the Zoo!

Saturday, Oct. 4, 1-3 p.m., Niabi Zoo, Coal Valley, IL

Whether you love the big cats, giraffes, or just enjoy hanging out with your youth group buddies, come for an afternoon of fun, friends, and fascinating animals. Sign up at stpaulqc.org/signups. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.

HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday mornings

High school youth volunteer to teach Sunday morning learning for younger children, assist with worship, usher, work in the nursery, or sing in the Youth Choir.

Sunday Night Live (SNL)

Sundays, 6:30-8:30 p.m., starting Sept. 7, Youth Room

Grab a booth or a spot on "the carpet monster" for Sunday Night Live (SNL). SNL is a strong framework for high school youth, a fun place to get recharged before school on Monday morning. Jump into super-sized life experiences. SNL has something for everyone. Contact: Ellie Lindmark, ellie@stpaulqc.org.

Confirmation Faith Stories

Sundays, Sept. 14, 21, & 28, 10:15-11 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Faith stories are the culmination of confirmation at St. Paul. This fall, for three Sundays during the learning hour, ninth-graders share brief presentations describing how they see God at work in the world and in their lives. Anyone from the congregation is welcome to attend. Contact: Katy Warren, katy@stpaulqc.org.



Council Notes

Wednesday evenings at St. Paul expands this year beyond standard choir practices and confirmation events. New offerings include a weekly Bible Study, intentional parenting conversations, and childcare activities. A monthly meal will be held on the first Wednesday of each month.

The Mission Board approved funding for the creation of 50 food and care bags for those experiencing food and housing insecurities. This new "Mini Miracles Ministry" was proposed by a St. Paul child. Additionally, the Tapestry Farms partnership launches next week, with volunteers packaging fresh produce for Tapestry families on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

St. Paul moves forward on the process of calling a third associate pastor to fill out the pastoral staff and allow for continued growth and creativity. Council affirmed Personnel's recommendation to form an associate pastoral call committee

for a third associate pastor position. Committee members include Ann Budde, Madison Castleberry, Jason Mahn, Joel Moore, Amy Paustian, and Peggy Wrzesinski. The anticipated timeline is approximately one year. A standard ministry site profile is in progress and will be approved by the pastoral call committee when they convene.

Council approved significant facility upgrades funded through the Capital Improvement Fund. The sanctuary tower project, including window replacement, will proceed with Bush Construction's \$266,225 bid and includes a 30-year warranty. Additionally, council approved replacing two 18-year-old rooftop air conditioning units totaling \$61,450. The main hallway unit serving pastoral offices has completely failed, while the gathering area unit is experiencing heating issues and expected to fail soon.

Sorta Sacred: A new podcast!

We're excited to introduce *Sorta Sacred*, a new podcast that explores faith, spirituality, and the sacred moments we encounter in everyday life. This isn't your typical religious show—we dive into the messy, beautiful, and sometimes unconventional ways the divine shows up in our world. From coffee shop conversations about our strengths to parenting and finding God in unexpected places, *Sorta Sacred* creates space for honest questions, authentic stories, and the kind of spiritual discussions that happen when we're willing to look beyond traditional boundaries.

Hosted by senior pastor Mark Neithammer and communications director Jessica Taylor, new episodes are released biweekly and feature St. Paul staff and leaders around the community. Listen in as we discover that the sacred isn't always found where we expect it, and that's exactly what makes the journey so meaningful. Find new episodes wherever you listen to podcasts, the St. Paul website, or on [youtube](https://www.youtube.com/@StPaulQuadCities). [com/@StPaulQuadCities](https://www.youtube.com/@StPaulQuadCities).



WORSHIP at St. Paul

► September 6 & 7

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Mark Niethammer

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► September 13 & 14

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Sara Olson-Smith

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► September 20 & 21

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Katy Warren

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► September 27 & 28

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Maddy Tyler

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► October 4 & 5

Season after Pentecost

Preaching:

All services: Sara Olson-Smith

Liturgical tradition:

5pm/8 & 9am

Contemporary Open Spirit:

11:15am

► October 8

Golden Agers Worship & Lunch

Preaching:

10:30am: Peter Pettit



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2136 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52803

START-UP WEEKEND

STARTING SEPT. 7 *Learning for all: 10:15-11 a.m.*

