

Being Present



September 2026

SEPTEMBER--THE BEST MONTH?

John Wesley gave his entire life to gathering, welcoming and ushering all who would listen and be drawn into faithful relationship with Jesus Christ. The key, he realized, was the faithful presence of the collected to honor, glorify and praise the faithful presence of the Lord. Among his last spoken words through lips that labored to remain useful were, “the best of all is, God is with us!” He would repeat this to those gathered near him.

It is with this reality that we enter the month when schools are back to a lively status, the church fills once again, and Wednesday nights turn E.P.I.C. Yes, September might very well be the best month.



Concluding 30 days of a common prayer, we seek vision for what God might be speaking right now to the people of St. Paul's UMC. What did you hear? What did you feel? What did you see? Now is the time to respond to the urging of the Spirit and take these sensory experiences to paper and put them in front of the church. Your visions will help us consider ways we might continue to engage fresh expressions of ministry to our surrounding community.

This month we turn from prayer to presence in our covenant relationship with the church and with God. When hearing, we might confuse this with gifts; surprises all packaged up for special occasions. This is actually a quite suitable vision for what John Wesley described about God and for how we might describe each of you.

This month, think of trading attendance for presence. Attendance is dutiful and perhaps at times disciplined according to guilt for time away. Take heart, celebrate God's presence, “rejoicing in the presence of the LORD your God,” (Deut 12:18) for “I am the light of the world.” (John 8:12) Realize that your presence is a way of witnessing God's light. “Let us make humans in our image,” (Gen 1:26) the Triune God speaks, for “you are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.” (Mat 5:14)

So, come with joy and thanksgiving; come, into God's presence, with your presence, to be present, and to present yourselves holy and blameless as your offering to God and to each other. Amen.

Pastor James

pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

“he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him” (Col 1:22)



Meet us at The Landmark Grill and Grind 128 West Evans Street Williamsburg, Iowa



Join the ladies for a hearty breakfast, great conversation, and prayer at Landmark Grill & Grind in Williamsburg the 2nd Thursday of every month! It's a great way to learn more about others at St. Paul's.

Service Sunday Returns to St. Paul's October 11th!

Let a board member or staff member know if you have a project for members to tackle!



Current projects planned:

- Meals served free of charge at Millersburg and North English Community Centers. Headed up by Delores Reinhart
- Tying fleece blankets in the fellowship hall led by Tammy Fields.

Watch for sign-ups for more projects coming soon!

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesdays

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Wednesdays

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Thursdays

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Fridays

By Appointment

August Attendance

8/2 - 96

8/9 - 125

8/16 - 85

8/23 - 122

8/30 - TBD

Prayer requests can be emailed to office@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

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Organist: Sue Heitmann

Custodian: Melissa Savage

Editor: Shelley Berger

Deadline for news for next month's newsletter is the 20th of the month.

N.O.W. Notices

Noticing where God is already at work among us.



Notice...

Looking through the lens of

Presence

Where is God inviting us to pay attention today?

Let's Notice Together...

September has a way of bringing a buzz with it.

School is back. Calendars fill up. Here at St. Paul's, there's a buzz too—meals to prepare, lessons to teach, people to welcome, and opportunities to serve and grow together.

There is a lot of *doing*. And much of that doing is good. **It matters. It's often how we love and serve one another.**

But even when we're doing good things with full hearts, we can move so quickly that we miss what's right in front of us.

Presence invites us to notice.

The person who lingers. The child with something to tell us. The new face just outside the conversation. The friend whose *"I'm fine"* sounds a little different today.

Presence doesn't always require more time. Sometimes it simply means being fully **where our feet are**—looking up, listening a little longer, and seeing the person, not only the task.

Jesus had important work to do, too. Yet again and again, He noticed the person along the way.

So keep showing up. Keep serving. Keep doing the good work God has placed before you.

But while you're there—notice.

Because sometimes the most important ministry of the day isn't another thing on our list.

It's the person God placed right in front of us.

 *Until Next month...*

As September fills with all the good things ahead, may we remember the people tucked inside the doing.

Look up. Listen well. Notice.

Simply paying attention might remind someone that they matter.

We'll keep noticing together.

 - Kristin

Notice God...

This month, practice being fully where your feet are.

Look up.

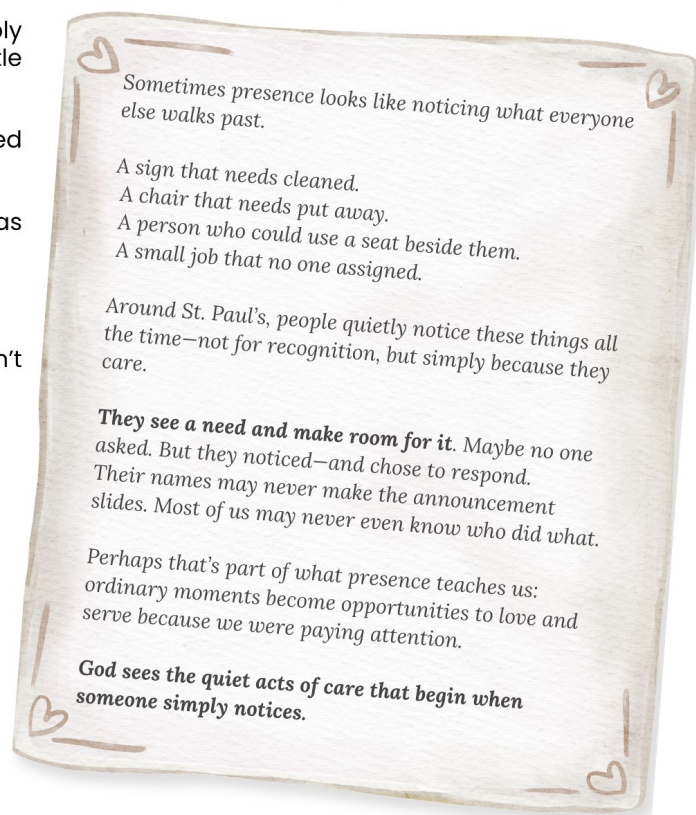
Listen a little longer.

Leave room for interruption.

Notice who God has placed in front of you.

Every Story Matters...

A Story from St. Paul's



Welcome Our New Nursery Supervisor



Hello all!

I am Nicole Sorden-Schott, formerly Schlesselman. I am excited to be back with St. Paul's as the Nursery Supervisor! St. Paul's is the church I attended from my childhood until I graduated high school. I have many fond memories of this church and can't wait to reconnect with the congregation. In my time away from the church my life has been pretty busy! I have been married to my husband Bentley for just over a year and we have two daughters, Dylanne who is 4 and Zoe who just turned 7 months old. I believe in education through play, and hope to establish a creative, fun and nurturing environment for the kiddos of our church. I am blessed to be a part of this growing community!

Nicole will be in the nursery on Sundays during worship services and Wednesdays during EPIC

PLANNING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER!

It is time for us to show our energy...and we need you! We are inviting each of you to complete the Congregational Assessment to gauge the strength, vitality, and trends in our church. The information we gain will be valuable to help our leaders vision, set new ministry goals, and make decisions about the future of St. Paul's UMC.

Those with unique email addresses will soon receive an email with a unique link to the survey, which opens on September 20th. This should take about 30 minutes to complete. Anyone of confirmation age or older is invited to complete the survey and each member of a household above that age should complete a unique survey to ensure a viable range of opinions and desires.

You may complete the survey electronically with the link provided in the coming email. If you prefer a paper copy, we will provide it to you, drop it off at the office, and we'll enter your survey results for you.

All answers are strictly anonymous. We have no way of matching any assessment to a particular person, so please feel free to candidly share your perceptions, opinions and experiences. Our future goals will be influenced by your participation and honest answers.

If you have questions, please contact:

Kristin Scandridge, N.O.W. Director at director@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com
or feel free to talk with a member of the assessment team below.

Many thanks,

Pat McGovern, SPRC Chair
Bonnie Kinkaid, SPRC
Mary Ann Cozine, SPRC
Jenn Lane, Nurture/Entry Captain
Sherry Pope, Finance
Delores Reinhart, Lay Leader
Amy Schuerer

Kristin Scandridge, N.O.W. Director
Shelley Berger, Office Administrator
James Baty, Pastor





Find Your Place in the EPIC ADVENTURE

Wednesdays • 5:30–7:30 PM

Family Night Kickoff: September 2 Groups Begin: September 9

We're saving seats for everyone interested in joining us! Scan the QR code if so that we can prepare meals, volunteers, classroom space, and meaningful experiences for every age group.



Nursery



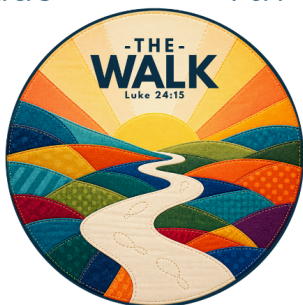
Pre-K - 3rd Grade



4th - 6th Grade



7th - 12th Grade



Adult Studies

Dinner • Worship • Groups • Connection

There's a place for you at EPIC.

EPIC Meals

- Sept. 2nd
 - Family Kick-off Night catered by Mi Casa
- Sept. 9th
 - Gumbo burgers (like Maidrites)
 - chips & other goodies
- Sept. 16th
 - Tater Tot Casserole
- Sept. 23rd - Homecoming Week
 - Baked potato bar with all the fixings
- Sept. 30th
 - Taco bar

The "Kitchen Ladies" will need extra help each week. If you are available from 5-7pm and would like to lend a hand, reach out to Donna Heitman by text or phone call at 319-330-5197.

Donations Needed

- 4 doz. Desserts EACH WEEK
 - can be made by more than one person
- Four 2lb bags of Tater Tots
- Ten 2-cup bags shredded cheese
- Eight gallons Chocolate milk
 - 2 gallons per week
- Four gallons White milk
 - 1 gallon per week
- Eight sticks of butter

*Each week the Kitchen Ladies may ask for additional "odds-n-ends" for meals. Watch for these items in the Weekly Update email.

*Donations may be dropped off during office hours or on Sundays in the kitchen.

Financial Report



CURRENT HILLS BANK BALANCE AS OF August 24, 2026

\$202,558.15 which includes the following breakdown:

- \$81,162.04 General Fund from Offerings
- \$62,376.08 Capital Improvements account
- -14,880.49 in designated amounts such as missions, scholarships, etc.
- \$7,197.52 Memorial Fund account
- \$51,822.51 6-month CD

This leaves \$66,281.55 to pay regular expenses.

Edward Jones, Williamsburg Summary

Funds invested in a CD & Money Market - \$42,372.33

YEAR TO DATE SUMMARY - 1/1/26 to 8/24/26

(35 weeks)

- Total offering given to the General Fund received YTD: \$171,298.47 (\$4,894.00 average weekly offering)
- Total Capital Improvement offering YTD: \$19,905.00 (\$569.00 average weekly offering)
- Total Interest Income YTD: \$1,303.37
- Total expenses paid YTD: \$210,890.98 (\$6,025.00 average weekly expenses)

Iowa Methodist Foundation Fund

(From Marilyn Tanner Memorial) as of 7/31/26

Balance \$108,586.20 (\$100,000 of this money is designated by the family for a future sanctuary)

Notes from the Board



• **Did you know?** St. Paul's is governed by a 14-person board that follows the UMC's One-Board Model. Voting members work on specific area committees empowered by board vote, with special items and updates brought to the board by these committees. The board consists of:

• **Board chair** (non-voting) - Kevin Wilkinson (thanks to Kevin for stepping into this position when Brian Bishop moved. Kevin has provided so much valuable leadership to SPUMC over the years.) The chair and vice chair meet with pastor monthly.

• **Vice Chair** (non-voting) - Carolyn Rathjen (Carolyn recently stepped into this position that Kevin had held. We are so thankful for all the experience she brings.)

• **Trustees** - Blair Belland, Micah Schnebbe, and Jason Kent. This committee handles everything dealing with the church building and property, including such large endeavors as roof and HVAC replacement, solar panels.

• **SPRC (Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee)** - Pat McGovern, Bonnie Kinkead, Mary Ann Cozine. More than just HR, they facilitate a healthy work environment for the staff on behalf of the congregation.

• **Finance** - Brad Gremmer, John Gillaspie, Sherry Pope. Charged with producing and managing the yearly budget, revenue and spending, investments (including estate bequeaths), and apportionments.

• **N.O.W.** - *Nuture* - Jenn Lane, manages a team for all-age education and congregational wellness. *Outreach* - Erica Wilkinson, manages a team for missions and the community. *Witness* - Jess Coffman, manages a team to give voice to the Holy Spirit at work in our faithful community..

• **Ex-officio** - Treasurer - Roger Rathjen, Lay leader - Delores Reinhart, Financial Secretary - Shelley Berger, Pastor James

Upcoming projects/events:

- **Congregational Assessment** - A survey for all to help discern St. Paul's priorities and goals.
- **Greenhouse Vision Project** - St. Paul's has been invited by the Iowa Annual Conference to join in a leadership vision course over six months. Beginning September 23, pastor, John Lane and Jess Coffman will take the work of our Breakthrough Prayer and begin to step through this visioning progress. The goal is a proposed plan for new ministry God is calling for here. The team, working with the Board will prayerfully develop a business pitch of this ministry to the Conference for initial seed funding.
- **Capital Campaign** - The charge conference this fall, initiated by the Board, authorized a campaign to fund upgrading the aging roof to architectural metal and a plan to own our power with solar panels mounted to the roof. A fundraising campaign will be led by Russ Heitmann and introduced to the congregation later this fall.



10-MINUTE CHALLENGE

Spend the first 10 minutes of your morning reading, thinking and praying.

This practice will prove valuable to your personal faith journey.

5 MINS: Read the full passage noted in the weekly bulletin or below.

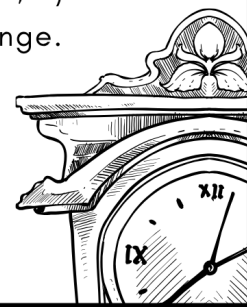
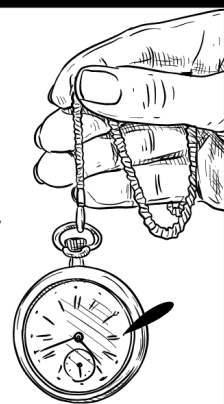
1 MIN: Meditate on something that stands out and write a question(s) you have about it

4 MINS: Pray as you are lead; for personal, family, community, and peace.

John Wesley taught those turning to Methodism that three acts of devotion were of major importance to our growth. The United Methodist Rule of Life follows these as 1) Personal and Family Prayer, 2) Searching the Scriptures, 3) Fasting or abstinence. You will get two of the three daily with this challenge.

September Scripture

Week of 9/6:	Matthew 18:15-20
Week of 9/13:	Romans 14:1-12
Week of 9/20:	Jonah 3:10 - 4:11
Week of 9/27:	Philippians 2:1-13



Silver Cord Service Hours Available



Many volunteer roles at St. Paul's qualify for Silver Cord hours, and there are a variety of ways to serve throughout the year. Talk with Pastor James or Kristin about opportunities that match your interests and schedule.

Silver Cord forms are available in the mailbox by the church office.

We are creating a new directory!
Help us design your page.
Send info to the office or scan
the QR below for the form.



THE ALLEN FAMILY
Joe Allen and husband, Steven, came to St. Paul's in 2014 with 3 small children: Jacob, Hannah, and Zoe. Their summer family times are spent at the lake in Missouri, swimming, and reading for the fireworks or all of the fall's endures. Travelling now includes trips to Missouri to visit Jacob and his wife, Alice, at Washington University in St. Louis. Joe shares his talents with the church family by singing in the choir, serving EPC in Idaho, and has served on the board in EPC (United States Religious Commission).



KRISTIN SCANDRIDGE
Kristin Scandridge and her children, Haven, Hudson, James, Hannah, and Alice Scandridge, have called St. Paul's home since 2011. Their family activities include game nights (with "Happy Selves" and "Piggy" being the highlighted favorites), jumping on the trampoline in the rain, and singing along to musical stories recorded at the top of their lungs during car rides. They are always ready for their own adventures together.



Means of Grace

John Wesley taught that most important to our life of sanctification was participating in God's means of grace evidenced in Scripture--Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper.

At SPUMC, our history has included Communion at each of our 2nd services. We are excited to announce the full return of weekly Communion. Communion is open to anyone who desires to eat at the Lord's Table and by faith accept God's grace. We now offer Communion as follows:

- 8:30 am service - 1st Sunday of the month
- 10:00 am service - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sunday of the month.

Want to participate in preparing
or serving Communion?
Contact Pastor James



SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

Sept 6th - 15th Sunday after Pentecost

In His Presence by Pastor James Baty

Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20

Sept 13th - 16th Sunday after Pentecost

From His Presence by Pastor James Baty

Genesis 50:15-21; Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

Sept 20th - 17th Sunday after Pentecost

With His Presence by Pastor James Baty

Jonah 3:10-4:11; Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

Sept 27th - 18th Sunday after Pentecost

By His Presence by Pastor James Baty

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32



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<https://www.youtube.com/c/stpaulsumcwborg>



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