



St. Paul's

Issue 8 Volume 1

Welcome to St. Paul's and Shawnee!



Joey and Megan Simpson

From the Pastor's Desk



A Special Prayer

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" - Romans 8:28

Dear Saint Paul's Family,

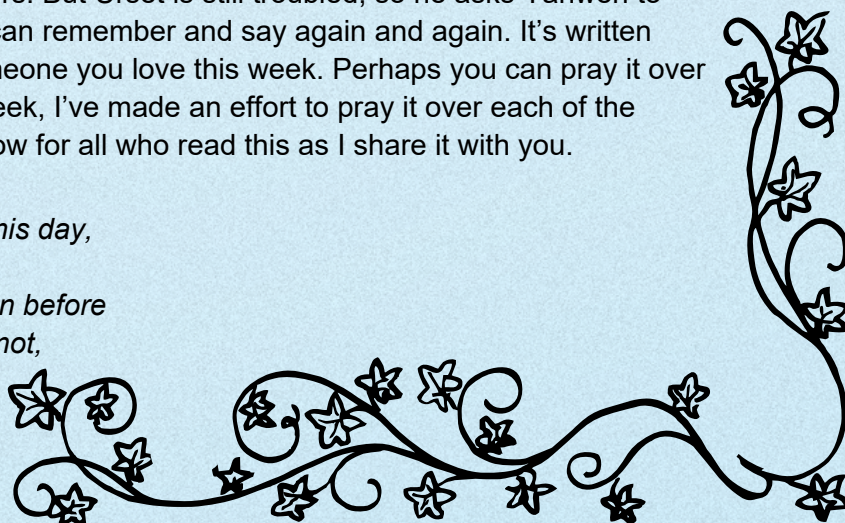
It is a joy to be writing to you for the first time. As we get to know each other, I look forward to hearing about the experiences that have shaped your faith journey and the scriptures and prayers that have been most important to you over the years. As something of an introduction to who I am, and as a devotion for this week, I thought I would share one of my favorite prayers with you. You may learn quickly, I take much joy in finding the ways that God speaks to us through all kinds of people and stories. One of my favorites comes from a Kiowa novelist, born right here in Oklahoma, named N. Scott Momaday.

In one of his books, *In the Bear's House*, he tells a story inherited from his tribe's oral tradition and adds poems and prayers to it. In my first year of college, the book was gifted to me by a friend and the prayer I'll share from it was bookmarked for me. It has encouraged me through many seasons.

The story in the book, in short, goes like this. Once, there was a hunter who killed a bear for his village to eat, and when he returned to the village it was tradition for him to go with the village's singer to pray blessings over the bear's house before the tribe could enjoy the meal. They had done this every time they killed an animal to feed the village. But when the hunter and the singer arrived at this house, the door was open, so they decided to go in. When they entered the house, they saw Urset, the first bear, having conversations with Yahweh. The book is a collection of their conversations.

In one conversation, Urset grieves to Yahweh that he doesn't know how to pray. Yahweh encourages him that every moment that he takes a breath is an act of prayer, because the sound of his very breathing is an act of speaking God's name. He encourages Urset to pray in all that he does: when he fishes, when he eats, and when he admires the other animals and the features of nature like mountains and rivers. But Urset is still troubled, so he asks Yahweh to write a prayer just for Urset, one that he can remember and say again and again. It's written below, and I invite you to pray it over someone you love this week. Perhaps you can pray it over me. As I have been getting settled this week, I've made an effort to pray it over each of the people I meet here, and I am praying it now for all who read this as I share it with you.

*I pray that you are kept safe throughout this day,
that you live as wholly as you can,
that you see things that you have not seen before
and that more of them are beautiful than not,*



more of them delightful than not.

*I pray that you hold easily in your hands the balance between Earth and sky,
that you laugh and cry,
know freedom and restraint,
some joy and some sorrow,
pleasure and pain,
much of life and a little of death.*

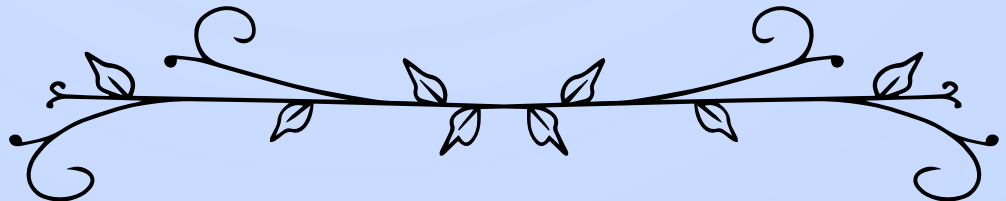
*I pray that you are happily in love in the dawn
and more deeply in love in the dusk. Amen.*

When Paul teaches us that God works through all things for the good of those who love Him, it is these very things that He works through. We may think, "Of course He works through joy, and freedom, and pleasure. But does God really work through the harder things too? Does God work through my pain, through my sorrow, and even through death?" I believe He does. While these things may not always be caused by God, and more often than not they are caused by sin, either of our own or by others who harm us, God uses what remains to work all things together for our good.

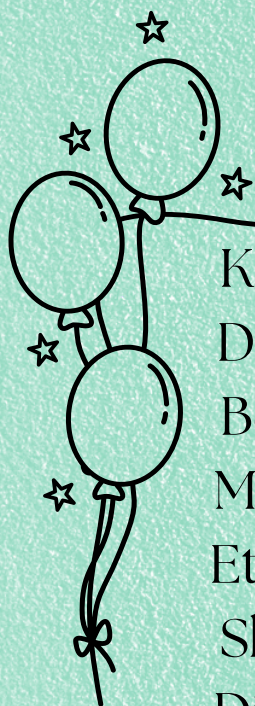
This week I've had my own share of sorrow, leaving my old church family behind to come and join you, but I've also had a great deal of joy getting to know some of you already. I've been in pain moving my house, both physical and emotional, letting go of old things I no longer need to hold on to (as you do when you start thinking about what all can fit in the back of a uhaul). But I've also had so much pleasure receiving such a warm welcome and settling into our new home here in Shawnee. In my experience, this week and in life, God uses the good, and the bad, and the inbetween, working it all together for our flourishing.

This prayer ends the way Paul's famous verse does, with love. God works things together especially for the good of those who love Him. I pray you stay in love with Him, drawing nearer to Him each and every day this week. If you need a place to draw nearer on Sundays, this month we'll spend a little time going through that special chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, and we'll spend a lot of time loving one another as a church family. I hope you can come and be a part of it, and I can't wait to meet you when you do.

With the Love of Christ,
Pastor Joey



Thank you for sharing these wonderful words. On Sunday, July 19th, if you have had a chance to welcome and meet Joey & Megan, we will be having cookies and punch in Fellowship Hall at 2pm. Everyone is Welcome!



July Birthdays



Karen Harris	6
Don Larrabee	8
Beverly Widowski	10
Maureen Trotter	13
Ethan Pounds	14
Sharon Reese	17
Dick Curtis	18
Ann Lockhart	18
Jimmy King	20
Eileen Hargrove	22
Ann Currie	30



Would you like to drop
a birthday card to
someone on the
birthday list?

Remember there are
FREE cards available
on the table by the
church office!

If you don't see your name and
birthday or you know of someone
who needs to be included please let
the church office know or email
amahillhouse@gmail.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sunday, July 19th

@ 2 pm

Meet and greet with Joey and Megan
in the
Fellowship Hall all are welcome

Community Dinner

Monday, July 20th
5:00pm Set Up
5:30pm Dinner

Care Team Meeting

Next Tuesday, July 14th
2:00 p.m. Downstairs Parlor

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday
9:00-12:00 & 1:00-4:00
Closed on Fridays

Service Times

Sunday Mornings
Small Groups 9:30 AM
Worship 10:45 AM

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