

# FAITH MATTERS

# Summer

pathfinder  
CHURCH

FAITH MATTERS  
SUMMER 2021

VOLUME 15 • ISSUE 2

Faith Matters is published four times per year by Pathfinder Church.  
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter  
15800 Manchester Road Ellisville, MO, 63011-2208

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# Reenergized and Excited About the Upcoming Season

by DION GARRETT *Senior Pastor*

**L**ife is filled with hard seasons, but seldom are those seasons the same for everyone. Most of the time, when we're going through a hard time, we lean on others who are in a season of blessing or strength to help carry our burdens.

**I love that each year a team from Pathfinder goes out to do disaster recovery in a nearby town devastated by tornados.** When your life has been

turned upside-down, it's a real gift to have someone from the outside come alongside to steady you. But this last year has been different; we've been through the same storm. All of us, at once!

But you already know all that.

What I've seen sure proof of is God's promise of growth through the hardest seasons (Romans 5:3-5). Personally speaking, instead of asking, "Why me?" I've told God, "I will grow." That has been my single **greatest** request over the last year. If you have never tried that approach to the storms of life, I'd offer it to you. It changes your mindset about difficulties, AND it's a prayer God is delighted to answer! And besides, storms, while dangerous, soften the soil and eventually cause growth!

I've been praying the same prayer over our church. True to his promises, God has been growing our church.

- Our online weekend services views are at all-time highs, still a year into the pandemic! We easily and routinely end up with YouTube views in the 1200-1500s per weekend, but some of our recent ones have surpassed 3,400 and 5,400 views! I know just enough about YouTube to know that counting views is tricky. Still, comparatively, we're seeing even more online views than when we were completely shut down! Incredible!
- We've seen a steady stream of people texting "Hello" on weekends, letting us know they're new here. 158 over the last year!

- COVID has been the impetus for many to find a church home in Pathfinder. Some of them are new to faith in Jesus. Some of them have been on the journey a long time but needed a church like ours to help them keep growing. Someone recently sent me this message after newly coming into the Pathfinder family in the last year.

**"I have tried to focus on the blessings in life during COVID. Pathfinder has been so beneficial for our family and our daily walk with Christ. I pray for you and the leadership of the church frequently."**

- While understandably, our volunteer pool has shrunk during COVID (something we need to reverse soon), the level of dedication we've seen from faithful volunteers goes beyond words. Most of our Pathfinder Kids' volunteers went from serving once a month to serving every week! It's not sustainable, but they know these kids need their church!

And now it's time to take all that hard-earned growth and go forward with it.

I don't know about you, but I have a preference toward action. And I know it is the active movement of the Gospel that will help our world heal and become a hopeful place again. Over the last year, I've realized just how important our mission is and how easy it is to lose focus by getting bogged down with the difficulties and hardships of life. In a year that's been all about surviving, I've seen how quickly leaders like myself can let organizational survival become the mission.

But our mission is bigger than surviving a virus, a downturn, unsettling cultural change, or internal tensions. **Our mission is to bring people to LIFE in**



**Jesus, now and forever—a whole Life.** It's clearer to me than ever before that we have been entrusted with the answer to the world's problems...more than an antidote or a vaccine...more long-lasting than stimulus...more substantive than a party platform. We have Jesus. And the world needs Jesus.

So I'm eager to lead our mission forward to help people find The Whole Life of Jesus. I hope you're ready to join me because we've got some exciting work to do:

- Reorienting our programmatic ministry around the whole life the Scriptures teach us about (letting the scriptures speak into our physical, mental, relational, financial, vocational, and spiritual lives).
- Launching a unique, new Pathfinder App to help you stay focused on your personal growth as you pursue God's way of life for each part of your own.
- Further investments in technology. You know that without past investments in technology to do worship online, the last year would've been very different. We're in need of reinvestment.
- Stewarding our campus infrastructure (HVAC, security, fire suppression) as most of our campus "comes of age" in the next few years.
- Increasing awareness and building rapport with our community throughout the St. Louis region. We've come to be known as a hopeful, gracious, and loving place. We want to extend that influence.

Maybe God knew we needed a storm to soften our hearts, to release our rigid plans, and to make room for future growth. I'm trusting that's exactly what God has been doing.



Backyard Bash • Pathfinder Women



**Summer at Pathfinder**  
is full of opportunities for  
growth and adventure!  
Be sure to take a look at  
the center spread of Faith  
Matters to discover what  
is happening throughout  
the Summer.



## ADAM BISCHEL

MEMBER-AT-LARGE,  
PATHFINDER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

My wife, Lara, and I have been attending Pathfinder Church since about 2007 and absolutely love it. We have four children, Parker, Carson, Cami, and Landry. I graduated from Truman State University and attended Parkway South High School. Professionally I am a senior vice president and managing partner of The Arbor Group at Morgan Stanley - a financial planning and wealth management group. I joined the board four years ago when leadership asked members to self-nominate; I felt a nudge, so I did just that.

Lara and I met in college. Our faith backgrounds were different, but we shared many core beliefs, so we started looking for a church home where we'd both be comfortable. When we moved back to St. Louis, one of my best friends invited us just to come and check it out - and it fit like a glove.

We weren't searching for a particular denomination. My main draw to Pathfinder continues to be the preaching and the content. Throughout our time here, the preaching has been spectacular. I love that our pastors are roughly my age and going through a lot

## BOARD HIGHLIGHT

of the same life situations I am. It means a lot to be somewhere where the preaching feels sincere, and our leaders are experiencing similar real-life issues.

Lara and I both love the kids and student ministry at Pathfinder. Of course, our experience has evolved from the nursery to now Core. However, we have felt the same love for our kids from the volunteers and staff through it all. Our kids were almost dragging us back to in-person attendance. When they want to go, it makes you want to go. We've seen glimpses of them caring for each other and others as they have grown. I am confident that their involvement with Pathfinder has helped solidify these behaviors and reinforced our parental teaching.

### SERVING ON THE BOARD

Being on any board has been such a blessing. Our board is amazingly talented. It's very impressive. I am constantly amazed that I am considered talented enough to be on it. I feel like my biggest contribution to the board is being able to look at big-picture financial issues and help us stay focused on the church's long-term goals.

Getting to know church leadership and staff a lot better has been great. I've seen the inner workings and how complex they can be in a church of our size. And to know I've had some small part in its stewardship - it's been fulfilling to me.

### WHAT'S AHEAD

Our church is at a bit of a crossroads right now with digital and in-person worship, especially as our online reach expands. Our board is being challenged with how to best use our resources to reach the most non-believers. It's also exciting to figure out how to best steward the property we already have and how that may need to change in the coming years based on property usage and deferred maintenance.

I believe we are very blessed to have such amazing leaders shepherding the way forward for Pathfinder. Pastor Dion has an amazing vision for the future of this church, and I am thankful to get to help encourage and support that vision. There are so many people looking for a church home where they can be themselves and be comfortable. I think Pathfinder is that place, and I think we need to shout it from the rooftops.

# MISSIONS WEEK 2021

## July 11–17

- Sign up for Missions Week
- Choose my project(s)
- Re-energize 24 St. Louis mission partners
- Tear down lack of time and manpower barriers
- Give boost of energy and momentum to partner organizations
- Join forces with our church community to make a deep impact
- Serve those who serve

## Sign up today

[PATHFINDERSTL.ORG/MISSIONSWEEK](http://PATHFINDERSTL.ORG/MISSIONSWEEK)

*Scan below to see why people are excited about Missions Week.*



# An Unstoppable School

by DOUG MAUSS

*Executive Director, St. John School*

I've never seen a school year like this before! (And hopefully never will again.) If you didn't know, COVID-19 put our new Personalized Learning model to the test the last ten months, and I'd like to let our church family know how well it went!

Our experience from March 2020 proved to us that we could navigate tough circumstances to keep providing uninterrupted learning. That gave us the confidence to offer in-person learning, knowing that we could weather individual class quarantines and hardly miss a beat. God blessed our approach, and we had no classroom quarantines until November. And then, even as COVID-19 outbreaks spiked all around the country, we never had more than one or two classrooms out at a time, and learning progressed regardless.

Secondly, the trend of public schools switching to "virtual learning" brought a lot of new families to our door this year. I am so thankful to God for helping steer new people towards us and to those parents for entrusting us with the stewardship of their children. Many of those families admittedly were using us as a one-year stopgap solution. However, they have been sharing all year how pleasantly surprised they were with what they found at St. John School. Their students were known and loved, and challenged to grow, whatever unique level they were at. The value here is so high that many of our presumed one-and-done families—over 50%—have decided to continue here for the sake of their child's growth!

Thirdly, I've always believed that we have the best Christian teachers anywhere. This year proved it. Our teachers showed themselves to be brainstormers and problem-solvers. They came up with solutions to problems that never before existed in education. They encouraged students and parents alike, especially amid the uncertainty of a pandemic.

Although our student body was 50% new, teachers were intentional about helping acclimate every new student to our distinct, excellent, gracious Christ-based culture.

In fact, our success has had other schools looking to copy our methods and even poach some of our teachers. We were saddened this year to see a few of our long-standing teachers respond to God's call to bring our methods to up-and-coming schools. I am so grateful for all they've done, and I know they will contribute mightily elsewhere.

I especially feel this way as we wish Principal Scott Osbourn a fond farewell. He will be using his academic expertise to help a Lutheran school in Baltimore work towards accreditation. After helping St. John School become one of the most highly accredited schools in our area, Principal Osbourn is uniquely qualified to help a sister church and school.

But I am also grateful that God does not leave us empty-handed. He has brought us a highly-credentialed replacement in the form of Dr. Derek Scott! With over 20 years of educational background, Dr. Scott is very familiar with the personalized principles of our innovative approach. He's a teacher-oriented people-developer. As we take new strides in the Social-Emotional Learning that our students need to succeed in an ever-changing world, I know that God will use Dr. Scott in amazing ways here.

The Bible promises that God can and will work all circumstances for the good of those who faithfully follow him. As we work to expand God's kingdom through our school's influence, I trust God to continue the great work he has done here for more than a century!





**Schedule a tour**  
[stjls.org/tour](http://stjls.org/tour)

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# Summer

## pathfinder

CHURCH

Summer is in full swing and Pathfinder has amazing events and opportunities to gather together, create memories, learn, grow, and to simply have some fun!

### Pop-Ups

Pathfinder Pop-up Events provide a way to experience new activities and meet new people in a low-pressure, low-commitment format. These Pop-Ups are intentionally limited to a small number of people and are interest based (fishing, basketball, painting etc.)

*Calendar and sign-ups at [pathfinderstl.org/popups](http://pathfinderstl.org/popups)*

### Summer Sessions

#### For Rising 6-12 Graders

Summer Sessions is a high-energy evening for students with team games, worship, and teaching. We strive to have any student in attendance feel connected with other students, find joy, and take steps on their faith journey.

*Dates and locations at [pathfinderstl.org/students](http://pathfinderstl.org/students)*

### Lunch Break

#### For Rising 6-12 Graders

Lunch Break is expanding! After our typical 11:37am lunch time, we will be heading off for an afternoon adventure. You have to eat anyways, why not make it fun? Grab a friend and join in! Bring money for lunch and activity!

*Dates and locations at [pathfinderstl.org/students](http://pathfinderstl.org/students)*

# Vacation Bible School

**June 21, 23, 25 | 9am or 11am**

Experience the excitement of the Rocky Railway! Vacation Bible School with high energy, live music and skits teaching children that Jesus will pull them through life's ups and downs.

*Register at [pathfinderstl.org/vbs](http://pathfinderstl.org/vbs)*

## 4th of July

This year it's back and we couldn't be more excited to host our community for free food, fun, and the best view of fireworks in all of West County!

*Details at [pathfinderstl.org/july4](http://pathfinderstl.org/july4)*

## Missions Week

**July 11-17 | Text MISSIONSWEEK to 43506 to sign up**

Join us for Missions Week and help reignite and re-energize mission partners throughout St. Louis. Serve alongside amazing people and help them push through barriers that keep them in survival mode. With a concerted force of person-power and energy, our goal is to help St. Louis organizations push through the barriers they face.

*Details and sign-ups at [pathfinderstl.org/missionsweek](http://pathfinderstl.org/missionsweek)*

## Global Leadership Summit

**August 5-6**

Join other St. Louis leaders at Pathfinder Church who are curious, growth-minded, change-driven men and women like you for the premier leadership event of 2021. Pathfinder Church is honored to be one of the local host sites, where you will experience two days of rich, high-impact, inspiring sessions, and learn from a diverse faculty who will share their wisdom and practical perspective to support you in your leadership growth.

*Purchase tickets at [pathfinderstl.org/gls](http://pathfinderstl.org/gls)*

# Bullet Journaling

by DOUG MAUSS

*Pastor*

All of my life, I grew up at church hearing stories of faithful disciples of Jesus, who had a daily discipline of devotions and prayer and journaling. Inspired by the practices of influential pastors and Christian leaders, I spent decades trying to keep a journal myself. I never could.

Bullet Journaling has become the first effective tool I've found to benefit my practical organization, mental health, and spiritual practices. If you're looking to take a next step in your spiritual LIFEjourney, here are some of the ways I've used bullet journaling over the last four years.

## Bullet Journaling...

### 1 Unclutters My Mind

I used to try to keep up with tasks and errands mentally. At best, I'd have sticky notes all over my desk and an Outlook calendar that kept me from missing any meetings. Bullet journaling allows me to "offload" my schedule and tasks. At the beginning and end of each day, I can quickly review my workload and add an action item when it comes up. In the meantime, I'm emotionally freed up to be creative and focused on what matters most.

### 2 Visually Prioritizes the Things I Value

Habit trackers have been a reason bullet journaling has exploded in popularity. They've been a game-changer for both my spiritual practices and my health. I have four habits I'm reinforcing through tracking each day: Fitness, Bible Journaling, a moment of Joy for myself, and Writing. Each habit has varying degrees of success.



### 3 Keeps Spiritual Truths Front and Center

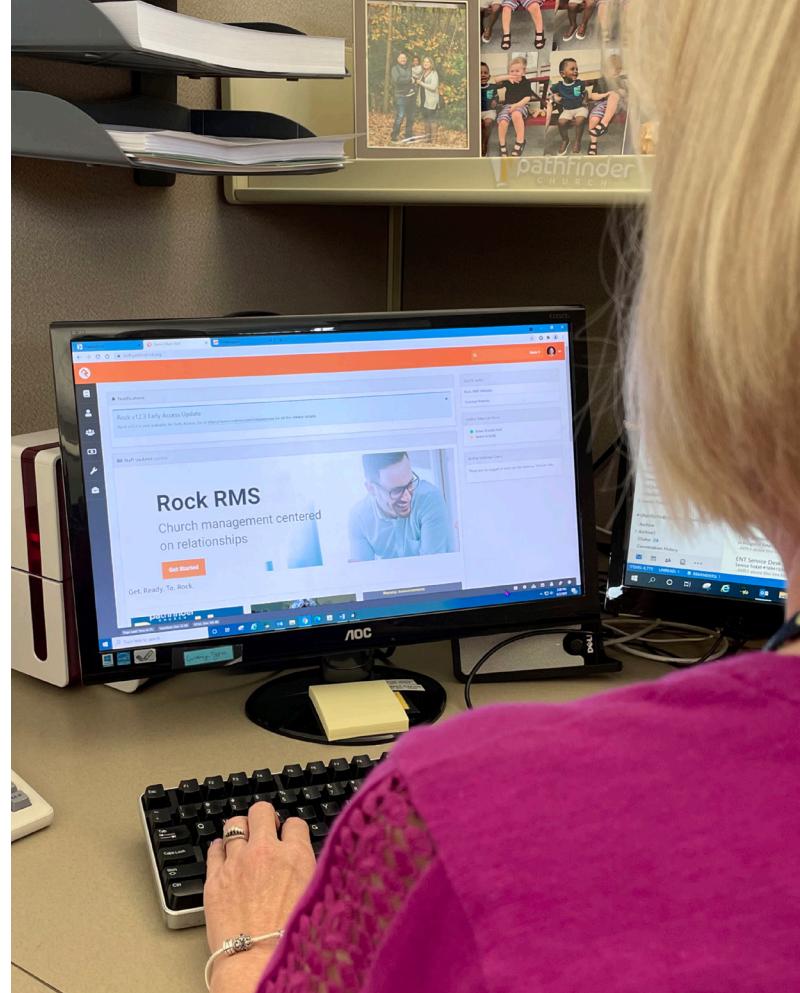
I have a spread dedicated to my Bible study insights and another for any Bible verses I come across in the world that I want to meditate on and memorize. These spreads ensure I look for what God is trying to show me rather than focus on the worries and stresses of the day.

### 4 Keeps Me Centered

When I feel the burden of all the things I don't get done, the journal serves as a visual, tangible record of all the things I did do that day. I used to get to the end of each day, lamenting the intended tasks that I failed to revisit. But the daily page reminds me that even though my original to-do list remains unfinished, that was because of all the things I did instead. Having all of my accomplishments spread out before me helps me feel encouraged to face another day of too-much-to-do!

Scan to see examples of my Bullet Journaling spreads and learn more on how it can benefit you.





# ► Infrastructure: The Important Invisible Stuff

by **TRACY DUNN** Director, Operations & Finance

As an operations staff, we're diving into projects to invest in the infrastructure of our ministry. You may not be excited when you read the word *infrastructure*...but it's not just for engineers and urban planners anymore! As the world and culture rapidly change, we recognize our continued investment in those invisible systems is crucial to keeping our ministry vibrant.

We've just launched a new database church management system called "ROCK" to replace our 20-year-old program. Rock is an open source system that focuses on the heart of ministry - THE PEOPLE! It is fully-featured and mobile friendly. This will allow us to engage with you better and simplify many of our processes. Technology has been essential to our expanded reach and is a trademark of our ministry approach. Look for more—coming soon this summer—about how you can get connected and ensure we have your current information.

Our campus is our largest financial asset and we will be furthering our investment by updating aging infrastructure as it comes of age. Recently, we just upgraded our door access system and controls. This will position us to further enhance our video security system in this next year. Our biggest upcoming investment will be to update 21 HVAC units and the controls system. We are excited about being able to continue to go greener on our campus with this project by installing more efficient HVAC units.

## STAFF HIGHLIGHT



### MELISSA HARTING HUMAN RESOURCES AND LIFEJOURNEY COORDINATOR

#### What's your role at Pathfinder Church?

It's hard to sum up my role because I wear a lot of hats. Essentially, I oversee the recruiting and hiring process for new staff members, support staff culture and development, and administratively support our LIFEjourney team. My days are never boring!

#### What's your background?

Funny thing. My background is in education (secondary with an English focus). God had a different path for me than I originally planned.

#### You are a huge part of the internship program at Pathfinder, tell us more about it:

I have the pleasure of recruiting and interviewing college students for our internship program. It's a ton of fun and every year we get to know so many amazing young adults. We are looking

for students who are growth-minded, ready for a challenge, and open to new experiences and relationships. More than anything, we value life change, learning, discovery, connection, and community for our interns, and that is what they experience over the summer. It is different from your typical summer internship because we are a lot less concerned with what our interns can do for us or how they can make our jobs easier. Instead, we focus on what each individual student needs to grow as a leader professionally, personally, and spiritually. This program is a direct reflection of the heart of our leadership; we believe in raising up the next generation of world changers and this is one really impactful way we are able to do that!

#### What personality test/assessment is your favorite? And what's the value of it?

I believe the whole point of these kinds of assessments is self-awareness. The better we know ourselves, the more capability we have to grow in all areas of our life. The Predictive Index is one of my favorites because it is insanely simple yet incredibly intuitive. We use it extensively on staff to better understand how and why we behave the way we do. I have seen evidence of our teams working more effectively and compassionately because they utilize PI results and have a deeper understanding of each other.

#### What is your favorite thing about working at Pathfinder?

The staff culture. We do our best to love each other as we are in the moment while creating an environment that encourages us to challenge ourselves and grow.

#### LIGHTNING ROUND

**Favorite Song:** Right now, it's *Dance Monkey* by Tones because it makes my workouts more fun.

**Favorite Book:** *The Tiger's Wife* by Tea Obreht

**Favorite STL Attraction:** The Zoo

**Hidden Talent:** I'm great at pretending to be a monster for my kids.

**How Alexa or Siri would describe you:** Pretty mean because you can yell at robots in ways you can't yell at humans.

**Favorite Vacation Spot:** Anywhere our camper is popped up!

# 2021 Pathfinder Interns

Our vision is to mobilize the next generation of world changers by providing an opportunity for interns to develop character, calling and competency as they participate in the mission of Pathfinder Church.



**Jordyn Jackson** • St. Louis Christian

*Student Ministry*

Investing in relationships with students in grades 6-12, taking part in event preparation and implementation, and having opportunities to teach.



**Jade Jameson** • St. Louis University

*Urban Youth Engagement (partnering with All Nations Church)*

Planning, executing, and conducting follow-up for summer events to help urban youth connect with All Nations Church. Working to plan six community events, as well as helping with Sunday morning activities.



**Amanda Schulz** • Missouri State

*Social Media*

Enhancing our church's visibility on social media platforms, assisting with design and execution of social media campaigns, participating in content creation and distributing content across different platform, and telling our story visually with videos and photos for digital communication.



**Tori Strege** • Truman State

*Kids Ministry*

Working with our staff to assist in preparation and implementation of programming for Sundays, Special Needs Ministry, and family events, as well as developing skills in leadership and large event planning.



**Caroline Wilson** • Iowa State

*Community Engagement & Missions*

Connecting with the community through projects such as the 4th of July event, aiding in the planning process of summer mission season, and engaging our Pathfinder community as part of the Hospitality Team on Sunday mornings.

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# 4TH OF JULY

FUN, FOOD, FRIENDS, AND FIREWORKS!

This year it's back and we couldn't be more excited to host our community for food, fun, and the best view of fireworks in all of West County!

**Saturday, July 4 | 6-10pm**

[PATHFINDERSTL.ORG/JULY4](http://PATHFINDERSTL.ORG/JULY4)