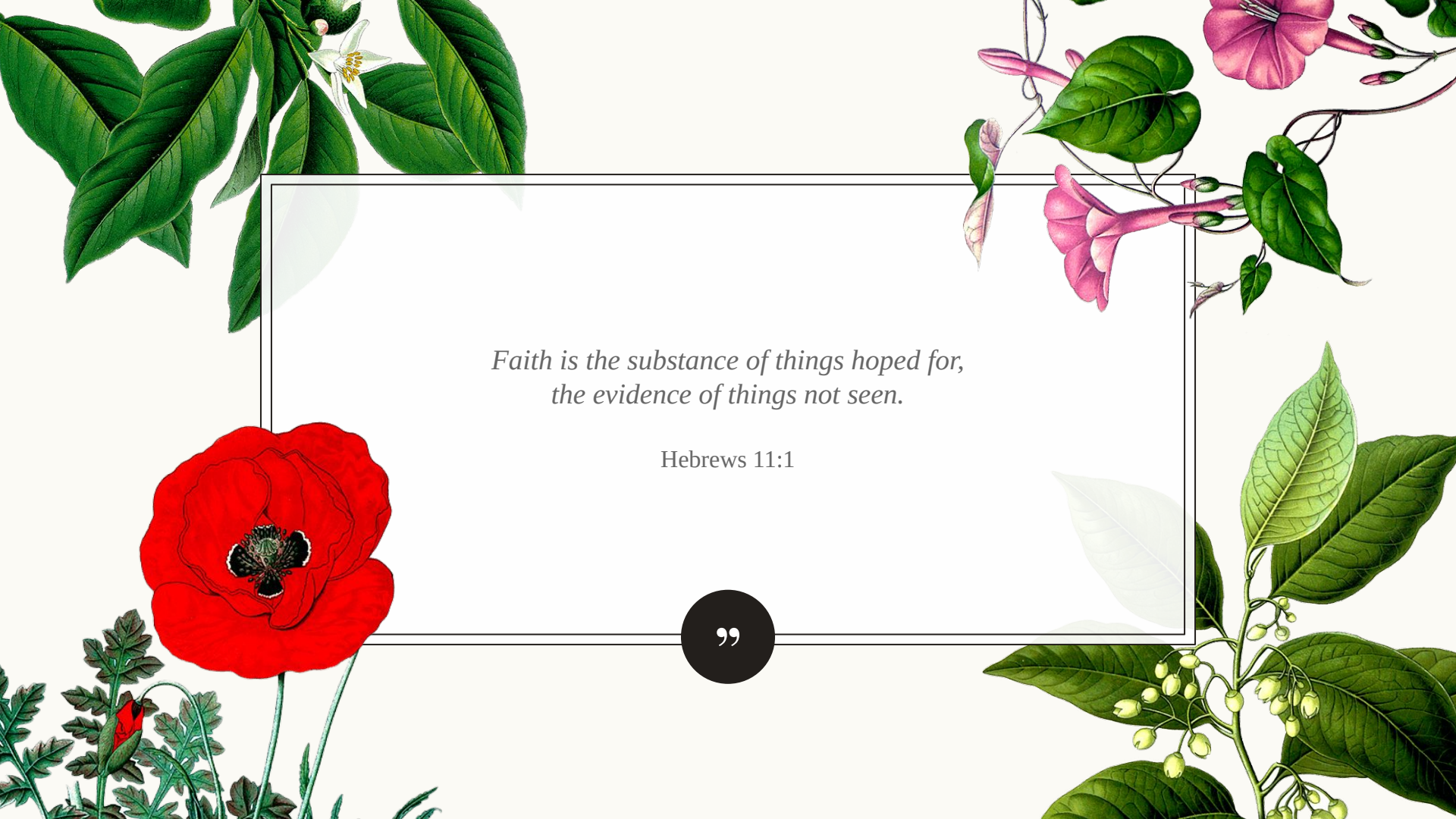


A detailed botanical illustration background featuring various plants and flowers. In the top left, there are pink flowers with green leaves. In the top right, there are white flowers with green leaves. In the bottom left, there is a large yellow flower with a dark red center and green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a yellow lemon with green leaves and a small white flower. The central text is framed by a white border with a thin black outline.

# My Faith Journey

**Agnes Barthel**



*Faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen.*

Hebrews 11:1

”






# Baptism

“Give her an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works.”

Holy Baptism, BCP p. 308





I was baptized on June 4th, 2006. My parents are Rita Rosenberger and David Barthel, and godparents are Beth Fait and Eirik Rennan. I was the first baby to be baptized by The Rev. Bill Van Oss at St. Paul's.

On that day I was presented by my parents to God and the world. I was brought into the Baptismal Covenant, and started my faith journey at St. Paul's.







# Music

*“To sing is to pray twice”*

St. Augustine of Hippo



Music has always been an important part of my life and my faith.

Whether it is singing in church, performing in the Episcopal Youth Music Camp musical, or playing piano or pipe organ, I always feel closer to God when I am making music. I have been blessed to have had so many wonderful people supporting my music learning in my life, including my former organ instructor Tom Hamilton and my current organ instructor Rachael Kresha.





## EYMC

I first went to Episcopal Youth Music Camp at Camp Heartland in Willow River in the summer before 3rd grade. I loved it and went every summer for the next 6 years. It was always an amazing experience where I made many friends and connections that I will remember for the rest of my life.

Like at St. Paul's, camp is a place I felt very close to God, especially when singing and praying. My favorite part of camp was singing around the campfire every evening. I can't wait to go back!





# Nature

*“Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the omnipresent God  
bursts through everywhere”*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



One of the ways I worship God is by admiring his creation. I see God's glory in:

### Plants

Ever since I was little I have loved anything to do with plants. Their importance to life on earth is staggering, as food, shelter, and producers of oxygen; reminding me of God's love for the world. I enjoy gardening, and always admire the beauty of things like the color of a flower, the shape of a leaf, or the dew on a blade of grass.

### Water

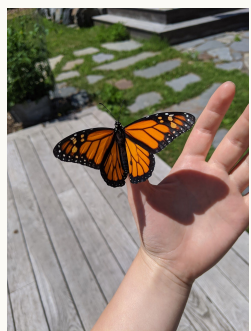
Water is vital for all life. It is from water that God created land and living creatures, and in water that we are Baptised. I see God's grace especially in the beauty and majesty of Lake Superior.



### Animals

My favorite Bible story growing up was the story of Noah's Ark, which reminds us that God wants us to care for all living creatures. I have always loved animals, and have fond memories of bringing as many animals as my parents would allow to the Blessing of the Pets, including a rabbit, a lizard, and two chickens.









# Service

*“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”*

-Mahatma Gandhi

I've had many service opportunities through my church, from preparing meals for Loaves and Fishes, to acolyting and playing pipe organ during church, all teaching me to share God's mission and love my neighbor. I would like to thank Sue Van Oss for making so many of these opportunities possible.



Helping Mom decorate bulletin boards



Baking for Loaves & Fishes







## Hands Across Duluth (HAD)

Hands Across Duluth was a very meaningful experience for me. Annually, the youth of St. Paul's Duluth and Ascension Stillwater spent nearly a week learning about issues surrounding poverty, race, and homelessness, and spent time volunteering in places around Duluth. I was able to participate in this event several times. Each time I met many wonderful people and learned how to better respond to human need with loving service.



Bundling sage at Fond Du Lac reservation,  
HAD 2019



## Vacation Bible School (VBS)

I was lucky enough to get to attend VBS as both a camper and a counselor for several years each. In my experience as a camper, VBS was a highlight of my summer, filled with fun activities and dancing. As a counselor, it provided meaningful experiences working with children and teaching them about God's love.





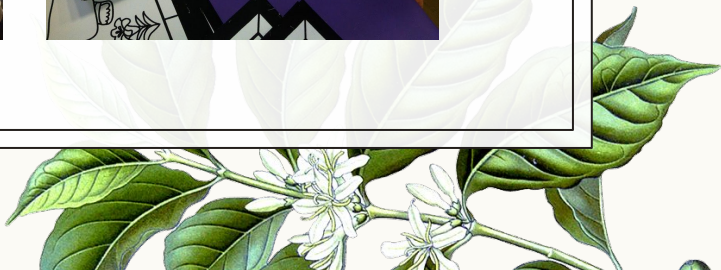
# Community

*Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help.*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12



I have always felt a strong sense of community at St. Paul's. Whether it's been starting high school, acolyting for the first time, or performing a piece of music during church, the members of St. Paul's have always been incredibly supportive. This community has helped guide and nurture my faith, and I feel blessed to be a part of such a wonderful congregation.





## Thank You.

I am truly grateful to everyone who has supported me along my faith journey towards confirmation, my family, friends, and all the members of St. Paul's.

A special thanks to: Mom and Dad, Beth Fait and Eirik Rennan, Bill Van Oss, Sue Van Oss, Luca Van Oss, Nat Constance, Tom Hamilton, Laura Budd, Joy and Bob Pyle, Karen Allison, and Carol Andrews.

