



# LIVING THE SIX THROUGH GOLF

*Paul Wunderlich*

by Becky Pagel | Director of Generosity

As her son crossed the stage for his graduation from the Golf Foundation of Missouri's youth summer camp program, a mom in the audience stood up and said, "You've changed my son's life. Thank you." And with that, Paul Wunderlich knew he had found his latest calling.

In the 37 years he's been at St. John, Paul has been on an amazing LIFEjourney. Ten years ago he saw an opportunity to meet the needs of children in St. Louis through golf. Because he and others got involved, nearly 650 children, and their families, have a chance at a better future. We call this "Living the Six."

St. John is a missional church, which means we equip, empower and send people to do God's work, as compared to the former attractional model when people relied on congregational leadership and organization for most Christian activity. If we are to be a community church, we must each be out in the community. That's why we're sharing this story.

A U.S. Marine paratroop officer, former CEO of St. Luke's Hospital, U.S. patent holder, husband, father and long-standing member of St. John Church, Paul has done a lot of interesting things. But the ability he has to change the lives of at-risk youth from the city of St. Louis through the sport of golf is what has blessed him the most.

"Helping kids through the Golf Foundation of Missouri has been the most fun experience in my life, and I've lived more than most," Paul said. "Of all the things the Lord's allowed me to do, in addition to my efforts at St. John, this is the best."

Through summer camps and other events, the Golf Foundation of Missouri uses the game of golf to teach 120 local children about "Life's Opportunities." In addition to learning patience, perseverance, integrity and sportsmanship, they also attend life skills classes where they work on writing skills, interview techniques, goal setting and making good choices. Paul is a founding member of this organization which began in 2003.

The Golf Foundation of Missouri is completely funded by donations from individuals and corporations. It partners with Girls, Inc., Gene Slay's Boys Club and Kingdom House to choose the participants and run the camp at the Highland Golf Course in Forest Park. Golf instruction is provided by Gateway PGA Professionals who volunteer their time two to four days a week for six weeks each summer.

Paul's drive to help others goes back a long way, as does his involvement in the church and St. John. The son of a professor at Concordia Seminary, Paul came to St. John with his wife, Sharon, in 1975. At the time he was building St. Luke's Hospital in Chesterfield and they had a son starting school. An invitation from the principal to visit St. John School led them here. Their son enrolled in school and they've been active and supportive members ever since.

"I'm not unique. I didn't do this by myself," says Paul. "I've been blessed to be part of a great group of people who are making a difference."

You are, too. You can make a difference in the community, the region and the world. How's God calling you to "Live the Six?"