

## **28:16 Story**

### **Gatwech Miak**

#### **The House of God**

In 2008, when I first walked into St. Andrew building at Melrose, I was met with open arms, and the welcoming hearts of pastors Kyle and Mark. They asked my name and phone number. Later that week, I received a follow up call from pastor Kyle. It felt right, to be accepted regardless of who I am or where I came from.

It was the first time someone did not start the conversation by asking me where I am from and what brought me to Iowa. I am accepted into something bigger than myself—a community of faith. This is what makes our church unique—to welcome everyone into God’s house with open arms regardless.

#### **I Am the Work of God**

More than three years ago, my family went through a crisis when my mother went missing in Gambella, Ethiopia. It was a difficult time for my family. A couple of months after we received the news about my mother, our car was stolen in the parking lot of our apartment. It was the church family who got my family through that difficult time.

Because I am a human, my thoughts were, “Is God punishing me? Why me? Have I done something wrong?” I didn’t know then that God was shaping my life, molding me into what He wants me to be, and he is not done with that process.

I know now that God brought me to St. Andrew knowing that these events will happen in my life, and He knows that I cannot handled them by myself.

“Surely, the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it.”