



Minister's Ponderings:

I have had quite a few conversations with our parishioners, wondering about what will happen with the **Christmas Eve** services, with the omicron variant spreading so rapidly. **At this point in time, the services are still scheduled for 4:30 and**

7:00 p.m., with pre-registration required for those attending in-person. The Transition Steering Team has been and continues to monitor health regulations and safety measures to keep us safe during this pandemic. Should anything change, we will get the word out. What I can tell you is that we have very strict protocols in place. We are restricting each service to a maximum of 90 people even though we can sit just under 500. We continue to be cautious. Of course, each of us must make the decision for ourselves whether we chose to attend in person or not. The **good news** is that there will be an on-line service Christmas Eve, no matter what happens. We will celebrate the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ. The angels proclaimed, "Jesus Christ is born!" and we join them in celebrating the incarnation of God into the world.

Worship:

This Sunday, Dec. 19th, is our **Christmas Cantata, "Winter's Grace"** with the St. Paul's and Friends Virtual Choir. A beautiful work of art, this has lovely music and singers and is always a favourite service each year. Worship with us with these special Advent services, either in-person at the church or on-line! Food Donations can be dropped off **Sunday morning** and we will get them to the Salvation Army Food Bank.

Christmas Eve Services – 4:30 and 7:00 p.m.

On Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m. we will be having an **All Ages Worship service** with in-person children being part of our pageant. Thank you to our Discovery Kids families who pre-registered with Rebecca so that your children can be part of the pageant. Come join with children, animals and all ages as we celebrate the birth of a baby who changed the world.

On Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. we will have a second service with Lessons, Carols and Candlelight. Our guest singer is Shayla Brown. A quieter service, we hope that it will fill you with the joy of Christmas.

Please note, **everyone, must pre-register for one or the other Christmas Eve service.** We need to know which service you plan to attend and how many people will be with you. If you do not pre-register, we cannot guarantee you a space. Email the church office stpaulsunited@rogers.com anytime or **only** on **Tues. Wed. Thurs.** or phone Louise 705-

526-1640, to let her know which service and how many are coming. You must pre-register by Wed. Dec. 23rd.

Sunday, December 26th will be an **on-line Worship service only**. There will not be an in-person worship that day.

2021 Advent Services 10 am

Advent 4 – December 19 - Choir Cantata "Winter's Grace"

2021 Christmas Eve Services - Pre-register now and get a seat!

Dec. 24 4:30 p.m. In-person All Ages Christmas Eve service,

Dec. 24 7 :00 p.m. In-person Carols/Readings/Candlelight Christmas Eve service

Dec. 26 On-line service only

Join our on-line worship service at www.stpaulsmidland.org



St. Paul's policy requires that all eligible congregants, volunteers, user groups and visitors be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and show proof of vaccination before entering the building. Those who wish to claim a Human Rights-Code exemption (such as a medical exemption), should notify the office of their accommodation request and guidance will be provided about how to proceed. Children not eligible for vaccination are welcome to attend! One member of the party will complete contact information for those attending with them. Masking, physical distancing and hand sanitizing is still required and singing will not resume.

We are required by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to continue active screening, therefore the COVID screening questionnaire is attached. **Please review it before you attend church on Sunday**, as the ushers will be asking you about your current health status.

Visit our website at www.stpaulsmidland.org and use the direct YouTube link at the top of the page, or simply go to YouTube and subscribe to our channel. Just type in "St. Paul's Midland" and you will find us. If you are on Facebook, you can get St. Paul's updates that way as well.

St. Paul's Zoom Coffee Hour:

The next ZOOM Coffee Hour will be on **Sunday December 26th at 1:00 p.m.** We invite you all to join. You can use the same link as before:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89969004401>



O Holy Night



Please join Richard Bott and others this Thursday, December 16th at 7:00 p.m. for "[O Holy Night,](#)" a Christmas service of healing and hope, with Moderator Richard Bott and others. Join the livestream on The United Church of Canada's [YouTube channel](#).

Congregational News/Updates:

Our **condolences** to our Volunteer Associate Minister, **Rev. Bev Irwin**, on the death of her daughter, Laurie Gray, on Thursday December 9th. Please keep Bev, Heather and the Irwin family in your thoughts and prayers.

Our **condolences** as well to **Joan Pellett** on the death of her husband, Bob Pellett, on Friday, December 10th. Joan and Bob attended St. Paul's for many years before moving away. They continued to worship with us on-line. Bob beautifully refinished several tables for the church. Please keep Joan and the Pellett family in your thoughts and prayers.

The office will be closed for the Christmas holiday period starting December 24th and re-opening on Tuesday January 4th. A reminder that Louise works from home for the most part (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) and is only actually in the office on Thursday mornings from 9 until noon. She can be reached at stpaulsunited@rogers.com or at 705-526-1640.

A huge THANK YOU from the UCW, to all of you who donated baking or purchased Christmas goodie boxes las week. With your help, this fundraiser was an astounding success!!

From our Stewardship Committee:

Any year-end donations must be received no later than noon on December 30th, 2021, for 2021 tax purposes. Even though the office will be closed, mail will be picked up at the church throughout the Christmas season.

For those of you who use the **weekly givings envelopes**, they are now available to be picked up on Thursday mornings between 9 am and noon, or you can pick them up if you are attending any in-person worship service. Some of you are now using e-transfer and may no longer want envelopes. Please let Louise know if this is the case.

Blessings everyone. Till next week. Karen

Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam, Minister, St. Paul's United Church

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