



St. Paul's Weekly Update – Feb. 17, 2022

Minister's Ponderings

I am so excited to report that starting **Sunday March 13th** at **10:00 a.m.** we will once again be returning to in-person worship. Mark your calendar and join us for worship in the sanctuary. If you are not yet ready for that or you are one of our on-line worshippers, continue to worship with us on-line. It marks two years since we closed our doors due to the pandemic on Sunday March 15, 2020. It has been a long time. I am grateful that things are beginning to open up. However, as I reported last week, St. Paul's has decided to re-open slowly and carefully. Until further notice, we still must be fully vaccinated to enter our building. Masks, social distancing and no food continue to be our protocols. No longer will you need to review a health questionnaire. You do not have to register to attend - just come. We have a large sanctuary and there is plenty of space to keep us all socially distanced.

These past two years have been difficult. We have been pushed to rethink how we live our faith and serve as the body of Christ. Opportunities and possibilities were and continue to be explored. We have forged ahead, making new paths as we have walked with one another on this journey of faith.

Worship

This coming Sunday, we will be talking about our local Black History and learning more about the Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church right here in North Simcoe, not far from us. This is our history as Canadians and it is rich indeed.



To worship with us, 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. Check us out on both our new website and Facebook.

Congregational News/Updates

Our condolences to the family of Kelly Asselin, on the passing of her mother-in-law Linda. Please keep this family in your thoughts and prayers.

THANK YOU to the Discovery Kids for their beautiful Valentines for our At Home Faithfuls. So much work went into them and the folks who received them were very appreciative. So nice to be remembered on Valentine's Day! Thanks also to our Pastoral Visitors who delivered them on our behalf.



The **Women's Grief Support Group** will resume on Tuesday, February 22nd at 2:30 p.m. in the Church Parlour. Please call Colleen at 705-427-9630 if you are requiring transportation. All are welcome!

Men's Breakfast Gathering

Our next men's breakfast group via Zoom will be on **Saturday February 26th at 9:30 a.m.** The Zoom link is included below. Gather with the guys while having your coffee or breakfast at home. All men are welcome to join.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89829828219?pwd=WmtONDZKNm91c0svSTNZbzV6aitLUT09>

Meeting ID: 898 2982 8219

Passcode: 995643

Annual Report and Annual General Congregational Meeting – February 27, 2022

On Sunday, **Feb. 27th at 1:00 p.m.**, we will be having our Annual General Meeting **via ZOOM**. The link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89969004401> is the same one as the Coffee Hour Zoom link. Our shorter Coffee hour will continue following the meeting. For those who **do not have internet service**, the Annual Report was delivered to you late last week. The meeting Agenda and meeting motions will be delivered to you and you will have the ability to vote by mail. Please take the time to read the reports of our various committees, the Nomination report and Financial Statements. Mark your calendar and plan on joining us.

St. Paul's Zoom Coffee Hour

The next ZOOM Coffee Hour will be on **Sunday February 27, 2022, at 1:00 p.m., at which time we will be having our Annual General Meeting.** We invite you all to join. You can use the same link as before:

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



St. Paul's Refugee Work Update

After years of delay due to the pandemic, we are happy to announce that the Ismail family are arriving in Midland on February 17th. They will finally begin their new life in Canada and be reunited with their two young adult children who arrived in Canada in 2018 as refugees. This picture is dated,



but this is the family that we voted to assist with in their sponsorship with St. Mark's Anglican Lutheran Church over three years ago. You will be learning more about our "St. Paul's Refugee Work" as this will be our Lenten project. Our Refugee Committee is looking forward to giving updates on this family and our second sponsorship, an Afghani family, who are still waiting for final approval to come to Midland. St. Paul's works with those in need in our local community as well as those around the world. War, violence, and a climate crisis has led to a significant increase of refugees around the world, desperately seeking a safe home for their families.

World Day of Prayer



World Day of Prayer will take place Friday March 4th at 2PM in person at Midland Alliance Church, 829 Yonge Street in Midland with COVID protocols in place. It will also be available on-line at <https://machurch.ca>. Guest speaker will be Lois Belsey, a retired Missionary.

This Week's Minute for Mission:

GOD'S MISSION
OUR GIFTS

Record numbers of families are turning to our Mission & Service partners for support.

In the last two years, visits to Canadian food banks have climbed 20 percent. Today, over 33 percent of foodbank users are children. For families already struggling, there's no relief in sight. Food prices are set to rise another 5 to 7 percent this year. Record numbers of families are turning to our Mission & Service partners for support.

That's why on February 21—as many provinces celebrate Family Day—Mission & Service is launching a special appeal to support Canadian families. Your gift of just \$25 will provide a family of four with a warm, nutritious meal. \$50 will support a family with two meals. \$175 will ensure a family can eat a good, healthy meal every day of the week.

Whether you are celebrating Family Day, Heritage Day, or if it's just another day, let's make February 21 a day of generosity. If you are able, please make a special gift to help families, and make sure your friends know there is an opportunity to give. With new variants, rolling school closures, lockdowns, fear, and uncertainty, families are more stressed than ever. It doesn't cost a lot to show we care. Above all, let us pray for families:

O God, bless our families.

Bless parents who are on edge balancing parenting and work responsibilities.

Bless those who feel isolated and alone without childcare supports.

Bless parents who are physically and mentally drained.

Bless those who are unable to find or afford safe housing and stable jobs.

Bless those giving it their all to approach this time with creativity and compassion.

Bless children who feel the uncertainty of these days most acutely.

Bless those living in unsafe home environments.

Bless young people who are missing friends and gatherings.

Bless teens who grieve the loss of graduation celebrations, who have delayed further education and work opportunities, and who are waiting for driver's tests.

Bless families facing financial insecurity, struggling to put food on the table.

Bless all experiencing anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges.

Bless those waiting for vaccinations and tests, worried about staying or recovering well.

Bless families to express warmth, caring, patience, forgiveness, and love toward one another.

Bless them to know it's okay to not be okay, and to reach out for support.

Bless them with the peace and grace of your holy spirit.

Bless them to know they aren't alone.

Amen.

Blessings everyone,

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