

From the Minister

If you were able to attend or watch our Youth Musical this past Sunday, I am sure you experienced joy and laughter as we heard once again the story of Christmas through the misadventures of workers in an Ugly Christmas Sweater factory. We are so grateful for all who led and participated in this event.

This Sunday is our Cantata. We are so blessed to have our own choir plus singers from the community and instrumentalists who gift us with beautiful music. Please join us and invite others to hear the good news this coming Sunday.

Our Christmas Eve celebration will be in-person and we look forward to being together as a faith community on the holiest of nights. The service begins at 7:00 p.m. and we hope that you will join us and invite others to join as well. If you have any friends/relatives that live out of town and cannot attend the service, please let them know that they can watch it online from home.

Upcoming Advent/Christmas Worship Services

Worship with us in person at 10:00 a.m. or on-line. 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.



Have You Heard: A Celtic Christmas Celebration:

Join us for this special Sunday service on **December 18th at 10:00 a.m.**

Our cantata Sunday is the most popular of the year and this event will be no exception. St Paul's choir will be joined by the Bay Sound Singers, instrumentalists and a few "extras" this year as we present this special celebration. All are welcome.

Advent Services Calendar – 10:00 a.m.

Advent 4 - December 18th - Choir Cantata

"Have you Heard: A Celtic Christmas Celebration"

Dec 24th - Christmas Eve Service – 7:00 p.m.

Dec 25th - There is no church service on Christmas Sunday. We invite you to watch an earlier service online.



Jan 1st – Join us for Sunday morning worship to bring in the New Year with warm hearts of gratitude and a look at new beginnings.

Join our live-stream service at stpaulsmidland.org

Our Christmas Eve service this year is in person as well as online, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Please come join us once again for this service of carols, candlelight, children and the Christmas Story.

Congregational Life

For those of you who missed the announcement in church last Sunday, we want to congratulate Victoria Warwick on the birth her granddaughter "Darcy", who was born on November 26th, 2022.



Our condolences to our Church Administrator, Louise Therrien on the loss of her partner's father, Giovanni Reda who passed away on December 9th. Please keep Louise and the Reda family in your thoughts and prayers. The funeral service is in Orillia on Saturday, December 17th.

We also want to express **our condolences** to the family of Betty Bradford who passed away the first week of December while in Florida for the winter. Betty was a member of the U.C.W. and part of the bible study group as well as a regular attender at church when she was able. Please keep the Bradford family in your thoughts and prayers. At this point we are not aware of any funeral/memorial service plans.

For those of you who have ordered **church photos**, we have been advised that the pictures are being sent out this week. Please keep in mind that the Photo Directory booklet will not be ready for a few more weeks, as it is still in the first draft stage.

St. Paul's ZOOM Coffee Hour

In-person Coffee Hours are still temporarily cancelled for health and safety reasons and will not resume until the new year. Our ZOOM coffee hours will continue on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. **Please note that there will be no ZOOM coffee hour on Christmas Day.**

Message from the Stewardship Committee

For those of you who may have missed it, below is Pat File's message to the congregation from Sunday December 11th.

"On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I get to say some of my very favourite words today in church - it is truly a day to say Rejoice and Hallelujah! As we come together to celebrate the season of Advent during these uncertain times, we are reminded of how much we have to be grateful for.

We are so very thankful for the generosity and donations from our congregation, the groups who use our church, the splendid choirs, the Faithful Footprints grant and a small rebate that we are expecting now from Enbridge. This has helped us reach our fundraising goal for the new energy efficient furnace. We say Thank You, Rejoice and Hallelujah!

This congregation has also remembered those in need here and around the world. We have raised over \$10,000 this fall for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which will be matched four times over by the Canadian government. Earlier this year, we also raised money and other forms of support to help welcome new Refugee families to Midland. Your contributions on Christmas Eve

will go toward our Benevolent fund and will help meet individual needs throughout the year as they arise. Our UCW have also been busy making cookies to raise funds for their many projects here and abroad. Again, we say thank you - Rejoice and Hallelujah!

As we continue to support the ongoing work of St Paul's and the staff who provide us with such inspirational services every Sunday as well as other meaningful services for the congregation and community, we thank you for your donations. Both pre-authorized remittances (PAR) or through individual offerings, your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you - Rejoice and Hallelujah!

As we come to our year end, the Stewardship Committee is seeing a shortfall of approximately \$20,000 between our income and expenses. As you consider any year-end charitable donations, we humbly ask you to keep St. Paul's in your prayers. If you are able to make an extra donation at this time, we once again say thank you - Rejoice and Hallelujah".

Remember that anything you donate is tax deductible and a tax receipt will be issued before the end of February 2023. **Year-end donations for 2022 must be received no later than noon on December 30th.** Although there will be no one working at the church between Christmas and New Year, the mailbox is checked daily.

An update on our Income and Expenses as of November 30, 2022:

Income: \$216,545

Expenses: \$236,653

Deficit: (\$20,108)



Salvation Army Food Drive:

Our Salvation Army Food Drive will end this Sunday, December 18th. If you plan to donate food items, please bring them in by that date. Any donations by cash or cheque need to be brought directly to the Food Bank located at 555 Dominion Avenue in Midland. If you are attending in person service and would like to contribute, donations can be left near the door by the organ. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Men's Breakfast Gathering

Our regular Men's breakfast gathering will not be taking place in December, as it falls on New Years Eve, Saturday December 31st.

Office Hours

The office is open on **Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings** from **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon**. Jane is in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. You can reach her by email at officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com or by phone at 705-526-6077. Louise is in the office on Wednesday mornings. The remainder of the time (between Tuesday and Thursday until 4:00 p.m.) Louise can be reached at stpaulsunited@rogers.com or at her home phone number 705-526-1640.

The office will be closed between Christmas and New Years and will re-open on Tuesday January 3, 2023.

UCW

UCW wants to thank everyone who purchased our Goodie Boxes this year. All together we sold 48 boxes!! Great job everyone. We would also like to send out a big thank you to all the bakers for making such delicious treats that made this goodie box sale possible! Merry Christmas to all from UCW.

Faith Formation

Discovery Kids are wanting to let families know that we are inviting all children attending our Christmas Eve service to be part of our mini pageant. There are no rehearsals, just come a bit early to allow time for a costume change and to get ready for the service. Grandchildren and great grandchildren are welcome!

Upcoming concert at St. Paul's

Vox Community Choir: Come to the Music

Come and join us for this this uplifting Christmas concert on **Saturday, December 17th at 4:00 p.m.** It will be held here at St. Paul's and doors open at 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, plus a non-perishable food item donation for the Midland Salvation Army Food Bank. Students aged 16 and under have free admission. Tickets can be purchased at Johnstone's Musicland, from the VOX Choir members or at the door. This is a mask friendly event and our choir will be masked. Please wear yours as we don't want anyone's Christmas to be ruined! We hope to see everyone who can make it there.

This Week's Minute for Mission

**GOD'S MISSION
OUR GIFTS**



We all know what it's like to feel our spirit lift at the first note of music or to sense our minds being pried open by an enlightening radio or television show. Deep down we know that art changes our lives.

For hundreds of children living in Córdoba, Colombia, arts programs supported through your Mission & Service gifts teach children about their rights, give them an opportunity to express themselves, and promote peace-making as well as gender justice.

The Latin American Center for Popular Communication (CEPALC) states that "by providing workshops for children that teach them about their rights, it empowers them to think critically about themselves and their country. Through media, art, music, and theatre, they learn about important social issues, human rights, and gender equality."

Children are the most vulnerable group in Colombia. Eighty-four percent of violent acts in Colombia are committed against children. Two and a half million children living there work to sustain their families. Many are forced into dangerous labour. That's why CEPALC designs programs in sectors hardest hit by poverty and violence.

"I told my mom that we had seen some works of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Flora Tristan. I remember that they taught us that we must defend the rights of us women. What I like, in general, is that they taught us that we must make peace," says Amelie, an eight-year-old girl who lives in Bogotá and workshop participant. "Thanks to CEPALC workshops, I'll be a writer, and I will write things so that children will promote and defend peace, following Jesus' examples. I will defend and promote our rights in my stories so that nobody can disrespect us or the rights that we have. When I am an adult, I won't be doing violence against anybody."

Blessings everyone,

Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam, Minister, St. Paul's United Church 705-433-1224
minspucmidland@gmail.com

Church Administrator – Louise Therrien, (Tues. Wed. Thurs.) 705-526-1640
e-mail stpaulsunited@rogers.com
Louise works at the church office from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays only.