



## St. Paul's Weekly Update—January 12, 2023

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### From the Minister

I am sitting in the Minister's study here at the church where I try to work every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings now that the church building is open again. At first, it seemed strange but now it is good to have a sense of the community as I touch base with people coming and going. Meetings have started to be in-person and the church is once again being used with most of our groups being back. One thing COVID taught me was to value the importance of community and those who enter our lives. I feel more engaged and connected with others, and it is a good place to be. Our numbers are certainly increasing on Sunday mornings as more and more people find their way back to the church. It is fun to watch as more people reconnect with each other. If you have not yet found your way back, I invite you to attend our services again. You might well be surprised. God works in mysterious ways and often through the people we meet. We miss you.

### Worship

Thank you to the Worship committee and volunteers who came out on Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup> to take down the Christmas decorations and put them away. It was a lot of work but much appreciated. This week's worship service is the Baptism of Christ and Renewal of Baptismal Vows Sunday. Directly below is the opening page of the service with a direct link to stream the service to make it easier for people to find us. Click on the link below just before 10:00 a.m. on Sunday or anytime after that and join us for this worship service.



<https://youtu.be/UrmudJetd1s>

**Worship with us in person** at 10:00 a.m. or online. Click the link above us to go directly to the service or visit our website at [www.stpaulsmidland.org](http://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.

## Photos

A reminder that we have received the Photo Directory pictures and that they are ready for pick up during office hours at the Church. These photos are for those who had their picture taken but did not order any further ones or placed an order for digital photos. On Sunday, volunteers will be distributing the photos to you if you are not able to make it in person. A very special thanks to Sue and Mike Sauve and to Sheila Thompson for all their work on this project.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:stpaulsunited@rogers.com) or at her home phone number 705-526-1640.

## Volunteers Needed

As we prepare the Annual Report, it is also a time to reach out to invite you to please consider volunteering here at the church. We have a variety of committees and other volunteer positions available. Without our volunteers, we could not be the church so please prayerfully ponder if you might be able to help. Some of our committees meet in person, others by Zoom. Please call the church office, Karen or Sue Dorion, our Chair of the Board, and we will be happy to speak to you and explore where you might feel you are able to contribute, even if only for a few hours every now and then.

## Congregational Life

The Congregational Life Committee and Visiting Team will be meeting on Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Parlour. Congregational Life will meet at 10:00 a.m. and the Visiting Team at 11:00 a.m.

**Greeters/Ushers:** We are currently looking for volunteers for greeters/ushers. Now that we are once again 'passing the plate' we require more folks on the greeter/usher teams. If this is something that you might be interested in, please contact Sheila.

**Congregational Life/Visitors:** The Congregational Life committee oversees communication and 'connections' within St. Paul's. We organize Social Hour following church, the Visitors' program, are responsible for the take-out dinners and look for opportunities for social events to engage our congregation. Please give this some thought, our church is our family and we all need to take part.

## St. Paul's ZOOM Coffee Hour

In-person Coffee Hours are still temporarily cancelled for health and safety reasons and will not resume until sometime in the new year. **Stay tuned for an update on this.** Our next **ZOOM** coffee hours is **Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>** at 1:00 p.m. You can continue to use the same link as before: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89969004401>

## Choir

Victoria would be delighted to have more singers in our St. Paul's Choir. Not only is it an opportunity to enjoy being part of making music, but it is also a great opportunity to meet people and build a sense of community.

## This Week's Minute for Mission

**GOD'S MISSION**  
**OUR GIFTS**



### **March 14 is PIE Day.**

In church circles, this it has nothing to do with math. PIE is short for "public, intentional, and explicit." These are the standards we hold ourselves to when we seek to be affirming, welcoming, and inclusive.

PIE Day was co-founded by Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble and Affirming Connections. Every year, Affirm United invites us to celebrate the full inclusion of Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ people in faith communities and beyond. The day challenges us to widen our welcome, to embody love, and to celebrate gender and sexual diversity.

It's critical that we do. Gender identity and sexual orientation are used to justify human rights violations around the world. Same-sex sexual activity is a crime in 71 countries; in 11 of these the death penalty can be imposed.

Here in Canada, 1 million people identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+. In 2019, police reported 263 hate crimes targeting people for their sexual orientation. This was a 41% increase over the previous year and the highest number since 2009.

Your gifts through Mission & Service sustain life-transforming advocacy and education. They support refugees fleeing for their lives because they identify as Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+. They support safe shelters, community awareness education, human rights programs, and safe spaces.

Thank you for giving through Mission & Service. God's compassionate love knows no boundaries. Your generosity shows that ours do not either.

### **Blessings everyone,**

Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam, Minister, St. Paul's United Church 705-433-1224  
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Church Administrator – Louise Therrien, (Tues. Wed. Thurs.) 705-526-1640  
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Louise works at the church office from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays only.