

From the Minister

Bev Irwin shared with me a prayer that was written by her brother-in-law, whom she loved and respected very dearly. He sadly passed away in 2022, but I think that it is a very suiting prayer for Lent. Even though Walter's prayer is addressed to the human spirit, God's spirit is in all of us. This prayer resonated with me, and Bev told me that she found this prayer inspiring:

O human spirit,
Quintessence of the mind,
Temper this day, my intellect
With tolerance, love, empathy and humility
That I may overcome the evils of
Self-righteousness, insensitivity, thoughtlessness and greed.
Sustain me through fear, frustration, anger and depression
That through you my life will have meaning.
For through my children and their children
You, human spirit, are infinite and eternal.
-Walther Shean

Worship



Sun. March 5/23
Lent 2

Communion
St. Paul's United Church
Midland, On

<https://youtube.com/live/ulCznYRFHIU?feature=share>

Worship with us in person on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. or online. Click the link above to go directly to the service or visit our website at www.stpaulsmidland.org and use the direct YouTube link at the top of the page. Or you can simply go to YouTube and subscribe to our channel. Just type in "St. Paul's Midland" and you will find us.

In-Person Coffee Hour

Join us **this Sunday March 5th** after the worship service for our in-person coffee hour. We now gather in-person on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.



St. Paul's ZOOM Coffee Hour

Our next ZOOM coffee hour will take place on **Sunday March 12th**. Join us virtually for coffee, fellowship, and interesting conversation.

World Day of Prayer

A World Day of Prayer event is taking place on Friday, March 3rd with a service here at St. Paul's at 1:30 p.m. The host writing country for 2023 is Taiwan. The service is written by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Taiwan and prepared for use in Canada by the Women's Inter-Church Counsel of Canada. Refreshments will follow the service. All are invited. Thank you to Sharon Foster for organizing this service on behalf of the U.C.W.

Urgent: Volunteer Needed

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we are urgently seeking a volunteer to assist with our Meals on Wheels program. Our previous volunteer who helped out as our driver on the second Tuesday of the month for quite some time now is unfortunately no longer able to. Any help with this would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the church office if you are able to help. We are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and can be reached by phone at 705-526-6077 or email at stpaulsunited@rogers.com.

Outreach: Coldest Night of the Year: St. Paul's is supporting our Guest House

We would like to thank everyone who participated in our Coldest Night of the Year event last Saturday, February 25th. We had a great turn out! St. Paul's raised \$2,320 and for the entire walk, a total of \$40,252 was raised by the community for the Guesthouse.



Take Out Dinner

A big thank you to all of you who supported our dinner last week, and also to the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this happen. With everyone's support, we raised \$638 that will go toward the work of St. Paul's. **Our next take-out dinner will be on Wednesday March 22nd**. Treat yourself to a delicious meal of meat lasagna with a hot vegetable and coleslaw side, bread and dessert. Pick-up will be in the Atrium between 4:30-5:00 p.m. Please make payments in advance to the church office.

CAFÉ CONVO – Midhurst United Church

The community is invited to join the conversation on **March 24th** from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Midhurst United Church, with Victoria Fisher. Victoria is Anishinaabe from Ebb and Flow First Nation with a Master of Social Work – Indigenous Specialization. She is the Executive Director of a non-profit service organization, contributes to Indigenous-led resource development and works to shine light on community capacity. Victoria will talk with us about the service/relationship experiences that guide her work. She will facilitate opportunity for shared reflection and connection. Café Convo is a safe space to listen, ask questions and join the conversation on a variety of topics. All are invited.

Bowling Night!

Our **all-ages bowling night** has been rescheduled to **Friday, March 31, 2023**. The event will be at the Knight Haven Bowling Lanes, at 17 Poyntz Street in Penetanguishene, where we will meet at 6:00 p.m. The church will cover the cost of bowling, but if you want to purchase snacks for yourself, please bring cash (no debit or credit cards). If you're interested in signing up, please contact Sheila Thompson or Sue Sauve. Sheila can be reached by phone at 705-526-2186 or email at rmsmt@rogers.com. Sue can be reached by phone at 705-433-1611 or email at suemsauve@gmail.com.

United Church of Canada response to the Situation in Türkiye (Turkey) and Northern Syria

On Monday, February 6, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit southeastern Türkiye (Turkey) and on the border with Syria. Followed by another tremor registering 7.6, the quakes were felt as far as Lebanon and Cyprus. Many homes and community buildings have been destroyed. Hospitals have also been damaged, and acutely injured and traumatized people are struggling to find help. The winter weather, damaged infrastructure due to the prevailing conflict, and previous displacements of people are making an already difficult situation worse. More than 15 million people are affected. In Syria, at least 4,427 people are reported dead as of 13 February with the majority of victims recorded in Aleppo, Hama, Latakia and Tartous. In Türkiye, the authorities count at least 31,643 dead. More than a thousand buildings have completely collapsed, raising fears of even higher human losses".

The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), which is a partner of The United Church of Canada, and ACT Alliance (of which The United Church of Canada and MECC are members) are responding in some of the hardest-hit areas in Türkiye and northern Syria. The MECC is implementing a rapid response by meeting the needs of people seeking shelter in churches and in public schools with items such as blankets, mattresses, food, water, and hygiene items right now, until the situation becomes more stable and the longer-term needs of people are assessed. ACT Alliance members are active in Türkiye and have initiated a rapid response. Thanks to previous donors to the Global Emergency Response fund, The United Church of Canada has made an immediate grant of \$20,000 to support their efforts.

The impact of the most recent earthquake is all the more devastating because of ongoing conflict that has displaced millions of people and damaged much-needed infrastructure (such as hospitals), a severe economic downturn, and the COVID pandemic. MECC and ACT Alliance continue to assess the immediate and ongoing needs of the communities. The United Church of Canada is committed to working with Mission & Service partners MECC, ACT Alliance, and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, we have joined the Humanitarian Coalition to call on Canadians to show tangible support for the people of Türkiye and Syria.

We will share more information with you as soon as we can. Thank you for your prayers and generous support.

You can be a part of these efforts by donating now. Thank you for your generosity. **You can donate online** via the United Church of Canada's secure donation page at <https://www.gifttool.com/donations/Donate?ID=1955&AID=2274&PID=6564>

You can also **donate by phone** at 416-231-5931 or toll-free 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2738 and use your Visa or MasterCard. You can also **send a cheque or money** order to:

**The United Church of Canada
Philanthropy Unit - Emergency Response
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4**

Please be sure to note "Emergency Response—Türkiye" on the face of your cheque.

This Week's Minute for Mission

Creating a safe space for single women in India



Maina Bai's mother died when she was a baby, and Maina never went to school. When she was just 10 years old her father married her off to an older man and by the age of 16, she had a child. A few years after the birth of her daughter, her husband died. When she returned to her maternal home, Maina was married off yet again. After a few years of marriage, Maina became a widow again. Single, she faced extraordinary stigma.

Approximately 2.18 million single women like Maina live in the state of Rajasthan, India. Whether they are widowed, divorced, or have never been married, these women are deemed "incomplete" and a disgrace to their families. As a result, many live lives marked by stigma, fear, and violence—simply for not being married.

Your gifts support Mission & Service partner Astha Sansthan, "Association of Strong Women Alone" (ASWA). In 20 years, the association grew from 450 single women to over 70,000 members. ASWA's approach is simple: Create a safe space for single women to come together and get the knowledge and skills necessary to improve their lives.

The association has made all the difference for Maina. She can now read and write and is empowering other women to become literate. Because of her leadership, 35 women have enrolled in adult learning. All of them now have grade eight certificates. What's more, the generational cycle of illiteracy has been broken. Maina's daughter can not only read and write but is also teaching others to do the same, opening up opportunities and increasing independence. Your Mission & Service gifts empower women like Maina to be agents of change within their communities. Thank you for your generosity.

Blessings everyone,

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

Church Administrator – Louise Therrien, (Tues. Wed. Thurs.) **705-526-1640**

e-mail stpaulsunity@rogers.com

Louise works at the church office from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays only.

Office Secretary – Jane Quigley (Tues. Thurs.) mornings 9:00 a.m. - 12 at the church.
705-526-6077.

**GOD'S MISSION
OUR GIFTS**

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.