

### From the Minister – Growing Together

Sometimes there is no growth without a struggle. The crocus comes up even through the snow at times. I think of those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) whose lives have been upended with the trauma they've experienced. I have had long conversations in the past with WW2 veterans or members of their family who spoke of the struggle to adapt to the person who came home from the war who was different from the person who left. For some there were years of abuse as they all had to cope with PTSD.

The same is true for our first nations and Metis people who are survivors of the residential school system as well as years of racism. PTSD takes a huge toll on people's lives, for both the individuals who have it and those around them. Add to it the racism and blatant discrimination and life is not easy.

This coming Sunday is a powerful service but not without its struggles, as we remember Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, highlighted with the red dress project. We will have two local Indigenous women share with us their journey of bringing the project to our area and why. Our trees will have red dresses hanging in them once again as we walk in solidarity with them in remembering this very real and ongoing sorrow for all Canadians. It is also one way in which we engage in reconciliation and healing for us all. We invite you to hear their stories, knowing that is part of the teachings of Jesus to be with those who struggle.

This is also communion Sunday, so for those of you are joining us online, please have bread or a cracker and a beverage handy to join us in sharing the Lord's supper.

Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup> is Christian Family Sunday, recognizing Mother's Day and expressing appreciation to all who are as mothers and fathers to us, whether they are actual family members or people who are significant in our lives. We would like to encourage you to invite your mother or a significant person in your life to join us for this special service. Just one more way in which we can grow together.

### Worship



<https://youtube.com/live/8bcg6Ok7Msc?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](http://www.stpaulsmidland.org)

## In-Person Coffee Hour

Join us on **Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup>** after the worship service for our next in-person coffee hour. We will continue to gather in-person on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month.



## No Zoom Coffee Hour on Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup>

There will be **no ZOOM coffee hour** on **Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup>**. The participants who often join us have suggested that because it is Mother's Day, we should not have the zoom coffee hour that day.

## Welcoming New Members and Adherents – May 28<sup>th</sup>

On **Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>** we will be welcoming new members and adherents. If you are interested in joining the congregation please call or email Karen or contact the church office during office hours. Becoming a member is a decision that says that the church is important to you and you want to be part of it. It also gives you voting privileges. An adherent is someone who regularly attends church, however for a variety of reasons, chooses not to become a member. This service recognizes that you are part of the congregation and allows us to welcome you into our faith community.

## Congregational News

The UCW is part of the Gift of Grace Soup Kitchen, and every year once a month they help to prepare meals for them. They are currently seeking **non-perishable food items**. A box will be placed in the sanctuary for donations. Anything helps, such as canned soup, pasta, tuna, etc. Thank you for your generosity.

**A Celebration of Life for Graham MacDonald** will take place on Saturday **May 13<sup>th</sup>** at the Wye Marsh on Hwy 93 in Midland. Family and friends will gather at 2:00 p.m., followed by sharing of memories at 2:30 p.m. and visitation/lunch at 3:00 p.m.

**A Celebration of Life for Reuben Reckzin** will take place on Saturday **May 13<sup>th</sup>** in the Great Hall, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Reuben is Doreen Gunson's brother and he sadly passed away on January 22, 2023. There will be a tribute at 1:30 p.m. followed by a luncheon.

**A Candlelight Peace Vigil** will be held at the Midland Cenotaph on Wednesday **May 10<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 p.m. The St. Paul's Choir, Bay Sound Choir and VIVO Choir will be singing at this event.

**Vox Community Choir** presents "The Gift of Music – Music for Mom in May" on Saturday **May 13<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are available at Johnstone's Music Land, from VOX Choir members and will also be available at the door.

**Bay Sound Choir Concert "Spring into Summer"** will be held on Saturday **June 3<sup>rd</sup>** at 7:00 p.m. here at St. Paul's, featuring special guest Vox Femina. Tickets can be purchased online or at the door at a price of \$20 for adults and \$15 for youth. This concert is free for children under 5 years old.

**Volunteers Wanted:** We are also looking for volunteers who would be willing to work with Karen and the Worship Team to record some outdoor Acknowledgements of the Land. Please contact Karen if you are interested. We also need one or two artists to assist in a project that will be used for Pentecost Sunday.

## This Week's Minute for Mission

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



Would you go to jail to proclaim your love? Would you be willing to die?

We are blessed to live in Canada, a country that recognizes the right to love whoever you want regardless of their gender or sex. While we haven't always done what is right, The United Church of Canada now recognizes that all love—including Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+

relationships—is holy and blessed by God. But those rights do not exist in many parts of the world today.

"One of our partners in Kenya has advocated strongly for the human rights of sexual minorities, and that has caused him to be in jail, caused him to risk his life to be able to do that," says the Rev. Michael Blair. The church's first openly gay General Secretary is now helping to advocate for sexual and gender minorities in foreign countries. "When we hear these stories, we can see that this is a life and death matter."

Mission & Service plays a critical role in Blair's efforts. Your gifts help shelter refugees as they escape repressive governments. Same-sex attraction is a crime in 71 countries, and 11 of them have the death penalty.

Mission & Service also holds consultations in other countries to discover how we can best work with our partners to protect sexual and gender minorities. "A few years ago, we hosted a consultation here in Canada with several partners and asked how we can be supportive of their work," Blair says. "They told us we needed to come and help in their context."

To date, Mission & Service has supported consultations in Latin America and the Philippines.

"We are bringing together leaders to explore how the church can be a place of liberation and life for sexual and gender minorities in those communities. That is happening because of the folks who contribute to Mission & Service," says Blair.

For more information, A Deeper Look: Protecting Love around the World - Part 1 and 2 are available on YouTube.

Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diH\\_o-Xu8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diH_o-Xu8o)

Thank you for helping to protect sexual and gender minorities. You are saving lives and changing views around the world!

### **Blessings everyone,**

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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.**