

### Special Advent Christmas Worship Calendar

**10:00 a.m.**

**Dec 24th** – No morning service.

Christmas Eve Service – **7:00 p.m.**

**Dec 25th** - There is no church service on Christmas Day.

**Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>** – **10:00 a.m.** A service celebrating new beginnings as we bring in the new year.



### From the Minister

This time of year can be so special and magical to some and difficult for others. It is always my hope and prayer that no matter what happens, that somehow, we will all find our way to the light in the stable. The stable was a place in the Christmas story that was not without its own adversity. May the light of Christ truly enter our hearts and begin its transforming love in our own lives and in the life of our communities and world.

Last Sunday was a beautiful service. If you missed it, I invite you to go online and watch it. Thank you to Victoria Warwick, to St. Paul's Choir, the Bay Sound Singers and all our instrumentalists for the joy of that truly beautiful service. This Christmas Eve service will be a beautiful time to come together and be immersed in the good news that Jesus Christ is born.

I am mindful that this is the last Christmas season I will share with you as your Minister. It is always wonderful to celebrate the birth of Christ in so many wonderful ways here at St. Paul's. The life size animals are also a great delight and I look forward to seeing them every Christmas. Wishing you a blessed Christmas with quiet moments of peace in the midst of the chaos. May peace be embraced all over the world.

### Worship

Just a reminder that there is no **Dec. 24th morning service**. We will instead be worshipping together on Christmas Eve. All children are invited to take part in our **7:00 p.m. Pageant on Christmas Eve**. You do not need to RSVP. **If you wish to be in the pageant, please arrive at the church at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>** to choose your roles and get into costume! Costumes will be provided. There will be angels, shepherds, magi, Mary and Joseph. All are welcome - grandchildren, cousins, friends and newcomers!



Click on the link below to join us virtually for the Christmas Eve service if you are unable to attend in person.

<https://youtube.com/live/-VtvZt3mx54?feature=share>



Click on the link below to join us virtually for the New Year's Eve service if you are unable to attend in person.

<https://youtube.com/live/X2CLP90tkgE?feature=share>

### **No Sunday School -- Dec 31 Worship Service**

There will be no Discovery Kids programming for the Dec. 31 Worship Service. If your child needs a place to play, you are welcome to go up to the Discovery Kids playroom. If you turn on the television in the playroom, the live stream of the service will automatically come on the screen.

### **Office Hours**

The office is open on Tues., Wed. and Thurs. mornings from 9:00 a.m. until noon. **Please note** that the office will be closed starting Friday Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> and re-opening on Tues., Jan. 2, 2024. **The next weekly update** will be on Thurs. Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **A message from your Stewardship Committee**

We are so grateful to all those who generously contributed to support the mission of St Paul's United Church. As in past years, the **deadline for year-end donations is noon on Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>** for personal tax savings in 2023. Although the office will be closed, the mailbox will be checked daily.

### **In-Person Coffee Hour**

Our next in-person coffee will be on **Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024**, following worship. Joan Lavin's team will be hosting.



**UCW** will not be meeting in January. Our first meeting for 2024 will be February 13th. See you in 2024!

## **A Message from Kathy Stewart, our Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Thank you to everyone for the warm welcome to St. Paul's. I've enjoyed meeting all of you and helping to provide leadership as we put our faith into action. Looking forward to even more "faith in action" opportunities in 2024. May Joy be your gift at Christmas and may Faith, Hope, and Love be your treasures in the New Year.

**Knox Presbyterian Church** is having a moving sale on **Fri. Jan. 5, 2024** from noon to 4:00 p.m. and **Jan. 6, 2024** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Individual items priced at \$6.00 and up or make them an offer they can't refuse. If you have any questions, call 705-526-7421.

## **St. Paul's Outreach**

A group of volunteers has met to put together some ideas for the Guesthouse meal preparation that will be happening the second Wednesday of every month starting on Jan. 10, 2024. Stay tuned for information about ways to help with this very important initiative.

## **Learning Together - Save the Dates**

**On Thurs. Jan. 18, 2024**, our next guest will be Chief Ted Williams from Rama First Nation. A recognized and sought after motivational speaker, Chief Williams will join us to share his "If you dream it, if you believe it, you can do it" message.

How do Art and Spirituality relate? Join us for a **card making workshop** with Victoria Tovell on Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

## **This Week's Minute for Mission**



When you think of the word "tradition," what comes to mind? At this time of year, many of us think of gathering with friends and family as we share stories over a warm meal. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas with our loved ones, it is heartbreaking to think of families who are unable to afford a warm meal or a small gift for their children. While we recognize this season as a time of joy, for many underprivileged families it is a difficult reminder of their struggle.

For Mission and Service partner London Community Chaplaincy (LCC), bringing joy and community-building fun to the social housing complexes they serve goes hand-in-hand with creating and sustaining traditions. **The Christmas Parade is one of LCC's most popular traditions.** Children's eyes gleam with excitement as their stockings are filled with candy canes, books, and toys. There is music, food, and of course a visit with Santa Claus! With full bellies, children play together, filling the air with excitement and laughter while their parents connect, support each other, and share their stories. Your gifts to Mission and Service help partners like the London Community Chaplaincy as they nourish spirits in their communities. Thank you.

## **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

**Minister** – Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam, **705-433-1224**, [minsucmidland@gmail.com](mailto:minsucmidland@gmail.com)

**Church Administrator** – Louise Therrien, (Wednesday mornings 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 at the church), [stpaulsunited@rogers.com](mailto:stpaulsunited@rogers.com) **705-526-1640 (home office)**

**Administrative Assistant** – Judy McConnell (Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00) [officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com](mailto:officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com) 705-526-6077