

### From the Minister

There is hardly a day when I don't find myself feeling grateful for this faith community. I see so many people committed to walking the path of Christ. Some are on committees; others provide pastoral care by visits or phone calls. Others work for peace and justice. Others pour coffee, pound nails and help with our building. Others ponder faith and pray. Our work and ministry are not centred on the minister but on the community of faith all working together. I hear words of gratitude from many of you who speak of things that have happened here that touched their lives and how they now want to bring it forward. That is part of what it means to follow Jesus and open ourselves to the presence of the Spirit and the call of God.

Next week, on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m., we are so excited to have a much sought after speaker, Ted Williams, who will share with us his "If you dream it, if you believe it, you can do it". I hope you not only plan to attend but invite others to join you. Please register with the church so that you know you have a space for this event.

### Worship

This week, join us for worship as we begin a five-week exploration of the United Church of Canada's newest statement of faith called "A Song of Faith". Paper copies of this will be available at the church for you to pick up if you wish. Attached to this email is "A Song of Faith", should you wish to read it and ponder it.

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



<https://youtube.com/live/-ZuLF8oH5wI?feature=share>

### St. Paul's website

Want to know what's going on St. Paul's? Visit our **website** at <https://www.stpaulsmidland.org/>. There is lots of information and worth the look. You can also follow us on **Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=st.%20paul%27s%20united%20church>

### 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.

## **Connecting Together**

This group begins this week, on **Thurs., Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>** from **2:00 to 3:30 p.m.** Join us to connect and enjoy time sharing stories, fun, fellowship and to meet new friends. If anyone can display our flyer around town or at your place of work, it would be very much appreciated. Flyers are located on the desk in the atrium.

## **Volunteers needed**

Please join Kathy Stewart on **Sat. Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>** for coffee and muffins from **10 - 11:30 a.m.** at St. Paul's, to hear about our "Take a Moment for Peace" project. Kathy will be looking for volunteers for various jobs and the more helpers the merrier! Children are welcome to attend. For more information, please reach out to Kathy at [volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com).

**The Women's Grief Support group** meets next Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. in Kathy's office.

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

Our Learning Together series will host Ted Williams on **Thurs. Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.** A dynamic speaker, Ted will share with us his "If you dream it, if you believe it, you can do it" message to encourage all of us to do more in our communities. Please RSVP to the church office at 705-526-6077 or to Kathy at [volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com)

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

## **In-Person Coffee Hour**

Our next in-person coffee will be **next Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024**, following worship.



## **Family Food and Bingo night**

Please join us on Fri. Feb. 2 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. for pasta with fixings and ice cream. This will be a free-will offering and everyone is welcome. For further information, contact Sheila at 705-526-2186 or e-mail at [rmsmt2612@gmail.com](mailto:rmsmt2612@gmail.com)

## **UCW – next meeting**

Please note that there will be no UCW meeting in January. The next meeting will be on Tues., Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024. If anyone is interested in being on the **UCW executive team**, please call Barb Carswell at 705 955-2619.

## **Office Hours**

The office is open on Tues., Wed. and Thurs. mornings from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

## **New Home for Orphaned Boys in Nairobi**

You may have noticed in Midland Today this wonderful story. What you may not know is that one of our parishioners, Paul Vanderwel is on the Board of Life4Kids, a local charity. He sent Karen an email which she wants to share with you. Paul wrote, "As a board member of Life4 Kids Canada I have been busy during the last month raising funds and purchasing this home. The old Kenyan rented home was declared unfit and we had to move otherwise the kids would

be on the street again. A beautiful ending of 2023. We have raised almost \$240,000 in Canada and have provided the entire purchase price for the new home as well as all related closing costs, the funds for renovations, furnishings and outfitting of the home. It is truly a Christmas miracle and an amazing gift for two dozen little boys!"

Thanks Paul and the Life4Kids for working to make a difference for others.



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

Imagine being forced to leave your home. Set adrift, hoping to find a place to land, somewhere safe so you can rebuild your life. "There's this huge misconception that refugees choose to be refugees," says ChrisAnn Alvarez, Refugee Support at The United Church of Canada. "It's not a choice. It's something they're forced into."



It's a reality that is faced by millions of refugees, and it's a reality that is becoming more and more prominent.

More people are displaced today than ever before: 117.2 million, says the UN Refugee Agency. That's the equivalent of three Canadas. There are many causes: human conflict, climate change, human rights violations, and more. We can help.

Your gifts provide food, water, sanitation, and social support to people forced to flee their homes. Mission and Service creates educational and confidence-building programs in refugee camps.

Mission and Service also helps refugees find new homes. "Congregations form sponsorship groups together to sponsor the refugee," Alvarez explains. "What Mission and Service allows is for them to sponsor through their own congregation." She tells one story of a sponsor who renovated their basement after it flooded and immediately planned to sponsor a refugee in the new space. "Who thinks like that?!" Alvarez exclaims with wonder and awe. "It's just so beautiful!"

The refugee stayed with his sponsors for years, and they became an adopted family to one another. "The sponsor told me, 'we have no kids, so this was an unexpected blessing,'" Alvarez recalls, tearing up. "That's one example of someone opening their home in their home, in their heart, and allowing themselves to be transformed."

When we help protect one refugee from persecution, death, or years in a refugee camp, we save the world for that one person—and just maybe for ourselves, too.

## **Blessings everyone**

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

**Music Director** - Victoria Warwick – [Warwick.victoria130@gmail.com](mailto:Warwick.victoria130@gmail.com)

**Children and Youth Co-ordinator** – Rebecca Amadei [rebeccaamadei@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccaamadei@gmail.com)

**Volunteer Co-Ordinator** – Kathy Stewart – [volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerspucmidland@gmail.com)

**Student Minister** - Shaun McIntosh [spuc.studentminister@gmail.com](mailto:spuc.studentminister@gmail.com)

**Technical Services Co-ordinator** - Glenn Erwin [glerwin@live.ca](mailto:glerwin@live.ca)

**Custodian** – Jim Lamers – contact church office

**Website:** <https://www.stpaulsmidland.org/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=st.%20paul%27s%20united%20church>