

### From Our Minister – Karen Ptolemy-Stam

Within weeks, our family has faced death and loss and as well, the birth of a grandchild this past Tuesday. The cycle of life continues. Both the loss of a loved one and the arrival of a baby in our lives bring both grief and joy. Memories of loved ones can sustain us in the difficult times. Pregnancies and birth itself are not always easy. There are very real moments of pain. And yet we are so truly delighted to welcome into our lives and love this newest member of our family, a grandson, even in the midst of loss.

David Giuliano in his book "It's Good to Be Here" writes, "We are birthed into the world by both joy and suffering. They are constant companions. From birth onward, suffering is woven with the threads of ecstasy and wonder. Knees get skinned. Sticks and stones and words keep breaking hearts and bones. From colds to cancer, there is illness. Aging naturally involves suffering. Even the very best death brings with it a measure of unavoidable physical and emotional pain for the dying and for the living. **Grief is the photonegative of love.**"

Sometimes we want to pretend that we can only be happy when everything is going well. However, in our struggles, we can find ourselves being opened to joy and love and laughter. More importantly, we can come to a new awareness that life is not about having everything perfect, but about being receptive to live life as it comes and being open to it.

### Worship

This Sunday we will be celebrating Black History as we have our last "Song of Faith" sermon before lent begins next week. Our Song of Faith portion for this week is how we are called to be agents of God's healing and reconciliation. Come join us either in person or click on the link below to join us virtually.



Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024  
St. Paul's United Church, Midland, ON

<https://youtube.com/live/sWFqm5gfVrc?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>

## **Annual Congregational Meeting: Sun. Feb. 25, 2024**

Our annual meeting will be held **immediately after church on Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>**. Please note that the Annual report will be emailed to you in the coming week and printed copies will be made available for those who are unable to access the emailed copy. At this meeting, the congregation will have read the Accountability reports by the various committees to approve, as well as vote on the proposed budget for 2024. Information on the life and work of the church and a chance to learn more about St. Paul's and its work and ministry is also part of this important time.

**Please plan to attend.**

### **Notice of Motion for the Annual Meeting**

Notice is hereby given that two motions will be brought forward by the Board of Trustees at the Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting:

1. That Sheila Thompson be nominated to the Board of Trustees.
2. That Shawn Leis has retired as a member of the Board of Trustees!

These motions are given in accordance with the Model Trust Deed.

## **Connecting Together:**

Join our group **every Thurs.** from **2:00 to 3:30 p.m.** 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.

## **Take a Moment for Peace** is happening here at St. **Paul's every Wednesday in**



**Feb., from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. Light a candle, put a dove on the tree, take a family peace activity home or stop for a drink and a cookie. Take a poster to put up in our community. They are located in the Atrium on the table by the door. **Thank you to Heather McDonald** for the inspirational peace showcase in the atrium. We are looking for someone to inspire us by creating a showcase for March. Let Kathy Stewart know if you have an idea.



## **UCW – next meeting**

The next UCW meeting will be on **Tuesday Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.** in the parlour, when we will celebrate Valentine's Day with games and prizes. We will also be installing our Officers for 2024 and the Treasurer will be presenting the 2024 budget. Hope to see you all there!

## **Congregational Life/Visiting Team**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wed., Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.** in the Parlour.

## **Scouts Pancake Supper**

**4<sup>th</sup> Midland Scouting** will be having their annual Pancake Supper on **Tuesday Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>**, from **5:00 to 7:30 p.m.** Funds will be used to help offset the Scouts travelling to the Pacific Jamboree in Sooke, BC this July. Please come out and help support our scouts!

## **In-Person Coffee Hour**

Our next in-person coffee will be on **Sun., Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**, following worship.



**Coldest Night of the Year:** Volunteers are needed to help with the "Out of the Cold" walk on **Feb 24<sup>th</sup>**. Please let Zena or Kathy know if you are interested in helping **OR** you can support the St. Paul's team by making a donation. **You can do this by following the link below. Click on the "Teams" tab (about 1/2 way down the page), then click on St. Paul's Midland to donate.** Let's do our part to put our Faith into Action.

<https://cnoy.org/location/midland>

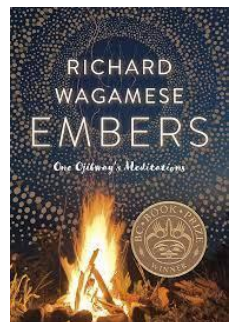
**World Day of Prayer** this year will be on **Friday March 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m.** at St Margaret's Church, Hugel Avenue in Midland. This service is prepared by the Word Day of Prayer committee of Palestine.

## **Welcoming Sunday: Mar. 10, 2024**

Interested in being welcomed as an adherent or member of the congregation? Give Karen a call and she will be happy to visit and share with you what it means to become a member of the United Church of Canada and what it means to be an adherent. Together we can explore how we seek to be authentic as Christians in this faith community at St. Paul's.

## **Karen's Last Theological Study Group at St. Paul's**

Karen has decided to have one last theological study because she so loves Richard Wagamese's book Embers. This book is an honest and evocative meditation on stillness, harmony, trust, reverence, gratitude and joy. Wagamese is one of Canada's foremost authors and storytellers. He won the 2013 People's Choice Award in CBC Canada Reads. He died in 2017 yet his writings continue to inspire all readers into a deeper spirituality in humble and real ways. This is a **4-week study** starting on **Mon. Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> and ending on Mon. Mar. 18<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.** If you are interested, **please let Karen or the church office know by Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>** so that a book can be ordered for you.



## **Office Hours**

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



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

In February 2023, just one year ago, earthquakes left people in parts of Türkiye and Syria facing the devastating loss of their loved ones, homes, and communities.

Today, those same people are still facing the ongoing impact of the disaster. On top of difficulties with accessing basic needs and medical

care, there remains an economic crisis. The costs of fuel and basic commodities have doubled, and in some cases tripled.

Mission and Service partner the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) has been providing ongoing help to people living in the aftermath of the earthquakes. **A Cash Assistance program has been life-changing for families**, especially those who do not have a steady or fixed income.

Even the smallest amount can provide a family with a significant boost. Whether it is making house or rent payments, covering the cost of a medication, or being able to afford groceries, Mission and Service partners are there to provide support.

Your gifts to Mission and Service extend a loving hand of peace and warmth to those in need as they live through the worst crisis of their lives. Thank you for your generosity.

### **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**)  
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