



St. Paul's Weekly Update – February 27, 2025

Minister's Message, Sunday, March 2, 2025

Beyond Sunday: Lenten Disciplines

Next week we begin the Season of Lent. Lent is traditionally a time of study and reflection. It is a time to do "spring cleaning" for the spirit. You may have heard of giving things up for Lent. That flows from a tradition of fasting as a spiritual discipline. Fasting is meant to focus the mind on things other than the body. Often people will choose a food they love, or they may choose days/meals to skip eating. Sometimes people choose fasts other than food: perhaps abstaining from all social media. Other people may choose to take up a practice during Lent: additional time in prayer, or spiritual reading. It is a very personal decision and depends on your needs.

I have mentioned to a few people that one year I gave up complaining about the weather. It was a hard winter, and I was feeling very down. I felt the negativity was not good for me, so I consciously worked on being positive about other things. I may do this again this year!

Whatever you choose to do, even if it isn't anything as organized as "giving something up for Lent," I encourage you to spend some time attending to your spiritual needs. Do you need peace? Would cultivating wonder be good for your heart? Is forgiveness or forgiving something that you need to work on?

If you happen to be at the church during Lent check out the table next to my office. Or look for a new table in our sanctuary with candles that can be lit on Sunday morning.

Whatever you do, know that you are beloved of God, a wonder to behold, and precious in God's sight.



<https://youtube.com/live/-ELLBK3lfJ8?feature=share>

Office Hours

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to noon, with Judy in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and Louise is in the office on Wednesday mornings. The balance of the time, Louise works from home so you can reach her by phone any time between 8:30 and 4:00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Pastoral care

For Pastoral Care, please contact Rev Kirsty Hunter at 705 717-1918. She wants to know if you are in hospital and seeking a visit from her. You can email her at revkirsty@gmail.com. Please

use Rev. Kirsty's direct phone number at all times to reach her, as there isn't always someone at the church to answer the regular phone line.

Condolences

Our condolences go out to the family of Betty Wilcox, who passed away on February 17th. Betty was a long-time member of St. Paul's who moved away a few years ago.

The Connections Group is cancelled for this week (February 27th). We will resume meeting on March 6th, weather permitting.

Coldest Night of the Year

Thank you to all who generously supported the **Coldest Night of the Year** event this year. It was a resounding success and with everyone's help the Guesthouse Shelter exceeded their goal. **The St. Paul's Team raised \$8,257!** Thank you to the walkers, donors, volunteers along the route and at the church. Thank you also to Juli Fong and her young assistants for preparing delicious food for everyone; it was enjoyed by all!!

Coffee Hour

Our next coffee hour is **this Sunday**, March 2nd, 2025. Joan Lavin's team is hosting Social Hour this Sunday and Marilyn Broome is captain of the greeters for March. We're still looking for additional greeters so if you can help out, please reach out to Sheila Thompson.

Outreach

The Outreach Committee will be **selling soups at coffee hour again this Sunday**. This week's flavours are sweet potato with red lentil and Greek chicken. Cost is \$6 each or two for \$10. If you can't make it to church, please inquire by e-mail at stpaulsunitedchurchoutreach@gmail.com about having it delivered. The funds raised from this initiative support various outreach initiatives.

"Adult Social" group has a new name!

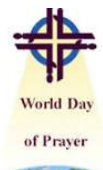
"Coffee Social Night" will continue to happen on a weeknight once/month. This is an opportunity for adults from the congregation to drop in and hang out -- much like the Connections Group, except it will be in the evenings. **The next "Coffee Social Night" is next Wednesday, March 5**, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Parlour

Women's Grief Support Group

We will be offering a grief support group for women who have had a partner pass away. This group will meet weekly **starting next Wednesday March 5th** and will continue until Wednesday April 30th from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Discovery Room (formerly known as the Room of Requirement). This is a time to support and comfort each other. Please contact our facilitators Sandra Flint at 705-529-6462 or Linda Fong at 705-209-8284.

World Day of Prayer

This year's event will be taking place at the Salvation Army Church at 555 Dominion Avenue, Midland, on Friday, March 7th, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. More details to come.



United Church Women

The next UCW meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, at 1:30 p.m. in the Parlour. All the ladies of the congregation are welcome!

Our guest speaker at the March meeting will be the Georgian Bay Food Network; an organization that helps address the challenges of food insecurity in north Simcoe. The GBFN is an independent, non-profit food bank that provides fresh and non-perishable foods, plus the steps to becoming self-sufficient for a growing number of people who are going hungry in Midland, and surrounding communities. This organization is a recent addition to our area, not to be confused with the long-serving Salvation Army Food Bank.

NEW!

Study Groups

Are you looking for something to take up during Lent? There are two new opportunities starting in March.

Book Study: We will be spending time with "How We Learn To Be Brave" by Mariann Edgar Budde. Please purchase or borrow the book on your own and come out to join the discussion on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Parlour from March 13 to April 17. There is no sign up required but please let Rev Kirsty know that you plan to attend. For the first session you do not need to have the book.

Bible Study: Join in a wide-ranging discussion of scripture. Bring your own Bible or borrow one at the church. We will be approaching the text using the knowledge and experience we have gained in our own lives. There are two opportunities to join the discussion. Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. starting on March 13 in the Parlour, or Mondays at 8:00 p.m. via Zoom starting March 17. Note: this is a drop in style, each session is self contained though we will be working our way through the Gospel of Luke one chapter at a time. Please email Rev Kirsty if you are interested in joining the evening group in order to get the link. revkirsty@gmail.com

Fundraising



Want to know the most delicious way to support St. Paul's? Order Purdys chocolates and enjoy some Canadian sweets for the soul this Easter! Ordering is as easy as eating chocolate. Just click this link: <https://fundraising.purdys.com/2108500-126806>, fill out your info (name, phone number, and email address), click "Join Campaign", and "Shop Online" to your heart's content! Our customer campaign number is 80085. Catalogues are also available in the Atrium. The **order deadline is March 25th**, so you'll have your treats in time for Easter! Email any questions to Christina at cstrong@rogers.com or find Carolyn Hendry or Carol MacDonald to assist.

United Church Calendars: We still have some United Church of Canada Centennial calendars available for sale at \$20 each. See Sharon Foster or Sue Dorion at church or contact them by mail sharonfoster000@gmail.com or sues0703@gmail.com

The Talent Auction is coming back! Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 26th for this fundraising event. The committee is asking for donations of knitting, crocheting, baking, preserves, sewing, dinners, gardening and we could go on and on. All money raised will go to support the work of the church. For more information, please contact Gail Wilcox at 705-526-6368.



Guides Spaghetti Dinner

The Penetanguishene Girl Guides are raising money for camp. On Saturday, April 12th from 5:00 pm to 7:00 p.m. in the Great Hall, they will be hosting a pasta meal with salad, garlic toast, coffee and tea all included for \$20 for adults and \$10 for kids. Please come out in support. Tickets can be purchased by emailing 1stpenetanguides@gmail.com or by calling Juli Robitaille @ 705-279-3334.

Faith Formation

SAVE THE DATE! St. Paul's Discovery Kids Camp will be held August 11-15, 2025. It will be a FULL DAY program running from 9-3. Details soon...

St. Paul's website

Want to know what's going on at 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>

This Week's Minute for Mission



In the Eastern Carpathian Mountains, far from the chaos of war, a retreat in Tukhlya, Ukraine offers rest and renewal to mothers who have given everything for their families. Supported by Mission and Service partner ACT Alliance, ACT member Hungarian Interchurch Aid has welcomed 135 mothers and their children in the "Happy Family" initiative, providing space for healing and resilience.

In early January 2025, 18 mothers and their little ones arrived. All had either been displaced by war or lived near the frontlines. Many are exhausted, burdened by grief and overwhelming responsibilities. "I always thought only about my children—their clothes, food, education," shares Yulia, a mother of five who lost her husband a year ago. "Here, I was able to stop and think about myself."

With psychological support, hiking, art therapy, and group sessions, the retreat helps women regain their inner strength. While the women focus on healing, their children participate in creative activities, allowing everyone time for self-care. Many women hesitated before they left home, worried about stepping away from their duties and earnings. "How could I leave everything?" Yulia recalled. "But now I see how much I needed this time to regain my strength and return home with love and energy."

This retreat is made possible with help from your gifts to [Mission and Service](#). While it cannot erase hardship, it offers strength for the journey ahead. Your support provides a space for healing, restoring hope, and empowering those in need. Thank you for making a difference.

Blessings everyone

Minister: Rev. Kirsty Hunter, **705-717-1918** revkirsty@gmail.com

Church Administrator – Louise Therrien, (Wednesday mornings 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 at the church), 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 705-526-6077