



From the Minister

When I was a child, I still remember to this day the expectation and longing for the arrival of Christmas. In my time there was not an overabundance of toys, but there was still the excitement of Santa coming. Equally exciting was knowing that we would then head over to Grandpa and Grandma's house. Despite being small,

anywhere from 25 to 40 of us would gather for Christmas dinner. We all managed to fit in somehow and laugh and love and celebrate together. It was the highlight of the year and Grandma loved Christmas.

When I was expecting the arrival of my first and then my second child, there was a different kind of anticipation. It was a yearning for new life and a wee one in our lives. I was also filled with the anxiousness of being a new mother and the fear of childbirth itself. It was a time of joy and patient waiting and like Mary, the mother of Jesus, ponderings of the heart.

As I sat years later at my mother's bedside as she lay dying, there was a different kind of waiting and yearning. I longed to hold her and keep her alive and well here in my world, yet I also longed for a peaceful death for her amid her pain and her struggle. I was torn between gratitude to this woman who was so wonderful and important to my life and the overwhelming sense of loss and grief.

Waiting, yearning, longing – all three are part of our life's journey. They are also part of our Advent journey as Christians. While keeping the commercial aspect of Christmas at bay, we seek to create a space that longs for the birth of Jesus Christ again and again in our lives and in our world. It is a reflective waiting that asks questions like, "what difference does Christ make in my life, and in my world?" God incarnate, the mysterious presence of God, not just in Jesus Christ but God in us. The stable door is open to us all to enter into the mystery and presence of the holy, in ways we can never explain but only seek to embrace and live.

On behalf of the congregation, I do invite each and everyone of you to join us in our Advent journey and Christmas celebrations. Invite others to come, and enter into this special time in the Church's year.

Upcoming Advent/Christmas Worship Services

Advent Services 10 am

Advent 1 – November 27

Advent 2 – December 4 - Communion

Advent 3 – December 11 - Children's Musical
'A Christmas Yarn'

Advent 4 – December 18 - Choir Cantata
"Have you Heard: A Celtic Christmas Celebration"

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Service - 7 pm.

Dec. 25 – There is no church service on Christmas Sunday. We invite you to watch an earlier service online.

Join our live-stream service at stpaulsmidland.org



Worship with us in person at 10:00 a.m. or on-line. Visit our website at www.stpaulsmidland.org and use the direct YouTube link at the top of the page, or simply go to YouTube and subscribe to our channel. Just type in "St. Paul's Midland" and you will find us.
The Christmas Musical

"A Christmas Yarn" is scheduled **for Sunday, December 11th at 10:00 a.m.** during our morning Worship Service.

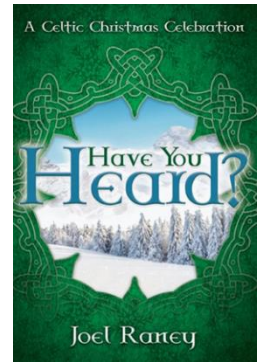


At Unique Gifts from Luxurious Yarns (U.G.L.Y.), ugly is beautiful! From the factory of the world's leading supplier of ugly Christmas sweaters, founder Sam Ebenezer pulls all the strings to make sure that no stitch is dropped. With a huge order looming to get out the day before Christmas, the team of Bob Cratchit ("that's pronounced Crochet"), Tiny Tom and others weave together a plan of attack, while Sam encounters three mysterious visitors who not only help overcome some ugly obstacles, but bring the beautiful good news of Christmas! With apologies to a well-loved Christmas Carol, don your ugliest Christmas sweater, and have a dickens of a good time with A Christmas Yarn! Bring your family and friends for this fun-filled performance!

Have You Heard: A Celtic Christmas Celebration:

Join us for this special Sunday service on **December 18th at 10:00 a.m.**

Our cantata Sunday is the most popular of the year and this event will be no exception. St Paul's choir will be joined by the Bay Sound Singers, instrumentalists and a few "extras" this year as we present this special celebration. All are welcome.



Salvation Army Food Drive:

Starting this week on Sunday November 27th we will be gathering **food items to give to the Salvation Army Food Bank.** If you are attending in person, and would like to contribute, we thank you in advance. You can leave your donations near the door by the organ.



Men's Breakfast Gathering

Our next men's breakfast gathering will take place on **Saturday November 26th at 9:00 a.m.** at Mom's Restaurant. Gather with the guys for some food, fellowship and interesting conversation. All men are welcome to join.

St. Paul's Zoom Coffee Hour

Our ZOOM coffee hour is this **Sunday November 27th at 1:00 p.m.** We invite you all to join. You can use the same link as before:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89969004401>. All are welcome!



Transition Steering Team (TST) Update

The Transition Steering Team met last week and decided to request that everyone wear masks at church events. Thank you for your understanding and support in this request.

We also decided to consult with those teams who are involved in serving **in-person coffee hours and funeral teas. Their advice is to pause these activities** for the time being and until the new year, which is what we have decided to do. This seems like the wise approach currently. We will continue with our ZOOM Coffee Hours on the second and fourth Sundays of the month starting next Sunday, November 27th.

The November Food and Fellowship takeout dinner will be cancelled as well.

We will monitor the advice from public health and resume these important services when our volunteers feel comfortable in doing so.

Office Hours

The office is now open on **Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.** Jane will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and Louise will be there on Wednesday mornings. You can reach Jane by email at officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com or by phone at 705-526-6077 on Tuesday and Thursday

mornings. Louise will be working in the office on Wednesday mornings, but the remainder of the time (between Tuesday and Thursday until 4:00 p.m.) she can be reached at stpaulsunited@rogers.com or at her home phone number 705-526-1640.

Outreach

The deadline for donations to our annual Foodgrains Campaign is next Wednesday November 30th. So far, we **have raised \$5,895.00**. Donations will be matched from our Trust Funds, up to a maximum of \$2,500.00. You can donate by cash, cheque (made payable to St. Paul's United Church) or by e-transfer. For every dollar that you give the Canadian government matches it 4 to 1.



UCW

The UCW will once again be selling Christmas Goodie boxes! The price this year is \$20 per box and all orders can be called in to Marlis Dupuis at 705-549-2018. The last date to order is on **December 4th**. The pick-up date will be on December 14th between 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. **Order yours today!**



The UCW will be having their regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday December 13th at 11:30 a.m.** in the Parlour. All women of the congregation are welcome.

Faith Formation

Discovery Kids are wanting to let families know that we are inviting all children attending our Christmas Eve service to be part of our mini pageant. There are no rehearsals, just come a bit early to allow time for a costume change and to get ready for the service.

Furnace Update

We are getting close to our fundraising goal of \$85,000! To date, we have raised \$61,640. We have also been approved for a \$20,000 grant of which we have now received \$19,000. This leaves us a **balance of \$3,360 yet to raise. GREAT JOB ST. PAUL'S – WE'RE ALMOST THERE!** We are truly grateful for all the donations already received. In order to meet our target goal and finish paying off the new furnace equipment, we will still need to continue our campaign. If you can assist at all it would be greatly appreciated.

Community Concerts/events here at St. Paul's

Together Again at Christmas: A Concert by Bay Sound Choirs

Join us **Saturday December 3rd at 7pm** at St. Paul's for this fun-filled Christmas concert. Performances will be held by Bay Sound Children's Choir, Bay Sound VIVO, and Bay Sound Singers. Special Guest appearances will include Bell A'Peal Handbell Choir and Georgian Bay Ringmasters Handchime Choir. Tickets are for sale on our website at www.baysound.ca and at the door. Prices are \$20 for adults, \$15 for youth and free for children age 5 and under. We hope to see everyone there!

DELUXE MIDLAND is sponsoring a **"Gift of Giving" event** in the Great Hall at St. Paul's on **Thursday December 8th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** This is an invitation **for those in need** in our community to shop free for Christmas gifts for family and friends!

This Week's Minute for Mission



People are facing the worst crisis of their lives and urgently need our support.

GOD'S MISSION
OUR GIFTS

While some refugees are returning to Ukraine, over 6 million are still displaced and have no home to return to. COVID-19 cases are starting to rise again, and some countries still have no access to vaccines or boosters. In Africa, food prices are soaring leaving 146 million people hungry. Entire communities in Pakistan are left

without shelter, farmland, healthcare facilities, and necessities of life because of flooding and landslides. After the headlines fade, the emergency remains. You can help.

November 29th is "Giving Tuesday", a day that is devoted to generosity. This year, Giving Tuesday gifts will support the United Church's vital emergency response work. Your gift will help provide essential life necessities such as food, water, shelter, personal care, rebuilding efforts, and trauma counselling.

Your gifts will be put to work immediately in the areas where they are needed the most. Most importantly, your support will be there to help rebuild long after the headlines fade.

Every gift counts. Make a life-saving gift this Giving Tuesday.

Blessings everyone,

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e-mail stpaulsunited@rogers.com
Louise works at the church office from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays only.