



From Our Minister – Karen Ptolemy-Stam



In response to last week's update, several people have questioned why I will not remain and be part of the congregation after my retirement. Let me attempt to explain.

Over the many years, I have seen retired ministers from different denominations, including our own, who have interfered with the congregation after they have retired. They have not been able to let go. The minister as well as the people of St. Paul's need to make space to grieve and in doing so make room for a new minister. If people keep coming to the former minister, it interferes with the establishment of a healthy relationship with the new minister. Just by being present, I am a constant reminder of what was, not what can be in the future. It is part of our professional ethics to step away for the sake of the congregation. I will continue to keep you in my thoughts and prayers and wish everyone the very best. I trust that God will continue to guide you.

When I first arrived at St. Paul's, there were people who said to me that no one could replace Cliff Pendlebury. They were correct. His ministry is still very much valued, and he was loved. Others realized, that though I was not Cliff, God had called me and that I was part of the team of St. Paul's. A year or two after I arrived, Paul Sloan announced that he was leaving. I grieved and couldn't imagine someone better to replace him. Along came Victoria Warwick, with a different vision and style and she is wonderful. Then Judy McConnell left as our Administrator and I grieved. She was with us 17 1/2 years and was liked by all. Who knew that God would call Louise Therrien and we would have another great Administrator. Then Bev Irwin retired and Colleen Gareau arrived, both unique and appreciated for the gifts they offered.

I have no doubt that you will find another minister who is unique and called to be at St. Paul's. She or he will have different ideas and ways of doing things. It is all part of a being healthy, engaging congregation, open to ministry and living in faith day to day.

Worship – Sunday, May 5, 2024

This Sunday is a remarkable service. Though difficult, it reminds us of a painful and ongoing reality in Canada that is heartbreaking. Displaying the red dresses and talking about this is one way in which we walk the path of reconciliation with integrity. It is also communion so I invite those of you who watch on-line to have a beverage and a cracker or piece of bread handy. Click on the link below or join us in person.



<https://youtube.com/live/JFJ IXFbJs4?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>

In-Person Coffee Hour

Our next in-person coffee is **this Sunday May 5th**, following worship. Joan Lavin's Team will be hosting and Joan's Greeting Team will also be at the door in May.

UCW Meeting:

The UCW will meet on Tuesday **May 14th at 1:30** in the Parlour. This month, our special guest will be Shaun McIntosh, our Candidate for Ministry. All ladies of the church are welcome. Next month on **June 11th**, we will have our finger food potluck luncheon! For further information, you can call Judy McConnell at 705 529-1826.

Save the date

Karen's last Sunday at St. Paul's will be on **May 26th, 2024**. Please plan to attend the service at 10:00 a.m., followed by a reception in the Great Hall.

Suitcases Needed

We are looking for two used suitcases that are clean and in relatively good shape. If you are willing to donate one, please call the church office to let us know.

Butter Tart Festival Fundraiser

St. Paul's will be holding a 'penny raffle' during this year's Butter Tart Festival **on June 8th**. Please consider making a donation to our prize table and/or volunteering for a couple of hours that day. This was a successful fundraiser last year and we hope to do as well in 2024. Please contact Sheila at 705-526-2186 or by e-mail at rmsmt2612@gmail.com) for further info.



Lifelong Learning

We have received many requests for information about caregiving and navigating the health care system. In response, we will be hosting guests from the Ontario Caregivers Association and a system navigator from the Couchiching Ontario Health Team. Stay tuned for more details.

Volunteer opportunities

Lifelong Learning- are you interested in working on a team to provide interesting learning opportunities at St. Paul's? This is one of the programs that we would like to continue after Kathy's employment under the Community Service Recovery Fund ends. Let's make St. Paul's a leader in the community by continuing to offer these events. If you would like more information please reach out to Kathy at 705-529-6121.

Volunteers are needed for the **St. Paul's team** that do the **Meals on Wheels and Driving programs** at the Red Cross. If you are able to volunteer for either of these very important initiatives, please connect with Lois McQuirter at 705-526-6854.

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



Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) is dedicated to sustainable relief.

When we hear of a global emergency, our minds often jump to "How can we help?" Your gifts to Mission and Service enable partners to immediately get to work providing crucial basic needs: food, water, shelter, and medication. But after the initial response, and after headlines fade away, the emergency and urgency remain.

After the immediate shock lessens, people living in the wake of a disaster can have difficulty imagining what life will look like down the road. In these times, hope is essential. By giving us the motivation to keep moving forward, hope is a powerful force that inspires us to keep going. Mission and Service partner the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) continues to be hard at work providing hope. People in Syria are still experiencing the devastating aftermath of the February 2023 earthquakes.

From retrofitting buildings and providing medical equipment to education and trauma healing, MECC is dedicated to sustainable relief.

In Aleppo, MECC rehabilitated four schools before the academic year launched in September 2023, providing children with a safe place to learn.

Thank you for supporting the work of our [Mission and Service](#) partners. Your generosity is a beacon of hope during challenging times.

Blessings everyone

Minister – Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam, **705-433-1224**, minspucmidland@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