



## St. Paul's Weekly Update – February 13, 2025

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### Minister's Message, Sunday, February 16, 2025

People talk about using their faith as a way to help them make decisions. The classic, or overused, phrase, "what would Jesus do?" comes to mind. This is a kind of appeal to authority. The one in control is Jesus, so just do what he said. However, there are often disagreements about what he said, or what he meant. So how do we know what is true? Who do we listen to? As you can see, this way of making decisions can be misleading. At the least, it is not a very systematic way to make decisions. What Would Jesus Do™? is often a way to justify what you are doing, or a way to judge what others are doing. It is fast and easy and can lead you astray.

So rather than rely on one point of data (or perceived point of data), I offer another way. For hundreds of years in theology people have been using some version of, the "Wesleyan Quadrilateral." It is a 4-pronged way of making a decision described by John Wesley. The basic idea is that any question should be examined using **FOUR** things, scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. Scripture, means the bible. It includes Jesus, because the bible is how we know about Jesus' life and wisdom. Tradition refers to the knowledge passed down: practices, extra stories, and teachings. Experience is our own lives, our particular context, and our unique understanding of the world. Reason is logic, deduction, and problem solving.

Thus we have a more balanced approach to making decisions. We are more likely to see or think about things that we haven't known before. This also is a longer way of making decisions. And sometimes slowing down can help us. When you are lost in the woods, the first thing you want to do is STOP (an acronym that means Sit down, Think, Observe, and Plan). If you are having a panic attack, first breathe. Slowing down gives us more reaction time when driving. We live in a culture that demands speed. But important decisions need time, deliberation, and more information.

Questions to take home...

How do you make major decisions? Minor decisions?

What role does your faith play in how you live your life?

Is there something in your life that needs a little renewal?

Prayer... (from our worship on Sunday)

Dear God,  
we pray for strength in our tough times,  
and for hope when we need it.

In our high-pressure world,  
it gets hard to follow your path.

When we are sidetracked,  
may we always try our hardest to return to you. Amen.  
(Terrence Bigby, from I Am Listening)



## Speaking Truth

February 16, 2025

<https://youtube.com/live/hEA9BxY4WXw?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](mailto:revkirsty@gmail.com).

### **Coffee Hour**

Our next coffee hour is **this Sunday**, February 16th, 2025. Barb Carswell's team is hosting this week. **Joan Lavin** is Captain of the Greeters for the month of February.

### **Men's Breakfast**

The monthly Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday February 22nd at 9:00 a.m. at Mom's Restaurant. Gather with the guys for some food, fellowship and interesting conversations. All men are welcome.

### **Nametags**

If anyone requires a new or replacement name tag, please let Judy McConnell in the office know. Her direct e-mail address is [officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com](mailto:officesecretaryspuc@gmail.com).

### **Fundraising**

**Love & Friendship Dinner Update** - The love is abundant at St. Paul's! This past Saturday, some 60 diners partook in a chef-inspired 5 course meal with local talent on display. The setting was beautiful, the food delectable and the smiles and joy bountiful. We raised \$2,300, fellowship was shared and the only question remaining is: when do we do it again? Keep an eye out for dates so you don't miss out on the next one. **Thank you to everyone who came out in support!**

**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](mailto:sharonfoster000@gmail.com) or [sues0703@gmail.com](mailto: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.



Believe it or not, Spring is around the corner which means Easter treats are on the horizon. Stay tuned for a chance to help raise funds for St. Paul's with the help of delicious Canadian chocolate from Purdys!!

## **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 Wednesday March 5<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday April 30<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in 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.

## **Outreach**

Coldest Night of the Year - bundle up for the Coldest Night of the Year, a winterrific family-friendly fundraising walk for charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness in our community. Please join us on February 22<sup>nd</sup> or support our St. Paul's Team!



<https://secure.e2rm.com/registrator/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=1026483&langPref=en-CA>

## **Stock Exchange**

Our first soup sale was a success! We sold out and raised \$180 towards our outreach efforts such as preparing meals for the Guesthouse, life-long learning events and more. We will offer this again during the first coffee hour in March -with more soup. **Thank you for your support!**

## **Pause for Peace**

The outreach committee will be hosting the **Pause for Peace** event again this year on Wednesday February 19th and February 26<sup>th</sup>, anytime between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Invite your friends/community to join us as we spread the message of peace. It is an opportunity to come and sit quietly, light a candle, make a craft for kids, hang a symbolic dove as we collectively take a moment to promote peace in our communities, within ourselves, our families and the world around us. Share a prayer or whatever has meaning to you for peace.

How can you help? We need some volunteers-ambassadors to greet/welcome visitors make cookies, attend to show your support. Please help us to spread the word in our community. There are flyers on the table outside the admin office that you could help to distribute around town. If you can help, please reach out to Carol MacDonald (g.c.macdonald8@gmail.com) or Kathy Stewart ([kathy.stewart@sympatico.ca](mailto:kathy.stewart@sympatico.ca)).

## **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 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. More details to come.



## **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 Rift Valley of Kenya, over 200,000 people are HIV positive, and many will not survive. Grandmothers whose children have died of AIDS are often left alone to care for their grandchildren, and to add insult to injury, their church community condemns them, leaving them without support as they raise their grandchildren.

Some pastors in the Rift Valley, as in many other places, believe and teach that faithful Christians cannot contract the disease and that it is a judgment from God—a disease for sexual sinners. "The pastors had little information about HIV and AIDS; to them, and others in the community, it was a strange disease.... [They believed] HIV was a result of sexual sin and was a judgement from God for the sexually immoral," writes Esther Mombo of the World Council of Churches.

In partnership with the United Church of Canada, Mombo and Pauline Wanjuru of St. Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya, led a series of workshops in one Rift Valley community that has been hit especially hard by HIV/AIDS. They invited grandmothers and pastors to connect and learn from each other. One grandmother who attended the workshops was 70 years old. She was raising three grandchildren on her own after losing both her daughter and her son. Instead of stepping up to help, her neighbours refused to visit her because they said her daughter and son had been sexually immoral. Her pastor wouldn't even attend her children's funerals because he didn't want to be seen associating with her family. When she went to church, the pastor preached about the punishment for sexual immorality.

At the workshops, this woman bravely told her story to the pastors who attended. She also shared with them how it felt to be shamed for loving her children and caring for her grandchildren. Another grandmother explained that her grandchildren were born with the virus and couldn't have been involved in any sexual immorality. Yet another spoke of God's love for everyone. Pastors listened and learned and moved forward by making a commitment to extend compassion and offer pastoral care to the grandmothers.

All of us know from our own life experience that when we know better, we do better. Your **Mission and Service** gifts gave these grandmothers the opportunity to help their pastors learn to do better by connecting their love for their grandchildren to God's love for all. Thank you.

## **Blessings everyone**

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