



St. Paul's

Herald

May 2023

St. Paul's Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in the sanctuary of St. Paul's following the combined service on Sunday, April 16. Rev. Christina opened the meeting with a prayer and members and adherents were welcomed by chair of Council, John Challinor.

One baptism was celebrated in 2022, Roman Alexander George. There was a moment of silence to remember those members of St. Paul's who had died this past year – Gladys Hume, Murray Wilson, Margaret Ford, Jim Black, and Wayne Beauchamp.

Reports from the Board of Trustees, the Church Council, Reverend Christina, and the various committees had been sent out via email prior to the AGM. The Board of Trustees report was accepted along with the resignations of Sue Butson and Don Clements. Two Council members, Sue Butson and Colleen McDuffe, had resigned their positions at the end of the year.

Theo Wolder went through the nominations for Church Council for the upcoming year and asked for any further nominations. Here is your Council for 2023-2024:

Chair	John Challinor
Vice-Chair	Shawn Cronkwright
Treasurer	Werner Anders
Secretary	Jennifer Viveiros
Past Chair	Theo Wolder
Facilitator – Infrastructure & Finance	Carole Tyrer
Facilitator – Community & Spiritual Life	Joanna Rowe
Ministry & Personnel Committee Chair	Shelley Doucet
Representatives to Horseshoe Falls Regional Council	Jennifer Viveiros
	Priyanka Singh

Priyanka will be sitting on Council as part of her role.

Norman Flemington and Kristi Rowe are the two new St. Paul's trustees.

Werner introduced Melissa Coulson, our external auditor, who provided an overview of the audited financial statements. He then presented the 2023 budget. It is a balanced budget that sees one significant increase on the income side, several large increases on the expense side, but also some very conservative expense budgets with built-in emergency funds.

In his closing remarks, John Challinor stated the areas St. Paul's needs to focus on next year include:

1. Recruitment of new members
2. Financial Stability
3. Stewardship
4. Encouragement of Volunteerism

He thanked the members of Church Council for their service over the past year, Sue Butson for her many contributions over many years, the Search committee for their efforts in bringing Rev. Christina to our church community, and Don Clements and Brent Tyrer for their assistance with grant applications.

Rev. Christina led us in a closing prayer.

Communion Table Bible Has Its Old Bones Restored

By Hélène Ellison

In keeping with the March 26 readings and sermon, I couldn't resist the sensational headline! Have I caught your attention?

We gratefully acknowledge the fine craftsmanship and free service of restoring the large communion table Bible, which was provided by Stuart Hill, a Milton resident who also happens to be a book binder.

It had become apparent to those who set up for Sunday services that the above Bible had a broken spine and it was beginning to fall apart. Discussions at an early winter Worship meeting led to a

committee member approaching Stuart to see if the item was salvageable. He came by after a Sunday service, assessed the state of the Bible, and after graciously offering to do the work for free, he whisked it away to perform his magic!

Prior to the March 26 service, the restored item, along with a custom-made holder to prevent similar future damage, were returned into our keeping. Reverend Christina offered thanks and the Bible was welcomed back with applause and happy smiles.

A thank you card from the Worship Committee on behalf of St. Paul's has been sent to Stuart Hill.



On April 16, in keeping with the message of how God breaks through walls when we are most vulnerable, Erica and Alana read the book **I'm Not A Scaredy Cat** by Max Lucado.



Kaitlyn Viveiros contributed to the service with her rendition of 'Bridge Over Troubled Water'.

Annex Worship, March 19

Groups of worshippers in the Annex were asked to choose a picture of someone in a magazine, and based on what they saw in the picture, rewrite the familiar 23rd Psalm from their perspective. This is what they came up with:

God is my protector,
God shields me from the demands of peers and technology.
Even though I feel the pressure of the others, God covers me with strength.
In the face of blinding technology and overwhelming societal pressure, God will nourish my mind against the ignorance.
God provides people to cushion me and be an outside voice of love and reason,
And I shall remain with God and be an example of God to others.

God is my PSW, my personal support worker,
She knows my needs,
She holds me when I am alone,
She touches me in my moments of despair,
She gives the reassurance with the touch of her hand,
She does everything to protect me.
Even though there are tough and lonely times.
She loves me unconditionally.

God is my protector.
God sees the vulnerable real me,
Even though I fear aging and losing my career.
God reminds me of who I really am,
And sees beyond my physical appearance.
Surely God will provide for my future as I model behaviour to others.

We love him.
He makes me and you do cartwheels.
He loves me and you.

*(Audrey
and
Olive)*



In March the "Star Team" presented a program centered around St. Patrick, with interesting information about the "apostle of Ireland, a trivia game about St. Patrick's Day celebrations and, of course, green treats.



At the April meeting of the UCW, Jill Merk was presented with a life membership certificate and pin in recognition of her twenty-five years as our treasurer. Rev. Christina Crawford was the guest speaker and, in describing the events that led to her calling into diaconal ministry, she encouraged us to reflect on the ways we have also answered God's call to serve.



St. Paul's extends its sympathies to Wally Whitnell, Julie Nikolov and her family and the remaining Whitnell family on the passing of **Nancy Whitnell**. Nancy was a former member of our choir, the UCW, chaired the Fellowship and Events committee for many years, and was very active within the church.

“Jerusalem My Destiny” The Story behind the Hymn

By Sharon Pyle

This past Lenten season, we were introduced to the hauntingly beautiful hymn “Jerusalem, My Destiny”, composed by Rory Cooney. I’m sure I am not the only member of our congregation who found myself humming it many times during the weeks leading up to Easter!

Born in Delaware in 1952, Cooney taught himself to play the piano as a teenager. After high school, he enrolled in a seminary, intending to enter the priesthood, but left during his junior year. Working during the week as a travel agent, he directed choirs at various Catholic parishes in Phoenix while also composing worship songs. Since 1994 he has been Director of Liturgy and Music Ministries at St. Anne Catholic Community in Barrington, Illinois and still travels nationwide giving concerts and workshops.

Considered to be in the vanguard of church music composition in the United States, Cooney says, “A song is like a virus, or a child, or a piece of gossip. You let it out in the wild, or it escapes you; you don’t have any more control

over the outcome or meaning of it than the man in the moon. You don't know whose hand will take it up, whose voice will sing it, what circumstances of elation or tragedy or just rite will precipitate its singing. You just write a song because you have to, and wait and see what happens. It's a mystery, and a privilege to be a part of it.”

“Jerusalem, My Destiny” was dedicated to Cooney’s ten-year-old son Joel and his friends who were in their baptismal retreat during Lent of 1989. It was a “C” lectionary year and he wanted to compose a song that would tie the weeks of Lent together. Cooney writes that his imagination was captured by, “how the narrative of [Luke’s] gospel builds toward Jerusalem...The NRSV says Jesus “set his face” to go to Jerusalem; “The Message” version says he “steeled himself.” This is the part that caught me, that after the transfiguration, he knew that he could not wander in Galilee any more, but had to go to Jerusalem, the city of his destiny. This is not to say that I think that Jesus had any

clear idea that his death was imminent; I simply feel that he knew that he had to confront the people and structures who were at the source of interpretation of the law and prophets and put his reading of the scriptures in competition with theirs. It didn't take a prophet to know that the journey and confrontation might be dangerous."

Fran Szpylczyn reflects that the hymn's "rousing sound propels us forward into our own journey with Christ to Jerusalem, to suffering, death and the Cross. It also is a reminder of our resurrection to follow. Anything that makes me feel joyful about this journey is a gift indeed."

St. Paul's United Church: The Year In Review And A Way Forward

***By John Challinor II
Chairman, Church Council***

The last 12 months of church life at St. Paul's United Church were highlighted by the arrival of a new minister, three successful financial grants that improved the church's physical infrastructure to the benefit of its members and adherents and renewed interest in the church by the community it serves following the gradually retreating pandemic, whose impact some three years later continues to reverberate locally, nationally and globally.

In fact, the first 40 days of 2022 were lost to a provincial lockdown related to continuing COVID-19 pandemic health concerns.

However, following the development and publishing of the Living Faith Report, a Search Committee was established and tasked with the responsibility of recruiting and hiring a new minister. Rev. Christina Crawford conducted her inaugural service at St. Paul's in mid-September, which culminated in ever-increasing Sunday services participation through the fall and early winter by current and potential members, whether it was the 9:30 a.m. young family-oriented service in the Community Hall or the 11:00 a.m. traditional service in the historic Sanctuary.

Rev. Crawford also quickly began the arduous task of reconnecting the church with the community, whether through pastoral care, helping members and others develop a relationship with God or faith to faith community engagement.

Special thanks to Jim Coulson, Helene Ellison, Val Ewan, Angie Herdman, Stephen Hurley, Sharon Pyle, Tim Szumlanski and Jennifer and

Kaitlyn Viveiros for their work with the Search Committee. Most of them also contributed their leadership to the Living Faith Report. Thanks are also owed to Rev. John Smith, Rev. Ken MacDonald and the members of St. Paul's Worship Committee for their ministerial leadership between Rev. Dale Skinner's departure in early 2021 and Rev. Crawford's arrival in late 2022.

Successful grant applications made in 2022 by the church to Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada resulted in the addition of a \$42 300 full-height partition wall in the Community Hall, a \$10 000 door security system across the width and breadth of the church and a \$5 170 assisted hearing device to support those in need wherever they are on the church campus. The church made significant gains in the quality and usability of its physical infrastructure in support of its members, many tenants and others from the community who use the church every day for a myriad of purposes.

Special thanks to Don Clements for his management of the application process as well as to Brent Tyrer for acquiring initial quotations and managing the relationships with the vendors during the individual installation processes, which were made all that much more difficult because of global supply chain issues created by the pandemic.

Whether it was members, potential members, tenants or others from all walks of life in the community, 2022 closed with much renewed interest in St. Paul's United Church. A slowly dissipating pandemic, new ministerial leadership

and a desire by the community served by St. Paul's to attempt to get back to normal resulted in increasing participation in Sunday services, more tenants on the church campus and re-engagement with the community at large, chiefly through the warming station during the Santa Claus Parade and the Christmas musical ministry performed by Father Mark Curtis.

Special thanks to Karen Tyrer for her strong leadership in spearheading Rev. Curtis' appearance at St. Paul's as well as to Ms. Butson for her excellent organization of all facets of the warming station activity, which attracted 300 to 400 grateful Miltonians during the parade.

While the pins are in place for the resurgence of St. Paul's United Church in 2023 and beyond, there are three key matters that Council, its committees and the congregation must remain mindful of, moving forward. They are, as follows:

- St. Paul's requires many more members than it boasts today to continue to be a viable option for local Christians. The church's leadership must be focused on recruitment in 2023 and beyond;
- St. Paul's must continue to exercise fiscal responsibility and current and

future members, adherents and others must continue to acknowledge the importance of a strong balance sheet in affording them one of the very best environments in our community with which to pray, reflect and serve God. The church's leadership must also be focused on stewardship in 2023 and beyond; and

- St. Paul's is largely operated by volunteers and that will not change. The church's leadership must encourage participation in the life of the church in a way that provides a balance between the organization's needs and the ability of its members to serve without impairing their personal lives, their professional careers or their love of God. The church's leadership must encourage volunteerism, but in a way that allows everyone to participate at a level they are comfortable with while meeting the needs of the organization.

Thanks to each and every one of you who has donated financially, volunteered your time, talent and/or wisdom or chosen to serve God through St. Paul's United Church over the past year. Our church is blessed to have your presence here.



Worship at 11AM on Palm Sunday featured a palm parade and several prominent Canadian television journalists reporting live from Jerusalem with on-the-spot interviews of local people about the recent events in the city. Communion was served in the pews to end the service.



A powerful service of remembrance was held on Good Friday with special music from our choir, readings and drama. It concluded with the people in the congregation symbolically dropping their nails at the foot of the cross.



At the Annex Easter Sunshine Service we opened Resurrection Eggs and learned what each symbol inside represented. Then, everyone took part in the centuries-old tradition of "Flowering the Cross" by covering the barren cross with fresh flowers to serve as a symbol of Jesus' resurrection.



Thank you to Sarah Calera for arranging for the donation of delicious hot cross buns from COBS Bakery, a treat that was enjoyed following both services on Easter Sunday.





The Brass Ensemble under the direction of Judy Hunter enhanced the Easter Sunday service.



Pebbles that we carried during Lent, meant to remind us of some of the "temptations" that we wanted to become more aware of during this season, were returned on Easter Sunday.

Save the Date!

On Sunday, June 18 we will celebrate communion at a combined service for all ages. This will be followed by a potluck lunch. Please plan to attend and enjoy this time of fellowship together!

