



St. Paul's

# Herald

December 2022

## St. Paul's Covenants with Rev. Christina



Reverend Michael Brooks, as a representative of the Horseshoe Falls Region, presided over the covenanting service at St. Paul's on Sunday, November 13. This event symbolizes the commitments we make to each other as Rev. Crawford assumes her role as minister of St. Paul's.



Tim Szumlanski presents a Bible as a symbol of education as we grow together in God's living word.



Helene Ellison presents a pair of sandals as a symbol of pastoral care as one who journeys with us - from darkness into light.



Liam Hurley(not pictured) presents a bouquet of balloons which celebrates the ministry with people of all ages, and various stages on the journey; through laughter, joy and celebration of the Holy Spirit.



Zoe Jordan-Hurley(not pictured) presents a towel and basin, symbol of servant leadership, as a reminder of Jesus, who took on and transformed the role of service by washing the disciples' feet.

Stephen Hurley delivered the message, part of which follows. For the complete message go to <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pIRQQeTaHD76KnIeneMPXa69BTswEU2qaLxOcmRdKGE/edit?usp=sharing>

**What is it that you seek?**

The first words out of the mouth of Jesus in the Gospel of John don't come in the form of a statement, a precept or a law. They come in the form of a question! But it's a question that cuts right to the heart of who we are as human beings:

**What are you seeking? What is it that you are longing for?**

As scripture scholar Raymond E. Brown points out, **"This question touches on the basic need of humans that causes us to turn to God."**

The two young men who had been drawn to Jesus and were following close behind him must have been caught off guard with his question. They risked a question of their own in return, "Rabbi, where are you staying?"

Jesus doesn't rebuke them for dodging his question. Instead, he responds with three simple words that held both an invitation and a promise:

**Come and See!**

Seems like a simple response—invitational even—but on a deeper level, Jesus is providing an answer to his own question:

**Come, follow me and you'll discover what you're looking for. Come and see what it really means to live in the light of God.**

Through his invitation to come and see, Jesus invites those first disciples—and he invites us—to join him on a journey of faith. This is not a journey of the head. No, this is a journey of the heart—it's a living faith journey that promises to reveal what it means to walk from darkness to light—from death to new life. It is a journey that is not so much about following the law that had been originally written on stone tablets but about living the spirit behind that law with renewed hearts. It's a journey that involves a deepening relationship with Jesus...a deepening relationship with God. It is a covenant journey.

This month, we marked a new chapter in the life of St. Paul's United Church. We are grateful to be covenanting with Rev. Christina Crawford to lead us and walk with us on this next part of **our** journey as a faith community.

In a very real sense, our journey over the past two years has been a response to the same question that Jesus asked those first followers in John's Gospel:

**What is it that you seek?**

And moving forward, we count on Rev. Christina to hold that same question in front of us. In turn, we need to hold that question in front of Rev. Christina, as our spiritual leader.

May our life and work here at St. Paul's continue to be inspired by the powerful question that Jesus asked his first followers, and may our response always be a robust and faithful:

**Come and See!**

**Thanks be to God**



Rev. Christina presents a spiral pin to Sharon Pyle, representing the congregation of St. Paul's. The spiral has become a significant symbol of Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada. It represents a shared philosophy of action/reflection in the formation and practice of ministry and faithful living.





Kaitlyn Viveiros presents a pitcher of water symbolizing the sacrament of baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Jo McDuffe presents a special symbol from the St. Paul's Community of Faith to Rev. Christina. This prayer shawl was the first one that Jo's sister, Jacquie, knit.



Luke Hurley presents bread and wine symbolizing the sacrament of communion.



Angie Herdman presents a copy of the Living Faith Story, a symbol of our attempt to live out our faith by our actions so that our faith story may give glory to Christ Jesus.

St. Paul's member **Margaret Ford** passed away on November 5. St. Paul's extends condolences to her daughter, Patricia Doreen Ford.

***“Comfort, comfort my people,” says your God. (Isaiah 40.1)***

As the Christmas season approaches, preparations for a happy holiday are already under way. Some of you have started your Christmas gift shopping; others are pulling lights and decorations out of storage. Some have even begun “hanging the greens.” It won't be long before *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* and other carols are heard across radio waves and satellite signals, through speakers, and earbuds, and *live and in person* along the Main Street of Milton!

For many of us it will be a wonderful time, but there are others who aren't up for a holly jolly Christmas. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with disease, and many other circumstances make holiday gatherings and joviality painful for many people in our community. Unfortunately, sometimes it appears that sadness and grief are unwelcomed emotions during the holidays, and we can find ourselves attempting to spread holiday cheer to those who simply need comfort and understanding.

Jesus had some good friends - Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. When Lazarus died, and Jesus arrived after the funeral, Mary came to him sobbing about her loss. Jesus did not offer her advice, such as “Count your blessings.” He didn't offer to take her shopping to help relieve her pain, nor was he quick with an aphorism or saying, like “time heals all wounds.” Instead, he allowed her to experience her pain and express it, and he shared it with her. Jesus wept. (John 11:35)

As we enter the holiday season, may we give space to those who grieve to have a ‘blue Christmas.’ Let us share the gift of comfort and support for those who mourn. Please join us at St. Paul's Blue Christmas Service on December 18 at 3 p.m. May you be blessed with peace, love, and light as we celebrate the coming of our Lord and Saviour!

Your Sister in Christ, Rev. Christina

## St. Paul's to Host Angel Workshop

*“See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared.” Exodus 23:20* Are angels among us? What exactly are angels? Where did angels come from and what is their purpose? Angels appear in the course of Israel's history as God's messengers, and the Israelites' guides, and they imparted God's laws. Jesus' life was intertwined with the attending ministry of angels. The early followers of the way encountered angels along their way, and many believe there are angels among us today. In this 4-week spiritual practices series, we will read, meditate, reflect and open ourselves to stories of angel encounters. Please have a bible on hand for referencing and a journal to use for your own personal reflection. Space is limited. Please register with Rev. Christina Crawford

On Zoom: Monday evenings Nov. 28 – Dec. 19: 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
St. Paul's Tuesday mornings: Nov. 29 – Dec. 20: 11 a.m. - noon







Judy Rye led our UCW November 9th meeting in the Sanctuary. She read many interesting trivia facts related to remembering our Veterans on November 11. Jane Baynton and Helene Ellison also contributed with articles.



Dawn Brodie celebrated turning 90 with friends and family at Hugh Foster Hall on Sunday, November 13.



Kaitlyn Viveiros sang "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" accompanied on the guitar by her grandfather, Brian Swainson during the Remembrance Day service.



Stephen and Zoe Hurley read the names on the Historic Honor Roll and the names of recent fallen Canadian soldiers.





# New Faces at St. Paul's



Helen and Norman Flemington were members of Bethel United Church before its closing. They usually spend the winter in Sanibel Island but, due to Hurricane Ian, the accommodations they had booked were destroyed. Welcome!



On October 30, St. Rev. Crawford delivered the message and the choir, Don Cassano, and Elijah Calara provided the music.



St. Paul's Worship Committee - Sharon Pyle, Jo McDuffe, Don Cassano, Peter Anderson, Rev. Christina, Helene Ellison, and Val Ewan.



Host Rev. Christina presented the first question as Tim and Stephen faced off for their teams during the Family Feud game at the Annex on November 20.

This month's bouquet goes to Tim Szumlanski who has recently taken on the responsibility for keeping St. Paul's Facebook page up to date. As well as frequently posting pictures from our worship services and promoting upcoming activities at St. Paul's, Tim also includes links to other interesting events and opportunities for education in the wider community. Please invite your friends to join the over 300 people who follow the St. Paul's United Church Milton Facebook page!



## Upcoming Services

- November 27** 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – communion at both services  
Coming Home to the Heart of Christmas at 7 p.m.
- December 4** **White Gift Sunday\*** at both services
- December 11** Pageant – combined service at 11 a.m. ‘Come that day! Everyone gets a part!’  
Community Christmas Carol Sing, 3-4 p.m.
- December 18** The Annex at 9:30, Christmas Music with the Choir and the Brass Ensemble at 11  
Blue Christmas Service in sanctuary at 3 p.m.
- December 24** Christmas Eve Family Service with communion at 6 p.m.
- December 25** Online Christmas message

*\*Please bring a gift for the food bank either wrapped in white tissue paper or in a white bag.*



## Community Christmas Carol Sing -- December 11th

The Community Christmas Carol Sing will take place on December 11 from 3 to 4 p.m. The sing-a-long begins on the lawn of St. Paul's, followed by a walking carol sing to the front lawn of Knox Presbyterian Church for 3:20 p.m., where Christmas carols will be sung until we walk and carol our way to Southside Community Church to share the gift of song at 3:40 p.m. All are welcome to attend!

