

St Paul's United Church, Sidney

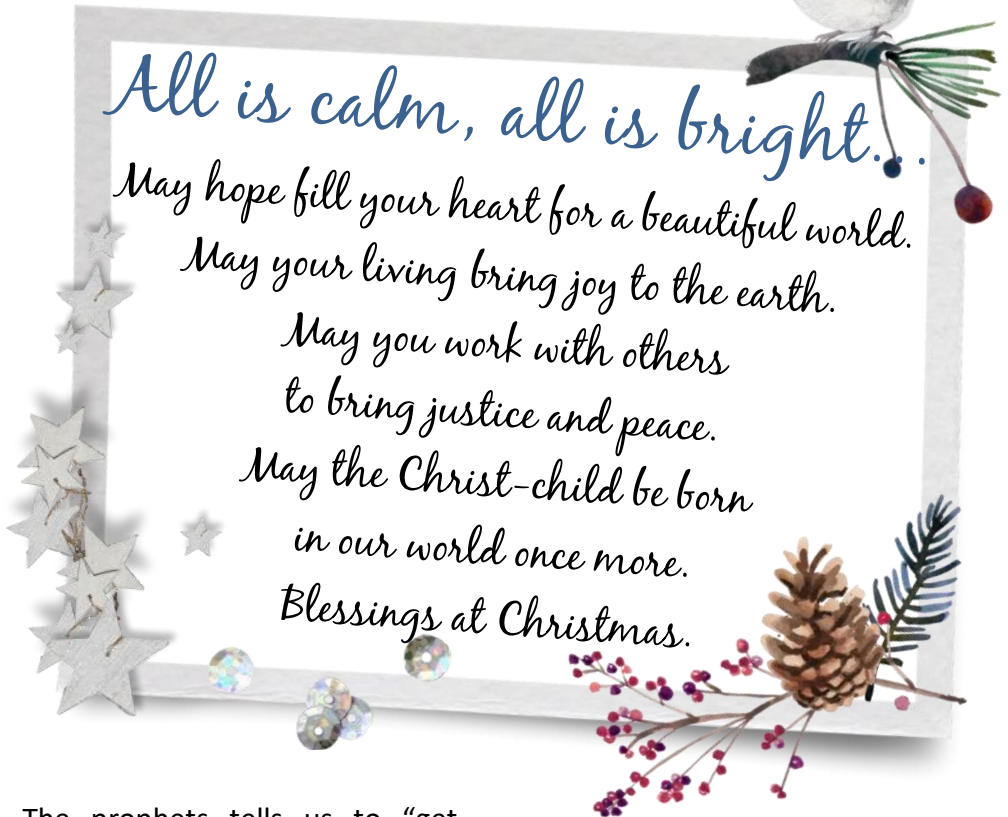
★ Winter 2018 ★ Newsletter

Dear Friends,

It's that time of year again. Those moments when you're caught between asking "where did this year go?" and anticipating the close of the year, drawing breath in expectation for the Christmas season. I confess that I don't quite feel ready for Christmas concerts and decking the halls. I'm still wondering where August went!

But here it is, the colder season, damp earth shivers. Even the dog protests, not wanting to brave the weather. But there is something about this season that brings a deep sigh of relief. A year of hard work is ending. Goals set earlier on can be celebrated or mourned, but either way they can gratefully be released into the cold air.

As the darkness of the season sets in I can't think of anything nicer than to take a chilly walk and gaze quietly at the Christmas lights in the windows. There is something hopeful, comforting about those lights, - tiny twinkling little shards of brightness bringing infinite messages of hope to our world. Looking back on this year, did we ever need it! It's been another uncertain year for our world. I love Advent, because this season invites honesty. In our scriptures on Advent Sundays we'll be looking at some unusual ones. We'll hear cries from the prophets who help us to utter our unanswerable questions as we gaze at the world.



The prophets tells us to "get real" and deal courageously with the truth of what is.

Advent is also the season of longing and waiting. We wait in darkness. We wait in a place of unknowing, wrestling with our romantic ideals and wishes until our longing draws from us an energy and anger to re-make things and re-do things that are more aligned with God's ideals. Advent calls us to stand upright, confident and hopeful whatever darkens our unsettled future, whatever difficulty we walk through now. That's Advent hope. And sometimes it seems as if hope is all we have. A star, a pinprick of light in the dark black sky. But we've got to wait for it, and sit with it.

Hope is born of trust in a world of fear; it is believing in and being committed to God's future in times of despair. So let us light the lights, let us find things to grasp hold of through the uncertainty of the news of the day. Let's not only proclaim and sing of the Christ-light born into a fragile world, let's long for it, pray for it and work for it with everything we have and are.

And so as we travel through Advent into Christmas let us celebrate with gladness, God's love for the world, for God is with us.

Every blessing to you,
Rev. Suzanna Bates



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES

All is Calm, All is Bright

Advent I

Sunday, 2nd December, 10.30am

Advent II

Sunday, 9th December, 10.30am

Advent III

Sunday, 16th December, 10.30am

Longest Night

Friday, 21st December,

6.00pm

Advent Spiral Walk

Advent IV

Sunday, 23rd Dec.

10.30am

Nativity for All

Christmas Eve

Monday, 24th Dec. 7.00pm



This Advent...

All is Calm,
All is Bright



This year is the 200th anniversary of the debut of "Silent Night, Holy Night." This hymn has become associated with the best-loved worship moment of many, when on Christmas Eve something beautiful happens as we light our candles and sing the hymn. We sing of the moment when "*all is calm, all is bright*". It is that moment when we are most hopeful for peace and light for the world. We will be singing through the verses of "Silent Night" as we travel through the season of Advent, lighting our Advent candles along the way, pointing us to the hope, peace, joy and love that Christ's birth announces

Longest Night

21st December, 6.00pm

Advent spiral walk



As winter and darkening days approach in the northern hemisphere there is also expectation and hope. The earth grows quieter with longing. The Winter Solstice (21st December) marks the turning point of the year, the shortest day, and with it, a celebration of the return of light. Join us as we walk the Advent Spiral carrying our light through the dark turns of the spiral and then outwards again knowing that spring's light will soon increase.

OPEN THE DOORS!



On 14th October, a glorious day, we began our worship outside as we dedicated the new front entrance of our church. The bell rung out in celebration as we opened our new doors! We blessed our new entrance in grateful remembrance of all who have loved and served this church in the past and gave thanks for those who will serve it in the future. We deeply appreciate of all who freely gave of their time, talents, and money so that this entrance could be built!



Pastoral Care Update

Your Pastoral Care Committee is celebrating! We are delighted to welcome new folks who are worshipping with us. Some have moved to Sidney from the Gulf Islands, some from further afield and some, who have lived in the area for some time, have decided to attend as time and commitments allow. On Sunday Nov. 30th we held a membership Sunday to welcome those who chose to formalize their membership. We want all newcomers to know they are welcome and that, though we are happy some have chosen official membership, it is not a requirement and we are delighted that they chose to make St. Paul's their church home. Prayer shawls were made available for those who wish to symbolize the day in this way.

The following people were received into membership:
Bill Cassell and Mary Cassell;
Bob Fish and Lori Hudson-Fish;
Ruth Gilliat; Dorothy Wiebe;
Ed Pedersen and Esther Harrison.

Your Pastoral Care Team will meet in mid December to prepare a Christmas gift to deliver to folks who are home-bound or find it difficult to attend services. We want them to know their active participation in days past is remembered and appreciated and they are still very much a part of our church family.

In the new year, probably in February, we plan to update our Photo Directory by adding our new folks. We find this directory is invaluable to our newer people and a very positive way to make them feel at home in their new church.

*Hazel Phillips,
Pastoral Care Committee*

BRIDGE & SCRABBLE

Are you looking for a delightful way to spend a Friday afternoon? We have an informal gathering of folks who enjoy a game of bridge, or if that is a bit serious for you, you might enjoy testing your word and spelling skills in a game of Scrabble. High word and spelling skills are not a requirement because we use dictionaries and word cheat sheets in our Scrabble games. We are not competitive, are quite relaxed and enjoy a good laugh. Participation costs \$2.00 for the afternoon of fun and includes coffee and tea and the occasional sweet goody if participants wish to donate goodies to the cause. Many of those participating go out for dinner together to a local restaurant following their games.



S, C, R, A, B, B, L, E, We meet most Friday afternoons from 2:30 to 5:00, even during the summer. We find that the bridge keeners arrive shortly after 2:00 to help set up the tables and put on the coffee and tea. Often they are deep into a game before the appointed time of 2:30.



**We invite you to check us out
on Fridays at 2.30 - 5.00pm!**

SAANICH PENINSULA LIONS FOOD BANK

The Saanich Peninsula Food Bank, located on Fifth Street beside the Iroquois Park in Sidney, serves the whole Peninsula. There are many ways that you can contribute to help the people of your community. Donations of monies, whether by cheque, Visa, cash, debit can be made in person, by mail or on line and tax receipts are given.

Food donations are always gratefully received through many avenues such as the local stores, our church, fundraisers. etc.

The most needed items are:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Canned Vegetables | Dry Soup |
| Canned Tomatoes | Jam |
| Canned Fruit | Peanut butter |
| Pasta | Rice |
| Pasta Sauce | School Snacks |
| Cookies | Juice |
| Crackers | Hot or cold cereal |
| Kraft dinner | Canned Milk |
| Boost/Ensue | Sugar |
| Helpers, eg. Sidekicks, | Hamburger helper |
| Laundry Soap | Facial Tissues |
| Baby food/ Diapers | Disinfectant |
| Wipes | Toilet Paper |
| Personal Hygiene Products | |

Fresh produce is also welcome but must be delivered to the Food Bank on Fifth Street beside the Iroquois Park in Sidney. Food older than 6 months from the Best Before date can not be distributed to the clients.



Thank you for your support.
Sheryl Williams

When you support the Saanich Peninsula Lions Food Bank you are ensuring that hungry people in your community get the support, assistance and help they need.
www.splfoodbank.com

Thank You

Outreach is an important part of our church life. I would like to thank all those who help out with the two aspects of Outreach which I oversee.

Thank you to all those who offer to read the bi weekly "Minute for Mission" throughout the year. These stories inform and educate the congregation about how the money donated to Mission and Service is spent.

Our participation in the "Our Place" Angel Gift program is very important. This year St. Paul's will donate 60 gifts to this wonderful cause. It's exciting to take them to St. Aidan's Church and see the approximately one thousand gifts lined up ready for distribution. I wish that everyone who donates a gift could see this, it is truly heartwarming.

Thank you!
Marion Gordon



Financial update to 30th September 2018

| Revenue | Actual | Budget |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Envelopes & Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)</i> | \$110,373 | \$127,500 |
| <i>Other Revenue*</i> | <u>\$24,569</u> | <u>\$29,153</u> |
| Total: | <u>\$134,942</u> | <u>\$156,653</u> |
| Expenses | \$152,508 | \$156,653 |
| Deficit | <u>\$17,566</u> | \$0 |

**Budget TYD includes revenue from a special donation not received until November (\$3,600)*

Outreach & Restricted Funds - January to September, 2018

| | |
|---|----------|
| Mission & Service (goal for year: \$25,000) | \$14,667 |
| Food Bank | \$856 |
| Our Place | \$120 |
| Camp Pringle | \$450 |
| Building (<i>includes 2017 balance & net of expenses YTD</i>) | \$12,419 |
| Front Door (<i>includes 2017 balance and net expenses YTD</i>) | \$37,249 |
| Memorial Fund | \$14,561 |
| Technology Fund* | \$1,452 |
| <i>*Revenue from Thrifty's Smile Card Program & donations</i> | |

General Fundraising Projects - January to September 2018

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Choir Concert Revenue (February) | \$612 |
| Concert Band (May) | \$255 |
| Victoria House of Music concert revenue | \$221 |
| Summer Produce Table | \$358 |
| Berry Tea (July) | \$780 |
| Car Boot Sale (September) | <u>\$1,015</u> |
| Total | <u>\$3,241</u> |

Advent Study Group "All Earth is Waiting"



Behind the longing, waiting and expectation of the season of Advent is the recognition that things are not the way that God longs for. Filled with vision for the future we cannot be content to sit back passively. We are invited to live as people of the already now, and also of the "not yet". We are invited to share Good News with every living thing as God's story of restoration and redemption encompasses all of creation. Join us as we explore this theme in our Advent Studies on Friday, 30th November and Friday 7th and 14th December at 10.30am



Ministry & Personnel Committee

Your M&P Committee (normally a jolly bunch) are have mixed emotions right now because our wonderful bookkeeper, Andrei Burdeti, has become so busy with his music career that he has not enough time to keep our books in good order. So, while we are delighted for him on his success, we are also very sad that he is no longer going to be working for St Paul's. Good Luck, Andrei, we wish you well for the future!

We are very pleased, though, that we have been successful in finding a replacement book-keeper, Wendy Sangha, who is now in the training phase and will be taking over from Andrei. Wendy is a fairly new addition to the congregation at St Paul's, and is a welcome addition to our staff. Welcome Wendy!

M&P Committee:

Marjorie Tate (Chair),

Jocelyn Carter, Marion Gordon and Fiona St Clair



ST PAUL'S PROPERTY

There is a lot to do and our Property Committee is kept busy keep busy around the Church:

The lawn gets cut, branches get picked up, leaves get raked, and the sidewalks get swept to clear debris. It is nice to see the property looking tidy. The new grass at the front entrance is starting to fill in after an over-seeding and by spring it too should be sufficiently established to withstand cutting. Some of the rocks from the old wall were used to edge the garden along the south side of the Fellowship Hall. The soil in this area can now be built up and the water will not run off on to the side walk.

The inner vestibule at the front entrance has been re-painted. The extra chairs are now stored on the west side. The name-tag board and bulletin board

Poinsettias in the Sanctuary

We are so thankful for the beauty they bring to our church during Advent and Christmas and we pray with those who are remembering loved ones. Poinsettias have been donated by the following members of St. Paul's congregation:



Carol White - celebration of family
Carole Neeves - in memory of Art Neeves
Phyllis Forsyth -
in memory of Bruce & Wayne Forsyth
Doreen Hutchinson - in memory of Anne
Susanne Craig - in memory of Vi Berringer
Gail Latta -
in memory of Jean Jackson & Ken Hutchin
Pam Turner - in memory of Mom Ethel
Janet Rowney - in memory of brother Paul
Dorothy Sluggett - in memory of husband Gordon
Audrey Ostrom, Marilyn Summers, Carol Smith -
in memory of sister Anola
Ray & Marion Gordon - in memory of our parents
Audrey Ash - in celebration
Isabelle Skolrood - in celebration
Grace Champagne - in memory of Morris
Ellie Baker - in memory of son James
Connie Downey - in memory of family
Jennifer Viljoen
in memory of mother Audrey Taylor
Dave & Barbara Couves -
in memory of our parents



have been hung on the west side of the inner vestibule. Look for your name tag there. The pamphlet box has also been secured to the wall in this area. We are still waiting for delivery of the blinds for the upper windows in the new entrance. Once installed the screen at the back of the sanctuary should be easier to see.

Thanks to everyone who uses their Thrifty Smile Card to support St Paul's We are nearing the \$2,000 limit for this year and will be applying again for next year.

*Submitted by Elizabeth Mitchell
for the Property Committee*

A Copenhagen Christmas

As Christmas 1956 approached, I was less than enthused. I was facing my first Christmas away from home in the Army Camp in Western Germany where I had spent a year without leave during my two year's National Service. A friend offered me a life line. He was planning a trip to Copenhagen, where he had friends.

So it was that three days before Christmas, we journeyed on the hard wooden seats of a local train to Hamburg, where we transferred to the exotic sounding "Rome to Stockholm Express". Some hours later, after a rough crossing of the Baltic Sea, the train approached Copenhagen. We were welcomed to the City by myriads of shining stars in the windows of buildings, celebrating the birth of Jesus. Christmas trees were lacking.

Next day, I was struck by the huge garlands of greenery arching across the streets. The department stores were thronged with family groups purchasing last minute presents, and I felt distinctly homesick for my own family. I began to feel the trip was a mistake, especially, when I returned to the barrack-like atmosphere of the hostel where I was staying.

In late afternoon, my friend and I went to the home of his Danish friends who had invited us to share in their Christmas Eve celebrations. We received a warm welcome and joined them in a service at a Lutheran Church. I did not understand one word of

the service but relived Christmas Eve services back home, as I fixed my eyes on the large nativity display near the altar.

As we left the Church it was snowing - this was a thrill, as I had never seen snow at Christmas. Back in their home, we were soon seated around a large table. I was extremely hungry. To my dismay, I was given two thin slices of meat on a small plate and in compensation poured a glass of a fiery liquid, which I swigged down when everyone said "Skaal!" This proved to be a mistake, as thirteen more courses followed and each time my glass was re-filled, if needed, and the toast of "Skaal!" was repeated with increasing enthusiasm as each course arrived.

Finally, the Christmas Cake arrived - a large conical creation made of solid almond paste and decorated with tiny Danish Flags. Hidden in the cake was a single almond kernel. The youngest child at the table "mysteriously" discovered it in his slice and received a prize. In my mind, I remembered the many times at earlier Christmases I had found the silver three-penny piece in my portion of Christmas pudding.

Christmas for me is a season to be with family. I will never forget the kindness of a Danish family who made me part of their family Christmas.

I wish each one of you a Joyous and Blessed Christmas.

Ray Gordon.





Read a Good Book this Winter...



From St Paul's Library:



CHRISTMAS TITLES

The Fireside book of Christmas stories (1945)
 The Story of the other wise man (1959)
 The Best Christmas pageant ever (1972)
 The Guideposts Christmas treasury (1972)
 Tracks in the straw (1985)
 Tracks in the straw (Revised ed. 2005)
 Child of peace (1987)
 The Hired man's Christmas (1997)
 Fathoming Bethlehem (1997)
 The Mitford snowmen (2001)
 The Midwife's story (2003)
 The First Christmas (2007)
 Twenty-one candles (2014)
 Rescuing Christmas (2017)
 All the earth is waiting (2017)



NEW CHRISTMAS TITLES FOR CHILDREN

"Refuge" by Anne Booth & Sam Usher.
"In this moving retelling of the first Christmas, follow this humble family as they travel in a strange land, hoping to find refuge in the kindness of strangers." - Book cover.



"The Best Gift of All" by Cornelis Wilkeshuis.

DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH LIBRARY

"Paradoxology: Spirituality in a Quantum Universe"

230 Win Miriam Therese Winter



"A Pilgrim's Almanac : Reflections for Each Day of the Year"

242.2 Hay Edward Hays

"Prayers for a planetary pilgrim : a personal manual for prayer and ritual"

242.8 Hay Edward Hays

"My heart in my mouth : prayers for our lives"

242.8 Lod Ted Loder

"The haunt of grace : responses to the mystery of God's presence"

248.4 Lod Ted Loder

"Out of the depths : the story of Ludmila Javorova, ordained Roman Catholic priest"

B Jav Miriam Therese Winter.

The Library is not locked, but to gain access other than a Sunday, please check with the office.

To borrow a book:

1. Remove the circulation card from the front of the book.
2. Write the day's date, your name and phone number on the card and leave it in the circulation card box by the card catalogue.

Season's Greetings to all from your Library Committee:



Edda Ross, Sheryl Simpson, Lynn McArthur, Anne Thompson, Dale MacEwan

Weekly Bulletins

Each Friday we send out our weekly bulletins by e-mail to many of our members and friends. If you do not receive a bulletin by email, please contact the church office: stpauluc@telus.net and ask to be put on the mailing list.

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/stpaulsunitedbc

and on our Website:

www.stpaulsunitedbc.com

PASTORAL NOTES

Please be in touch with the minister if you would like a pastoral visit or call. If you are going to hospital and would like a visit please let us know or if you know that someone from St Paul's is in hospital we'd be grateful to hear from you.

Rev. Suzanna Bates, tel: 250-466-5993

rev.suzanna@gmail.com

The United Church of Canada
St Paul's United Church



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Mission Statement:

"Celebrating God's love, St Paul's welcomes all and seeks to grow in faith and service to others."

