



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH
January 5, 2025

*Through Faith, we walk on the path Jesus set for us.
The people of St. Paul's Belong... Believe... Love... Listen... Lead.*



PRELUDE

WELCOME VU78 Sing till Sundown

WORDS OF WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TREATY

LIFE & WORK OF THE CONGREGATION

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Isaiah 60:1-6)

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. (NRSVUE)

We come to praise the source of the light.

Look around you and see: everyone is coming together, they're all headed your way. Your squad is gonna come from far and your girls will be right by your side. (GenZ Bible)

We join with people from all directions to explore how God is with us today.

All nations shall come to the light and kings to the brightness of the dawn.

We gather together in worship and praise

WE GREET EACH OTHER WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Magi followed a star leading them to the Light of the World

The candle flame reminds us that the Light of the World is in our midst

Gathered as people who are drawn to the light, we centre ourselves for worship.

OPENING PRAYER

Jesus, teacher, friend, and guide, be with us this morning as we pause to gather together.

We are a community of faith and of faithfulness, led by your star into new adventures of spreading your Good News.

Today, as we sing, praise, and pray, open us to listen as you give us our instructions for the days ahead. Amen.

(writtten by Kate Gregory <https://gatheringworship.ca/prayer/j>)

Gathering Hymn VU79 Arise, Your Light Is Come (1L)

WE SHARE AS GOD'S CHILDREN THE BIBLE'S STORY IN WORD AND IN SONG:

A TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

Sharing of Celebrations and Concerns

Celebration of Communion

INVITATION

Here at this table we join in a ritual that stretches through time and space.

Here God invites us to share in the banquet of life.

This is God's table, and God invites all who seek to follow the Way of Jesus Christ to eat and drink from it.

Come and taste the grace eternal, come and see that God is good.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

May the Peace of Christ, the love of God, and the Power of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you

God of life, in the beginning of our story you decided to do a new thing. You spoke and creation came into being.

And we join with millions who have gone before us to share words of praise and thanksgiving for this universe you spoke into being.

Then after a while you decided again to do a new thing.

You called Abram and Sarai into a new life, promising that through them the world would be blessed.

The new thing continued through the lives of their children and grandchildren through many generations.

Then the people were enslaved and you once again did a new thing.

Calling Moses and Aaron and Miriam to lead the people to freedom, giving them a set of rules to guide how they lived with you and with each other, covenanting to be with them always.

Over time the people would forget their part of the covenant, they would wander from the path.

And you would send messengers to call them back, men and women filled with your Spirit.

Remembering all these gifts, all these new things, all these ways you attempted to renew and mend the world we join in the old songs of praise and thanksgiving.

THE STORY IS TOLD

Eventually, looking at the world, you again decided to do a new thing.

You chose to become one of us, Word-made-Flesh, to share the joys and sorrows, the slings and arrows of our lives.

In Jesus of Nazareth, child of Mary you walked among your people

Jesus revealed a new way of being, Jesus revealed what it would look like to live a life based on love for all he met, Jesus challenged his peers and challenges us to live as though the Kingdom of God was really present in our midst.

But the world was not ready for Jesus' message, for his challenge, for the Kingdom.

And so he was arrested, tried, convicted, executed.

But then you once again did a new thing!

You raised Jesus from death, shattering the bondage of the grave.

Here at this table we remember a meal Jesus shared with his closest friends.

During that meal he took bread, blessed it, broke it and passed to to them saying:

Take, Eat, this is my body broken by the world. Whenever you eat this loaf remember me.

Then he took a cup of wine, blessed it and passed it to them saying:

Take, Drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink from it remember me.

Joining with the community of Christian faith across the miles and the centuries we continue to eat and drink and remember.

As we share this bread and this cup send your Spirit upon and among us. In the eating and the drinking may our commitment to living as people of The Way be strengthened.

Fill us with hope for the present and the future so that as people of hope we are ready to give of our selves so that your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

As we gather at this table, unite our hearts and souls with our brothers and sisters in faith across the country and around the globe.

We pray in the name and memory of Jesus, the man from Nazareth; whom we call Christ and Messiah, and who encourages us to pray together saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven...

BREAKING, POURING, SHARING

The Bread we share is the Bread of Life.

The Cup we share is the Cup of Love

Gifts from God for the people of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God who invites us to the table,

We have eaten, we have drunk, we have tasted your goodness.

May the meal we share here today awaken our hunger for the Banquet of Life.

May the company of these brothers and sisters renew our commitment to live as people of the Kingdom of Love.

God who regularly does a new thing,

As we go out from this meal may we be refreshed and renewed.

When the next new thing comes along may we have:

the wisdom to discern if it is from you,

the courage to embrace what you offer,

and the energy to journey with you on the road.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Teacher and Guide, our Rock and Redeemer. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Matthew 2:1-12

SERMON *Strange Visitors*

A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

(trusting that God is at work in our midst we
allow the words we have heard to settle and stir in our souls)

Hymn VU81 As With Gladness Men of Old (PD)

WE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO GOD AND PREPARE FOR MINISTRY IN THE WORLD

THE OFFERING

Mission & Service Story Reflecting on the Past, Building the Future

(<https://united-church.ca/stories/reflecting-past-building-future>)

The Invitation:

Sung Dedication VU93 When Heaven's Bright with Mystery verse 4 (1L)

PRAYER FOR & ASSURANCE OF GRACE

God sometimes we think we know exactly who is a part of your community.

But then you surprise us, and strange new visitors show up.

Broaden our vision, we pray,

help us see the wide diversity that makes up your family

God of Grace, help us welcome both friend and stranger.

God of Grace, open our homes and hearts to the unexpected guest. Amen.

Hymn We Three Kings (1L)

COMMISSIONING

We have been fed at Christ's table, we have joined the Magi in Christ's home

Now we go out to the world to share Christ's love.

We have become part of the global community drawn to the light of Christ

Drawn from all directions and backgrounds, sometimes strange companions on the journey of faith

Strange companions and visitors all linked by one thing:

All are beloved children of God

As God's Beloved children go out knowing that God:

who has created and is creating,

who is revealed in the Baby Jesus, the Word-Made-Flesh,

who works in each of us through the power of the Holy Spirit,
is with you as you continue the journey of faith and life
Thanks be to God. Amen.

SUNG BENEDICTION VU82 A Light is Gleaming vss3, 4 (CCLI)
POSTLUDE

Announcements

Ministry by: The Congregation
Enabling Minister: Rev. Gord Waldie Church Office: Carla Johnson
Telephone: (780-532-2415) Email: stpaulsucgp@gmail.com
Sunday School: Lori Ellis, Susan K Thomson
Youth Ministry: Valerie Jenner Music Director: Alison White.

If you have a prayer request, please write it down in our prayer book on the table at the entrance into worship. Your needs will be added to our community prayer.

Thank you

If you have noticed someone missing from our congregation, please contact them by phone or visit them in person. You may be their "angel"

🕒 Regular Office Hours: Mon–Fri, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
(Closed over the noon hour)



"Would you like a visit with Rev Gord? This can be easily arranged by contacting the office. Call Carla and she will arrange something for you " 780-532-2415

We are in need of Scripture Readers, and Door Greeters, and Coffee Hosts / Hostesses every Sunday. Please sign the lists in the foyer if you would like to volunteer to help on any given Sunday.

What questions do you have about being a disciple of Jesus? What does it mean to be a member of the church? I know there are people out there who are interested in exploring these questions so Gord is inviting us to get together and explore them together with the aim of welcoming new members and/or renewing our faith promises in the spring, possibly on Easter Sunday. Let Gord know if you are interested and what day of the week would work best for us to get together.

Join the 102 Street Stitchers for a Days for Girls Workshop

The UCW and 102 Street Stitchers invite you to a workshop on **Monday, January 20th**, from **9:00 AM to approximately 4:00 PM**, to create and finish items for **Days for Girls**.

We'll be working with scrap flannel and quilting cottons, focusing on cutting, sewing, and placing snaps on products that will be passed on to the local Days for Girls leader in Grande Prairie.

No sewing experience is required! If you'd like to sew, we have an older sewing machine available, or you're welcome to bring your own machine or serger. We also need a team for snap placement and everyone will take part in quality control.

We'll share a **potluck lunch**, with coffee and tea provided. Bringing food isn't necessary, as a few of us will handle this part of our outreach mission to support the community.

Feel free to bring a friend and join us, whether you're active in the UCW or not. Let's come together to make a difference in the new year!

Looking forward to seeing you,

Heather Fedoruk

102 Street Stitchers

Coming Up This Week

Sun., Jan 5th - 7:00 pm – Handbell Practice

Tue., Jan 7th – Bible Study on Zoom – restarts The link and scriptures will be sent out on Tuesdays morning.

Tues., Jan 7th – 7:00 – 8:30 pm – CGIT / Explorers

Jan 8th – 1:30 pm. – UCW AGM Meeting in the Friendship Room

Thu., Jan 9th – 9:30 am – Worship Team Meeting -in the Friendship Room

Thu., Jan 9th – 10:30 am - Music Morning Music fun for 2-4 year olds and their caregivers. Cost is \$5 per family per week.

Thu., Jan 9th - 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm – Embers –in the Friendship Room

Fri., Jan 10th – 9 am – Noon - 102 St Stitchers – in the Friendship Room

Wed., Jan 15th – 7:00 pm – Council Meeting – in the Kids Corner

Newsletter Editor & Contributors Needed! Are you gifted in putting words and pictures together? We're looking for a Newsletter Editor for 2025 to share all the exciting events, activities, and goings-on for St. Paul's United Church. You'll work closely with our Communications Team, who are ready to support you every step of the way!

If you're interested or would like more details, please contact Carla in the church office.

Going to an event? We would also love people to contribute photos and/or individual write ups!

Share them with us at communications@stpaulsuc.ca

PowerPoint Tech Help Needed!

Do you enjoy technology or want to lend a helping hand on Sunday mornings? We're looking for volunteers to assist with running the PowerPoint slides during our worship services.

- **No experience necessary** – we'll provide all the training you need!
- A great way to serve and be part of our worship team.
- Perfect for teens, adults, or anyone eager to help.

Interested? Contact the Church office - Thank you for considering this opportunity to support our church community!

Moved?? New to the Church??

If you have moved, or you are new to the Church, please stop by the church office or send Carla a quick email (stpaulsucgp@gmail.com) with your new details so we can keep our records up to date! Thank you!

Do you have a special family member you'd like to celebrate by creating an LED slide to commemorate the occasion. We can post the slide for a day or a week.

We can include a picture, or just have a generic slide with their name and their school logo and colours. Contact the office with the details of the occasion.... A birthday, a graduation, a special milestone and how long you'd like the slide to be up and the date(s) you want it to run. Do they have a favourite animal, colour, or "passion" that we can use to personalize the slide?

ATTENTION ALL HOUSEHOLDS

Have you joined St. Paul's Recyclable program yet?

St. Paul's has an easy fund raiser to help with the Church renovations. All you need to do is bag up all your empty bottles, cans and milk jugs and put our **church id # 1468-2415** visible on each bag and drop them off at a recycling depot.

At St. Paul's the calendar is quite busy. **Please be sure to check with Carla** in the church office before you expect a room will be free for your use. **Rooms booked with Carla in the office will have first priority.** You can also check out our online calendar on the church website, to get an idea who else is in the building and in what room(s) to know if it will conflict with your plans. <https://74071685.view-events.com/calendar/74071685/>

Financial Donations

Interac e-Transfer is a simple, secure way to give directly to St. Paul's United Church.

- **Email for e-Transfers:** stpaulsucgp@gmail.com
- **Note Field:** Indicate your envelope number (if applicable) and the fund(s) your donation supports. For example:
 - \$25 GF (General Fund)
 - \$50 MS (Mission and Service)
 - \$25 OU (Outreach)

Fund Codes:

- **GF:** General Fund
- **MS:** Mission and Service
- **CA:** Capital Fund
- **OU:** Outreach

Donations without a fund code will default to the General Fund.

Other Ways to Give:

- **Offering Envelopes:** Contact Carla for envelopes to ensure your donations are receipted.
- **PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance):** Sign up or adjust your giving anytime by contacting Carla.
- **Canada Helps:** Donate online at [Canada Helps](#) (Receipts issued by Canada Helps).