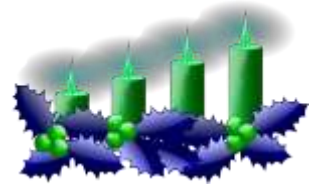


# Advent/Christmas Newsletter

St. Paul's United Church, Tillsonburg, ON

## MESSAGE FROM REV. KARLENE



Greetings My St Paul's Family,

Advent is here! It is the season for "Preparation". The people involved in commerce surely have preparation down to a science. By the time we realize Thanksgiving stuff were out alongside Halloween stuff then Christmas stuff came. They were preparing to get our very hard-earned dollars. But what is our Advent about? Forget the commercialization, how many of us are more concerned with getting ready for Christmas? The cleaning, the decoration, the baking and the shopping, we are crazy busy. Is this what it is really about?

Advent is really about waiting and preparation. As we celebrate his first coming at Christmas, we await his second coming expectantly. There was no place at the inn so Jesus was born in a stable. They missed the joy of Emmanuel "God with Us" - Let us not make the same mistake.

I share with you five ideas I read online that I think can help us to prepare for this coming Advent:

### Prepare Room at the Inn

*Heart Check* – the heart is God's dwelling place. Is there unforgiveness anywhere? remember Jesus taught us to pray, forgive as you are forgiven.

### Clean Out the Cobwebs

*Heart Clearing* – So there might be stuff in your heart that shouldn't be there. Next step spring cleaning! Clear them out! Ask God to help you! He will.

### Hang New Curtains

*Heart Refurbishing* - The room of your heart is ready: hang new curtains of hope and joy and anticipation.

### Get Out the Fine China and Set the Table

*Heart settings* – Jesus is coming! We are sure so it's time to get ready. Let's get out the fine china. Let our attitude be one of enthusiastic expectation. May our hearts pound in anticipation of His presence!

### Open the Front Door

*Heart welcoming* – All is done, now we open our front door and wait expectantly. It is a time of quiet for us we are ready. The final step is to simply "be." No worries no questioning; we don't worry if there was more we should have done. We've been good and faithful servants and are ready for Christ.

*Adapted from Beliefnet.com*

As we look to another Advent, we sing lustily

Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee.

Shalom  
Rev. Karlene



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Children's Christmas Play  
December 9 at 2:00 p.m.
- Blue Christmas Service  
at 11:00 a.m.
- Crooners Christmas  
Concert at 7:00 p.m.
- December 16 - Cantata  
'2000 Decembers Ago'  
10:30 and 2:30 p.m.
- Christmas Eve Service  
at 7:00 p.m.

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## NEWS FROM CHAIR OF COUNCIL

As we approach the Advent season the planning begins. Parties, family events, special concerts, tinsel, ribbon and bows all come to mind. Decorations rise out of the boxes and begin to adorn the house. Lights twinkle in the night.

All of these items and many more prepare us for the festivities of the SEASON. However, we must always remember the REAL REASON for this season. The present that arrived with no wrapping came on a starlight night announced by angels and seen by shepherds. To the Christian world this gift was that of the Christ Child who sent, by HIS father was the gift to save us all. Remember this Real reason for the SEASON as you prepare to celebrate with family and friends.

As a Council we continue to meet monthly to conduct the business of St. Paul's. Budget meetings are beginning, and preparation for the Congregational Annual Meeting in February will begin soon. Annual reports will be due early in January. Big changes in the United Church structure take place January 1, 2019. We continue to move through the processes necessary to assist Rev. Karlene to become a Candidate for Admission to the United Church in May.

There are many changes taking place as we move forward. Stay tuned, stay informed and keep up to date. Thank you for your continued support as we prepare for all the Christmas excitement during December.

Season's Greetings to you and your family.

*Respectfully submitted, Mary Anne Silverthorn, Chair of Council*



### *Worship News - Important Dates for our church family*

Dec. 2 – Communion  
 First Sunday of Advent  
 Congregational Meeting following worship

Dec. 9 – Children's Concert – 2p.m.

Dec. 5, 12 & 19 Advent Bible Study "Underdogs and Outsiders" – Tom Fuerst 11:00 a.m. Friendship Room

Dec. 14 – Blue Christmas – 11a.m.  
 Andrew Martin Crooners Concert – 7p.m.

Dec. 16 – Cantata – "2000 Decembers Ago"  
 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Dec. 16 - Poinsettia Distribution to shut-ins and recently bereaved – Can you help? More people are needed.

Dec. 23- Christmas Service  
 Kid's Birthday Party after worship

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m.





Monday, December 3, 2018 the UCW ladies will meet for their annual Christmas meeting. Kelly Edmonds from One Hundred Women – Oxford will be our guest speaker.

The Frosty Fair, with a slightly different format, included a vendors' market and a Tea Room. A big THANK YOU to all who helped make it happen, who worked in so many capacities, who came to shop and to browse. We were also privileged to welcome those who attended the Messy Church programme.

Thank you to Dave Morris for finding us a new refrigerator for the downstairs kitchen and having it in place for this busy season.

Remember that Unit One meets the fourth Monday afternoon of each month and Unit Six the fourth Wednesday evening. All women of the congregation are very welcome to attend.

We look forward to another successful year in 2019.

## Stewardship

1. The special green Christmas offering will go to Tillsonburg Salvation Army and Sakura House. Monies will be divided evenly unless indicated.
2. St. Paul's will once again participate in the Adopt-A-Family Christmas program. This is an opportunity to help others in our Community who have encountered difficulties.
3. Watch for the gift tags on the Christmas tree in the rotunda on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>. Items will need to be returned by Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>.
4. The United Church's Mission and Service Fund works with partners in Canada and internationally. Our target for 2018 is \$25,000.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



## AOTS NEWS

Next AOTS Breakfast is Sunday, December 16 at 8:00 a.m. "All Men are Welcome".

AOTS held their annual church service on November 18. Our guest preacher was Rev. Tom Hiscock former minister at St. Paul's and the singing of The Agritones.

Boy's Outing was on November 24 an outing to Sammy Krenshaws bowling. A good time of bonding for boys and men.

Christmas Blessings to All from the AOTS.

**Rev. Maurice Francis**



**It's almost that time again!** Submissions for the annual report are due no later than **Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019.** Thank you for your consideration in meeting this deadline.

## ST. PAUL'S CHOIR

**Sunday December 16 - 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.**

St. Paul's Community Choir will once again present a Christmas Cantata entitled "2000 Decembers Ago", created by Joel Lindsey.

Musical director and Accompanist is Shelley Vermeersch.

At 2:30 p.m. Dave Ramer will sing some of his favourites and the choir will again perform the Cantata.

Come out and enjoy some wonderful seasonal music!

**Shelley Vermeersch**  
**Music Director**



## NEWS FROM KAREN HODGES—KIDSTOWN

### Children's Christmas Concert – December 9

The children have been working hard and are excited to perform for you – please come out and support our kids. On the day of the concert, we are inviting the parents, children and helpers to stay after church and join us for pizza and drinks prior to the concert.



Don't forget to sign up to go Carol Singing on the evening of December 14 – a sheet is at the back of the Rotunda. We are joining together with other churches here in town - we will meet at St. Paul's United Church at 6:30 p.m. and disperse from there. Depending on the number of people, we will be breaking up into teams to cover as many areas of Tillsonburg as possible. Everyone is invited back to St. Paul's at 8:00 p.m. for refreshments.



On behalf of all the children, the Sunday School volunteers, Brenda and myself we wish you a very Merry Christmas. May you be blessed as you reflect on the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ the very best gift of all.

*Karen Hodges, Sunday School  
Co-ordinator*

## MESSY CHURCH

The next meeting is December 15 at 10:00 a.m.

Our theme is:

"It is more blessed to give..."

Our numbers are growing as is our Messy Church staff.

Staff members are taking on more of the craft preparation and we now have a food team.

Many thanks to our St. Paul's family who have embraced the endeavor with open minds and open hearts.

**Respectfully,**  
**Norma Collis**

**All Charitable Donations must be received prior to the end of our worship service on December 30<sup>th</sup> to be included in 2018 receipts. You may include on the offering plate or deposit to the Bidwell Street entrance mail slot or to the office. Thank you.**