

Because I live, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO.

JOHN 14:19

News 'N Views Easter 2026

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2026 AT ST. PAUL'S

Informed Prayer. Prayerful Action. Imagine Christians from over 170 countries coming together in spirit, uniting on a common day to pray for relevant issues affecting women and children. This is a reality: the World Day of Prayer (WDP) movement has been active for nearly 100 years. Each year, a different country writes the service materials. WDP is generally celebrated on the first Friday of March. This year, the writing committee was from Nigeria and was based on the scripture "I Will Give You Rest: Come" Matthew 11:28-30.



St. Paul's Mission Circle group (part of the Women's Missionary Society of Canada) organized the service for WDP in Simcoe. We delivered posters to the churches in Simcoe, inviting people to come and celebrate WDP at St. Paul's. We decorated the sanctuary table and the library table and prepared to share the WDP service. On March 6, 50 people from St. Paul's and various churches in Simcoe attended our service. We watched a video and service prepared by the WDP Nigeria committee, learning much about their country, the stories of their women and children and their prayers and music.

We learned that Nigeria has a population of over 230 million, making it the most populous country in Africa. There are three large ethnic groups and over 500 indigenous languages are spoken, with English serving as the official language. Nigeria is known for its religious diversity, including Christianity, Islam, traditional African religions and other faiths.

There is a rich cultural tapestry woven from over 250 ethnic groups which contribute talking drums, traditional dances, vibrant textiles, playwriting and a large film industry. There is also a rich agricultural potential in Nigeria with millet and sorghum widely cultivated and serving as staple crops. Cassava, yams and seafood also serve as significant foods in Nigerian cuisine. Other crops include beans, rice, sesame, cashews, cocoa beans, corn and melon.



Nigeria has made progress in increasing access to education but gender discrimination, with girls receiving fewer educational opportunities than boys, continues to exist. Early marriage in parts of Nigeria forces girls as young

as 12 or 13 into marriages. Marital violence often goes unreported due to cultural stigma and lack of legal protections. Widows are subjected to cruel and degrading cultural traditions and in laws forcibly taking assets that rightfully belong to the widow and her children.



During the service, we sang a traditional Igbo Nigerian song, *Keleya*, which features a call and response style common in West African music. The song expresses gratitude to Jesus and honours Him as King. We also listened to the powerful stories of three Nigerian women — Beatrice, Jato, and Blessing — who shared their experiences and appeals for relief from systemic oppression, religious persecution, poverty, and despair. To symbolize hope, we lit a candle, praying for strength to ease the burdens faced by Nigerians and to offer comfort during difficult times. We also responded to a call to action, committing to transform our informed prayers into meaningful actions, striving to go forward with faith, hope, and love

and to be a light in the world. An offering was collected, raising \$555, which was blessed to support WDP grants for programs assisting women and children in Canada and globally. In 2025–2026, donations to WDP enabled \$100,000 in grants.

After the service, we gathered in St. Paul’s library to enjoy refreshments. The Mission Circle group prepared traditional roasted chickpeas and fruit platters celebrating Nigerian cuisine, along with other baked goods and treats. We left feeling inspired by the faith and resilience of the Nigerian community, grateful for the opportunity to learn and connect with others. The gathering reinforced our commitment to work together, making a positive difference through prayerful action. Special thanks to our Mission Circle group, Nancy Jonker, Ian Madge, and Becky Stewart, for ensuring the success of the WDP Simcoe service.

We are excited to participate in next year’s celebration, marking the 100th anniversary of WDP with the theme “United in Prayer for Justice and Peace!” prepared by the World Day of Prayer International Committee. We hope you will join us!

Jane Ashenden for Mission Circle



UPCOMING EASTER SERVICES

Palm Sunday, March 29 at 10:30 AM
Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 7:00 PM
(Communion Service)
Good Friday, April 3 at 10:30 AM
Easter Sunday, April 5 at 10:30 AM

UPCOMING COMMUNION SERVICES

April 2 – Maundy Thursday
May 24
October 4 - World Communion Sunday
November 29 - First Sunday of Advent



IN SYMPATHY – REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES

The sincere sympathy of St. Paul's is extended to the families of:



[John Baranowski](#)



[Eileen Paterson](#)



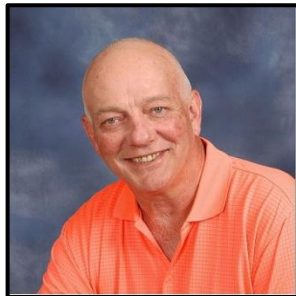
[Bonnie
Lavassuer](#)



[Jim Longley](#)



[Harry Lee
Caswell](#)



In Memory of Gary McConnell Jr.

This quiet, unassuming man worked to clean our massive building for over 20 years. Even though he suffered health issues, he did his best to carry on with his duties, often experiencing some back or leg pain. To get a better picture of Gary Jr.'s commitment to St. Paul's, here are a couple of memories:

I always found Gary easy to work with. I remember one time he was using some 'derelict' vacuum cleaner that was well past its best before date or maybe even bringing his own and I queried him. Basically, he more or less indicated that he'd rather make do than mention it. I did quickly share with the Property and Maintenance committee that our custodian needed workable equipment and a purchase was made. (Ian Shaw)

My favourite memory of Gary Jr. comes from the time that we decided to replace the carpeting in the Sanctuary. This was in 2018. At one point in the project, the old carpets had been lifted but the process of installing the new carpets had not begun. The Sanctuary was a real mess...Lots of dust covering the pews, bare floors, etc. I contacted Gary on Saturday morning and apprised him of the situation. I asked him to do his best in making the place "liveable" but not to sweat it regarding the overall condition of the space. I was shocked and very grateful on Sunday morning to see the condition of the place. Certainly, it was a construction zone but everything possible had been done. Gary went well above and beyond to make the place suitable for the service.

(Ian Macaulay)

The McConnell family always supported Gary Jr. and have demonstrated their faith through long time service in so many ways. St. Paul's is richer for having had Gary Jr. on our staff and as part of our church family. May he rest in the arms of Jesus, free from pain. Our heartfelt condolences are extended from St. Paul's to the entire McConnell family.

***He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.
Revelation 21:4***



With gratitude, St. Paul's Session

MISSION COMMITTEE



By the time that this letter arrives, spring will be here! Hallelujah!! Easter is only a few weeks away, and with Easter comes the resurrection. This is representative of Christ's return to life, and the return to life of nature around us.

Our committee is busy with our spring projects.

Our Lenten coin boxes have been distributed around the church. If you have not yet picked one up, please do so when you are next at church. We ask that you fill them (either cash or cheque) during the weeks of Lent leading up to Easter. The money collected will be directed to PWS&D. We hope to fill the top of the communion table on Easter Sunday!! Please remember to put your envelope number on or in the collection box.

We will be taking orders for Easter flowers each Sunday from March 8th to March 29th. Someone from our committee will be in the library at coffee hour after service to take your order and accept your payment. Our beautiful pots are from King's Flower and Garden. We are offering 6" pots of tulips, hyacinths, and lilies for \$15 each. The 10" mixed pots (e.g. tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, pansies, and pussy willows) are \$30 each. Flowers are available for pickup after the service on Easter Sunday. Money raised goes to support PWS&D.

On Friday May 1st, the Mission Circle/WMS and the Mission Committee are co-hosting a Trivia Night. We are looking to have up to 10 teams of 6 players. You do not need to have a full team to join up. Singles or couples are welcome. We will add you onto a team. Cost is \$15 per person, payable at sign up. The evening starts at 6:30 pm. Sign up will start in April. We look forward to a fun-filled night! The funds will be used to support the Front Door Ministry.

On Sunday May 3rd and Sunday May 10th, we will be gathering items in the lower lobby, and upstairs in the library, for the Norfolk Pregnancy & Family Resource Centre. The centre, located on Robinson Street in Simcoe, offers support to families in Norfolk County. They provide food, clothing, supplies for babies (diapers, wipes, formula, etc.) as well as hosting parenting classes, and more! What a wonderful way to honour your mother by helping other mothers in our community on Mother's Day!

Blessings to you and your loved ones and may the miracle of this Easter bring you perfect peace and joy!

Leigh Nagy
Convenor



The Pancake Dinner crew!



[SCS Band](#)

The Simcoe Composite School band joined the 2026 Young Artists Recital at Brantford's historic, 1,100-seat Sanderson Centre on February 20. Members of the band include two of our youth - William Han and David Han. Click on the link above to get all the details.

PRAISE AND PRAYER

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him." Psalm 28:7

On Tuesday mornings in July and August, let your heart leap for joy at Vacation Bible Camp for grown ups! Hosted by the Praise and Prayer group, each of these one-to-two-hour sessions will feature a different activity led by a member of St. Paul's. Let your inner child loose as we paint, sing or dance, look at the wonder of God's creation through the eyes of a scientist, and celebrate Christmas in July and Easter in August! You can pick and choose which sessions to attend - or come to them all!

"Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp." Psalm 149:3

The Praise and Prayer group meets on Tuesday mornings in the choir room for about an hour beginning at 10:00 AM. You can leave your prayer requests in the God box in the lobby and you are most welcome to join us as we sing, read and discuss scripture, and pray. Come and experience the joy of fellowship and the peace of God's presence.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20

For more information contact Kyoungsoo or Becky.



HERITAGE POTLUCK

Christian Nurture hosted a potluck lunch on February 15 to celebrate our church families' many unique qualities. We enjoyed many of our family's favourite dishes and dressed in clothing that expressed family identity. A few of our participants are shown to the left: Grace A., Kyoungsoo H. and Prudent A. looking wonderful in their traditional dress. It was an enjoyable fellowship time together. Thank you to all who joined in the fun!



MEDICAL MISSION DEPOT COLLECTION 2026



MARCH 8 TO APRIL 19

Jean Aitcheson, the brainchild of the depot is a retired nurse. She has collected, organized and even travelled to deliver loads of goods. Jean was part of a WMS team who went to Cuba recently. Read about it in this online article by Grant Haven Media, dated Feb. 25, 2026.

Photo: from left, Canadian Women's Missionary Society president Cathy Reid and Jean Aitcheson open a suitcase of donated medications alongside a Cuban church volunteer and retired pediatrician.

By Gary West

Perth South's Jean Aitcheson has spent a lifetime caring for others, both close to home and around the world. Now the retired Stratford General Hospital nurse is urging Perth County residents to help the people of Cuba after returning from a recent mission trip.

Aitcheson was one of six women who travelled to Matanzas and Havana from Feb. 7-14 as part of the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church. The team carried financial resources, educational materials and medical supplies to partner churches supporting their local communities. The group completed its visits and delivered supplies before departing from Varadero on Feb. 14. With flights to Toronto cancelled, they flew to Montreal and then travelled by train to Toronto before making their way home.

While the team was prepared for challenges such as power outages, fuel shortages and mosquito-borne illnesses, Aitcheson said the reality for everyday Cubans is far more severe – particularly in rural areas. Electricity is available only a few hours a day and at unpredictable times. Gasoline is scarce; during their week-long stay, the group saw just one open gas station with long lines of vehicles waiting for a ration of fuel. Public transportation is extremely limited, and many people stand along roadsides hoping to pay for a ride. Water infrastructure is failing with broken lines and contamination issues common. Food shortages are widespread. Though Cuba once had a thriving agricultural economy, Aitcheson said fuel shortages, broken equipment, lack of seeds and fertilizer have crippled production. Many families rely on small backyard plots and a few animals to survive. Tourism, once a major economic driver, has declined, further limiting access to foreign currency needed to import essential goods.

The mission team transported 12 suitcases weighing 50 pounds each, most filled with medications and medical supplies from the Stratford Mission Depot at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stratford. Three suitcases of consumable medical supplies were delivered to a pediatric hospital, where administrators and surgeons expressed gratitude for even basic items such as a pediatric stethoscope and a single bottle of Tranexamic Acid used to control bleeding during surgery. Hospital staff work extended shifts amid severe shortages of supplies, fuel and personnel. Many pharmacies and hospital shelves are bare.

Churches in Cuba serve as vital community hubs, providing purified water, feeding programs and limited access to medication through volunteer medical professionals.



GOD-MOMENTS

The idea of God-moments in your life intrigue me. These experiences for me anyway are unplanned, often startling, or casual with no pre-planned expectations. Happenings off the cuff if you please, reactions in the moment.

I went to the Ontario Agricultural College (University of Guelph) because it was affordable, with the plan to take mechanical engineering as an elective. The first two years were common to all students. There were 13 options for specialization in years three and four, mechanical engineering being one. This option required an aptitude entry test which I took and failed. I was shocked as I had been exempted from final exams all through high school and felt I had, coming from a farm, good mechanical skills. Right on the spot without thinking I made the decision to take Dairy Science as my option. As I look back on this decision, I did not realize at the time how that decision would change the whole direction of my life, setting the stage for a future in Simcoe with all the experiences that come with it. This impulsive five-second decision was surely a God-moment. I had the option of continuing in mechanical engineering in spite of the test results, as the test was not a prerequisite. But I chose a different direction.

In the fall of 1958 my roommate at OAC, and I were appointed assistant deans with the responsibility to supervise a floor in the college residence. As the school term settled in, my fellow student dean, Dave, became interested in a woman student attending Macdonald Institute and wanted to ask her out on a get acquainted date. This woman of interest had a roommate and Dave asked me to blind date this roommate and the four of us would go to the student lounge for coffee and a snack. This occasion was arranged and the four of us sat down for coffee. Dave and his woman interest carried the entire conversation. The two blind dates were speechless unable to enter the conversation. When we got back to our room, I said to Dave that I had not even heard the sound of my blind date's voice and felt a little bit cheated. So I asked my blind date for coffee myself just to hear her voice. That is the honest truth. The Dave-date relationship fizzled. My blind date became my late wife, Betty whom many of you know. Betty speechless?! My agreement to this blind date was another God-moment. I could have turned the opportunity down, dismissing it as a lost cause. But I did not.

The year 2003 started out normally but ended tragically. Betty was diagnosed with cancer in November and quickly referred to London Victoria for abdominal surgery. As it turned out the cancer had spread throughout the interior of her body. Three feet of the large colon were removed which was not expected. The operation was extended by three hours well into the night. At midnight my son Greg, John Cruickshank, and I returned to Simcoe. The next morning I returned to the hospital and found my way to Betty's room. I walked in. She was sitting up in bed, hair styled, made up (Betty friendly) and smiling to see me. For a few seconds, maybe five or ten, I saw a bright halo glow surround her face. It was brilliant. The room was L-shaped and I was the only person to see this vision. I have not told this story to many as the reaction I get is a polite "I'm sure you saw what you saw, Ken". I did see. I did not make any comment at the time to Betty. It was as if the vision was for me personally. To this day I believe that vision was the instant that the power Supreme was given to

Betty to strengthen her for what was lying ahead. Until she died, I never saw tears except for one 20 second occasion. Regardless how this event was interpreted by others, it was a God-moment for me.

It was customary for our Presbyterian head office to send a notice to all Canadian clerks when a clerk or spouse passed away. I had received such a notice in 2003 between Christmas and New Years that a John Tough, husband of Beth Tough had passed. Beth Tough, clerk of Oak Ridges, was unknown to me and I did not pay much attention to the notice as Betty was in palliative care. After Betty's death the customary notice was circulated. Shortly, I received an email from a Beth Tough, thoughtfully offering sympathy for my loss, saying that she understood, having just gone through the same experience. I was profoundly touched but did not respond as I received a host of sympathy messages.

This email from Beth Tough kept floating to the surface of my mind, as unusually sensitive and thoughtful. As it happened all Presbytery Canadian clerks were being brought together for a conference, held bi-annually at the Queen of the Apostles in Mississauga in early April. I thought I would seek Beth Tough out and thank her for her thoughtfulness. It took a while to find her but we did meet and socialized together during informal breaks and other downtime occasions. When the conference concluded, we found ourselves beside each other as we walked to the dormitory area to collect our luggage before heading home. It was impulsive of me but as we walked, I asked her, "Would you mind if I called you sometime?". She responded simply that would be fine. I fussed over this conversation for two weeks before I called her, and the rest as they say is history. The permission to call granted was another God-moment. I could have decided not to call but I didn't.

This is the most important paragraph in this whole story. God-moments are not recognized as such at the moment. Sometimes the wrong decision is made with bad consequences. I have a few of those which were not good. We worship a God who knows our thoughts even before we do. But we are given a choice.

Our all-knowing God is also a forgiving God if we recognize and admit our failures.

From The Ole Guy
(aka Ken Smith)



GRAVE MISTAKE

PresbyCan Daily Devotional – Thursday, January 17, 2008 – by Ivie Bozeman

Matthew 25:25 – *So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you. (NIV)*

A billboard at a local church, known for its wise and catchy messages, recently posted the following: "Burying your talent is a grave mistake." I trust that others who passed the church that week received its message as I did.

It is easy to make that "grave mistake". Any time we fail to recognize, use, or develop a talent, it is a "grave mistake". We limit God and cheat ourselves by not developing and using the talents God has given to us.

"I have no talents," we often say, or "That's not my talent", we say, shrugging off a responsibility we don't want to do. Sometimes, we think of talent as art and music, teaching or writing, and nothing more. Baking a cake, cleaning a kitchen, mowing the yard, visiting the sick and shut-ins, and encouraging those in need of a ray of sunshine are also talents to be used. None of these come fully developed and perfected. We have to use them over and over until they are mature.

Matthew 25:21 – *His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (NIV)*

Jesus tells us that our talents will be multiplied when we use them. He also says that what is not used will be subtracted. The more we develop our talents, the better we can serve the Giver of these gifts. Our lives become much richer. Burying them is a "grave mistake" — for our lives and for the kingdom of God.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for our talents. May we multiply them for service in Your kingdom. Amen.

Submitted by Keith Main



On February 18, 2026 Mimey Muth, granddaughter of Malcolm, received the degree PhD in Theoretical Physics from Memorial University. Mimey has pleasant memories of St. Paul's Sunday School, Friendship in Faith and visits with her grandmother, Marie, to the WMS.



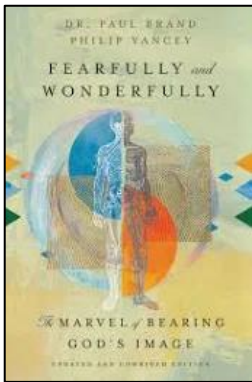
The new AED has been relocated, from the Library to the back stairwell which runs between the kitchen and the parlour. There is new directional signage to indicate to church users where to find the AED. This is a central location for all.

AV TEAM NEWS:

Dennis A. has been training in the booth for the past few months and is now a full team member. We appreciate his dedication and welcome him to the team!

BOOK CLUB

We continue to be amazed at God's creation of the human body and how it correlates to our roles in the body of Christ as we study the book "Fearfully and Wonderfully" by Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey. The dates and readings for our sessions are noted below. For more information contact Becky Stewart.



- * Session Four: April 16, 2026
Chapters 12-15, pp. 258-260
- * Session Five: May 14, 2026
Chapters 16-18, pp. 260-262
- * Session Six: June 11, 2026
Chapters 19-23, pp. 262-264

I praise you because
I am fearfully and
wonderfully made;
your works are
wonderful, I know
that full well.
Psalm 139:14

DIVINE PARTNERSHIP (from October-December 2025 "These Days" devotional)

The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps. Proverbs 16:9 (NRSVUE)

I just binge watched a Netflix series that ended abruptly. I had paid no attention to the number of seasons or episodes; I was just clicking along. When I went to move to the next, it was over. It was obviously not written to end. I'm not sure whether it was not renewed, or the new episodes had not yet been released. I only know there were too many loose ends and open story lines for this to be an intentional final episode. The last week of the year kind of reminds me of this.

Obviously, we aren't caught off guard that the year is ending. However, like our favorite show, it rarely ends neatly with all the questions answered or loose ends tied up. Some parts of our narrative may just be getting started, while others are slowly winding down or even coming to a sudden end. For some it's been a great year and they'd love for this part of their story to continue. Others may be desperately praying for a plot twist. No matter where we fall on that spectrum, we can be certain of one thing. God is not done. The NIV version of Hebrews 12:2 refers to Jesus as "the author and finisher of our faith." In other words, God is writing our story. If you are reading this, your story is not over. The author knows the beginning from the end and all the pages in between.

This doesn't mean that we play no part. I love that Proverbs 16:9 states it so simply. It is a partnership. We plan; God directs. I find it interesting and honestly a bit challenging, that God puts some of the responsibility on us. God doesn't just do it all for us. Other well-known scriptures reinforce this concept. Proverbs 3:5-6 (NRSVUE) tells us to "trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Psalm 37:5 (NRSVUE) says "commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." Again, it is two-fold. We trust, commit, and acknowledge and God acts.

Unfortunately, just because it is simple does not mean it is easy. In a difficult chapter it can be tempting to throw our hands up in defeat. Why plan when everything seems to go wrong? Is God really at work in the midst of our problems? That is where trust comes in. We trust with our heart, not our head. We believe

that God is good and is directing our way, even if we can't figure out how. We may need to remind ourselves of previous times in our story when God faithfully led us through. The same scriptures still apply when all is going well, although the temptations may be different. We may begin to trust ourselves for our success and neglect to rely on God. We might take our good fortune for granted and become ungrateful. It can be a slow, subtle change that we don't consciously realize.

Just as the end of a chapter is a good break point in a book, the end of the year can be a great time to pause and assess our own story. Where have we been and where are we going? It is an opportunity to spend time in prayer, partnering with God, and plan for the year ahead, making both short- and long-term goals. We can honestly evaluate the past year. If we have developed habits or attitudes that we don't wish to continue, we can pray for help and guidance on how to change them. If we've gradually become impatient, unappreciative, complacent, or lost focus, now is a good time to purposefully course correct.

The scenarios are endless as everyone's story is different. Yet, no matter what phase of life we are in, some spiritual responsibilities are the same. It's easy to drift into autopilot and unwittingly neglect them. God is unchanged, and the instructions through the scriptures remain relevant to all. We are accountable to plan our way, trust with all our hearts, and acknowledge God. God will make the paths straight and direct our steps. It is a divine partnership.

Questions:

1. What intentional plans can you make to develop your relationship with God in the coming year?
2. Have you been neglecting to acknowledge God? Spend some time today in thanksgiving and praise.
3. Are you going through a tough season? How can these scriptures encourage you to trust?
4. I stated earlier that it challenged me in these scriptures that God puts some of the responsibility on us. Is there an area where God is prompting you to do your part?
5. With God as your partner, are there places where you need to dream bigger and aim higher?

Lord, we recognize that we need you and never want to trust in ourselves only. Help us as we plan and commit those plans to you. Amen.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT



Our committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continued and generous support of St. Paul's. Once again we asked for a big push in December and once again you came through and we are able to start 2026 in a positive way. We would like to avoid the need for another big push in December of 2026 and want to make a suggestion for your consideration and possible action. We all know that our personal everyday costs continue to rise and our church costs rise as well. We ask you to think about the last time you increased your weekly gift. If each of us are able to contribute a little more on a weekly basis, by the end of the year a small increase each week will add up to a noticeable increase by year's end. We know some may not be able to help but we ask for all to consider this suggestion. Thank you for your continued support and recognition of all the many programs and services that St. Paul's gives each of us and our community.

Gord Summers, on behalf of the Finance and Stewardship Committee