



St. Paul's is a family, commissioned by Christ, gathered together in faith to glorify God and nurture spiritual growth through worship and service.



**Our Sunday Service begins at 10:45 AM.**  
We are located at 319 Prescott Street at the corner of Mary Street in Kemptville, Ontario.

# St. Paul's Matters

[www.stpaulskemptville.ca](http://www.stpaulskemptville.ca)

Winter - 2012

## Christ is Born. Halleluiah!

*"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things."* **Hebrews 1:1-2**

A young man had just started his own business. He had just rented a beautiful office and had it furnished with luxurious furniture. He saw a man come into the outer office. Wishing to appear very busy, the young man picked up the phone and started to pretend he had a big deal working. He threw huge figures around and made giant commitments. Finally he hung up and asked the visitor, "Can I help you?" "Yeah, I've come to activate your phone lines."

Communications. We live in an era of technology-based communication with social media and the Internet. The world has kept changing and it will continue to change. Computers ever since the developments of microchip manu-

facturing have been shrinking in size and getting bigger in memory and faster in speed. With the new iPhones and small tablets, communication and exchanging information with any place at any time around the world has become so easy. You can keep up with friends and family and get to know their news in a matter of seconds through Facebook, Twitter, Skype and others.

And yet, with all of our means of communication and social media are we really communicating? We know more things about each other. But, do we know each other more deeply? Is it possible that many people think they are communicating but have lost the true experience of communication?

A joke is told about a couple who were attending a marriage seminar on communication. Dan and his wife listened to the instructor declare, "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other."

He addressed the men, "Can you describe your

wife's favorite flower?" Dan leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered, "Robin Hood All-Purpose, isn't it?"

Communication requires taking away all the barriers which keeps us from hearing each other on the heart level. Good and true communication touches the heart.

God communicated with us on the first Christmas through His Son Jesus the Christ - and is still communicating with us through His word, the Bible, because His desire for us is to have a relationship with Him.



There is no greater heart level of communication than that which God did by incarnating and dwelling among us, taking our place on the cross, and resurrecting from the dead to reconcile us to himself.

Celebrating Christmas is an opportunity to celebrate that we

are loved by God, to thank Him for forgiving our sins, and to give our lives to the relationship He offers us in Jesus Christ.

Dears, God's communication in Jesus is the ultimate example of how we can communicate with each other and build life-long relationships. As God in Christ set aside His rights as God in order to meet us in our humanity, we too should set aside our "rights" in order to meet others at the heart level and to walk with them side-by-side and experience life together.

May we learn this Christmas to communicate as God communicates.

**Have a Merry Christmas and prosperous and happy New Year!**

**In His Service  
Rev. Samer Kandalaf**

## Move Over Little Drummer Boy -The St. Paul's Drummer Girls Are in Town!



St. Paul's was well represented in this year's Santa Claus Parade. Catherine Armour, Skyler Green and Nicole Scott are all members of the North Grenville District High School's "Big Bang" African Drumming Band. Their float won - drum roll please - a third-place ribbon from the judges. Congratulations girls!

## A Christmas Prayer - Robert Louis Stevenson



Loving Father -

Help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the

shepherds and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

Amen



## Hark! It's Another Stark Grandchild



Congratulations to Roger and Janet Stark on the birth of their second grand-daughter, Charlie Rose. She was born on December 4th and weighed 7lbs 10 ozs. Her proud parents are Cheryl (Stark) and Corey Easingwood of Rimby, Alberta.

Proud seems like too mild a word to use to describe Roger. He's delighted, elated, overjoyed and ecstatic to have two girls - Charlie and her big sister Cadence - to spoil this Christmas.

## Library Survey - The Results Are In

The results of the Christian Education Committee's Library Survey are in. Sadly, there was a very low response which seems to indicate a general lack of interest in reading Christian books.

In the coming year, we'll try something new and get a trial subscription to the magazine "In Touch" and boost our collection of DVDs.

Remember - The future use of our funds to buy new material will be dependent on whether there is a desire for it.

Donated books, however, will still be accepted. There are several congregation members who use the library regularly and these books will replace some of our older ones.

**Submitted by Sharon Côté, Librarian**

**DID YOU KNOW THAT OUR WEBSITE AT ST. PAUL'S IS UPDATED EVERY WEEK? IT IS A GREAT PLACE TO LOOK FOR PHOTOS AND INFORMATION. YOU CAN FIND IT AT:**

**STPAULSKEMPTVILLE  
.CA**

**IF YOU KNOW OF FRIENDS OR NEIGHBOURS WHO WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL, CONTACT JIM ARMOUR AT [j.armour@cogeco.ca](mailto:j.armour@cogeco.ca)**

**HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE HELD ON:**

**March 24, 2013**

**June 2, 2013**

**October 6, 2013**

## Music, Fun and Fellowship at St. Paul's Old-Fashioned Christmas Concert



St. Paul's congregation kicked off our 2012 Christmas Season with an "Old Fashioned Christmas Concert" which was held Saturday, December 1, 2012 at 7:00PM following our annual Christmas Potluck Supper.

The program was a great success, with a variety of talents being showcased.... Kids and adults alike enjoyed getting on stage and showing their stuff !! We were entertained by a piano solo, a variety of vocal solos, a trio, some interactive acts, a children's story, and a variety of poetry. We finished with lively rendition of a song titled "All God's Creatures got a Place a in the Choir" in which we allowed some of our "Choir Member Wannabes" to join us. The audience participated by joining us in the chorus. (You can see this song performed by a group called Celtic Thunder on the Internet.)

We were surprised and pleased to have Steve Verhey there to accompany us on keyboard, since he had been at a family wedding, and we did not think he would be able to attend.

Thank you, Steve for making the effort to come. We

appreciate it wholeheartedly !!

We were very pleased to have Knox Mountain joining us for supper and participating in the concert.

It was my great pleasure to convene this year's program, and unless someone tells me differently, there will be another such evening on the first Saturday in December of 2013!!

Several people have let me know that they enjoyed the program and that they would like to participate next year. So here is your invitation to start planning now. I invite families, groups, and individuals to start practising their favourite song, poem, dance or anything they would like to do. It does not have to be Christmassy, it can be comedy as long as it is appropriate, and each "act" will be allowed a time slot up to 5-7 minutes long to show off their best talent!!!

See you next year!!

Annie Blaine



## Another Massive Turn-out This Year for Our Gingerbread House Night



## Mission Committee Report on Operation Christmas Child

St. Paul's once again made Operation Christmas Child their fall project. This has been an annual project since the year 2000 when Peter Ivey asked St. Paul's to be the drop off centre for the Kemptville area. That year a total of 430 boxes were dropped off, with 73 coming from St. Paul's.

This year the Mission Committee set a goal of 60 boxes. The congregation responded with a total of 96 boxes being collected. Mountain brought in 50, to give us a total of 146.

The Mission Committee would like to thank the congregation for their great support as this was a major contribution towards the total of 550 boxes collected in the Kemptville area.



## Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) for Offering Available in New Year

If you have automatic withdrawals from your bank account to pay for your insurance, taxes, home-heating fuel or mortgage, then you will understand the PAR principle. When you sign onto the plan, your offering to St. Paul's will be automatically withdrawn from your account every month.

The advantage of PAR for St. Paul's is that it would ensure a regular, dependable flow of contributions through-out the year – especially during the summer months. It also means a reduction in paperwork for our treasurer and envelope secretary.

There are advantages for individual contributors as well. By joining PAR, you can reduce the number of transactions through your bank account and you'll never again have to worry about forgetting your cheque book. PAR also lets you avoid those nasty "catch-up" periods after summer or winter vacations.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has put together a list of frequently asked questions about the pre-authorized remittance program that covers some very useful information.

### **If I join PAR, can I still direct part of my offering to Presbyterians Sharing or PWS&D?**

*Yes – the plan allows for specific contributions, as with the existing offering envelope program.*

### **Can I change or stop my deduction when on the program?**

*Yes – changes can be made by notifying the administrator of the program early in the month in which the change is to be effective.*

### **If I participate, will I have anything to put in the offering plate on Sunday?**

*Yes – PAR offering cards will be available. Each Sunday, individuals on PAR can place a card on the offering plate, signifying their gift to God.*

### **Can I still make offerings for special mission appeals or on special occasions such as Anniversary Sunday or Christmas?**

*Yes – you may still use offering envelopes or a plain envelope indicating your name and/or envelope number.*

### **Are there any costs to using the PAR Plan?**

*There is an administrative cost to the congregation of 50 cents per donor per month (\$6.00 a year). Congregations report that the benefits of dependable, and often increased, giving far outweigh this minimal fee. Individuals can also be encouraged to cover this cost with their "initial offering" – as they are now with envelopes.*

### **Will I still receive an income tax receipt?**

*Yes – income tax receipts will be issued in the normal manner.*

### **Can anybody participate in the program?**

*To participate in PAR, all you need is a bank account and to ensure that there are sufficient funds in the account to cover the monthly deduction.*

### **Are there a minimum number of participants required at St. Paul's to initiate the program?**

*No – it just takes one. However, since one of the benefits is to ensure regular monthly giving, the more people on the program the more valuable it is to the congregation.*

### **Who would administer the program at St. Paul's?**

*To ensure the same strict confidentiality that St. Paul's currently has with envelope offerings, the program would be administered by the envelope secretary.*

### **Who administers the PAR Program nationally?**

*The service is provided by the United Church of Canada, who has been operating the program for many years. It is an efficient, well-run operation that not only takes care of its own congregations, but those of other denominations as well.*

To sign up for PAR at St. Paul's, fill out the application form in one of the brochures found in the Church Hall and give it to Bea McHale or Jim Armour, along with a void cheque.

While the submission deadline for starting in January is December 30th, you can sign up for PAR whenever you want throughout the year.



## Thank You - From Allan and Dianne Jorgensen



We wish to express our sincere thanks to all all who have prayed for our son-in-law Scott Rabuka in North Gower.

Scott was diagnosed with a form of non-Hodgkins lymphoma last May. He has since undergone six sessions of chemotherapy with an experimental nausea drug. The side effects have been minimal and it appears that he has responded well to treatment.

Scott is back to work at DNA Genotech in Kanata and has regained energy for work and family.

## Please Keep the Shammas Family in Your Prayers



St. Paul's is always happy to welcome visitors but several weeks ago, there was a new face in our pews with a story that was a little out of the ordinary.

The Reverend Firas Shammas is the minister of Latakia Presbyterian Church in Syria. Latakia is the country's main sea port on the Mediterranean and the fifth largest city in Syria, with a population of roughly 384,000. The vast majority of Latakia residents are Muslim, but about 14 per cent of the population is Christian. Most of those are either Armenian or Greek Orthodox, but there is a sizeable Protestant community too. The Presbyterian

church that the Reverend Shammas leads has a membership of between 300 and 400 worshippers.

Given the current instability and violence in Syria, the Shammas family has decided to immigrate to Canada. Firas applied to the Presbyterian Church in Canada to be recognized as a minister in our denomination. His application was accepted and now he must complete one year of study at Presbyterian College in Montreal for everything to be official. Firas, his wife Reine, and their daughters Cynthia Maria (10) and Amy (7) will move to Canada in May of next year.

So what, then, is the connection to Kemptville? Well, Firas did his religious studies at The Near East School of Theology in Beirut. His roommate during the four years that he spent there was none other than Samer Kandalaft. Firas' wife Reine also studied theology at the same university and her roommate was Shahrzad!

Latakia is the stronghold of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his minority Alawite sect. While the region has been largely untouched by the violence to date, the conflict is drawing ever closer. Most commentators agree that Latakia will likely be the site of the Assad government's last stand.

We pray that this doesn't happen until the Shammas family is settled in Canada and we ask God to grant them safe passage.

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## **"A Memorable Christmas"**

The year was 1979. In common with many churches and groups in Canada, the congregation I then served decided to sponsor a family of boat people. The tragic aftermath of the war in Vietnam - the plight of the families fleeing in overcrowded boats, scarcely sea-worthy - then being refused landing in many ports, touched many hearts across this generous land.

Several meetings were held and a committee elected. We considered at some length what we might do about housing, a possible job, clothes, food, medical care, etc. Things were progressing, but very slowly. It was somehow all an effort. Many had doubts about the project. Unemployment was high. How would these people fit in? The congregation was less than enthusiastic. However, there was plenty of time. They were not to come until February and it was now the middle of December.

"Wait until the New Year when people aren't so busy - then we'll really get organized!"

Then came the call. "Your family has arrived in Canada. They are in Edmonton. We'll put them on the plane for St. John's next week."

One week to get ready, and it was almost Christmas!

And yet within that week, everything was miraculously done. People who had shown no interest suddenly came to life. An apartment was found and furnished. We were flooded with clothes and dishes, food, and toys for the children, even a TV. Christmas cards began arriving for the family even before we knew their names.

Then it was off to the airport to welcome them. It was snowing, somehow a typical Canadian Christmas scene. The airport was jammed. Students returning from school. Family members home for the holidays. Everywhere, people were laughing, bags stuffed with gaily wrapped presents, parents hugging sons and daughters, everyone full of Christmas spirit.

And then, almost without warning, there stood our family - pale, emaciated, with matchstick arms and legs, sallow skinned, huge eyes and incongruously dressed in an assortment of Canadian winter clothes that did not fit. Uncertain, frightened, alone, the mother had a tiny child in her arms. The father, with a child at his side, had his arms outstretched, as though to protect them all

from the strangeness, the suddenness of their arrival in an unknown place, among unknown people.

None of us moved. Somehow, before our eyes, amidst all the prosperity of a North American Christmas, a tableau of tragedy. A child born in a stable because there was no room for Him in the inns of this world. A family who were to become refugees in Egypt, escaping the horrors of persecution. The eternal lesson of Christmas - reinforced for us each year by all the needy children of this world - be they in Europe, Africa, in Asia, in Central America, or here in Canada.

Christmas means seeing Christ in all - being Christ to all - especially to those in need of our help.

A happy ending? Yes, please, at Christmas-time. Let me tell you the rest of the story. Our Vietnamese family, by their hard work, quickness of mind, independence of spirit, became self-supporting long before the year ended. They prospered and we saw and heard less of them.

Christmas Day 1982. I was just about to sit down to dinner. It had been a hectic morning, visiting the hospitals, delivering poinsettias from the Christmas Eve service and now it was time to sit down and enjoy my family and friends. The doorbell rang. What now? With some reluctance I opened the door.

There stood the little family, immaculately dressed, radiating good health, beaming from ear to ear. "May we come in?" "Of course."

In they trooped and perched on the chairs. No, they would have nothing. In their hands were packages, carefully wrapped in white tissue paper. "For me?" "For you. Is it not your Christmas - a time of giving?"

Inside was a tea set - not Crown Derby, not Limoges - and yet no cups and saucers could have been more precious. That Christmas Day, the little family visited every member of the committee, and for each one, there was a tea set that said, "This is Christmas."

St. Francis of Assisi reminds us that "it is in giving that we receive."

May it be so with you this Christmas.

*Reprinted with permission from "Twelve Tales for Christmas" by The Reverend J.S.S. Armour*

