



ST. PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A National Historic Site: Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Sunday Service – Third Sunday of Advent **December 14th, 2025. 11 am**

WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S

*We are so glad that you've come to worship the Lord with us today, and we hope that you will experience the presence of Christ among us. In the pew are the following tools for participation in this service. The blue "**Book of Praise**" contains our hymns, the red "**Book of Psalms**" contains the responsive psalms, and the blue "**New English Bible**" contains the scripture passages. If an item has an asterisk (*), then please stand if you are able. **Large print Hymnals** are available in the back of the Sanctuary. An usher would be happy to help you. All are welcome to join us for Coffee hour in St. Andrew's Hall, immediately following the service today.*

WE COME TOGETHER BEFORE GOD

Prelude "Comfort Ye My People" G. Bohm, Paul Manz

*Call to Worship

*Opening Hymn 23 "I waited for the Lord my God"

Welcome

Prayer of Approach and Confession

Assurance of Forgiveness

Response to Forgiveness

Gloria Patri

WORD OF GOD READ AND PROCLAIMED

Reader: Joel Swenor

*Responsive Psalm 146, ref. II

Isaiah 35: 1-10 (page 854, OT)

Luke 1: 46-55 (page 69, NT)

*Reading for Advent 3

*Hymn 110 "Come, thou long-expected Jesus"

Anthem "People, Look East" Eleanor Farjeon

Sermon "How Long, O Lord, How Long must We Wait?"
Rev. Dr. J. Mark Lewis

Silent Reflection

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD WITH CELEBRATION

*Hymn 109 "All earth is waiting"

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The Lord's Prayer 831 *Book of Praise*

Announcements

The Offering

Offertory Solo "Magnificat" Randall Thompson
Soloist: Beth McJanett

*The Doxology 830 *Book of Praise*

Prayer of Dedication

WE GO FORTH IN THE JOY OF THE LORD

*Hymn 120 "Lo! Christ comes with clouds"

Benediction

Choral Amen

Postlude "From Heaven Above to Earth I come" J. S. Bach

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St. Paul's is situated on the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. All peoples have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Land acknowledgments are essential as we move forward on a path to reconciliation and are guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

AN INCLUSIVE & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

The church is called to be a welcoming, nurturing, loving and supportive community—a true church family. As affirmed by the 2021 General Assembly, all people whatever their sexual orientation or gender identity are equally beloved by God. The Session of St. Paul's endorses these truths and will strive to create a church where all people are included and affirmed.

PLEASE NOTE: GALLERY SEATING IS CLOSED

For insurance reasons, the gallery seating around the top of the sanctuary is not open to the public. Only the individual who is coordinating the live stream will be in the gallery. We invite you to join us in the pews on the main floor of the Sanctuary as you worship with us today. Thank you.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



An automated external defibrillator is available in the hallway outside the main office.

ST. PAUL'S VISION



St. Paul's Presbyterian Church is a Christian community in downtown Hamilton, embodying Jesus' acceptance and love of all people and supporting the growth of God's people in faith and service.

ST. PAUL'S TEAM

Interim Moderator:	Rev. Dr. J. Mark Lewis
Clerk of Session:	Jer Dubash
Director of Music:	Blair Havers
Chimer:	Branden Moffat
Custodian:	Ruparain Sydney
Office Administrator:	Gordon Swenor (Interim)
Today's Ushers:	Murray McDowall Annette Sydney

ST. PAUL'S CONTACT INFO

Website:	www.stpaulshamilton.ca
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Mail:	70 James St. S. Hamilton, ON L8P 2Y8

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sanctuary flowers –

The flowers in the sanctuary are placed in loving memory of Mary Plater and Jack Woods by Margaret Plater and family.

Giving Tree –

Please consider looking through the Gifts of Change catalogue to learn about charitable projects that you can support with a donation to the Presbyterian Church in Canada. There are physical copies of the Gifts of Change catalogue on the piano in the sanctuary, and the catalogue can be found online at presbyterian.ca/gifts-of-change

Donations can be made online at presbyterian.ca/donate or in-person by specifying what Gifts of Change project you'd like to support on your donation envelope. Once you've considered donating, feel free to write your name and donation amount on one of the star ornaments located on the piano in the sanctuary, then hang it up on the Christmas tree. More info can be found on the Giving Tree insert on the piano and please direct any further questions you may have to Gordon in the office.



THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, December 14th

11:00am: Sunday Service

12:00pm: Coffee Hour

4:00pm: Hamilton Beat Harmonic

Monday, December 15th

9am-3pm: Church office is OPEN

7:30pm: Scottish Country Dancing in St. Andrew's Hall

Tuesday, December 16th

9am-3pm: Church office is OPEN

7:00pm: Finance & Property Meeting

Wednesday, December 17th

9am-3pm: Church office is OPEN

Friday, December 19th

5:30pm: Friday Night Meeting in Centennial Hall

Refugee Committee Update –

Sandu's arrival date is scheduled for January 10, 2026. Their apartment is currently being prepared for their arrival. If you wish to help with their arrival there are items listed on the bulletin board that you could generously provide for them. These items can be left in the bin labelled 'Kitchen Items' on the stage in St. Andrew's Hall, thank you to all of those who have already donated. Please reach out to Ida deJong with any questions you may have regarding Sandu's family and their arrival.

Books for Bus Tickets Fundraiser –

Our Books for Bus Tickets fundraiser will continue into the fall. Ida has taken over from Lydia. Please visit the book table in St. Andrew's Hall to view the entire collection. Thank you for your generosity and support!

Third Sunday in Advent: JOY

Voice 1: Mary praised God who entrusted her with a sacred role. Great things God has done!

Voice 2: With Jesus' birth, the world will never be the same again.

Voice 1: The powerful will be toppled from their thrones. The hungry will be lifted up and joy will break through in unexpected places.

Voice 2: Every time a child is born, the world changes for someone. Our lives changed when a humble young woman gave birth to the One who would save us. On this third Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of joy.

The candle of joy is lit.

Let us pray together:

Living God, gift us with Mary's trust and readiness to accept your purpose. May we celebrate your coming, as we say with joy: Come, Lord Jesus.



Brenda Gains Confidence in Nicaragua

Brenda Francisca Méndez Ñurinda is an entrepreneur and mother of two, living in Nicaragua.

"I come from a large family with few economic resources, but very hardworking," she explains.

During her first years of motherhood, Brenda experienced domestic violence. After leaving the abusive relationship, Brenda looked for work at the local market, where she earned minimal pay for her efforts.

To improve her family's future prospects, Brenda participated in a program implemented by PWS&D's local partner, INPRHU. Through the training she received, Brenda developed the knowledge and confidence to start her own small shop.

"Each workshop strengthened me. I found a space to share, learn and improve my self-esteem as a woman and mother. My children are my greatest motivation. I decided to resume my high school studies on Sundays, and I am proud of my achievements. Now, I am an entrepreneur," she shares with excitement.

This Advent season, faithfully respond to help families build sustainable livelihoods and advocate for their rights.

WeRespond.ca

Ways St. Paul's Congregation may participate in Mission during Advent 2025

1. Donate items of warm winter clothing for people who come to our door in need. Items may be placed in a tote located in St Andrew's Hall.
2. You will have an opportunity to purchase a mission gift for Presbyterian World Service and Development and place a decoration on our Christmas tree in celebration of your gift.
3. Sandu's Apartment - Several more administrative barriers have been cleared and we hope that the family from Eritrea we are helping to sponsor will arrive in Canada shortly. A list of required items is posted on the bulletin board. Donations can be placed in a tote in St. Andrew's Hall, marked Sandu's Apartment.
4. We have set a goal of \$50,000.00 for our Year-End Fundraiser. A portion of the Year-End Fundraiser will go towards offsetting our deficit, and a portion will go to Hamilton Out of the Cold.

Hamilton Out of the Cold is a not-for-profit, non-denominational program that provides meals for those in need in our community from November to March. Their mission is to provide hot nutritious meals served with dignity and compassion. To learn more about their program:

hamiltonoutofthecold.ca/all-about-us/

Thanks to St. Paul's for their part in this Christmas miracle. Sandu and her family will arrive in Canada on Jan. 10, 2026

On Saturday, January 10, 2026, Sandu and her three children will arrive in Canada from a refugee camp in Israel. Their place of origin is the East African country of Eritrea, bordered by Sudan, Ethiopia and the Red Sea.

In June of 2024, St. Paul's received a request to help sponsor this family of four fleeing the dictatorship in Eritrea. The people of St. Paul's immediately accepted the challenge, with great love and enthusiasm.

In October of 2024, the application was completed, and the Eritrean community in Hamilton provided \$41,000 in financial assistance, which exceeded the \$30,000 required to support a sponsorship. The funds were invested in GICs.

The Refugee Committee applied for a two-bedroom townhouse through Kiwanis non-profit housing.

In November of 2024, we received confirmation from the Canadian Refugee Committee that the application had been received and approved. For a period of several months, there was no communication, and we worried about the status of Sandu and her family in the context of violence in the Middle East.

In October of 2025, we received word that all of Sandu's documents had been approved, including her VISA for travel to Canada.

In October of 2025, a two-bedroom apartment just a five-minute walk to Hess Street school was secured through Kiwanis. The people of St. Paul's have been generous in providing furniture and other provisions for Sandu's new home.

On December 7, 2025, a flight to Canada was arranged for Sandu and her three children. They will arrive in Canada on Saturday, January 10, 2026.

Thank you to all the people of St. Paul's who have participated in this wonderful mission. Particular thanks go to Ida DeJong, who has been St. Paul's faithful representative on the Hamilton Refugee Committee.