



News 'N Views Summer 2023

WMS Synodical 2023

St. Paul's Mission Circle is very thankful for the great success of our two day Synodical conference held here at St. Paul's on April 18 and 19! We were so blessed to welcome about 50 members from across southwestern Ontario for worship, singing, speakers, workshops, delicious meals, happy socializing and so much more. We could not have done it without the amazing help of wonderful staff and volunteers and the support from our congregation. Many people commented on our wonderful church building, the meaningful worship services and the words of Rev. Mikal, the fantastic music from our choir and Ian M., and the hospitality and food prepared by our own Thistle Club, and our caterer, Deb Moffat. We were so proud to be hosts of Synodical and thank everyone who supported our event!

St. Paul's WMS



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BEHIND THE SCENES AT ST. PAUL'S!

By Pastor Wendy Noll

All groups are open to the congregation AND our local community!

Delight in the Lord – feel joy when you think of Him always! [Philippians 4]

GROUPS:

We continue to host **BLESS FEST** from 7 to 8 pm on the first Monday of the Month. God divinely connects us with gifted local artists each month.

Launching into Spring 2023, Bless Fest featured gifted singer / songwriter 'MICHELLE TITIAN!' Our summer line up of artists features:

JUNE - Khristien Van Ryssen

JULY - Jim Jackson 'Local Artist'

AUGUST - Jeremy Droppert 'Worship Band'

*Check out our Monthly Spotlight: <https://stpaulsdowntown.com/monthly-spotlight>

*Watch: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNY6c8_9WfxgV9QPt5lG3UiI6vMCizNd8

God is deepening friendships through the **WASS UP Singles Group**. Join us from 6 to 8 pm on the **second Tuesday of the Month**. Two months of SPA activities has prepared the group for an exciting line up of Summer Group Activities—Single 'males' welcome!

JUNE - Indulge Ice Cream Outreach

JULY - Fellowship Walk & Picnic

AUGUST - Beach Picnic Outreach

Are you a prayer warrior? Do you need prayer? COME...Soak in His presence!! **A.S.A.P. Prayer Group** meet weekly on Tuesdays from 10 to 11 am.

Is God nudging you to GO DEEPER? Join us for weekly **BIBLE STUDY** on Wednesdays from 1 to 2:30 pm. Experience a wonderful journey through the LIVING Word of God! Currently we are studying the book of James. Stay tuned for our Summer Bible Study lead by Rev. Mikal... <https://stpaulsdowntown.com/group-ministry> Where two or more are gathered, together in His name, HE IS there in our midst. [Matthew 18:20]

GRIEF SHARE Group celebrated the completion of their 13-week ministry group with a potluck luncheon. Rev. Mikal and Pastor Wendy will facilitate a second Grief Share group in September. Stay tuned for more details: <https://stpaulsdowntown.com/group-ministry>

ST. PAUL'S YOUTH GROUP has one Youth Outreach Event scheduled this summer. Please email Pastor Wendy for more information: pastorwendy@stpaulsdowntown.com
AUGUST 14TH, 2023 – ECO Adventure 'KAYAK Tour'

NEW GROUPS:

INTERGEN CONNECT Group is a multi-generational gathering that offers opportunities to build Godly intergenerational relationships and social interaction, with intentionality. INTERGEN is held monthly –c heck out the on-line Calendar on our website for upcoming events: <https://stpaulsdowntown.com/calendar>. We launched INTERGEN in April by hosting a Scavenger Hunt/Community Potluck Outreach. Join us in May for a Spaghetti Dinner/Game night!

TWO-WAY PRAYER Group *“The Oxford Group called it quiet time and guidance. The Twelve Step Program describes it as prayer and meditation. The idea is to set aside time every morning to receive guidance from God. Prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening to God. Most people know how to pray, but very few know how to listen.”* **The Two-Way Prayer group will be held weekly on Mondays from 11 am to 12:15 pm starting June 12th, 2023.**

COMMUNICATIONS

There are several emerging trends impacting the church today, some of the top reported trends for 2023 are:

- Increased use of technology and hybrid worship services to connect with the congregation and community.
- Greater focus on mental health and wellness programs.
- Social media continues to play a significant role in how churches communicate with congregants and the community.
- Fostering ways to become more environmentally friendly.
- Focus on providing a multi-faceted Worship experience that gives people a sense of connection and community.
- Increased focus on Community Outreach: creative engagement, hospitality, participation, and meaningful relationships

In keeping with evolving church trends, St. Paul's has launched its new website 'HUB' - see the link at www.stpaulsdowntown.com We continue to develop an engaging on-line presence through social media and trending technological advancement that fosters an emotional, contemplative atmosphere of spiritual depth and connection with God.

¹How to Listen to God by Wally Paton, page 15

ST. PAUL'S WITNESSING IN NORFOLK

It is interesting to look at attendance at St. Paul's over time to see the trends as Covid recedes and regular programs are restarted and new ones put in place. Thanks need to go to Nancy who provided the data used to create the graphs and to Kate Woods (granddaughter of Ken and Beth) who constructed the graphs.

Figure 1 shows the attendance at Sunday worship over a 16 month period commencing January 2022 to April 2023. Graphical points are the total attendance for the month. Beside the expected Sunday to Sunday variations, no attempt was made to remove the effect of months with 4 or 5 Sundays. The solid linear trend line clearly shows inhouse attendance is rising from an average of about 60 to close to 100 by April, 2023. The April data includes Easter and shows the expected uptick.

Figure 2 is the sum of the YouTube and Facebook attendance over the same period and is clearly a pleasant surprise. The total of the attendance of the two online broadcasts averaged around 150 in January, 2022 and was still over 100 at April 2023.

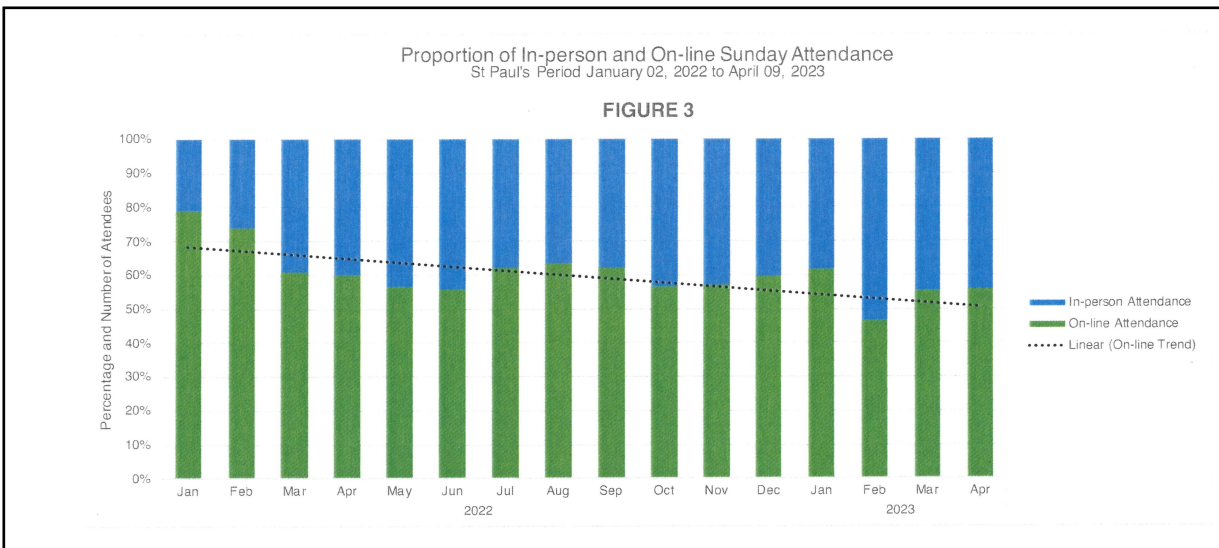
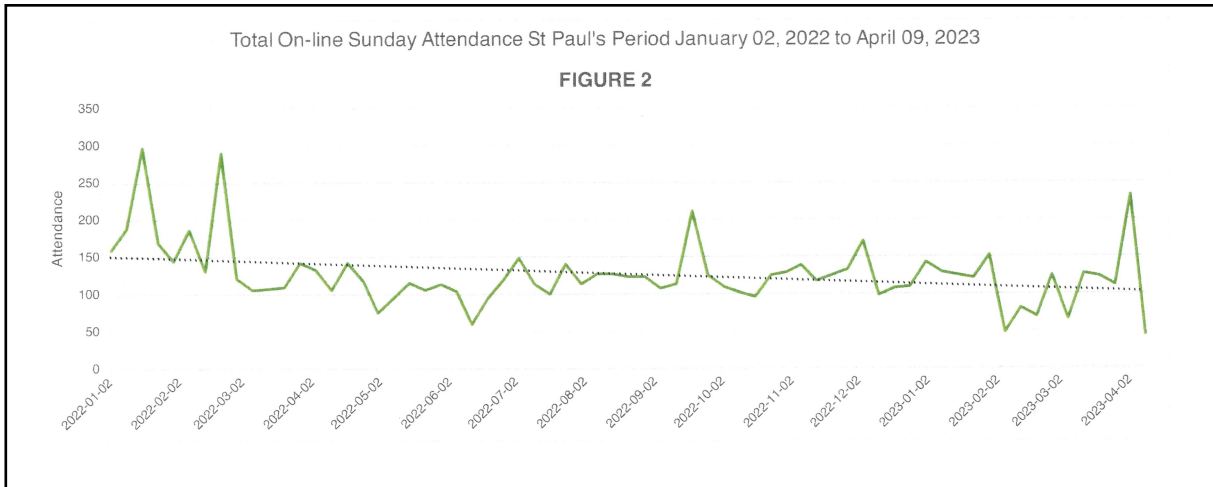
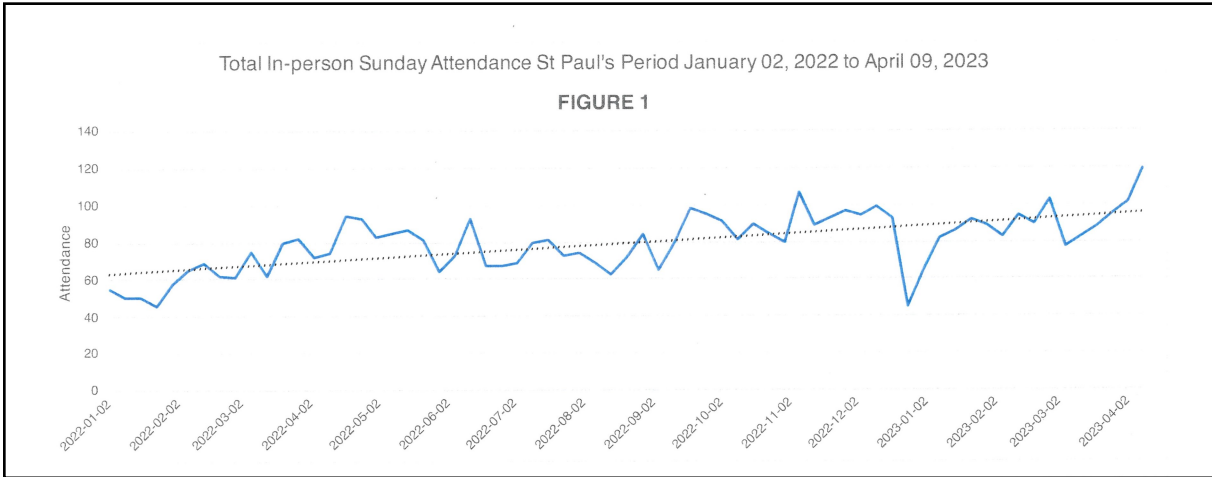
Figure 3 shows the proportion, each of inhouse and online attendance to the total. The online attendance in January 2022 (coming out of Covid) was about 70% of the total (online plus inhouse) and dropped to about 50% by April 2023. Facebook was technically down for February 2023 so the online attendance would be somewhat understated but the overall trend is clear.

Online attendance brings about 150 more participants into the weekly service, a little over doubling our monthly service participation. Surely this confirms the value of all the expense and effort to put the online equipment into place and, in particular, thanks to the Tech Committee, Bruce Murray, Ian Madge, Rev. Mikal, and including Nancy for the months of effort. Not to be overlooked are the volunteers who each Sunday operate the control station making this all happen. We should also not forget Jack Nicholls who built the housing and helped with the relocation of the AV control station.

Online services have pleasant surprises. One participant, a couple outside of Simcoe, watched the Lenten services and was very thankful for the experience. They forwarded a substantial donation to St. Paul's as evidence of their appreciation.

"A witness in Norfolk to the transforming love of Jesus"

Narrative compiled by Ken Smith



In Sympathy - Remembering our Family



VINCENT

The sincere sympathy of the congregation is extended to Greg Joannette and family with the passing of his sister, Yvonne, on March 16, 2023.



TERRY

The sincere sympathy of the congregation is extended to Bill and family with the passing of his wife, Carol, on April 15, 2023.

ROBBINS

The sincere sympathy of the congregation is extended to Marlene Smith and family with the passing of her mother, Norita, on May 3, 2023.



MOSS

The sincere sympathy of the congregation is extended to the Moss family with the passing of their dear Wendy, on May 7, 2023.



TERRY

The sincere sympathy of the congregation is extended to Bill and family with the passing of his brother, Bob, on May 9, 2023.



NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

We have a little area just behind the mailboxes that is maintained as a space where children younger than our Sunday school program could be cared for. In the past, we have had a number of adults who have agreed to be willing to step out in order to allow parents to take part in Worship knowing their little ones are well cared for. Sadly, we haven't needed the help! But hopefully we will in the near future. For our safety policy, Leading With Care, 2 responsible adults are needed. Or 1 adult & teen. Would you be willing to put your name on a list of people willing to step out when needed? You would still be able to see/hear the service - on the big screen! (and even grab a coffee & cookie!) There is a sign up sheet ... or contact Judy or the office for more information and to put your name down to be occasionally called on.

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP NEWS - SUMMER 2023

In an effort to keep everyone up to date on the financial situation at St. Paul's we have included a graph that will be familiar to most of you. They compare the giving's received after the first 18 Sundays in 2022 and 2023. It is amazing how similar the two years are, with 2023 being a little ahead.

Giving Levels for First 18 Sundays – 2022 and 2023					
Yearly \$ Level	Avg. Weekly	# of Families		Total \$ per Group	
		2022	2023	2022	2023
\$1 - \$520	\$0 - \$10	20	25	2,005.56	2,180.50
\$520 - \$1040	\$10 - \$20	17	21	4,284.00	5,369.29
\$1040 - \$1560	\$20 - \$30	18	14	8,619.21	5,960.65
\$1560 - \$2080	\$30 - \$40	9	19	5,661.98	11,633.40
\$2080 - \$2600	\$40 - \$50	11	11	8,894.87	8,954.06
\$2600- \$3120	\$50 - \$60	4	5	4,020.00	5,143.92
\$3120 - \$3640	\$60 - \$70	5	1	5,695.00	1,170.00
\$3640 - \$4160	\$70 - \$80	0	4	nil	5,338.44
over \$4160	Over \$80	13	13	36,848.84	29,509.83
TOTALS		97	113	76,029.56	75,260.09

Your Financial and Stewardship Committee wants to thank all of you for your continued support and we will try to keep you up to date as the year progresses. We are running a deficit at the current time, again very similar to what occurred in 2022. We really want to avoid the build up of a large deficit as has happened over the past several years which has required a big effort at years end to eliminate. Let's all of us keep an eye and help when we can. There are many exciting things going on at St. Paul's (check the weekly bulletin or our web site) so let's get out and support them and all can see how your giving's are helping in so many ways.

Gord Summers for Finance & Stewardship

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

From July 2 to September 3rd our regular children's program for 3 years to Gr. 5 is on holiday! Adults and youth in Gr. 9 and up are invited to lead each week and a minimum of 2 leaders are needed. The materials will be ready and available to you no later than June 4th and the task is simple! The lessons will be sitting on the cart just inside the Lower Hall, Please sign-up on the board just inside the glass doors and beside the stairs.

Do it early to ensure your preferred date(s) are available.

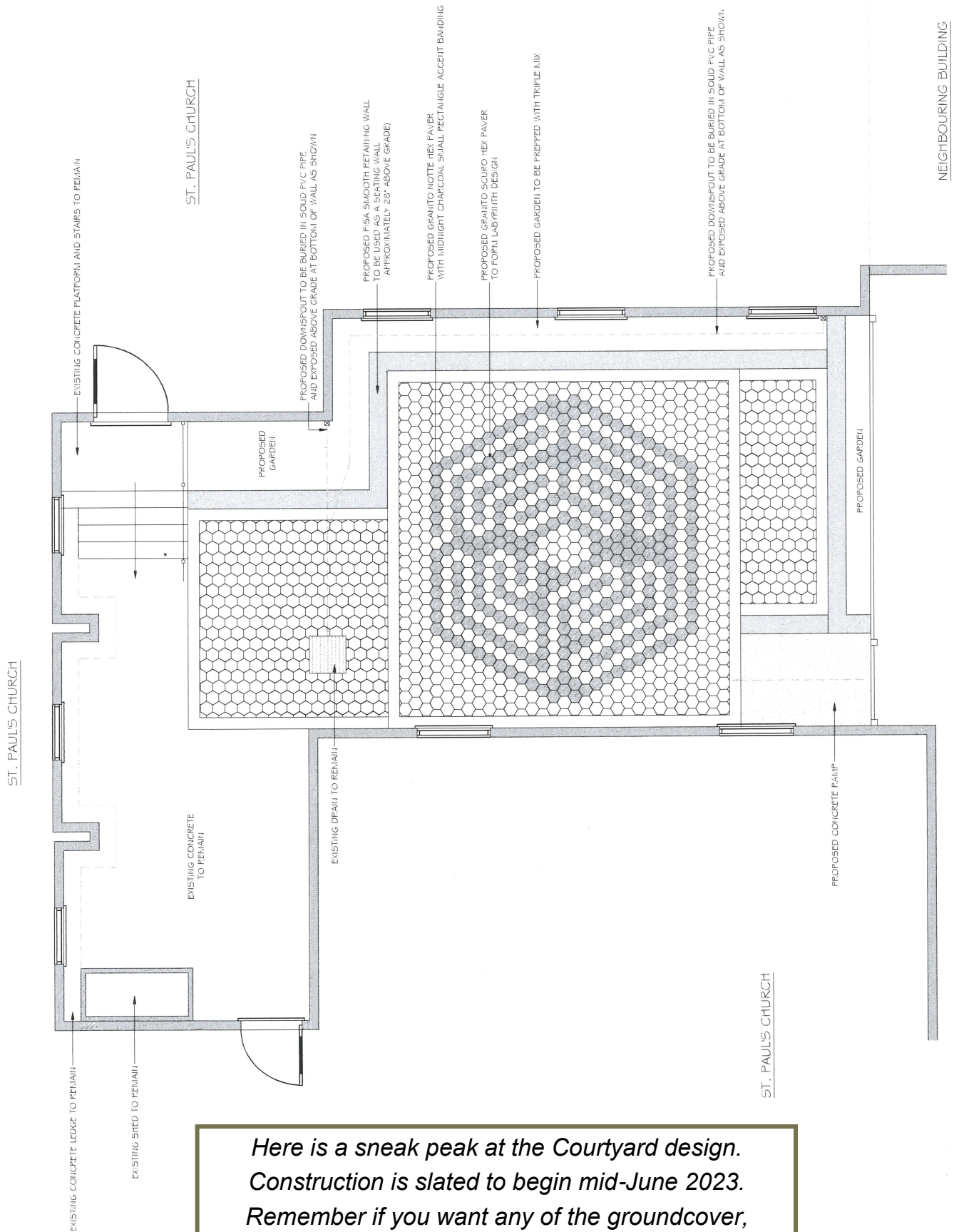
If you have any questions please speak to Diane Stinson or Linda Shaw.

DR. D.C. MACDONALD SCHOLARSHIP

The Committee, composed of Carol Croucher, Mikal Schomburg and myself reviewed the recommendations of the three theology colleges, The Presbyterian College, Montreal, Knox College, Toronto and The Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver. After some deliberation, we are happy to report that we chose Alfonso Issa, who is attending The Vancouver School of Theology. Alfonso has an interesting background. He is originally from Brazil and responded to God's call to leave a successful career as a medical doctor to come to Canada to study. He is married with three children. He was active in the Presbyterian Church in Brazil and has continued that involvement as a member of Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church in Vancouver. He wants to either serve in The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a congregational minister or as a medical missionary. The Scholarship will be \$6,000, which is approximately the income earned on the principal amount held in trust.

Submitted by Mike Cobb, Chair

COURTYARD PROJECT UPDATE



Here is a sneak peek at the Courtyard design. Construction is slated to begin mid-June 2023. Remember if you want any of the groundcover, please pop by to dig some up before it's gone.