



**Annual Vestry Report for 2024  
Part 1 – Ministry Reports**

# **St. Paul's on-the-Hill Anglican Church**

**Sunday, February  
23rd, 2025**

**Revised Version**

# St. Paul's Vestry

February 23, 2025

1. Opening Prayers
2. Election of Vestry Clerk: Melanie Foord
3. Presentation of the Auditor's Report.
4. Acceptance of the financial statements audited.
5. Motion that Vestry retains Dawn Flett & Associates Chartered Accountants to maintain St.-Paul's-on-the-Hill's books for the 2025 audit, and to present the Auditor's Report at Vestry on February 22, 2026.
6. Acceptance of the Minutes of Vestry, February 23, 2024, of the Special Vestry November 25, 2024.
7. Incumbents' Report
8. Presentation of Budget for 2025.
  - a. Church Budget
  - b. Food Bank Budget
9. Acceptance of all other Reports as printed in this Vestry Report.
10. Motions concerning the Advisory Board and Executive Committee.
11. Appointments by Rector: Rector's Warden; Production Director, Receiptable Secretary.
12. Nominations and Elections of: The People's Warden, Deputy Wardens, Parochial Tribunal, Scrutineer, Envelope Secretary for St. Paul's, Synod Delegates (3) and Alternate Delegates to Synod (1).
13. New Business and Questions.
14. Announcement of 2026 Vestry Meeting: February 22, 2026.
15. Motion to Adjourn.
16. Closing Prayers.



Diocese of Toronto  
Anglican Church of Canada

## The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter to Vestries, 2025

*to be read or circulated on the Sunday of the parish's annual vestry meeting*

### To the clergy, churchwardens, and parishioners of the Diocese of Toronto:

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

**“...be renewed in the spirit ...” – Ephesians 4:23**

In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese of Toronto is exhibiting a burgeoning health and vitality that inspires us daily. To God be the glory! As your bishops, as we travel around to visit our parishes, we have witnessed the Holy Spirit engaging in marvelous ways with people, groups and ministries right across this Diocese – from Mississauga to Minden, from Cobourg to Collingwood. The Season of Spiritual Renewal, this invitation to spiritual growth, has been enthusiastically received in so many ways, including the sharing of prayer resources, participation in online workshops, and our bishops' Advent study online. We are also looking forward to #LiveLent: God's Story, Our Story, a daily Lenten resource with a helpful guide for small group use.

We are excited that the next phase in this Season of Spiritual Renewal is called “Lift Up Our Hearts.” Over the coming year, large worship services will take place across the Diocese on five Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. Each celebration of the Eucharist will feature excellent music, moving testimony, and preachers from within our own Diocese, each with their own unique approach to spiritual renewal. We hope you will plan to join us for one or more of these marvelous gatherings. Come on your own, bring a friend, or hire a bus! We will see you there:

- **March 22 – St. James Cathedral** (*preacher: the Rev. Molly Finlay*)
- **March 29 – Trinity Church, Streetsville** (*preacher: the Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas*)
- **May 31 – All Saints, Whitby** (*preacher: the Rev. Gerlyn Henry*)
- **September 27 – St. James, Orillia** (*preacher: the Rev. Dr. Rob Hurkmans*)
- **October 25 – St. Paul's, Bloor Street** (*preacher: the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley*)

The call to spiritual renewal, however, was just the first of 20 Calls articulated in the Cast the Net strategic vision adopted by Synod and this Diocese in 2023. Over the coming year, you will hear us repeatedly emphasizing the need for each congregation to review and consider all of the 20 Calls and then choose which two or three your parish will focus on. As you gather today for Vestry, this could be the perfect opportunity to start considering the question. A small group – the Netminders – has prepared resources to help you, which you can find on the [Cast the Net web page](#). While it's important to remember that no congregation could possibly answer all 20 Calls, we strongly believe that each congregation can consider two or three. Leading up to our diocesan Synod in November, we hope that every parish will be able to identify which of the Calls they are living into.

We are pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Varun Balendra ODT. A familiar face around the Diocese, Varun has served in many volunteer capacities over the years, and we look forward to working together in this new capacity. By the time of our diocesan Synod on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8, we expect that we will be introducing a new Secretary of Synod and a new full-time Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, whose primary focus areas will be supporting the work of the Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism (ABAR) and other DEI training, and supporting individuals and parishes to grow, build community, educate and engage.

Some other new faces at Synod may include guests from the Diocese of Brasilia. This past June, at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in the city of Brasilia, the two diocesan bishops of Brasilia and Toronto signed the covenant that brings our two dioceses into a companion relationship. Since the signing of our agreement, a small representative group from each diocese has been meeting monthly – in both Portuguese and English – to pray together and to plan events. For example, clergy from both dioceses will gather online for a joint study day on liberation theology on March 25. In the fall, a youth delegation from Brasilia will join our own youth at the Re-

Charge youth retreat at Muskoka Woods camp. And we anticipate sending a delegation from Toronto to Brasilia in 2026. We have even developed a shared logo for our relationship that combines elements of each of our own logos: our Diocese of Toronto dove springing from their Ipe Tree. You can expect to hear more about this companion partnership as we enter into the second year of it.

Closer to home, the partnerships within our own Diocese continue to flourish. When we speak of casting the net, we are referring to the supportive, creative and collaborative ministry that occurs in each deanery and regionalization, between parishes and congregations, amongst church neighbours and colleagues. We are grateful to our hardworking and devout clergy and our dedicated lay leaders, especially churchwardens, treasurers, administrators, musicians and the countless church staff and parish volunteers who are Christ's hands and feet of ministry in our communities. We are so grateful for all of your faithful work in our parishes and beyond.

We have embarked on a feasibility study to discern if this is the right time for the Diocese to conduct a major financial campaign. Over the next six months, M&M International, a Toronto-based fundraising firm, will listen to parishes large and small, soliciting feedback on a case for support. It is proposed that if a campaign does go forward, the majority of funds raised will remain in the parishes, with a smaller portion supporting the 20 Calls at the diocesan level. Your feedback and commitment will make the difference as we look into this additional way of working together.

Lastly, we want to encourage each Vestry meeting to consider this year's social justice motion: "Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario." The Church has a role to play in calling on government for responsible actions in caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, to ensure life-saving protections for those experiencing addictions and other challenges. Please consider how your parish can speak up, and out, for those who require advocacy. As we anticipate going to the polls in the coming year – federally and provincially – let us remember our baptismal promises as we cast our ballots, choosing candidates who align with our values. And let us pray for them.

For it is in praying that we are drawn ever deeper into relationship with the Triune God and become more attentive to the will of our Heavenly Creator. In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, we ask every reader of this letter to commit more deeply to a life of prayer, that it may infuse your every day with Grace as you witness to the Love of Christ in your life and to the world.

In your prayers, please pray for all three of us, your College of Bishops, both in your personal daily devotions as well as your parish's weekly intercessions. Know that we are praying for you too, giving thanks for our common life together across our wonderful diocesan family.

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Andrew Toronto".

The Right Rev. Andrew J. Asbil Bishop of Toronto

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Riscylla Shaw".

The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Kevin Robertson".

The Right Rev. Kevin Robertson  
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

# St. Paul's Vestry Meeting: February 25, 2024 Minutes

*Meeting called to order at 11:48 a.m. by Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, Incumbent with the Declaration of Membership in the Anglican Church of Canada and the Land Acknowledgement.*

*Note that the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of taking minutes and recording will be destroyed after the minutes have been completed.*

- 1. Opening Prayer, Prayer for Peace, and Prayer for Vestry by Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, Incumbent.**
- 2. Motion to appoint Melanie Foord as Vestry Clerk:**
  - Moved by Bruce Hampson. Seconded by Steve Masson. Motion carried.
- 3. Presentation of the Auditor's Report by Dawn Flett (Annual Vestry Report for 2023 Part 2 – Financials):**
  - Final financial documents approved by St. Paul's wardens and will be presented to support St. Paul's charitable status.
  - Report is a "Clean opinion." Everything that Dawn requested to see to audit the church's books was provided to the auditors. No outstanding matters. All documentation provided.
  - Initial statement regarding cash is a standard clause for all churches because St. Paul's does accept cash donations and all cash looks alike.
  - In 2023, Food Banks Canada oversight requested that individual Food Banks to reflect not only their monetary donations but also to reflect FOOD PRODUCT DONATIONS in order to understand the volume of food coming in the door. Monetary value is set at \$3/pound. Needless to say that this has increased "Donations" and "Expenses". (3 pounds food in, 3 pounds food out as a "Donation in Kind")
  - Using a value associated with Gifts in Kind also requires a fiscal year end inventory of food. At year end there was \$162K worth of food on hand. (Please note that this full amount of food has already been handed out.)
  - \$50K increase in monetary donations to Food Bank in 2023.
  - Deferred Revenue indicates items/funds specifically intended for a designated project but not yet disbursed.
  - Proceeds from Caribbean night increased annual donation amount substantially.
  - ALPHA continues as a separate program and in/outs are managed separately for this account.
  - Expenses – major change due to \$500K increase in FB expenses (due to recording of direct food donations)
  - Remainder of donations is in line with previous year's givings
  - Thanks to people who maintain an aging building without significant increases in annual expenses
  - Depreciation of Capital Assets → accounts for purchases that are used over multiple years and whose value decreases as the asset ages
  - No Jubilee Grant in 2023 as expected since program ended.
  - Diocesan and Raiser's Edge Fund (the individual funds in Raiser's Edge come from previous donations of Securities to St. Paul's from parishioners) – the dollar amount varies as market fluctuates. Year End Market Value recorded annually for Vestry Report.

- HST is partially recoverable since St. Paul's is a charity. HST for Food Bank and St. Paul's recorded separately.
- Other Receivables went up substantially due to timing of year end bank deposits, December 31<sup>st</sup> collection didn't go into the bank until Jan 4, 2024 so it was in "Receivables" versus in the bank account at the time of the audit.
- Food Bank payroll is run through the church (and under the church's charitable number).
- Prepaid shows \$162K of Food Bank inventory of food (food inventory new this year).
- Major 2023 expenditures by St. Paul's were AV purchases and Parking Lot repairs
- AP and accrued charges higher are simply due to timing of reporting, especially payroll timing. Payroll itself is in line with previous year.
- Special Funds – givings designated for specific church programs (Food Bank, Scholarship, Women's Fellowship etc.) which each show separate inflows/outflows for the year and are each tracked separately.
- Designated Funds – tracked to ensure givings are directed to project requested by donor (Building Fund, Church Security etc.)
- Long Term Deferred Revenue – donations given in regards to a long-term asset that requires depreciation calculations.
- \$19K less cash in bank accounts (Food Bank and St. Paul's General account), however this is balanced by increased funds in stock holdings so not a concern
- Written reminder that we are part of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto and are a charity/non-profit and therefore do not pay tax on "profits"
- Written acknowledgement that the church receives donations of many hours of service which cannot be expressed with a monetary equivalent but which are essential to the functioning of the church.
- Note 4 indicates returns on St. Paul's investments which wardens review regularly to determine if they should be rolled over, cashed out, moved etc.
- Difference between Income and Expenses for "Gift in Kind Food donations" indicates year end physical food inventory amount (valued at \$3/pound.) Note 6 regards depreciation of existing sound system with addition of 2023 investments in new AV equipment as well as depreciation of parking lot improvements
- Sincere thanks from the auditor to those who look after church financial records and who once again managed to provide information to the auditor to have ready for Vestry in spite of a very tight turn-around time.

**Questions regarding Auditor's Report:**

- Question from James Doxsee: Who pays Food Bank's rent? Response: St. Paul's/Food Bank.
- Question from Peter Kirwin: asked if Food Bank inventory could be reflected as an investment rather than a pre-paid item. Response: No because audited accounting statements require additional audit procedures which would require additional costs including an auditor supervised inventory whereas if they are shown as an unpaid expense St. Paul's incurs no additional cost.

**4. Motion to accept the audited Financial Statements for 2023.**

- Motion by James Doxsee. Seconded by Nancy Logan. Motion carried.

**5. Motion to retain Dawn Flett & Associates Chartered Accountants to maintain St. Paul's on-the-Hill's books for the 2024 audit, and to present the Auditor's Report at Vestry on February 23, 2025.**

- Motion by Bruce Hampson. Seconded by Bruce Neville. Motion carried.
- Sincere thanks offered to Dawn Flett.

**6. Motion to accept the Minutes of Vestry: February 26, 2023 as amended.**

- Request for amendment by Paul Scuse correction of Doug Smith “Curator” to Curate.
- Motion by Isuru Weerasekera. Seconded by Dan Reynolds. Motion carried.

**7. Motion to accept all the 2023 Reports in February 26, 2023 Vestry Report with required amendments:**

- Motion by Elaine Phipps. Seconded by Sophia Levy-Presner. Motion carried.
- Request for amendments by Nancy Logan et al:
  - Page 12 Pastoral Letter in Vestry Report:
    - Correct second instance of name to “Hasangika”
    - Correct to “Geoff” Pring
  - Page 22 – Sunday School & Youth Ministry in Vestry Report
    - Remove “(SOS)” from heading

**10. Motions concerning the Advisory Board and Executive Committee:**

- Motion that the Advisory Board be suspended for 2024. Congregational meetings, or special Vestry meetings, will be held as necessary, which will be open to all members of the parish.
  - Motion by Bruce Hampson. Seconded by Susan Scott. Motion carried.
- Motion that the Executive Committee be comprised of a Rector’s Warden, People’s Warden, six deputy wardens and the rector. Each Churchwarden will have oversight of and serve as a liaison with a designated area of our parish ministry.
  - Motion by Paul Scuse. Seconded by Joy Pring. Motion carried

**11. Appointments by Rector:**

- **Rector’s Warden:** Bruce Hampson
- **Production Director:** Bill Bradbury
- **Receiptable Secretary:** Cassie Williams

**12. Nominations and Elections of The People’s Warden, deputy wardens, parochial tribunal, scrutineers, envelope secretary for St. Paul’s, Synod Delegates and alternate delegates to Synod.**

- Motion to elect David Hamilton as People’s Warden
- Motion to elect Janet Herrera, Sophia Levy-Presner, Kehinde Ladipo, John Honsberger, Nkiruka Ochei (Food Bank Treasurer) and Clare Masson as deputy wardens.
  - Moved by Joanne Karam. Seconded by Cynthia Peroff. Motion carried.
- Friendly amendment to correct page number listed in motion.
  - Amended Motion to accept the Parochial Tribunal, Scrutineers, Envelope Secretary for St. Paul’s, Synod Delegates and Alternate Delegates to Synod as listed on [pages 30 and 31](#) of the *2023 Vestry, held February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024*.
    - Motion by George Denny. Seconded by Ivan Hunte. Motion carried.

**13. Presentation of Budgets for 2024:**

**2024 St. Paul’s Church Budget Report by Kehinde Ladipo**

- The wardens are pleased to announce that whereas 2023 was a “deficit budget”, the proposed 2024 Budget will NOT require to be in deficit due to generous donations to St. Paul’s.
- \$454K budget proposed (last year was \$462K)
- Undesignated Weekly Givings continue to be the majority of donations
- Note that “Designated” givings have their use constrained, (i.e. cannot use “Missions” money because Covid made missions impossible but also couldn’t use it for other purposes) so undesignated givings are preferred.
- Not selling any stocks or bonds, only drawing from accumulated interest.
- Half of church revenue (54%) goes to personnel/clergy costs.
- Please remember that the Diocese has been covering 50% of Curate Doug Smith’s salary and will continue to cover next year but then St Paul’s will need to fund his position fully in 2026 if he is to remain with the parish.
- The buildings of St. Paul’s continue to age so we are basing 2024 expenditures on increasing 2023 actuals.
- Christian Ed (SS, Youth etc.) to be increased modestly (gratitude expressed to Esther Laiman for her diligence in searching out and use of inexpensive and free materials for youth and SS activities).
- “Church Life Costs” (allotment to Anglican Diocese) has been reduced due to presence of Doug Smith and Esther within the parish.
- Installation of Security Camera to proceed. \$10K grant received from the government but will likely require additional funds to complete project.

#### **Highlights on 2023 Donations:**

- St. Paul’s portion of Caribbean Night proceeds as well as the proceeds from Comfort Food & Carols (less expenses) were designated and sent to the Food Bank. (Note that St. Martins portion of proceeds went to their charity of choice.)
- AV project & Parking Lot project (\$8950) are now complete, but parking lot remediation was significantly more expensive than expected.
- Diocese Reach Grant (\$5000) was used for revamped online presence and AV equipment.
- Deficit covered by Building Fund and release of Geoff Pring Memorial Fund (with thanks to Joy Pring)
- Question from Paul Scuse. Response: Church staff and Food Bank personnel wages are combined for privacy. The intention is to give raises within cost-of-living allowance based on performance.
- Question from James Doxsee. Response: No expropriation or sale of church property has occurred.
- [Motion to accept the 2024 St. Paul’s Church Budget as presented in the February 25th, 2024, Vestry report.](#)
- Motion by Claire Masson. Seconded by Yvonne Nunes. Motion carried.

#### **2023 Food Bank Update – Lindsey Morrill**

- May 2023 meeting with Minister of Finance (Peter Bethlenfalvy). Suggestion to apply for Trillium grant to fund Food Bank’s need for new equipment (fridge and freezer for milk and eggs - \$13,200 approved. Fridge and freezer to be installed in March 2024.
- Switch from handing out food donation as pre-packed boxes with predetermined to a “grocery store approach” with six manned stations where clients can select items that better suit their needs and diet.
- Change to Client intake procedure required due to huge increase in prospective clients.
- Prospective clients now have to make an appointment for a 15-minute in-depth interview with mandatory report on net income and expenditures to ensure Food Bank can help neediest clients first.
- Criteria for acceptance = Poverty line + 10%



- October meeting with Mayor Ashe resulted in City of Pickering agreeing to pay 2024 monthly Food Bank facility rental cost (\$48K) → savings redirect to eggs, milk and halal food procurement
- 80% of clients are Halal and therefore are now purchasing Halal products.
- 23K of food rescued from Landfill
- Holiday Food Drives raised 1800 pounds of food, 185 turkeys and additional funds. Information packets handed out. Many thanks to the Food Drive volunteers who assisted in raising the Food Bank profile. 200 Christmas hampers included Walmart gift certificates and warm clothing. Many toys were also donated and distributed. Also launched a “Build a Box” campaign to create hampers
- First ever Donor Open House and tour was held on October 21, 2023 to raise Food Bank profile and build relationships. Future plans for 3 annual Food Bank Open Houses in 2024.
- 2023 media coverage and raising profile of Food Bank resulted in unexpected December uplift in donations. This was unexpected and avoided a year-end deficit. Please note that this unexpected surplus has already been used up in January/February and the 2024 budget does not reflect any future windfalls of this nature.
- 2023 Hunger Count Report: 18,988 Adults and 10,131 Children helped.
- 29K of residents helped in 2023 versus 21K in 2022. 2024 numbers to date already show huge growth month-over-month so 2024 Hunger Count expected to be much higher again.
- Additional meetings and second food sorting shift added due to huge growth in need
- Sincere thanks given to Canon Stephanie, the wardens and congregation of St. Paul’s as well as Mayor Kevin Ashe, members of Pickering council, grocery store partners, donors etc.
- Request to minute thanks to Lindsey and Rebecca for their amazing outreach, results and hard work at the Food Bank.
- Note that Food Bank has been informed that it is to be a recipient of proceeds from 2024 Mayor’s Fundraiser (8.3% of proceeds expected to be \$25-\$35K).
- Question from Steve Masson about whether our Food Bank had requested to be included as a recipient of CBC Radio’s Sounds of the Season Food Bank Fund Raising Proceeds. Response: 2023 recipients had already been selected but the Food Bank will be contacting them early this year to attempt to get on the list for 2024.

### **2023 Food Bank Budget Update – Rebecca Wilson**

- In 2023 Donor base increased by 287 donors versus 2022 due to raised profile of food Bank in the community in large part due to Food Bank and Lindsay’s advocacy within the community
- \$10K Diocese Grant
- O.T.F. grant for fridge/freezer
- 45% of Food bank donations arrived unexpectedly in December 2023 (Food Bank was in significant deficit as of November 30<sup>th</sup> and was not expecting to break even).
- 237K pounds of food donations helped cushion increased monetary expenditures.
- 56% of expenditures to be spent on groceries (including pricier halal foods)
- New line item is for security – increased clientele with varying backgrounds makes this a requirement for Food Bank property and personnel security
- Planned improvements to Food Bank website and social media presence to increase profile
- Request to minute thanks to Lindsey and Rebecca for their superb work.
- **Motion to accept the St. Paul’s Food Bank budget as presented in the February 25th, 2024 Vestry Report.**
- Motion by Bruce Neville. Seconded by James Doxsee. Motion Carried.
- Question by Catherine Picard: Are we liaising with local mosque regarding halal purchases? Response: Yes, Lindsey is in on-going and extensive contact with the Muslim community.

- George Denny expressed a vote of thanksgiving for the initial vision for the creation of St. Paul's Food Bank and for its continued vibrancy and vision for the future.

#### 14. St. Paul's Scholarship Motion:

- **Given the complexity of administering the St. Paul's Scholarship Fund by volunteers, it is moved that we will no longer accept donations to the St. Paul's Scholarship Fund for 2024, publicly communicating the suspension of the program and addressing any donations received in 2024 according to CRA guidelines; That we will not be disbursing scholarship funds in 2024 due to lack of leadership; that we call for the creation of a committee under the lead of Clare Masson as warden, with at least 2 additional members from the parish; That this committee will determine what changes can be made to the fund according to CRA guidelines; and make recommendations of possible options for simplifying the management of the fund, bringing it to Vestry 2025 or sooner if possible (friendly amendment).**
- Matthew Templar: Proposed amendment: Could the existing funds be moved to another fund that could be used for Education? Response: We can document this suggestion but the actual process would be very complicated and would require financial advice from Auditor etc. regarding CRA guidelines that the church, as a registered charity, MUST adhere to or risk losing its charitable status. We are also constrained by and wish to respect the wishes of the initial donors and cannot responsibly spend elsewhere what has been designated as the intended use for the funds. At this time we do not want to accumulate additional money that we cannot distribute, hence the request for permission to pause receiving funds for this purpose. Should an anonymous donation come in for this purpose AFTER the public declaration, the wardens will determine how to allocate. If the donor is known then the Wardens will communicate with the donor to discuss the situation.
- Peter Kirwin: What about worthy SPOTH Youth Group members who will be graduating this year who will not be eligible if the scholarship is put on hold? Response: We were currently unable to administer the fund due to a lack of volunteer leadership both last year in 2023 and at present. This is why we want to reframe the program to make it more manageable and make sure it is available in the future.
- For consideration of Scholarship Committee: Part of mandate of committee should be to determine if we can possibly allow students from 2023 and 2024 to apply retroactively to whatever future form the scholarship takes in future. Comment noted by Committee Chair.
- In summary: There was a strong feeling in Vestry that we need to carefully take into consideration what avenues are open to us, respecting CRA regulations, regarding students graduating in 2023 and 2024 to see what can be done retroactively.
- Comment by Claire Masson: \$10K of funds are currently in Scholarship fund and we are unsure what to do in the next 5 years and no one has come forward to administer this group. As the scholarship is a "Designated fund" this creates CRA concerns that must be addressed. If new leadership comes forward in the next month, we could definitely schedule a Special Vestry Meeting to allow funds to be awarded in June for this year.
- Stephanie expressed sincere thanks to Marg Jocz, Anita Murray and Marilyn Sinclair for administering the scholarship and bursary for many years.
- **Motion by Dave Hamilton. Seconded by Marilyn Sinclair. Motion approved.**

#### 15. Notes of Appreciation:

- Canon Stephanie expressed sincere appreciation and acknowledgement for the ministry of Pastor Doug Willoughby over the past 20 years at St. Paul's and noted the recent celebrations for his retirement. All present also expressed their heartfelt appreciation for his service to the church and the community.

- Canon Stephanie also requested to specifically minute our thanks and appreciation publicly for the staff, wardens, music ministry, and lay readers at St. Paul's on-the-Hill and for the ongoing ministry work of Doug Smith, Esther Laiman, Joanne Karram, Bill Bradbury and all volunteers.

#### **16. New Business and Questions:**

- James Doxsee: Why the curtains are half-way down the Stained Glass? Response: This is to ensure that the video image is clear for the live-streamed viewers.
- Matthew Templar: Are reports, Pastoral letters, bulletins still available online? Response: Normally yes, they are present on the landing page, although occasionally they may not be updated. Please be advised that we are currently in the middle of changing the St. Paul's website and some links are broken for this reason. This issue will be resolved when the new website is brought online. In the meantime, we will attempt to rectify. All vestry reports etc. are available in the website's archive section.

#### **17. Announcement of 2024 Vestry Meeting: Sunday February 23, 2025, at 11:30 p.m.**

#### **18. Motion to Adjourn.**

- Motion by Steve Masson. Seconded by Nancy Logan. Motion carried.

**The meeting finished at approximately 1:46 p.m.**

# St. Paul's Special Vestry Meeting: November 25, 2024, Minutes

- Meeting called to order at 7:42 p.m. by Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, Incumbent.
  - Note that meeting is being recorded for the purpose of taking minutes and recording will be destroyed after the minutes have been completed.
- 1. Opening Prayer for Special Vestry and for St. Paul's and its congregation by Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, Incumbent.**
  - 2. Vestry Declaration**
    - I solemnly declare that I have been a member of the Anglican Church of Canada and of this congregation for at least three (3) months, that I have attended regularly scheduled services of worship with this congregation at least three (3) times in the past year, that I am of the full age of sixteen (16) years and that I have not voted as a member of any other vestry during the previous three (3) months, nor do I intend to vote in any other vestry during the ensuing year.
    - 39/39 or 100% so declared
  - 3. Appointment of Vestry Clerk**
    - Melanie Foord was nominated.
    - Sophia Levy-Presner moved the nomination. Seconded by Kehinde Ladipo.
    - Motion carried.
  - 4. Presentation: Rationale and Capacity for the position**
    - **Staffing for size:**
      - Parishes of the size of St. Paul's Church have full-time parish administrators.
      - Canon Stephanie has regularly had to take on administrative duties when working with a half-time administrator, leaving her spread thin for her other responsibilities.
    - **Staffing to assist with Food Bank:**
      - In addition to overseeing the church, Canon Stephanie and the wardens oversee the largest Food Bank in Durham region.
      - In order to stay in compliance with Diocesan canons, wardens and the incumbent are required to be much more involved in the running of the Food Bank than under previous incumbencies.
      - Full-time administrative support will assist with this additional weight of responsibility.
    - **Stability in staffing for administration:**
      - A good parish administrator can make all the difference in the world.
      - It is difficult to find a qualified administrator willing to work part-time only.

- Providing a full-time position will establish stability in the office, and in particular with our present staffing solutions.
  - **Stability in staffing:**
    - More generally, we are expecting a number of pastoral staff transitions in the 2025 year, with the departure of Rev. Doug Smith at the end of his curacy - sometime in the late winter or spring of 2025, and the arrival of a new staff in Family and Welcoming Ministries.
  - **Capacity to Support a Full-time Administrator**
    - Since we have now confirmed that we are receiving an MAF grant, we are able to configure our financial resources in such a way that we can support this full-time position.
- 5. Motion for Special Vestry**
- **It is moved to make the (historically) half-time parish administrator position a full-time position.**
  - Motion by Clare Masson. Seconded by Bruce Hampson.
- 6. Consideration of the Motion**
- Several individuals reiterated the benefit and the need for full-time administrative assistance.
- 7. Calling of the Motion**
- Motion passed unanimously.
- 8. Motion to Adjourn**
- Motion by Steve Masson.

**Meeting closed with the grace at 8:19 p.m.**

## **A Motion Concerning the Executive Committee & Advisory Board**

In recent years we have replaced the Advisory Board with periodic congregational meetings which were open to all members of the parish. We have also increased the number of Churchwardens to allow for better sharing of responsibilities. This has been a more effective & efficient organizational structure. Therefore:

- 1. It is moved that the Advisory Board be suspended for 2025. Congregational meetings, or Special Vestry meetings, will be held as necessary, which will be open to all members of the parish.**
- 2. It is moved that the Executive Committee be comprised of:**

**A Rector's Warden, a People's Warden and six deputies and the Rector.**

**Each Churchwarden will have oversight of, and serve as a liaison with, a designated area of our parish ministry.**

### **Faithful Departed 2024**

Glenn Thomas Rauthmell  
David Brian Wall  
Owen Winslow Murray  
Anita Lolita Murray  
Rose Flora Cadogan  
Ronald Frank Moore  
Franklyn Anthony Wyke  
Patricia Magaret Mckenzie  
Magaret Renett Peckford  
Lisa Ann Joan Patrovannie  
George Lundrigan  
Gillian Juanita Cave-Donald  
Leroy Bertiam Patrovannie  
Carmel Rosalee Michelin  
Judy Ann-Cloe Gilkes  
Glenda Marilyn Younghusband

### **Register of Marriage - 2024**

Angelica Solomon and Daniel Gidari  
Cynthia Solomon and Adrian Asgarali

## **Register of Baptism - 2024**

Angelica May Solomon  
Cynthia Romilla Solomon  
Williams Stanley James Corlett  
Julien Lorenzo Williams  
Terry Byard  
Colby Hendrix Logan-Armstrong  
Keynes Alisha Edirisinghe  
Ben Yehuda Edirisinghe  
Amarisa Adina Edirisinghe  
Alina Suresh  
Jonathan Suresh  
Lucas Herrell  
Moboluwaduro Jeremiah Adisa  
Kinsley Monique Dianne Barnett  
Emilia Beverley Corlett

# Pastoral letter to the parish from the Incumbent

*The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

Dear friends,

I write this at the beginning of our 100th year of ministry in Pickering. Ours is a story of God's faithfulness to the generations of believers who have gathered in faith, love, and service to Him.

In this Vestry book, you will find new stories of God's faithfulness in the ministry reports by lay leaders and staff. I hope you will be as encouraged by them as I have been.

Before I go further, I want to express my thanks at the outset to all our lay leaders as well as their teams, for their service in 2024. It is not possible for me to mention everyone in my report, so I wanted to signal that my thanks go to ALL of you. Lay ministers are the engine of the parish (well the Holy Spirit is, but you get what I mean).

What I want to do in my report is offer an overview of where we've come from in the past year. Strategic planning, resourcing for ministry, staffing, and overall oversight of the ministries (both Food Bank and Parish) are key responsibilities of mine, in addition to my regular priestly roles of preaching, teaching, preparing for sacraments, weddings and funerals, pastoral visitation and so on.

## **Strategic Emphasis in 2024: The year for Strategic Renewal**

Every year, for my past 3 years as your incumbent, I have set a strategic focus from the coming year. 2022 was the *"The Year of the Food Bank,"* because of the urgency of matters needing addressed. 2023 was *"The Year of the Parish,"* because of the urgency of rebuilding the very basics post pandemic and post interim.

Last January, we moved out of crisis mode and into strategic planning. 2024 was *"The Year for Strategic Renewal."*

The vehicle to guide us on the strategic front was a parish visioning process overseen by Diocesan staff. On Sunday, January 28th, 2024, I launched the process in a sermon. The process involved two Diocesan-led studies - each study with one online and multiple in-person sessions to allow for wide participation. These discussions identified lay perspectives on our church's strength and growth areas.

I am including the diocesan summary of our visioning report as an addendum to mine. I want to thank everyone at St. Paul's who participated in these discussion groups. Your insights gave us clear directions as to the gaps we need to attend to (fellowship, community, newcomers), as well as unity around priorities valued by all (ex. family ministries).

Out of that process, and subsequent conversations, I identified a resource that you will be hearing more about in 2025, called Invite, Welcome and Connect. This offers us a roadmap to address some of the gaps identified by SPOTH membership, and was part of our successful MAF grant application.

## **Visioning Process and its Impact on the Shape of Pastoral Staffing**

One of my ongoing challenges at St. Paul's is figuring out how to best put our resources to work. *We have the capacity to support 1.5 pastoral staff through our donations, plus some honoraria.*

To increase our staffing to two full-time personnel, we have opted to pursue grants each year. In 2023 and 2024, I sought a two-year curacy grant to enable us to keep our student, Rev. Doug. Additionally, we set aside honoraria for a (then) small Sunday School Ministry, an honorarium which we increased in 2024. This was for the position filled by Pastor Esther.

When we learned in the spring of 2024 that Pastor Esther would be stepping down, and that Rev. Doug had agreed to move on at the end of his curacy, per the bishops' request, we knew we had to look to reconfigure staffing.



I recommended to the Corporation that we not pursue another curacy grant. Curacy contracts are only for two years, which leads to heartache as parishioners and staff emotionally attach and then soon have to say goodbye; additionally, most curates don't come as experienced as Rev. Doug. It was a good fit for a season with Rev. Doug, but not a go-forward solution.

Instead, we decided to pursue an MAF grant, for which we were eligible to apply because of our completion of the visioning process. Our grant proposal needed to relate to the findings from our visioning process. For the purposes of the new MAF Lay Pastor role, these were:

- *"We value Children & Youth Ministry"* and need to support this with a proper staff position, as a growing ministry.
- *"A growth edge for St. Paul's is community:"* specifically, supporting and valuing volunteers, welcoming and integrating newcomers, & nurturing communities of fellowship and care.

I worked on this proposal along with Glenn Brown and Jacob Ladipo - my thanks to them both. We found out in October that we had won a grant worth \$315,288 over 6 years.

As a result of this grant, in the fall of 2024 we were able to hire Pastor Mabel Leung full-time, with the plan to pay for additional clergy support from our honorary assistants in 2025 once Rev. Doug has completed his curacy.

Pastor Mabel Leung will be working with *Family Ministries (Pastor Esther's former role) Small Group Ministries (one of Rev. Doug's roles), Pastoral care of families and newcomers, and our new Welcoming Ministries.* We are reallocating the family ministry honoraria to allow for regular preaching by Rev. Sam, Bishop Patrick Yu, Canon Judy and Father Paul. A portion is also dedicated for *Canon Judy to take on Doug's oversight of the lay pastoral visitation team and his role in stewardship.*

### **Strategic Renewal: Highlighting Work Accomplished by Staff**

The staff have provided their own reports, and I want to express my thanks to each of them for their contributions in 2024. *Here, I simply wanted to underline some of the significant work they accomplished aligned to the renewal programme we set out:*

Amongst his other valued ministry roles as preacher, teacher etc., in 2024 Rev. Doug Smith completed developing a Lay Pastoral Visitation Team and offered several Estate Workshops and ran Alpha for adults. The creation of the visitation team was one of the key tasks I asked him to complete in his curacy, because of the way pastoral ministry dissolved during the pandemic, with staff turnovers & shortages. Rev. Doug has done a fantastic job in creating a team of gifted lay leaders. While I looked after Youth Alpha, Doug ran Adult Alpha, as part of our *"do we have a future as an Alpha parish"* exploration we committed to in 2024. (The answer is yes). Lastly, Rev. Doug was part of the rebooting of the Stewardship Committee, and at my request offered valued Estate Workshops coming out of his previous work experiences in fundraising. It was also a huge help to "divide and conquer" the 2024 parish workload with Doug, with me handling the leadership, funding, staffing and admin pieces, as well as oversight of Family ministries and any teaching/sacraments touching families and youth, and Doug handling support of volunteers, and teaching programs and sacraments touching adults. I will miss Rev. Doug greatly! We look forward to a parish gathering in the spring to thank him and celebrate his ministry.

**Pastor Esther** continued the work of growing our Family Ministries from January to June of 2024. She solidified our Sunday School Ministry through her work with teachers and their families, continuing the work begun in 2023. Thanks to her work, we were able to make a case for our MAF grant in supporting a new full-time position, with 50% of the time dedicated to Family Ministries. We thanked & celebrated Esther at a parish gathering in June. A special thanks to **Yora Chijindu** for her steadfastness in nursery – her constancy is a gift.

**Amaka Ozoemene**, in addition to learning her role as our parish administrator, stepped into the gap in Family Ministries beginning in July, first working as our Summer Sunday School Director, and then supporting our teachers by handling the Admin side of Sunday school With her help, and the support of Sunday school teachers and parents, we were able to continue the strength in our Sunday School programming and support of our youth, with numeric growth in that time

period, year-over-year. Thanks to her co-op placement with us, we were able to start an archiving process with our filing system. Lastly, I asked her to create a database for managing statistics, which helps us make data-driven decisions.

In addition to his weekly role in livestreaming, **Bill Bradbury** supported our Family ministry by incorporating interested teens in the AV ministry, one of our goals in youth ministry, and helped us with work with the Diocese on a new project tracking online worship.

**Isuru Weerasekera**, our Lay Reader, in addition to his steady role in worship, stepped into leadership as Chair of our 100th Anniversary committee in the fall of 2024.

**Duane Ramkissoon** continued his support of our treasurer, Kehinde Ladipo.

**Joanne Karram** was a key support to Randal Vasagam in the reboot of a praise and worship band in 2024. I want to underline Joanne's love for our parish, seen in her care for tending to the various worshipping styles in our parish. Though she was hired to be the organist and choir director, she works hard to care for blended styles of worship. It was also her brainchild to have a children's choir and presentation for Advent, with the help of Heather Turner and Sam Vasagam, offering strong support to Family Ministries. In the Music Ministry at the 8 am, **Bonnie Thomson** continued to spoil us with rich musical offerings.

**Lindsey Morrill** accomplished significant strategic milestones, specifically in diversifying our funding (ex. city grants, grocery stores partnerships) developing our donor base (e.g. Food Bank Open Houses, Corporate volunteer days), building community relationships and goodwill (through her own interactions in the community), and working on volunteer and client safety and satisfaction through a diverse number of efforts (e.g. responsive intake policies, focus on client experience, code of conduct, & creative ventures with DARS). **Rebecca Wilson** has implemented reporting income with weighed food, (as well as without weighed food), enabling us to fully meet CRA requirements in our accounting as a Food Bank.

Our **Honoraries Canon Judy Herron-Graham, Father Paul Scuse, and Rev. Sam Adisa** have continued to enrich our worship with their fine preaching and help wherever needed. Special thanks to Canon Judy for leading in Stewardship, as the Food Bank Chaplain and now the Lay Pastoral Care visitation team.

### **Strategic Renewal: Work Accomplished by Corporation**

I am thankful to God for our gifted **Wardens Ministry Team** here at St Paul's: deputies Clare Masson, John Honsberger (digital), Sophia Levy-Presner (HR), Janet Herrera (Food Bank), Bruce Hampson (Rector's), Dave Hamilton (People's), Kehinde Ladipo (treasurer - parish), and Nkiruka Ochei (Treasurer - Food Bank).

The Wardens and I accomplished some key goals we set for 2024:

**Developing and Executing a Staffing and Funding Plan for 2025:** This was reported earlier. Managing budgets and stewarding givings is a huge piece of our work for the parish.

**Completing the Parish Visioning Process & Beginning its Application:** the biggest application in 2024 was in our choice of staffing models, but you will see it applied in new areas in 2025.

**Bringing the Parish and Food Bank Up to Date with Health & Safety Standards:** I recruited parishioners Denise Boland, Amara and Chuks Okpechi (both engineers) to lead this work. Thanks to their work the Food Bank is now up to standards, and they are casting their eyes next to work in the Parish.

**Re-Establishing Key Committees:** specifically, we created a Stewardship Committee under the leadership of Clare Masson and resurrected the Property Committee under Ivan Hunte's leadership as a formal body.

**Developing a Strategic Plan for the Management of our Property:** I have wanted us to be able to budget for future major capital repairs, and the Property Committee has begun undertaking this important work.

**Organizing Digital and Soft Copy Archives:** This is a big project that we have just started, under Amaka's leadership and with support from Denise Boland, John Honsberger, and Jacob Ladipo.

**Lightening Wardens’ and Canon Stephanie’s Administrative Load:** The warden team at St. Paul’s carries an unusually heavy load for a parish our size, in part because our administrator historically only worked half-time, in part because of the Food Bank. We accomplished this goal in part by expanding our leadership team to include Nkiruka Ochei (treasurer for Food Bank). We also took a few tasks off the plate of wardens when we were able to recruit gifted lay leaders for key roles (Denise Boland as the Screening in Faith Coordinator). However, the main way we achieved this was through Vestry Support of hiring Amaka Ozoemene full-time. Thank you for your support at the Special Vestry.

**Statistics for 2024:**

Thanks to Amaka for compiling our statistics for 2024. You will note the growth in worship, in-person and online, as well as in our family ministries.

Summer School (July-August) 2023 42	Summer School (July-August) 2024 145
Christmas Eve (In-Person) 2023 472	Christmas Eve (In-Person) 2024 463
Christmas Day (In-Person) 2023 19	Christmas Day (In-Person) 2024 45
Easter Services (In-Person) 2023 333	Easter Service (In-Person) 2024 371
Online Streaming 2023 (hours of viewing) 8686	Online Streaming 2024 (hours of viewing) 12027
Total In-Person Worship 2023 8268	Total In-Person Worship 2024 9895
Total Youth 2023 80	Total Youth 2024 272
Total Number of Children and Youth in 2023 532 Average = 11 Each Sunday	Total Number of Children and Youth in 2024 1055 Average = 22 Each Sunday

**Special Thank yous: My period of sick leave**

This is not a normal part of my Vestry reports, as prior to 2024 I have never been sick with more than winter colds & infections. As many of you will recall, I was off on sick leave for just over 5 weeks in 2024, with what they finally determined was Long Covid. This discouraging time for me was made so much more bearable because of your understanding and care. I want to thank all of you in the parish for your love and prayers, the wardens for their practical support, the staff for their picking up the slack on all fronts. I especially want to thank Rev. Doug and Canon Judy for stepping up and managing all those Lenten and Holy Week services (talk about throwing Rev. Doug into the deep end!). And thank you for your patience with me as I regained strength and continued my recovery and medical treatment through the spring, summer and fall.

I thank God for his healing work, and total return to normal strength around Christmas 2024.

**Strategic Focus for 2025**

Given this is our 100th year, the theme “Celebrating God’s Faithfulness” will be an obvious focus. You will see it in special events, guest preachers, and of course our celebration on November 9th, 2025, with our community meal afterwards.

Alongside this time of reflecting on the ways the Joy of the Lord continues to be our Strength, I'm thinking of 2025 as the year we are **Building the Foundations for Renewal**. I'm going to be up front here: this is not going to be an overnight fix. Like the Jewish people rebuilding Jerusalem after exile, this will take time, prayer, commitment and a lot of love shown towards each other as we participate in God's transforming work in our midst.

I hope you will, with me, approach this work, with hope. I am so encouraged as I look back over my past 3 years with you, at the ways God has faithfully provided for our community. We have seen renewal of most ministries, new members arriving, steady growth in our worship, and now a sense of God's guidance to us as the Body of Christ here on the Hill.

Truly, the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; God's mercies never come to an end! Thanks be to God, and thanks also to you, the people of St. Paul's.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Douglas-Bowman', with a stylized, cursive script.

Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman

## ST PAUL ON-THE-HILL VISIONING 2024

*In February over 45 members of our congregation met to talk about our congregation's future. This is a snapshot of what we heard. We will meet again in May to continue our work that will set a path for ministry and mission growth over the next few years.*

### WHAT BRINGS US JOY, HOPE, A SENSE OF SUCCESS

New Energy & Growth	St Paul's Community
Music & Worship	Children & Youth Ministries

### WE EQUIP BELIEVERS & GROW DISCIPLES THROUGH

Small Groups	Learning Together (St Paul's College)
Music & Worship	Example of our Leaders

### ST PAUL'S CORE STRENGTHS

Faith Focus & Prayer	Leaders (character, preaching, fun, approachable)	Diversity of Membership (culture, age, race, church backgrounds - we look like Pickering)
Music & Worship	Children, Youth, Family Ministry	Zoom

## WAYS TO BUILD ON OUR STRENGTHS

<p>Welcoming Ministries</p>	<p>Some people feel welcomed immediately, but others do not. We need an intentional welcoming and hospitality ministry to be developed and put into practice so that no one leaves St Paul's feeling ignored or overlooked.</p>
<p>Music &amp; Worship</p>	<p>The Spirit moves when we worship together, and music carries the energy of our worship. We acknowledge that people in our congregation have different preferences, and some feel a sense of loss with the blended service. We know that there are challenges in trying to please everyone in one service but also see that there are opportunities to expand and diversify what we offer. Examples include inviting cultural diversity, young adult/youth participation &amp; preferences, emotional expressiveness, inclusive language.</p>
<p>Community Life</p>	<p>Develop community for those meeting and worshipping online. Help them become fully part of the church through stewardship and communicating all our programs.</p> <p>Value relationships and relationship-building. Attend to these rather than focusing on ambitious goals. Increase social events. Schedule programs at different times and days to accommodate people's busy lives.</p>
<p>Leadership Expectations</p>	<p>Have patience, discern, grow. Set realistic expectations, ideals, and timelines for who we are now rather than what we were like in the past. Work within our limitations and ensure we are sustainable and healthy before expecting to expand.</p>
<p>Youth and Young Adult Ministries</p>	<p>Develop youth and young adult leadership. Learn and invest in their preferences and what they are most interested and concerned in. There are implications here for worship, music, programming that we can consider and adopt.</p>

## Wardens Report for 2024

Another year and time for another Vestry report from your Wardens. Reflecting on the past 12 months and looking back as we move from 2024 to 2025, it's apparent that the coming year, much like the year just past, will bring many changes both here on the Hill and within the wider community around us. With the strong leadership of our incumbent, Canon Stephanie, St. Paul's is poised to continue growing.

Sunday school and Youth group are both thriving. Thanks to Pastor Esther Laiman, who re-established the Sunday School following years of COVID, and who continued serving as Family Minister pastor for part of 2024, then in a supportive role from June onwards. Thanks also to our Sunday School teachers, Yora Chijindu, in nursery for their work throughout the year. Lastly, we want to thank Amaka Ozoemene for stepping in as the Summer Sunday School Director and her continued admin support through the fall, and Canon Stephanie for overseeing and arranging all the various pieces of the Family Ministry puzzle during the interim period, as well as leading Youth Alpha with Helen Ehlers beginning in the fall of 2024.

Rev. Doug Smith continues to be very instrumental in assisting with Canon Stephanie's day-to-day operations as well as running the Alpha program and leading Estate Planning Workshop. Thank you, Rev. Doug.

A huge contribution to our staff has been the full-time hiring of our Administrator Amaka Ozoemene, whose organizational skills have been a great help to Canon Stephanie and the Wardens.

This year there was a growing concern about the number of clients coming to us at the food bank. Accordingly, to our records, your support for the Food Bank has helped feed more than 35,000 people. Increase of more than 6,000 from the previous year. The projected figure of 40,000 clients will receive food in 2025. We thank Lindsey Morrill foodbank director, Rebecca Wilson bookkeeper and their fantastic team of 85 volunteers who regularly commit their time to help those in need in these trying times. The wardens THANK YOU for your continued financial support to this important ministry.

Back here on the Hill we took on a few projects that were required to keep our favourite church in good repair. Please see the Maintenance Committee report. A sincere thanks to our unsung heroes on the Property team at St. Paul's who make sure our church is snug and secure and that everything is in good repair for the myriads of activities that happen every day.

Our AV team of John Honsberger, Bill Bradbury, Phil Jocz, and team have increased our inventory of equipment to ensure that our online community will be well served on a weekly basis. Due to their efforts our online community has grown. Thank you, team.

St. Paul's music contributions to our services have continued to grow, thanks to the leadership of Joanne Karram, Bonnie Thomson, and Randal Vasagam. We also thank our Lay Reader Isuru Weerasekera for his leadership.

Duane Ramkisson continues to be a great help monitoring our expenditures' keeping our books up to date for our treasurer Kehinde Ladipo.

As your chosen stewards, the wardens also work to make sure the funds that you entrust to us stretch as far as possible. We will continue to scrutinize all expenditures and ensure streamlining and efficiency that takes advantage of proven new innovations whenever possible. A standard part of every Wardens meeting is the review of the previous month's financial data.

As always, we, your Wardens, welcome YOUR input. We are the management team that you have put in place to run your favourite Church-on-the-Hill, and we cannot do it without you. We need every part of the body of Christ to fulfill our mandate, so we ask you to prayerfully consider how you can be Jesus' hands, feet, heart, and body in this world, using the unique talents with which He has entrusted you.

We want St. Paul's to continue to be as bright a light in Pickering.

Respectfully submitted:

Bruce Hampson (Rector's Warden), Dave Hamilton (People's Warden)

Sophia Levy-Presner, Kehinde Ladipo, Janet Herrera, Clare Masson, John Honsberger,

Nkiruka Ochei (Deputy Wardens)

## **Assistant Curate 2024**

It has been a joy and privilege to serve as your Assistant Curate since May of 2023. Sadly, this will be my last vestry report, covering the ministries and activities that I have been providing oversight. At the end of April 2025, I will be leaving this gifted and wonderful parish to start a new ministry somewhere in our Diocese. I was approached by our Bishops in 2024 to move to a new ministry somewhere in the Diocese. I responded with a yes to them as I felt deeply my calling to the priesthood, and I needed to honour that calling by God in my life.

This parish will always have a special place in my heart. I joined with you as a Postulant, stayed on as your Assistant Curate, first as a transitional Deacon and then Priesthood on January 20, 2024.

Pastoral Care is my primary area of oversight. Working with Canon Stephanie and the Lay Pastoral Care team we ensure that the pastoral needs of the parish are met. Regular visits to those of the congregation who are in long-term care facilities, or in the hospital, or at their homes, have taken place throughout the year. The Lay Pastoral Care team is very active and has a list of parish members they visit on a regular basis providing conversation, prayer, anointing, and communion.

I would like to express my thanks to Jan Couto for her leadership and passion for the Lay Pastoral Care team as she has been the co-leader of this ministry with me. We welcome Canon Judy Herron-Graham as the new co-leader with Jan for the year 2025.

During Lent I led a five-week Bible Study as we looked at Henri Nouwen's book, *The Prodigal Son*.

As we are all aware, Canon Stephanie was on a period of medical leave from the parish, March to mid-April, which left me stepping in on her behalf to lead the parish with the assistance of the capable and wonderful lay leaders. We kept the church running, including planning and leading the Holy Week services. I thank each and every one of you for working with me during this period and offering your support and prayers.

In this year I have had the privilege of leading Baptism preparation classes and had the joy of Baptizing 4 adults and 1 baby in this year.

I also journeyed with a couple as they prepared themselves for marriage and conducted their wedding service in the Fall.

Working with Canon Stephanie I journey with families through their grief with the loss of family members. In this past year I conducted 6 funerals.

I was tasked with the oversight of the Alpha course and so in late spring, early summer plans began for the Alpha course that took place for 7-weeks starting in October and ending in mid-November. There were 8 small group leaders who worked with me to lead the course, and we had a professional chef who prepared breakfast for us each Saturday morning and one capable and wonderful kitchen helper. We had 17 participants who took the Alpha course.

As in 2023 I was tasked with the oversight of our 2024 Back-to-Church Sunday and Ministry Fair. The Time, Talent, and Giftedness survey were updated and distributed on Sunday. We now have several new people involved in ministries.

I continued with oversight of the Small Group (Bible Studies) ministries by checking in with the leaders and ensuring



that the website information was current for each group.

And the additional area of ministry I undertook in the Fall was to present a workshop on Estate Planning (creating a Will). In the spring we formed a Stewardship Committee, and I participated as a member of the committee, which provides an oversight of our annual Christmas Bazaar.

Finally, I thank Canon Stephanie for her leadership as our Incumbent and her mentoring of myself in these past two years. She was very generous at sharing the pulpit with me and I'm grateful for every opportunity that was given to me to not only preach but to serve this parish.

I end this vestry report by using the Apostle Paul's words to the church at Philippi, with one slight change, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in St. Paul's on-the-Hill, Pickering.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

Respectfully submitted by,  
Reverend Doug Smith  
Curate

## **SPOTH 8:00AM Service Volunteers 2024**

This amazing small group of volunteers serve faithfully at the 8:00AM Sunday Worship Service as Ushers, Greeters and Scripture Readers. These volunteers are mostly seniors and are steadfast and diligent in their service, contributing their part in making this traditional Anglican service with holy communion spiritually uplifting and welcoming.

Growing this group continues to be a challenge. In 2024, this ministry experienced a further drop in the number of volunteers due to the fact that some seniors were unable to continue to serve for obvious reasons, while others relocated away from the Pickering/Ajax area. New volunteers are needed more than ever before to join the team. Help reduce the workload on our volunteers.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Jacob Ladipo, Coordinator.



## **Audio/Video Technical Ministry Report 2024**

In 2024, sadly we lost one of our team when Owen Murray died early in the year. We miss Owen! On a happier note, we gained two new members from the Saint Paul's Youth Group: Abishek and Bobby.

Through 2024 we offered an 8:00AM in-person service and a 10:00AM hybrid service (in-person attendance and live-streamed). The live-stream is for home-participation by members of the congregation who can't attend personally for any reason. Our live-streamed services can be found on the internet host [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

**2024 Livestream Statistics**

Total number of services livestreamed	70 videos
Total views	12,000 views
Total watch time	4,400 hours
Sunday Service watch time	3,080 hours
Services related to Easter & Christmas watch time	203 hours
Funerals watch time	1040 hours

In 2024, we added another video camera, a Canon XA60, to our AV inventory bringing our total number of live video sources to four. Below is a view of the current equipment setup used to provide AV support to live services and to broadcast the live feed via the internet.



You may join a Sunday E-service by going to the church website and clicking on the link provided on the first page, or you could go directly to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search for the channel St Paul's on-the-Hill TV or @SPVISION. If you subscribe to the channel, you will receive notification of the next E-service; we currently have over 300 subscribers.

I'd like to thank: Abishek, Bobby, Leroy, Phil, Steve, and John for their participation in the AV team; also, Joanne Karram, the wardens, and Canon Stephanie and Rev. Doug for their support and encouragement.

Respectfully submitted by,  
 Bill Bradbury  
 AV Director

**Music Ministry Vestry Report for 2024**

We are very grateful for the growth of our Music Ministry at St. Paul's in 2024. From the ranks of our very faithful and dedicated choir, with the addition of some "new" enthusiastic musicians, a Worship Band was formed, to the delight of the congregation. Under the leadership of Randal Vasagam, they brought very worshipful contemporary songs to

our 10 a.m. service several times throughout the year. We hope to hear more from them in 2025! I am very grateful to those members of the choir who are continuing to sing both in the choir and worship band. Thank you!

Our choir provided leadership in worship every Sunday in 2024 (except when the Worship Band was leading) and offered anthems at the Special Services of the Church Year. We practiced most Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings before 10 a.m. service. We are blessed by the commitment of these wonderful choristers whose goal is to sing to the glory of God.

We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to Bill Bradbury and his wonderful team for their ongoing audio-visual support of our worship and music ministry.

We cordially invite others to join us in this joyful ministry.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Joanne Karram  
Choir director/Organist

## **Envelope Secretary's Report 2024**

In 2024, we issued 360 tax receipts to families that made donations to support the ministries of St Paul's. These gifts represent approximately \$355,000 broken down into varying categories. This year's receipts included donations to specialized ministries such as: Altar flowers, Foodbank, Outreach, Gate 316 (backpacks for the Homeless), Children and Youth ministries as well as the important upkeep and operation of our church and the teaching and spreading of the Word. Some contributors are people who make regular and ongoing donations while others are visitors to the parish or who donate for a specific purpose.

Because of the volume of receiptable items, it is always important to include your name for every donation made through the church or through e-donations. Every effort is made to ensure people get proper credit for any donations made to the parish. We have a good supply of generic envelopes available for your use both in the pew and also in the lobby. Feel free to take a supply home with you for ease of use. On the generic envelope, you do not have to complete your address etc. unless some information has changed or we don't have your information, but please put your name and your envelope # if you know it (found on your tax receipt).

There are currently 85 families who utilize our Pre-authorized Remittance System (PAR). This system allows monthly offerings to be withdrawn automatically from contributors' bank accounts thereby making this an expedient and easy method of giving on a regular basis. Joining this program is as simple as completing an authorization form available on the church website or in the lobby.

We also use e-donations and that also proved to be a quick and easy method for making sure your donation reaches the church. You can specify in the information area whether you want your donation to go to general or specialized funds). Please see the church website for directions on using this method.

Please contact me if you wish to register or change PAR information, check how much you have contributed to date, or need to change any other information. I would be pleased to answer any of your questions or concerns. I can be reached at 416-660-1093 or by email at [cassiew@stpaulsonthehill.com](mailto:cassiew@stpaulsonthehill.com).

Respectfully submitted by,  
Cassie Williams  
Envelope Secretary

## Altar Guild Vestry 2024

2024 was a busy year for Altar Guild. We had 2 weddings, a service of renewal of wedding vows, 4 Baptisms and several funerals as well as preparing the Altar each Sunday and for special services over Easter and Christmas. With the attendance increasing we also need to be aware of the increase in the number of people we have to serve at Eucharist.

The Altar Guild is responsible for preparing the Altar before each service- ensuring that the priest has everything needed to celebrate the Eucharist. This involves ensuring that the frontals are the correct colour for the season or celebration, placing the appropriate vessels as well as the wafers and wine. Cleaning up after each service and storing the vessels and any consecrated wine and wafers appropriately in the Sacristy as well as being responsible for the laundering of the linens. Additionally, we are responsible for setting up weddings and funerals, taking into consideration requests from the families concerned.

In addition, we work with Cynthia Peroff, our talented Flower Coordinator, to decorate the church at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Altar Guild is also responsible for making the Palm crosses. In March we held a “Palm Party” - a morning when several ladies and one gentleman spent a couple of hours of fun and fellowship making 500 Palm crosses. It was a great time.

On a sad note, we lost a valuable member of the Altar Guild in December with the death of Judy Gilkes. Judy was a faithful member of one of our Altar Guild teams and we miss her a great deal.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the Altar Guild for their dedication, loyalty and participation in 2024. This is such a special way to serve in our church community.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Margaret Wells  
Head of Altar Guild

## Maintenance Committee Report 2024

Over the summer, there have been quite a few changes and upgrades to the Church property. Our committee has overseen the following work done by our Church Sexton Kevin Fleming:

- Grounds cleanup and vegetation cutback –especially around the western and lower parking areas
- Exterior lower window painting completed
- Plaza garden redefined

We are grateful to Kevin for his excellent work.

The committee completed the following work:

- Brickwork replacement and mortar repointing has been assessed and will be addressed in the spring.
- The Fire Alarm Communication Network system has been updated to code.
- The Eastern and Western sheds were reinforced, and rodent proofed.
- All parking areas have been relined as per handicapped and emergency vehicle requirements, with proper signage and new curbs put in place.

Extra special thanks go out to Wayne Lawrence and Ivan Hunte for diagramming, organizing, and supervising the work! Both Ivan and Wayne have spent an extraordinary number of hours attending to needed tasks and repairs on the property - for which the Wardens are extremely grateful.

On our return to the Church Fair, several parishioners signed up to join the Maintenance committee. Thanks to all who came forward to share the load. Many hands make light work. Please report any concerns directly to Ivan Hunte, our "Maintenance Team Leader and manager", not St. Paul's Staff.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Dave Hamilton  
People's Warden

## The Prayer Circle Vestry Report for 2024

Number of Members: 17, one having been added this year.

We are thankful for the privilege of seeing our heavenly Father continuing to work as we bring prayer requests to him.

Our Lord makes some special statements about prayer, encouraging us to ask so we will receive (Mt. 7:7-8), and telling us we are to be persistent in prayer, not giving up (Luke 18:1-8). In the prayer he taught us (usually called "The Lord's Prayer"), Jesus tells us to pray for God's will to be done on earth as in heaven. In the Garden of Gethsemane, he himself sets us the example of praying, "Father ... not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). Longing for God's will to be done is to be our prayer above all other prayers we may have.

That's because God's love is immense! Meeting our needs through his risen Son (Phil. 4:19), he becomes our peace and comfort, gladly giving us himself and each other. Thank you for continuing to provide us with the very special privilege of praying for you! And thanks go to each one on this team along with welcome to our new member.

If you have requests for which you would like us to pray, please contact

David Karram at 905-683-3467 (dksurfer7@gmail.com) or  
Pam Johnstone at 905-683-8726 (pamjohnstone0@gmail.com).

Confidentiality is ensured by using only first names, but surnames may be included when requested, or where public knowledge exists; and there are situations where names are not used. We have at least one prayer request each week and have had up to nine names in just one email. Also, as updates become available, they are shared with our Prayer Circle. Thank you for your very high level of confidence in sharing your needs.

In all this, God is at work, and we thank him for his great love always being with us. If you would like to join the Prayer Circle, you are most welcome to apply by contacting David Karram.

We deeply appreciate and value your continuing prayers for others and for us in this ministry.

Respectfully submitted by,  
David Karram  
Pam Johnstone

## Women @St. Paul's Ministry Vestry Report 2024

In 2024, Women@St.Paul's made it our goal to host one event per month. It is our desire to provide opportunities for friendship, spiritual enrichment and learning for the women of our church. A wide variety of events were planned and enjoyed under the leadership of a committee of eight dedicated women:

**January:** A Zoom "Coffee Chat" with speaker Lynette Alchin

**February:** A "Mugs, Muffins and More" Event with Rev. Becky Paonessa, Chaplin at a Women's Shelter in Toronto)

**March:** Vandermeer's Nursery Tour  
**April:** Spring "Breakfast Out Together"  
Zoom Meeting: "Women's Heart Health", with speaker Nicole Clowe from LMC Healthcare  
**May:** A "Mugs, Muffins and More" Event: "Travel Tips and Tales" with Jennifer Logan  
**June:** "High Tea at Jacquie's"  
**July and August:** "Lunch together" in Esplanade Park  
**September:** "Breakfast Out" at Perkins Restaurant  
**October:** Afternoon "Tea with a Mission" event  
**November:** supported the Annual Bazaar  
**December:** "Women's Christmas Breakfast" with speaker Karen Stiller

We wish to thank the wardens, Bill Bradbury and the custodial staff for their kind, ongoing support of our events.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Joanne Karram

## Gate 3:16 Vestry Report 2024

Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me".

St Paul's on the Hill has been partnering with Gate 3:16, an Outreach Centre in Oshawa for many years.

This year we did a presentation at the Sunday School in July. We felt the topic of homelessness was a little hard for the young children to grasp, even though we tried to use props such as sleeping bags, backpacks etc. in the presentation. We provided a small handout for each child to take home to their parents, indicating the current needs at Gate 3:16.

Then in October for the ladies' fellowship we did a more in-depth presentation for Gate 3:16. This presentation provided information about all the ministries and resources that Gate 3:16 provides for its clients. This presentation was very well received, and both clothing items and cash donations were received.

We provided 24 insulated water bottles and \$20 Walmart gift cards to be used towards Christmas gifts to the Gate 3:16 clients.

We were able to shop at secondhand stores to purchase items such as sleeping bags, blankets, coats, jeans, leggings, sweatshirts etc. Clothing items donated by the congregation were also greatly appreciated by clients of Gate 3:16. This has all been possible due to the financial generosity of St Paul's on-the Hill congregation.

We would like to thank the congregation of St Paul's on-the Hill for your continuing support of this outreach program.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Lorna Smith and Eva Boessler  
Coordinators of Backpacks for the Homeless

## Tuesday Morning Men's Fellowship Vestry Report 2024

Attendance: 8-12 people; Location: St. Paul's on-the-Hill Upstairs Meeting Room

Our time together every Tuesday morning includes the special blessing of praying for our needs, our families, our church and our world. We meet in person and provide live streaming through Zoom. This has enabled others to join us who could not do so otherwise, as with individuals up North or in Vancouver! Special thanks go to George Denny, Ivan

Hunt, and Dan Reynolds for helping to set up equipment! And Peter Kerwin's input on this was very valuable.

January of this year, 2024, began with continued reading of James and reflecting on the very practical guidelines he gives us. This was followed by the book of Revelation and seeing God's authority actively at work through those who serve and delight in him. Our readings reinforced the eventual coming of a new heaven and a new earth where God's great goodness will be fulfilled. We are now reading the book of Luke and finding our Lord's instructions and interactions very relevant to situations we face.

Enjoying God's presence is an ongoing part of helping us to grow into the people he wants us to be, and it is good to know he enjoys being with us. Our time together from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon continues to go by very quickly! Resting in him as we pray and read together, we are reminded of God's great goodness. His truth encourages and strengthens us as we welcome his involvement in our lives.

Lively discussions, deep honesty, much laughter, serious questions, and thoughtful responses are all greatly appreciated. We have the blessing of inviting God to speak to us and his delight in doing so! He shares many insights with us during our very meaningful two hours together.

As we reflect on all this, we give thanks for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit at work in our sessions. You are most welcome and invited to join us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of us:

David Karram at 905-683-3467 or [dksurfer7@gmail.com](mailto:dksurfer7@gmail.com);  
Ivan Hunte at 905-509-5415 or [ivan.hunte@gmail.com](mailto:ivan.hunte@gmail.com);  
George Denny at 705-448-3513 or [havendayle@gmail.com](mailto:havendayle@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted by,  
David Karram

## Sunday School & Youth Ministry

*The smallest family will become a thousand people, and the tiniest group will become a mighty nation. At the right time, I, the LORD, will make it happen." Isaiah 60:22*

By God's grace, our Children and Youth Ministry has been facilitating and supporting the faith formation of some of our youngest members and parishioners at St. Paul's on the Hill. We grew from a weekly average attendance of 11 children & youth in church in 2023, to a weekly average of 23 in 2024.

### Sunday School

We continue to welcome newcomers from every walk of life and background. We are grateful for our four new families who have made us their home church.

The Sunday school team is led by 26 faithful leaders who have received curriculum & Diocesan Screening & Sexual Misconduct Policy training. Yora Chijindu and four other teachers lead the nursery and preschool. The ministry was led by Pastor Esther from January until June, then overseen by Canon Stephanie and Amaka Ozoemene beginning in July until the end of the year, with scheduling support from Pastor Esther.

Every Sunday, children from nursery to grade 6 gather to learn with songs, Bible stories or videos, mindful games, play, inquiries, and crafts. There are also special events throughout the year. This year, we offered families The 40-Day Lenten Cards and a Good Friday Stations of the Cross program. On Palm and Easter Sunday, children sang and performed to the congregation and headed downstairs for an Easter Egg Hunt and special treats. Every child received a homemade Easter Egg weave basket with easter eggs and other special surprises. This Advent, Joanne Karram, Heather Turner and Samantha Vasagam prepared a well-received Christmas Musical Presentation.

In June, with thanksgiving, we were blessed with nineteen children and youths ages 6 to 14 who signed up and affirmed for the First Communion. We baptized 11 babies, children & youth throughout the year.

### **Summer Sunday School for July and August**

The summer months of July and August were a time of growth, learning, and fun for our Sunday School program, with a total attendance of 145 children. Weekly attendance ranged from 9 to 28 children.

We used the **VBS ReNew curriculum**, focusing on **“Mark 4:1-9: The Parable of the Sower.”** Each week, the children explored themes like planting seeds, taking root, growing, facing challenges, and living together in God’s love. They took home plants they cared for themselves, reinforcing the lessons learned. Special guests joined us to share about missions at St. Paul’s, including the Food Bank, Gate 3:16, and the Leprosy Mission. These visits helped show how God’s love inspires action in our community. The summer program was led by Amaka, with amazing support from volunteer teachers. It was an exciting time for all.

### **Youth Ministry**

This ministry was led by Pastor Esther and Helen Ehlers from January to June. In the summer, youth helped Amaka with Summer Sunday School. Beginning in the fall, Canon Stephanie & Helen led the confirmation program Youth Alpha for 8 teens, and Pastor Esther led youth Sunday school twice a month.

From January to June the youth met each week hearing and learning about discipleship, **Three Big Questions that Shape Our Future and The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly** Sermon Series. In the fall, Youth Sunday School met every second and fourth Sunday to enable them to serve in our community. The youths learned what the Bible has to say about **Forgiveness**. We completed the *Four-Part Series* about *Forgiveness* in November and ended 2024 with a short Advent message, Luke 2:8-18, **The Holy Night Christmas Story** by The Chosen Episode.

During the January-June period there were also special youth events led by Pastor Esther & Helen. We welcomed 2024 with a movie outing to the Cineplex Theatre then a debate and discussion over some food. In the month of Valentine's and Lent, the youth plunged into this season to raise money for Gate 316 and the Food Bank. What is Valentine's and Lent without giving? Ten youths gathered at St. Paul's On-the-Hill board room on a Saturday night to make “Friendship Bracelets” in hopes of raising \$500 for our community. YES, it was ambitious! But praise the Lord, with God’s help we raised \$593 for a hundred twenty-two Friendship Bracelets! More than what we can ask and hope for. That is who the God we serve. In the spring, the teens had an evening at The Laser Tag, and we wrapped up the year with a lunch and Game Event at the church before the summer break.

In June we celebrated and sent three of our senior high school graduates off to university. We thank all parishioners who contributed and took their time to write and share life stories and experiences, cards, and Bible verses to add to the *‘In Times Like This Package Envelope’* for our graduates. They were much appreciated and valuable to our graduates. Thank you!

The youth are committed to serving in various ministries in the church, i.e. Sunday School, readers, AV, worship band, and cross-bearers. Friends, if you see them serving, please give them a HIGH FIVE, will you?

### **Transitions in Leadership in 2024**

In June we thanked Pastor Esther for blessing us with her leadership as our youth and family minister. Pastor Esther built up the ministry team of teachers and grew the Sunday School during her tenure. Our SPOTH community came out for a time of fellowship and to express gratitude to her for her work, as she stepped down from this role for new ministry ventures.

We are grateful to Amaka for stepping into the role as Summer Sunday School director and for continuing to offer strong administrative support to our teachers this fall. In the late fall of 2024, we announced the good news that we received an MAF grant, allowing us to hire Pastor Mabel Leung who is stepping in to support this growing ministry in February 2025.

*“Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.” Romans 12:10*



Friends, is there room for more to serve? Absolutely! “Harvest is plenty, but labourers are few” (Matthew 9:37). Come and join us in this vibrant Children and Youth Ministry.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Pastor Esther Laiman, Amaka Ozoemene & Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman

## **St Paul’s Ushers / Greeters Ministry 2024**

Dear Friends of St Paul’s,

I am honoured to continue to coordinate the St Paul’s usher/greeter team. The usher team has undergone some changes this past year, with people coming and going, while maintaining a solid core team.

We were all greatly saddened by the death of Judy Gilkes, who passed away in early December 2024. She was an usher with St Paul’s for at least 20 years, working with the team coordinated by Ossie and Carol Fowler.

We have grown into a core team of 12 dedicated people, with at least 2 others willing to step in as needed, such as at Easter or Christmas when we have multiple, very well-attended services.

The team continues to have a very high level of autonomy, generally aligning amongst themselves whenever a swap is required. I’d like to extend a huge thank you to the whole team for their continued dedication, flexibility, and eagerness to serve. The team always ensures each person coming to St Paul’s is welcomed warmly!

The continued responsibilities of an usher/greeter are to ensure that the church pews are tidy, both between morning services and after the 10am service. They tidy any roaming bibles or hymn books, recycle any bulletins left behind, and ensure there are always offering envelopes available. They are responsible for collecting the offerings and securing them afterwards.

The team also endeavours to support Cynthia Peroff, who beautifully arranges the altar flowers and the spectacular decorations for at least the Easter & Christmas seasons, by offering to help deliver those flowers to those in need.

My sincere and continued thanks also go out to the Clergy, the Leadership Team, and the audiovisual team for ensuring the Weekly Services are available online. This continues to be the “virtual welcome” that St Paul’s online worshippers appreciate.

We are always looking for more members to join our team so if this ministry interests you, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or my cell, as listed below!

Many hands make light work!

Respectfully submitted by,  
Sharlah Barter  
Email: sharlah.barter@gmail.com  
Cell: 647-225-3385  
Usher / Greeter Coordinator

## **Stewardship Committee 2024**

The 3 T’s; Time, Talent & Treasures

January 12, 2024, I am writing this on the heels of my father-in-law’s funeral to realize if I had to finger my role model

for stewardship, it would be him. In listening to the various testimonies, he truly gave of his time and talents. With that said, do you notice what word is missing; yup– Treasures (which more people interpreted to be just money). Please don't get me wrong, my father-in-law was also a steward of financial/money treasures (and a generous one may I add); however, not one word about that was said at the funeral. Family Treasures – Yes – Financial Treasures – No.

My point with the above is that 2024 has been a year of subtle conversions within church leadership working to define what does Stewardship mean and look like at St. Paul's On-The-Hill. Traditionally, Stewardship committees have focused on money, money, and money. As chair (note I am an accountant), this will not be our focus. It will certainly be in the background; however, time and talent will be in the foreground.

In the last half of 2024, the Stewardship Committee was formed, consisting of:

- Doug Smith
- Judy Herron-Graham
  - Clare Masson, Chair & Warden Representative
- We gave prayerful considerations for more members including, a Prayer Partner – to open meetings with prayer and short meditation, and 2-3 SPOTH members – willing to share in the tasks of educating our community in Stewardship.

Our only 2024 meeting involved reviewing our backgrounds, our perspectives and what each can contribute. One overarching understanding is that, in the short term (3-5 yrs), the committee will not be leading a massive financial drive directed specifically to SPOTH operating expenses. Another significant guiding tenet being worked through at the Executive Board meetings is our understanding of fundraising – should it be for needs or wants or both. Example, for that last two years the Bazaar's fundraised funds have gone to the Foodbank. For 2025, it will shift to SPOTH's Children & Youth Ministries. Also, it was determined that our next meeting will be the Spring, 2025, moving towards ¼ly meetings.

Also, with the above said, church activities falling under the umbrella of Stewardship include:

- Stewardship Education (core/overarching committee)
- Fundraising (subcommittee)
  - The Bazaar
- Scholarship (subcommittee)

The last concept to put forward for consideration is optics – how does Stewardship look, feel and filter down to our greater community – to the strangers walking through SPOTH's doors. Optics – how do we want to present ourselves to the community? For consideration and prayer –

Many times, this past year I stood up at the front discussing and lobbying for the Bazaar. One perspective we have been working through is how to communicate what types of items are needed for the Silent Auction.

- In 2023, we asked for – New – those unopened gifts/new items in your closet that you never used. This definition kind of worked and kind of didn't.
- In 2024, we asked for items that one would bid on. Again, it kind of worked and kind of didn't. But this year, I was amazed at how many more items came in that were dirty and broken, which we could not put out for the Silent Auction.

Optics – what is a church bazaar all about?

- It is about the smaller inner community stewarding itself to the larger outer community.
- A church community working towards being Christ like.
- In as much as we are all sinners (broken and dirty), Christ is not.

*Most importantly, our time, talents, and treasures are to be used to bring glory and honor to God's name and to proclaim the name of Jesus in such a way that **we "let (our) light shine before others, so that they may see (our) good works and give glory to (our) Father who is in heaven"** (Matthew 5:16). (Quoted from Time, Talent, Treasures, by Michael Fida, July 3, 2018)*

St. Paul's On-The-Hill Anglican Church, Pickering, vision is to be the **Light on the Hill**.

For 2025, this Stewardship Committee asks that all prayerfully consider what your stewardship is to this inner community.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Clare Masson, Chair.

## Scholarship Update 2024

Inasmuch as Sophia Levy-Presner, Bruce Neville, George Denny and Clare Masson agreed to review the current expectations of what it means for St. Paul's On-The-Hill to manage and distribute a Scholarship Program, it quickly became apparent that the student requirements to receive a scholarship was not the core issue. The core issue is to have a committee to run the actual program itself. There will be a meeting shortly to follow up on this with the hopes to present at Vestry or shortly afterwards.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Clare Masson, Deputy Warden.



## FOOD BANK VESTRY REPORT 2024

### MISSION STATEMENT:

*St. Paul's on the Hill Community Food Bank's mission is to provide a nutritional supply of food in a welcoming and supportive environment to residents of the City of Pickering and Town of Ajax.*

### ONLINE ANALYTICS:

In late summer, I was introduced to Rachel Long, a social media expert who did a complete redesign of the food bank website. She now monitors and updates the website monthly, free of charge.

### WHAT'S NEW AND IMPROVED IN THE FOOD BANK:

At the beginning of 2024, the food bank started with a \$65,000 surplus, however, by February 20 we had gone through all the Christmas donations, and I began purchase. Due to the City of Pickering securing the rent for the year, I was able to begin purchasing Halal items as more than 70% of food bank clients follow Halal diets.

On February 7, 2024, Mayor Ashe invited Canon Stephanie and I to attend the City of Pickering's first "Stronger Together Interfaith Roundtable event and given the opportunity to present information about the Food Bank. This was a great networking opportunity and initiated many discussions with fellow community faith leaders. Throughout the year, many partnerships were formed through this meeting, including Purpose Church and Sanctus Church.

During the month of March, a group called "Share the Love" was formed with members of each of the four Pickering Community groups. They put together a month-long food drive at each of our supporting grocery stores, collecting over 8,000 lbs. of food. They continue to host events to assist the food bank.

April 27, 2024, was the first Open House of the year and we had approximately 35 people attend, including Mayor Ashe, Councillor Linda Cook and Councillor Mara Nagy. With lower attendance than anticipated, I decided to host a second Open House on August 10th, to include a free BBQ for visitors. Derek's Independent ended up sponsoring the

event and donated all food and drinks for the BBQ. Frank McGillan and other members of Pickering Community Associations became involved, and we were able to have a cotton candy machine, popcorn machine and face painting services donated as well. There were over 150 people in attendance, including Mayor Ashe, all of the City Council members in Pickering, Jennifer O'Connell, Durham Region Chair John Henry, Ajax Councillor Nancy Henry and Peter Bethlenfalvy. During the Open House, we also hosted our Ontario Trillium Grant event and did a ribbon cutting ceremony of the fridge and freezer with Peter Bethlenfalvy. The Open House was a tremendous success and opened the door to many conversations on the municipal and federal levels of government.

In May, we were approached by Dunbarton High School to partner with YMCA Canada Youth Exchange and hosted a group of 40 youths from Dunbarton and Attagoyuk High School in Nunavut. The students spent an afternoon at the food bank assisting with sorting donations and learning about how we operate. They also worked tremendously hard to host a food drive for two weeks of the exchange program, collecting 215 boxes of cereal.

During the April open house, an employee from Elexicon was there and learned the food bank needed another fridge. In June, the food bank received \$5,000 from the company and its employees for the purchasing of a new fridge which was delivered in early August.

In the summer, I implemented Company Volunteer Days, where companies could come in for the morning and assist the operations of the food bank. In 2024, we hosted groups from RBC, Capital One, Bell Canada, the management team from the Pickering Town Centre, Goodlife Fitness Pickering and OPG. This program was designed to bring companies in on client days so they can experience the need firsthand and a great way to bring awareness to those in the community. I will continue this program throughout 2025.

On July 11, I went on a tour around the Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture located in Ajax. During the tour and upon speaking with the owner, I learned the Centre's vision aligned with my vision for the Food Bank in providing more wholesome and fresh food for our clients. Through this, a partnership was formed and in October the Centre set up a farmers' market outside of the food bank on two client days. They continue to donate fresh produce throughout the winter, and I will be setting up a produce stand once a month from June – October this year.

In September, myself, Canon Stephanie and Rebecca Wilson worked together to apply for the Ontario Trillium Grow Grant, which would allow us to hire a Food Bank Coordinator for 3 years. As the food bank has grown very quickly, I am at the point of requiring an assistant to help with the daily operations of the food bank, allowing me to be out in the community more. This grant will also cover the cost of a Crisis Intervention Course for myself and the Food Bank Coordinator, which will aid in handling difficult situations at the food bank. In the grant we also requested funds for another freezer. We hope to hear whether we have been successful by spring 2025.

On October 6, Rona + in Pickering sponsored a Turkey Giveaway event, hosted by Frank McGillian, resulting in 116 families receiving a turkey for Thanksgiving. Mayor Ashe, Peter Bethlenfalvy and Councillor Linda Cook were in attendance and assisted in promoting the event.

On October 14, I did a live interview on CTV News and was given the opportunity to highlight the food bank and how the need has grown. With receiving requests for many interviews and appearances, I recruited one of our existing food bank volunteers, Trevor Nicolle, as a secondary spokesperson for the food bank, as he is very skilled in public speaking. On December 24, Trevor did a tremendous job in another CTV News live interview that brought further awareness of the growth we are facing.

Near the end of October, I implemented a numbering system for clients as we were faced with the issue of bags holding places in line which resulted in many arguments amongst the clients. To solve this issue, clients now come to the door when they arrive to receive a number ticket and once they receive their number, they can sit in their cars or leave and come back. This system has been very successful, especially on colder days.

At the end of November, Mayor Ashe informed me that the City of Pickering would be securing the rent again for 2025,

in the amount of \$49,200 through the Pickering Community Grant.

On November 17th I attended the Pickering Mayors Gala as the food bank was one of 6 recipients of the proceeds. I was able to meet some of the amazing donors and it was a great networking opportunity. We were presented with a \$40,000 cheque on December 20th.

On November 18th, I attended a Mental Health Awareness event at Queen's Park, along with Mayor Ashe, Peter Bethlenfalvy and other Members of Parliament. This was a great opportunity to discuss how mental health ties into those using food banks and coming up with ways to work together and bring further awareness to both food insecurity and mental health challenges.

On November 22, I was invited as a delegate to the 2025 Provincial Pre-Budget Consultation meeting, in which I was able to speak to the growing needs of Peter Bethlenfalvy and other Members of Parliament.

I spent a lot of time monitoring and talking with clients about issues that were arising in the line up before opening, concluding that some of the hostility was due to hunger. On November 26, I partnered with DARS, and their volunteers work outside from 9am-12pm distributing hot soups and drinks to those in line. This was proven to be a great success and created a sense of community and "breaking bread" together. It has helped tremendously in curbing some of the issues in line.

Through the advocacy of one of our volunteers and employee of the Pickering Casino, Gina Edwards, the food bank was voted as the 2025 charity of choice through the Pickering Casino's employee program, PROUD. Proceeds from any event hosted by the employees throughout the year will be donated to the food bank.

In late 2024, I formed a Health and Safety Committee, comprised of myself, Denise Boland and Amara Okpechi to bring this up to compliance for the size of the food bank. We try to meet once a month to discuss outstanding issues. Denise and Amara have been diligently working on fire plans, communication boards and signage and we have since added an up to date first aid station with a defibrillator and an eye washing station. Thank you to Denise and Amara for all their hard work!

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP:**

Throughout my tenor as Food Bank Director, I continually focus on establishing and maintaining strong relationships with new and existing community groups and companies. This has resulted in special partnerships with Derek's Independent Grocer, Food Basics, Metro and Freshco and Sobeys North Ajax. We continue to receive frozen items such as meat, dairy products, bread, non-perishable and perishable items through the Loblaws Retail and Second Harvest food rescue programs. These donations have exponentially increased the quantity and quality of food we are distributing. In 2024, the Food Bank rescued \$55,000 worth of food, which would have otherwise ended up in the landfill and provided 10,805 meals. Through these programs, we have also helped divert 73,362 lbs. of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere.

#### **FUNDRAISING:**

I continue to raise the food bank profile through a heavy online presence, attending many events throughout the community and hosting open houses throughout the year. Mayor Ashe has become heavily involved with the food bank this year and has been helping with online presence through his social media and reaching out to donors, like FGF Brands to help form future partnerships.

#### **CHRISTMAS HAMPERS:**

With the hard work and help from Kim Cahill, the Food Bank was able to provide 300 Christmas Hampers in 2024, including a \$50 Walmart gift card, turkey, a box with all items to make a holiday meal and winter items such as hats, socks and gloves. Unexpectedly, we received many toy donations again this year which were distributed on December 22 and 24. Fundraising was targeted at a Build-A-Box campaign and for a \$75.00 donation, supporters could fill a box and provide a gift card.

**VOLUNTEERS:**

The Food Bank team is comprised of 82 very dedicated and passionate volunteers. They work tirelessly to sort through, accept, pick up and distribute food to our clients, among many other things, and through all the changes in operations their commitment never wavered. I am extremely thankful for our amazing team as the Food Bank could not operate without them. On a personal note, I am in constant awe of these passionate, hardworking and committed individuals who have also shown me tremendous support in my vision for the future of the Food Bank.

In April we gathered at the food bank during Volunteer week and had lunch and a small thank you presentation for all the volunteers. On December 4, we enjoyed a Volunteer Appreciation Christmas lunch at the Mandarin as a thank you for their incredible service and hard work throughout the year.

**SPECIAL MENTIONS:**

I would like to thank the Financial Committee, Canon Stephanie and the Wardens for their continued support, valued input and ideas. They have been a strong sounding board, a great source of information and resources to aid in the success of the Food Bank. I would also like to thank Rebecca Wilson, the Food Bank Bookkeeper, who I thoroughly enjoy working with. She is very talented and strong in her position and her monthly reports have helped tremendously in my financial decision making.

I am very grateful for the support and responsiveness received from Mayor Kevin Ashe, Members of Council and the City of Pickering regarding the issue of food insecurity in our city. I am looking forward to continuing to work closely and cooperatively with the mayor’s office and the council in an ongoing fashion.

**HUNGER COUNT REPORT TOTAL FOR 2024:**

- Adults Helped: **23,015**
- Children Helped: **12,389**
- Total individuals: **35,404**
- Total food bank visits (households): **10,330**
- Total weight of food distributed: **511,128 lbs.**

**GOALS FOR 2025:**

- Working on a targeted purchasing plan (more produce and healthier options)
- Continuing to better client experience
- Adding fundraising events to the calendar year (open houses, food drives, etc.)
- Continuing to build relationships with supporting grocery stores and the City of Pickering
- Obtaining new grocery stores willing to set up donation bins in their store fronts

Respectfully submitted by,

Lindsey Morrill  
Food Bank Director

## ST. PAUL'S ON-THE-HILL

### *Proposed* LEADERSHIP TEAM 2025

#### PARISH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rector's Warden	Bruce Hampson	905-409-6387	bruceh@stpaulsonthehill.com
People's Warden	David Hamilton	905-683-7672	daveh@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	Kehinde Ladipo	905-239-7211	kehindel@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	Sophia Levy-Presner	905-492-0116	sophial@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	Janet Herrera	905 427-7680	janeth@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	Clare Masson	647-857-5855	clarem@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	John Honsberger	416-930-4760	johnh@stpaulsonthehill.com
Deputy Warden	Nkiruka Ochei	416-666-5694	nkirukao@stpaulsonthehill.com
Bookkeeper	Duane Ramkissoon	647-274-3290	duaner@stpaulsonthehill.com

#### WORSHIP

Rector	Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman	905-839-7909 x 1002	stephanied@stpaulsonthehill.com
Honorary Assistants	Canon Judy Herron-Graham	905-839-7909	
	Rev. Ayooluwa Samuel Adisa	905-839-7909	
	Father Paul Scuse	905-839-7909	
Pastoral Associate	Pastor Mabel Leung	905-839-7909 x 1005	<a href="mailto:mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com">mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Curate	Rev. Doug Smith	905-839-7909 x 1003	dougs@stpaulsonthehill.com
Music Director	Joanne Karram	905-683-3467	women@stpaulsonthehill.com
Music 8am	Bonnie Thomson		bonbelthom@gmail.com
Altar Guild	Margaret Wells	905-839-6499	dmpwells@gmail.com
Lay Pastoral Visitation Team	Canon Judy Jan Couto		
Church Décor/Altar Flowers/Altar Candles	Cynthia Peroff	647-502-9217	<a href="mailto:cynthia.peroff@outlook.com">cynthia.peroff@outlook.com</a>
Flower Coordinator	Janice Roberts	905-839-9212	grandmajanice2@gmail.com
Ushers			
- 8:00 am	Jacob Ladipo		jacobladipo@gmail.com
- 10:00 am	Sharlah Barter	647-225-3385	Sharlah.barter@gmail.com
Servers	Isuru Weerasekera	905-903-5506	isuruw@stpaulsonthehill.com
AV Production Director	Bill Bradbury	905-839-8924	<a href="mailto:billb@stpaulsonthehill.com">billb@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>

#### FINANCIAL & SYNOD REPS.

Financial Consultant	Auditor	Dawn Flett	
Envelope Secretary	Cassie Williams	416-660-1093	cassiew@sympatico.ca
Church Tax Receipts	Cassie Williams	416-660-1093	cassiew@sympatico.ca
Food Bank Tax Receipts	Cassie Williams	416-660-1093	cassiew@sympatico.ca
Parochial Tribunal	David Karram	905-683-3467	dksurfer7@gmail.com
	Helena Heesen	905-683-7672	htheesen@gmail.com
	Joy Pring	905-839-3246	
Synod Delegates (3)	David Karram	905-683-3467	dksurfer7@gmail.com

Alternate Synod Delegates Scrutineer	Steve Masson	905-426-9722	<a href="mailto:ciscomasson@gmail.com">ciscomasson@gmail.com</a>
	David Hamilton	905-683-7672	<a href="mailto:daveh@stpaulsonthehill.com">daveh@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
	Beverley Gibson	905-420-9624	<a href="mailto:fgibson58@hotmail.com">fgibson58@hotmail.com</a>
	Clare Masson	647-857-5855	<a href="mailto:clarem@stpaulsonthehill.com">clarem@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Stewardship Chair Property & Maintenance Chair	Clare Masson	647-857-5855	<a href="mailto:clarem@stpaulsonthehill.com">clarem@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
	Ivan Hunte	416-254-3792	<a href="mailto:Ivan.hunte@gmail.com">Ivan.hunte@gmail.com</a>

## VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Screening in Faith Coordinator	Denise Boland	437-226-6543	<a href="mailto:deniseb@stpaulsonthehill.com">deniseb@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Health & Safety:	Amara Okpechi	437-551-3586	<a href="mailto:vivian42k@yahoo.com">vivian42k@yahoo.com</a>
	Chuks Okpechi	437-533-1811	<a href="mailto:chuks.okpechi@gmail.com">chuks.okpechi@gmail.com</a>

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children and Youth Nursery	Pastor Mabel Yora Chijindu	905-839-7909 x 1005 905-839-7909	<a href="mailto:mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com">mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:yora@cchijindu.com">yora@cchijindu.com</a>
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## CHURCH LIFE & OUTREACH

Administrator & Digital Marketing Coordinator Website Webmaster	Amaka Ozoemene John Honsberger Bruce Hampson	905-839-7909 x 1001 416-930-4760 905-409-6387	<a href="mailto:amakao@stpaulsonthehill.com">amakao@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:johnh@stpaulsonthehill.com">johnh@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:bruceh@stpaulsonthehill.com">bruceh@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Food Bank Director Food Bank Bookkeeper SPOTH Bursary Committee	Lindsey Morrill Rebecca Wilson Clare Masson	905-839-9537 905-839-9537 647-857-5855	<a href="mailto:foodbankdirector@stpaulsonthehill.com">foodbankdirector@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:foodbankbookkeeper@stpaulsonthehill.com">foodbankbookkeeper@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:bursary@stpaulsonthehill.com">bursary@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Women's Fellowship & Team	Joanne Karram	905-683-3467	<a href="mailto:women@stpaulsonthehill.com">women@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
Men's Fellowship Outreach	David Karram Lorna Smith Eva Boessler	905-683-3467 905-837-0875 905-831-0575	<a href="mailto:dksurfer7@gmail.com">dksurfer7@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:lsmith1@bell.net">lsmith1@bell.net</a> <a href="mailto:evamaria1109@yahoo.ca">evamaria1109@yahoo.ca</a>
Prayer Ministry Team & Anointer Small Group Ministry Prayer Circle	Canon Stephanie Pastor Mabel David Karram Pam Johnstone	905-839-7909 x 1002 905-839-7909 x 1005 905-683-3467 905-683-8726	<a href="mailto:stephanied@stpaulsonthehill.com">stephanied@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com">mabell@stpaulsonthehill.com</a> <a href="mailto:dksurfer7@gmail.com">dksurfer7@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:pamjohnstone0@gmail.com">pamjohnstone0@gmail.com</a>

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Newcomers'	(Organizers & Volunteers needed) Newcomers' Welcome Committee Sophia Levy-Presner	905-492-0116	<a href="mailto:sophial@stpaulsonthehill.com">sophial@stpaulsonthehill.com</a>
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Please contact Bruce Hampson – Rector's Warden – [bruceh@stpaulsonthehill.com](mailto:bruceh@stpaulsonthehill.com) for any changes to this report.