



The Epistle

November 2019

Volume 51, Issue 9

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had.

ROMANS 15:5

Fall is my favourite season.

I do enjoy the winter. Sure, it tends to be cold, and the days are short. But there is something fresh about it, and I've always been a fan of winter sports. I also enjoy the spring. Watching everything return to growth and listening to the birds after a winter absence always puts a smile on my face. I also enjoy certain things about the summer. But if I'm honest, it's probably my least favourite season. I'm not a fan of the heat and humidity. Oh, and I should mention that I suffer from summer allergies. But the fall. Now there is a season I can get behind fully. I just love that fall marks the end of allergy season. Fall also means the return of cooler air. Fall also means you can go to a local stream and watch the salmon coming up to spawn. If you have never done that, I highly recommend it. They are absolutely amazing creatures to watch and it will fill your heart with joy. And those colours. How can you not be a fan of those brilliant colours. Fall is my favourite season.

Fall also marks the start of our church year. And along with that, we start planning for our next series of Congregational Meetings over the coming year.

According to the United Church manual, *"The congregation or pastoral charge must meet annually. This meeting must be held as early as possible in the calendar year. The congregation or pastoral charge may also decide to meet more often than annually."* At St Paul's, it has been our policy for quite some time to meet three times a year in an effort to keep everyone informed about what's happening within, and around, our church.

We have already met three times this year. We held our Annual General Meeting in February. We then held a special meeting in March to discuss the water issues in the nursery and approve funding to get it fixed. And finally, we met in June to hear the outcomes from the Council retreat and review the new Strategic Plan.

So when I met with the Church Council in October, we discussed whether or not we needed to host a fourth meeting this year. We concluded that there weren't any decisions pending where we would need congregational approval. And we figured we could use other means to communicate important matters to the congregation. This would include posting information on the Website and our Facebook page. Writing articles for the Epistle (such as this one). And including announcements in the Bulletin and on the screens before Worship. And of course, delivering announcements from the lectern during each Worship Service as needed.

So out of respect for your time, we have decided that we will NOT be hosting a formal congregational meeting this fall. And as a result, our next formal congregation meeting will actually be our Annual General Meeting which will take place on Sunday February 2, 2020.

Respectfully submitted by

Stuart McLean,
Chair of Congregation

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As Christians one of the things we commit to is caring for each other as Christ would care for us. We do this in a variety of ways in a variety of circumstances. This month I want to talk specifically about how we care for each other in cold and flu season. As most of you know we avoid shaking hands during cold and flu season to help avoid passing germs to each other. It's also important to make sure you cough or sneeze into your elbow rather than your hand to avoid passing bacteria and viruses to other people and to hard surfaces where they can live for hours.

We know its important to keep our commitments, but it's even more important to avoid passing on illnesses. If you are sick or suspect you might be, even if it is mild, stay home. An illness that is mild for you could be very serious for someone else.

Finally, if you are able, get your flu shot. There are many people who are not able to get vaccinated because they already have a weakened immune system. These people rely on others being vaccinated to keep them safe.

According to the Centre for Disease Control it is possible to have the flu and have no symptoms, meaning you could pass it on to someone without knowing it and for someone with a compromised immune system the consequences could be serious. According to the Government of Canada the flu causes approximately 12,200 hospitalizations and 3,500 deaths annually. If you have questions or concerns about the flu shot reach out to your local pharmacists or public health office. They are always happy to help.

As we move towards winter I pray for a healthy season for all of us and I encourage everyone to do their part to make that happen.

Rev. Cordelia

FINANCE COMMITTEE*Financially Speaking: Update, September 2019*

Donations From All Sources	September	YTD
What We Needed (from all sources)	\$15,032	\$142,176
Total We Received (including from the Building Fund)	13,332	133,189
What We Spent	17,557	180,876
Surplus / Shortfall (Total Received less What We Spent)	-4,225	-47,687
M&S Givings	10,744	\$9,599
Capital Fund Donations	7,170	6,125

September this year was a negative month as donations were lower than expected and expenses were higher than forecast. This has been our traditional pattern for September so, no surprises there. Unfortunately, this combination (lower donations and higher expenses), means that we had a negative bank balance of -\$738 at the end of September. On the surface our year-to-date numbers look discouraging but, keep in mind that we have spent over \$31,000 in Capital repairs to our building.

I know that we have had a lot of expenses this year. These expenses have been necessary to keep our building a safe place for everyone who enters it.

You will all know by now that our new roof has been installed. To pay for this major project, we borrowed \$19,000 from the Church Extension Council. One way we are raising funds to repay this loan is to sell bundles of roof shingles for \$60 per bundle. Thanks to you, we have sold 94 bundles so far, raising an amazing \$5,640 to date. Have you bought your bundle yet?

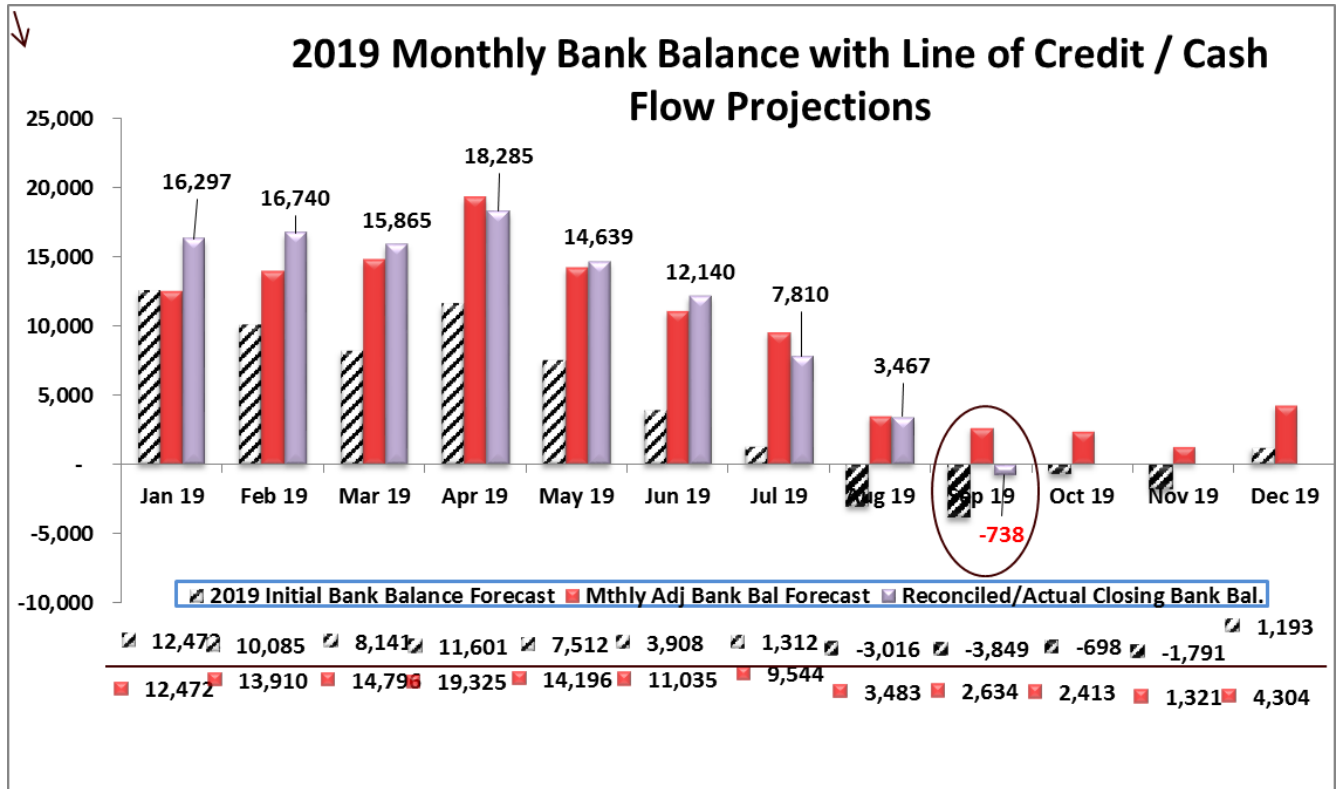
If purchasing a whole bundle of shingles is a little dear for your pocketbook, please consider buying a ½ bundle at just \$30.

As you know, stewardship is rendered in many forms whether as gifts of time, talents and skills, or treasure. Your gifts are appreciated. As always, your gifts will help St. Paul's to continue to be a place for everyone to reach out for worship and prayer, for comfort, for social interaction, and for help.

Please look at the chart that follows. It is a projection of what our 2019 year-end bank balance could be if all our budget targets are met. As of the end of September, the forecast suggests that our December 2019 bank balance could be a positive number. This number can and will change monthly. We monitor this chart regularly and share it with you continually so that you can see how we are doing financially. The red bars are suggesting that if our budget targets are met for the rest of the year, we might have a small, positive bank balance to begin 2020! Terrific.

FINANCE (con't)

Financially Speaking: Update, September 2019



If anyone has any comments or simply just wishes to better understand this graph's meaning and how this graph works, please contact Robert Hunt at 416 458 5888. All questions are welcome.

Your Finance Committee

CONGREGATION CONNECTIONS

Volunteers needed for The Open Cupboard

We are moving forward with the planning of hosting “The Open Cupboard” in the new year. It has been approved by our church Council and the response has been favourable. At our initial meeting it was decided that we will need volunteers from our church to run this outreach program and make it a success.

Volunteers will work in pairs, and the time required is minimal (2 hours a month). Please contact Linda Westendorp at 905-683-7670 or lindawestendorp24@hotmail.com if you feel you could help to make a difference in our community



Christmas Families

This year we will continue the practice of providing our Christmas Families with Presidents Choice gift cards instead of buying groceries. While the families are grateful for any assistance we can give them, the gift cards are preferred.

Last year we helped 6 families and in order to cover the cost of the groceries we provided in the past we will need a President’s Choice gift card of \$100.00 for each family. I will also purchase Walmart gift cards so that parents can leave a surprise from Santa under the tree Christmas morning.

Beginning November 17th you will find specially labelled red envelopes in the pew racks. You can leave cash or a cheque, payable to St Paul’s United Church with “Christmas Families” on the memo line in the red envelope and place it on the offering plate or drop off your donation to the office. If you do not find a red envelope in your pew rack then just use one of the regular envelopes and mark it Christmas Families.

The last day to make a contribution will be December 8th.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me in the office 905 683 4740.

Catharine Ottaway

The Giving Tree

St. Paul’s Mitten Tree has been renamed to be the “***Giving Tree.***”

The tree will be set up set up in the Narthex and will ready to be decorated with hats, scarfs, mittens and gloves of all sizes. They can be handmade or purchased. Some of the clothing items left on the tree will be included with the Gift Cards for our Christmas Families, the rest will be kept for our clients of the Open Cupboard.

You will also find a basket under the tree where you can donate personal hygiene products so we can begin to stock the Open Cupboard. Items we are looking for include: toothpaste, tooth brushes, bar soap, shampoo, hair brushes, combs, feminine hygiene products, diapers, etc. All these items will be distributed through the Open Cupboard program.



If you have any questions or concerns please contact me in the office 905 683 4740.

Catharine Ottaway

WORSHIP & MUSIC**Christmas Carols During Advent**

As is our tradition at St. Paul's, we'll be singing your favorite Christmas Carols before the morning service, starting December 1, 2019 at 10:25 a.m. Come with your favorite's title in mind, or arrive a few minutes early to check Voices United 35 – 78 and 91. Why not invite a friend who is looking for an opportunity to sing carols and get in the mood for Christmas?!

Your Bucket List

Should I join the choir? Only if you can "hold a tune in a bucket". Not sure if your bucket has holes in it? Contact Lois to arrange a 15 minute, private, personal evaluation. You might be able to add having fun, singing in St. Paul's Choir to your bucket list! You can reach me, Lois Craig at 905-427-3800; email me at lcraigbflat@gmail.com. Or come speak to me after the morning service.

Readers Needed

St. Paul's Choir is presenting its Christmas music on Sunday, December 8, 2019 during the 10:30 a.m. service. This year it will feature Carols and Lessons. 8 readers, in addition to Rev. Cordelia will be needed. New readers and experienced readers are welcome!

There is an optional rehearsal on Thursday, December 5, 2019 from 7:15 – 8 p.m. approximately. If it is your first time reading, it is highly recommended.

If you have any questions, please contact me at lcraigbflat@gmail.com, phone me at 905-427-3800, or come speak to me after service.

Thanks!

Save the Date

St. Paul's Senior Choir is presenting its Carols and Lessons December 8, 2019 during the 10:30 a.m. service. This year's music includes a double trio; soloists; full choir; as well as congregational participation. Plan to come with your family, friends and neighbours!

The uplifting music will help all of you prepare for a joyous Christmas season!

White Gift Sunday

White Gift Sunday is a special day each year when we are invited to share our Christmas with the wider community. This year it is December 1, 2019. You are invited to contribute a gift wrapped in white paper for a local shelter, or a non-perishable food item for the Salvation Army Food Bank. Monetary donations are also accepted.

The Mission and Service committee sorts the gifts and delivers them to local shelters for women and children, youth and men.

Please share a little Christmas Joy with someone living in a shelter this holiday season. If you can, bring a gift to Church on December 1, 2019.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Invitation to the Neighbourhood

St. Paul's United Church (SPUC) is situated in the Town of Ajax, (population 119,677- Census 2016), one of eight municipalities in the Region of Durham. More specifically SPUC is located in the Downtown Ajax neighbourhood, one of 50 Health Neighbourhoods that have been defined by the Region of Durham in order to monitor indicators tracking the health and wellbeing of local residents.

According to the Region, Downtown Ajax is "a diverse Neighbourhood south of the 401 that includes Ajax's business area along Harwood Avenue, the Ajax Town Hall, Ajax Library Main Branch, and the Ajax and Pickering Hospital. This Neighbourhood also includes the Ajax GO Train Station, Ajax Community Centre, Ajax High School, three elementary schools and various private schools."

As we consider how we can Love Our Neighbours, the Downtown Ajax profile (see https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/HealthInformationServices/HealthNeighbourhoods/Profiles/A2_downtownAjax.pdf) – and other data sources provide us with information that can help inform our programs and services. With a higher population of people aged 65+, higher number of recent immigrants, lower after-tax household income, higher rate of teen pregnancy, more people in vulnerable housing situations, and higher rates of social isolation than other Durham Region neighbourhoods, we have indicators that compel us to ask God for guidance and fortitude on how we can help our fellow residents.

With our mission in front of us and our faith strong, we can continue on our Christian journey, talking with our neighbours and offering comfort and support as the Church with the Open Arms.

SPUC is continuing to deal with a water issue that sees water entering the building during a heavy rain. A contractor will be onsite in the coming weeks to repair the window well outside the men's washroom. This work is expected to be completed by the end of the month. Recently additional challenges were identified both inside the building and around the building's exterior. The exterior challenges are being investigated through discussions with the Town and with the support of professional services. We will have more information for you on the outcome of that investigation in the coming weeks. In the meantime, your support in protecting our internal plumbing system by NOT flushing paper towels or pouring grease into the internal drainage system is very much appreciated.

Again, if you have any questions, please speak to Rev. Cordelia or Katie Cronin-Wood.

SPUC Water Bottles

It is estimated that 68 Billion single use plastic bottles (SUPBs) are discarded annually worldwide ([from procon.org](http://www.procon.org)). They can be found on beaches, in rivers, streams, lakes, the oceans and strewn about in our forests and provincial parks.

The manufacturing of these SUPBs emits toxic chemicals into our atmosphere and the recycling of these bottles also uses toxic chemicals which eventually emits even more toxic chemicals into the atmosphere.

SPUC reusable water bottles are now available. These 750ml, BPA free, dishwasher safe bottles are being sold at cost at \$10 each.

If any bottles purchased above the \$10 cost, the difference will count towards SPUC's fundraising targets. Bottles can be purchased at SPUC events.



UCW

On Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., the UCW will meet for their monthly meeting in the Fellowship Room. The topic is on the environment, especially eliminating plastic - one bag at a time. Everyone is cordially invited.

If anyone needs a ride, please call Valerie at 905-683-8798.

**MEN'S GROUP**

The Men's Group will meet for breakfast on Saturday, **November 9th**, 2019, at 8:00 a.m. in the Gathering Place. The invitation is open to all men. Arrive for the first time and enjoy a free breakfast.



The 4 **C's** will be there

Caffeine
Calories
Cholesterol
Camaraderie

Come to make the 5th **C**
Chuckles

CONGREGATION CONNECTIONS**St. Paul's UCW, M&S and Exercise Group Invites You and Your Friends**

On November 17, 2019, we're showing *The Caretaker's Club*, a documentary film on the challenges faced by those who care for their loved ones suffering from Alzheimer's.

This important and informative documentary by Ajax Director Cynthia Banks will be shown in the Fellowship Room following the 10:30 a.m. service.

There will be a freewill offering. Once we've covered our minimal expenses, the remainder will go to the Alzheimer Society who are supplying pamphlets and maybe even a guest speaker, at the end of the 80 minute documentary.

Plan to bring your lunch and join us!

(There will be some time to eat your lunch before the documentary begins. You may also eat during the presentation.)



FINANCE COMMITTEE

As I was searching for words that demonstrate the commitment of our congregations' members to Jesus Christ and His message of love, I happened upon an e-mail I received many years ago. I relayed it to you back then, and given our current financial circumstances, and our upcoming stewardship campaign, I thought it would be appropriate to share it with you again.

This quote came from a member of a congregation of the United Church of Christ ...

At What Cost?

A woman complained to her friend, "Our church costs too much! They're always asking for money!" "Look at it this way," her friend replied. "When my son was born, many years ago, he cost us quite a bit of money. He continued to cost us money as he grew older – money for clothes, shoes, food, bicycles, doctors, college and more. But we didn't mind, because he gave us so much joy and more in return. Then in his senior year in college, he died, and since his funeral he hasn't cost us a penny. Which situation do you think I prefer? As long as our church lives," she concluded, "it will cost us. When it dies from a lack of support it will no longer cost us a thing, but what will we have? I'm going to give and pray with everything I've got to keep it alive and well."

The words in the e-mail reminded me of the expenses we have incurred this year here at our Church home. Why are we willing to pay these costs? I think we do it because of the love we have for Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and the joy and inspiration He has given us to spread His message in our local community and throughout the greater world.

Our stewardship this year is: "Love Thy Neighbour 2.0, Going Deeper". Going Deeper means rediscovering the joy, understanding the privilege and seizing the opportunities that God has for us to love our neighbour now and into our future.

Oftentimes it is easy to forget the satisfaction we get when we see the joy on a neighbour's face. That joy can come from a simple thing like helping them carry a heavy load of groceries from the trunk of their car. It can also be a more complex situation such as a hungry person in a soup kitchen eating a hot meal at Thanksgiving. You might not actually see them smile, but you know they will smile with gratitude when they eat that meal. As a diabetic who has to fast regularly for blood testing purposes, I can tell you how big the smile on my face is when after fasting, I can sink my teeth into something delicious and filling. Being able to help others is a privilege. We are privileged to be able to help others and, unfortunately, there are many, many opportunities to help others in our world today. God, in his graciousness and through our faith in Him, has given us opportunity to help others in various ways using a combination of the time, talent or skills He has blessed us with.

Let us give thanks to God by loving our neighbour as is His wish.

Your finance committee.

"..... but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Galatians 5:13-14

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

the church with the open arms



St. Paul's United Church

65 King's Cres.,

Ajax, ON L1S 2M4

Phone: 905-683-4740

E-mail:

office@stpaulsajax.org

We're on the web!

www.stpaulsajax.org

The next *Epistle* will be issued on November 29, 2019

DEADLINE for articles is November 22, 2019

Please send articles to Wendy Mason at goosemason@yahoo.ca

JOIN WITH US TO WORSHIP AND PRAISE GOD.

Sunday Worship - 10:30 am

Wheelchair Accessible - Hearing Assistance

Sunday School and Nursery Care available during Sunday Worship.

Fellowship and coffee time follows every worship service.

Holy Communion is served on the first Sunday of the month.

Baptisms and Weddings may be arranged by calling the Church Office.

Meeting Space is available for booking.

Our office is open weekdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Minister: the Rev. Cordelia Karpenko

Office Administrator: Catharine Ottaway

Music Director: Lois Craig

We come to experience, show and share the difference God's love in Christ makes in our lives. We strive to be a people growing spiritually while reaching out to others in response to Jesus Christ.