



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



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

**The Sunday Service at our sister church Knox begins at 9:15AM.**  
They are located at 2227 Simms St. in Mountain.

# St. Paul's Matters

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

Fall - 2017

## Sola Gratia, Sola Fide and Sola Scriptura

500 years ago, on October 31st, 1517 in Wittenberg-Germany, Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg. The theses were his theological thoughts about the practices of the Church. That simple action began the Reformation - a movement that changed the world.

One man stood against the corruption of the establishment. Luther's fight was, of course, one of theology; but it was still one man, a monk, against the massive Holy Roman Empire. Luther was threatened, exiled, excommunicated and labeled a heretic. But his teaching grew in popularity in all Europe.

Luther and the other Reformers believed that all humankind is sinful, that everyone is guilty of error in God's sight. They also believed that God will punish those who do what He forbids. The problem is not only that everyone sins, but that humankind's sinful condition means there is no way to do enough good things to earn God's salvation.

The Reformation proclaimed that the solution to the problem is not in doing more penance, good works or in buying indulgences, but in God. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Knox taught that the Bible teaches salvation by God's grace, through faith, because of Jesus. God declares those who place their faith in Christ to be righteous. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." In other words, Jesus became our substitute on the cross so that we could be made "just" or right with God. All who believe in Jesus as their Savior receive forgiveness and eternal life. All of this is a free gift from a loving God.

The Reformation teaching is often summarized in three "solas": Sola Gratia, Sola Fide and Sola Scriptura - by Grace Alone, by Faith Alone and by Scripture Alone. The key to Reformation theology is found in God's love for people. By Grace Alone means that God gives His love freely. People can't earn God's love. People can't earn forgiveness. God's love is not

gained by human efforts, but given freely by God's grace. By Faith Alone means that those who believe in Jesus as God's Savior for all humanity receive forgiveness and eternal life. Faith is something God gives to people through His Holy Spirit. People do nothing to earn God's love, but receive it by grace through faith. By Scripture Alone means that God has revealed His truth through the Holy Bible. Scripture is the only trustworthy source for the truth about God and church doctrines. The Scriptures are properly read in light of Jesus our Saviour.

The three solas, by Grace Alone, by Faith Alone and by Scripture Alone, are all summarized in one more phrase from the Reformation, Solus Christus - Through Christ Alone. This is really the focus of the Reformation. God's grace, our faith and the Scriptures are all focused on Jesus Christ. The Reformation moved the focus and authority from the Church to Jesus.

As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation there is a wakeup call for us. We are reminded that yes, the Reformation began 500 years ago, but it continues for us today. We are reminded of the constant need to look to Christ and the cross for our forgiveness, life, and salvation. Today more than ever, we need to remember that the Reformation of the church continues, and that our work as the church is to proclaim the message of salvation to all, Jesus said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew. 28:18-20).

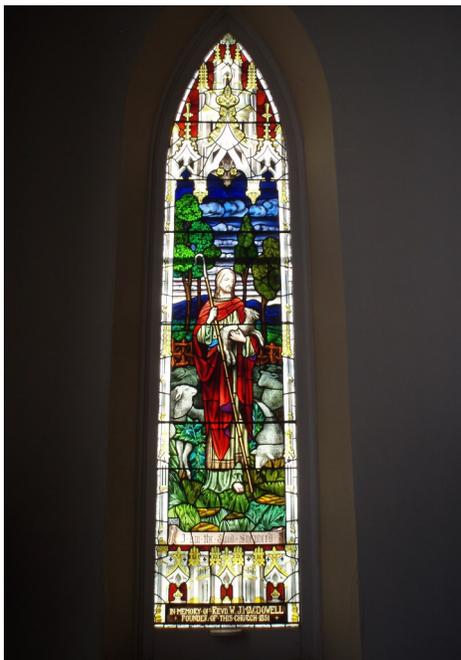
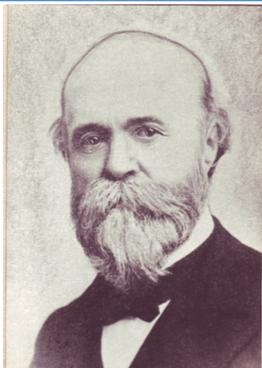
May God use us as His Reformation instruments to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified, for the sins of the world to the people in our community, and beyond for Jesus' sake.

**Have a blessed 500th Reformation Anniversary**  
**Rev. Samer Kandalaft**

## Sir John A. Macdonald Celebrates St. Paul's 166th Anniversary



## St. Paul's First Minister - Submitted by Donald Messenger



The Reverend William John MacDowell was born in the north of Ireland in Country Antrim, in 1825. He was a graduate of the Royal Belfast Academy Institute and of the Theological Seminary in Paisley, Scotland.

He immigrated to Canada and came to the Kemptville area in 1845 where he had congregations in South Gower, Oxford, and Mountain Townships.

In 1848 Rev. MacDowell started raising funds for the construction of a new church at the corner of Prescott and Mary Streets in Kemptville. He visited American Presbyterians in New York State to solicit funds, as well as from Ireland. In 1851, St Paul's was opened with Rev. MacDowell as our founding minister.

The Church spire and beautiful wood ceiling were added many years later. It was not until 1904 that the Church Hall, choir loft and Church office were added.

In 1857, Rev. MacDowell at the age of 32, left St. Paul's for the United States. His first congregation was at Lisbon, St. Lawrence County, New York, where he stayed for 5 years. His next congregation was at Ryegate, Vermont and remained there until he was called by the Reformed Presbyterian Society to found a Church in Brooklyn, New York.

He had another congregation in New York City before retiring. Due to heart issues, he passed away in Brooklyn, New York at the age

of 70 and is interred in South Ryegate, Vermont.

In 1905, Rev. MacDowell's son, Samuel with his family, came from Brooklyn, New York to visit St. Paul's Kemptville. Samuel presented to our church, communion ware in memory of his father, Rev. W. J. MacDowell. This communion ware we still use today. It is now 112 years old. When you do the math, this communion ware has been used at St. Paul's over 450 times since 1905.

In 1928, a stained glass window entitled "The Lord is My Shepherd" was dedicated in memory of Rev. MacDowell by the Mundle Family. Rev. W.J. MacDowell's sister had married James Mundle. This window, which we still see in our sanctuary, was dedicated some 71 years after Rev. MacDowell left St. Paul's, in 1857.

Truly, Rev. W.J. MacDowell, as founder of St. Paul's, left a legacy that was not to be forgotten. He lived by the following verse of scripture found in First Corinthians, Chapter 9, Verse 16 "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel".

Rev. W. J. MacDowell lived what he preached, starting back in the log churches in South Gower, Oxford and Mountain Townships in 1845. Our founder Rev. W. J. MacDowell will not be forgotten.

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

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

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

**HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE HELD ON:**

**December 3, 2017  
March 25, 2018  
June 3, 2018**

## Persecution of Christians in Iran



**The Azgomi Family** From left to right - Esther (Daughter), Daniel (Son), Omid (Father), Sholeh (Mother, Shahrzad's Sister) and Vahid (Esther's Husband)

The persecution started in the mid-90s after the martyrdom of Pastor Haik Hovsepian (January 1994) and the other Pastors, Tateos Michaelian (June 1994), Mehdi Dibaj (July 1994), and Bagher Yusefi (September 1996).

At that time, I was summoned before the Revolutionary Court once a week for a period of three months for interrogation, blindfolded and facing the wall for about 3 to 4 hours, at the second prison of Rasht which is on the Iraqi bridge street. The pressure and the focus were more on me because I was a convert from a Muslim family to Christianity. The authorities were repeatedly threatening me that turning away from Islam means apostasy and according to the Islamic Law the apostate should be executed without trial.

For 3 months every week I was summoned and interrogated by the authorities and openly I was threatened that I should not accept any newcomers in the church as well as I am not allowed to baptize anyone any more.

Also, my family was suffering and persecuting because of me. I remember the day when I went to register my daughter at the elementary school. It was very special time for me and my wife. The school principal told us that we can't register her because she is registered as Christian, therefore, there was no place for her and later the same happened for my son. Only one elementary school accepted them in the city we lived in, at that school they were bullied severely because of their religion and because their father is a pastor.

In September of 2004, my wife and I along with other 80 pastors and leaders of our church were arrested at our Christian Camp in Karaj at our Annual Leaders Assembly. Some were transferred to a place for filling the interrogation papers and others were returned to the camp and released except me and other nine church leaders, we were transferred to Rajai prison in the city of Karaj in a van.

In Rajai prison they took all the things in our pockets, blindfolded us and then transferred us to solitary cells. For three days, every day we were questioned several times. In every time they questioned us, they took us blindfolded to the interrogation room, and blindfolded were returned to our cells. They asked us questions such as:

- Who gave you this permission to be a church minister? What is your theological degree and how you obtained it?
- What's your connection to the Christian organisations and churches abroad, in the west?
- Draw a chart of your church hierarchy and explain all kinds of meetings and activities which your denomination in Iran is doing.
- Do you know that you are an apostate and that you are subject to execution without a trial?
- Tell us about all your Christian activists which you and your congregation are exercising out of your church building?

- Who pays you to distribute Bibles, Jesus movies and to attract Muslims to convert to Christianity?

Before our release, the officials forced us to sign a document then freed us. Returning to our homes, we learned that while we were in jail the media spread the news massively that a document was signed by the church leaders committing themselves not to add any new member to their churches as well as to prohibit the church groups from gathering at homes.

The authority continued their pressure on me and my family (wife and children), they eavesdrop our phone calls and all our movements were under observation and control. The authority persistently persecuted and threatened me that only the Hzbollahi and Basij people can decide arbitrarily how they will deal with me which no one can control their decision.

Also, my wife was repeatedly accused of attracting other women and girls to join our church.

In October 2007, at her first year in the university, my daughter was kidnapped and taken to an unknown building; they put her in a room for many hours before a man called Haji came in and very aggressively began accusing her of evangelizing the students at the university. He told her that he knows everything about me "her father", our family and our Church activities.

After many hours she was obliged to sign a paper of not sharing her Christian faith with any students at the university. After that she regularly was under pressure by the security at the university concerning her Hijab, her clothing and all her movement. The authorities were putting her under psychological pressure for years. As a result she was only able to get an associate degree in Architecture and not the Bachelor.

Moreover, my son, because of me, was under persecution. Although he was not speaking out about his Christian faith, the authority in June 2017 asked me to send my son to their office for interrogation. He was taken to a room and was questioned by a person with name, "Jamaati" for many hours, condemning him for following his father's steps in spreading Christianity and warning him of the consequences of it.

They asked my son about the religious pressure which our family passing through and especially about his father and promised him that it will increase. They questioned him about the church activities, his friends, and about his Brother-In-Law whom they called an apostate and they explained to my son about the punishment that one should receive as an apostate from Islam. Also, he was told that because he is a Christian he is not allowed to engage in the university activities.

My son used to work in a coffee shop, which he liked, but everything after that interrogation changed him. He could not trust anyone anymore even his close friend and lived in fear that everybody is watching him.

In November 2011 early in the morning, a group broke into the church through the wall - which is between the church and our neighbour - breaking the flower pots with a large axe. Also, they broke the windows of the church hall and church office.

As a warning, they left at the entrance a Palestinian Keffiyeh which the Basijis and the Revolutionary Guards use around their necks. This action was reported to the authorities, but they never did anything, and we had to install iron bars up to two meters high around the church walls.

Later, we were obliged by the authority to give a report in writing each week which includes the number of meetings held in the church during the week, the theme and a summary of my preaching and how many people participated in each church meeting. The report must be sent to our church office in Tehran which they would gather the other churches report and send them to the Ministry of Intelligence weekly.

This was to make sure that the number of participants at worship did not increase.

Later we were ordered by the authorities that we are only allowed to hold one meeting during the week which is the Sunday worship service. If that Sunday coincides with one of the official Islamic mourning event of the country, then we are not allowed to hold a worship service on that Sunday.

The pressure continued constantly over us. The terrorist attack which was carried out by Islamic extremists on Charlie Hebdo magazine in France on January 7, 2015 elevated the persecution on us.

At that time, a journalist, from Guilan NGO in Rasht, contacted me expressing his wish to hold a media briefing which brought together leaders of the three Abrahamic religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism so we could reject the insult which Charlie Hebdo made to the prophet Mohammed and to issue a declaration that rejects any insult and ridicule toward other religious beliefs.

Since in my city, Rasht, the only non-Muslims that have a place of worship are Christians, the journalist wanted to have separate interviews and statements from the leaders of the churches: one with me, another with the leader of the Armenian Church and a third with a Muslim leader. A day was appointed for my interview.

Without informing me, and for a propaganda purposes, a Muslim cleric who was part of the education department at the University of Guilan attended the meeting. The interview was photographed. However, I was shocked to read in the magazine a pre-made statement had been prepared by the authorities and was ascribed to me, not the interview which I had with the journalist.

*(Continued on the next page.)*

## Persecution of Christians in Iran (cont.)

A few days after, an online media which directly reflects the views of the Iranian Intelligence Service, in particular the Ministry of Information and Protection of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, condemned the action in the strongest possible terms, and the editor of the magazine. As a result, I was accused by the media of being hostile to the Prophet Muhammad by converting to Christianity and a Zionist agent in Iran.

These allegations were very serious and indicated that the government was planning for my execution. This was the pattern during the active years of the Assembly of God churches in Iran when the authorities closed churches and execute church ministers.

The only two Muslim-born pastors in Iran were myself and Pastor Hossein Soodmand who was executed in the city of Mashhad in December 1990 for the same reasons. As a result, I did not travel to any country for years in order not to give a reason to the government to condemn me with espionage charges.

In the past, I planned to leave the country, but my son was not allowed to leave the country before doing the compulsory military service. My fear was if I left without him, then the authorities would take their revenge on him. Military service, however, is not safe for Christians, especially the son of a converted pastor. My son's life would be in danger. Therefore, I waited until I gathered enough money to pay his temporary military exemption to the Public Duty Organization - which cost me a fortune.

This meant he had permission to leave the country for a short vacation before his university starts. As a church minister, I had a very little income. In order to obtain the temporary military exemption for my son and the airplane tickets for me and my family to flee to Turkey, I had to sell my car and my son's car as well as my home appliances.

I did not want to leave the country without my family, as I have a bitter memory of Bishop Hassan Dehghani. At the beginning of the revolution the authorities tried to assassinate him, but did not succeed. Bishop Dehghani left the country in 1979 leaving his son in Iran.

His son, Bahram Dehghani, who was only 24 years old, was assassinated in 1980 by the regime. Therefore, I did not

want to leave Iran and leave my son alone. When we were able to buy the temporary military exemption and get a passport for my son, we flew to Turkey almost immediately. My son-in-law joined us a few days later.

Our departure from the country coincided with two official holidays in Iran. Most of the Intelligence officials were busy with their families. After their holidays were over, the authorities were looking for me and my family. First, they called my mobile phone number, which still had a SIM card from Iran, I did not answer and turned off the cell phone. Then they began investigating the people who knew me as well as the church people asking them about our place and why my Son-In-Law is still in Iran. My son-in-law was ordered to present himself immediately at their office. The same day which the order was given, my son-in-law was able to leave Iran.

After my entire family gathered in Turkey, the Rasht Intelligence office began to threaten my son-in-law's family. This caused his father to have a heart attack. In order to save his family's life, my son-in-law was forced to return to Iran. Since that time, we have only heard from him once through a third-party phone number in Iran. He said when he arrived at Tehran airport, he was detained for a day and then he was returned to Rasht. The authorities now take him in for interrogations in Rasht Intelligence Office every day. He has been strongly pressured to reveal my phone number and where I am in Turkey - which he has resisted so far. He also is banned from leaving the city of Rasht.

Currently, we have sought refuge in Turkey. We have obtained documents from the United Nations Refugee Agency in Ankara and were told to stay in the city of Yalova. At this time, we do not have any income. In order to get any job in Yalova, we must learn some of the Turkish language and hope that our Christian faith will not be a reason for not giving us any job in a Muslim country.

*This is a first-hand account of persecution in Iran written by the Reverend Omid Azgomi, Shahrzad's brother-in-law.*

*Please keep Omid, Sholeh, Esther, Daniel, Vahid and his family in your prayers - as well as all Christians who face persecution in Iran and around the world.*

## Shoebboxes for Operation Christmas Child

Our fall mission project will be to again support the Christmas Child Shoe Box program.

Last year, thanks to the help of Knox Mountain, we collected an impressive 152 boxes. Let's see if we can surpass that total this year.

The shoe boxes will be going to the Ukraine, as well as countries in Central America, South America and Africa.

**The deadline for the filled boxes to be returned to St. Paul's by Sunday, November 12th.**



## Fellowship, Fun and Fish



A big thank you to the crew who helped make St. Paul's first fish-and-chips dinner such a great success. It not only raised much needed funds, but it was fantastic community outreach. Special thanks to our own fishing captain, John Dalrymple, who championed the idea and was the driving force behind the evening.

## Report from the Board of Managers

We are happy to announce that our kitchen has a new fridge compliments of a generous family in the church. Our old fridge had been giving us problems for the past year, so we are grateful for this generous gift.

We are thoroughly enjoying our new sound system. Half of the total cost (\$10,000) came from generous contributions and other funds in the church. After our appeal in the bulletin for contributions to replace the money borrowed from our investments a very generous donation of \$5,000 has been received.

We are most grateful to our donors for their

generous contributions which will enable us to complete other necessary projects which need our attention.

Other projects which the Board is working on is to reline our sewer pipe to prevent clogging. As well the front steps leading to the Hall need to be replaced. We are hoping to remove two trees next to the old Manse so that we can increase parking space.

Other projects are in the offing as money becomes available. Please pray for the Board as we seek guidance to keep our old building in good working order.

## Watch This Space for More Details

A suggestion came into the *St. Paul's Matters* mailbag for a new feature called "Getting to Know You."

It would be an interview with someone from the congregation who is new to the area or maybe a person who has been a fixture at St. Paul's for years.

The article could include something about their background, where they are from, why they came to Kemptville, what do they and a little bit about their family.

If you would like to suggest someone or volunteer yourself, contact Jim Armour ([j.armour@cogeco.ca](mailto:j.armour@cogeco.ca)).

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**Poet's Corner – Submitted by Gerald Anderson**

**The Autumn**

Go, sit upon the lofty hill,  
And turn your eyes around,  
Where waving woods and waters wild  
Do hymn an autumn sound.  
The summer sun is faint on them --  
The summer flowers depart --  
Sit still -- as all transform'd to stone,  
Except your musing heart.

How there you sat in summer-time,  
May yet be in your mind;  
And how you heard the green woods sing  
Beneath the freshening wind.  
Though the same wind now blows  
around,  
You would its blast recall;  
For every breath that stirs the trees,  
Doth cause a leaf to fall.

Oh! like that wind, is all the mirth  
That flesh and dust impart:  
We cannot bear its visitings,  
When change is on the heart.  
Gay words and jests may make us smile,  
When Sorrow is asleep;  
But other things must make us smile,  
When Sorrow bids us weep!

The dearest hands that clasp our hands, --  
Their presence may be o'er;  
The dearest voice that meets our ear,  
That tone may come no more!  
Youth fades; and then, the joys of youth,  
Which once refresh'd our mind,  
Shall come -- as, on those sighing woods,  
The chilling autumn wind.

Hear not the wind -- view not the woods;  
Look out o'er vale and hill-  
In spring, the sky encircled them --  
The sky is round them still.  
Come autumn's scathe -- come winter's  
cold  
Come change -- and human fate!  
Whatever prospect Heaven doth bound,  
Can ne'er be desolate.

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning**

**A Winter Day**

The air is silent save where stirs  
A bugling breeze among the firs;  
The virgin world in white array  
Waits for the bridegroom kiss of day;  
All heaven blooms rarely in the east  
Where skies are silvery and fleeced,  
And o'er the orient hills made glad  
The morning comes in wonder clad;  
Oh, 'tis a time most fit to see  
How beautiful the dawn can be!

Wide, sparkling fields snow-vestured lie  
Beneath a blue, unshadowed sky;  
A glistening splendor crowns the woods  
And bosky, whistling solitudes;  
In hemlock glen and reedy mere  
The tang of frost is sharp and clear;  
Life hath a jollity and zest,  
A poignancy made manifest;  
Laughter and courage have their way  
At noontide of a winter's day.

Faint music rings in wold and dell,  
The tinkling of a distant bell,  
Where homestead lights with friendly glow  
Glimmer across the drifted snow;  
Beyond a valley dim and far  
Lit by an occidental star,  
Tall pines the marge of day beset  
Like many a slender minaret,  
Whence priest-like winds on crystal air  
Summon the reverent world to prayer.  
A Winter Day

**Lucy Maud Montgomery**

A cold November day.

The trees are disrobed and the glory and  
beauty of autumn are all in the past.

It is that time of year when the earth seems  
a little dreary and when you long for the  
soft white blanket of snow to fall and cover  
it up until spring comes again.

**Bjorn**

**Editor's Note** - This edition marks the end of Jerry Anderson's run as the curator of Poet's Corner. After almost five years, he's hanging up his beret. Thank you Jerry for your dedication to this newsletter and for sharing some of your favourite verses with us.

