



The Wesley-Knox Kindred Spirit Connection

Moving in the Spirit...

Epiphany-Winter 2018

From Rev. Tracy



When Harry MacLean mentioned that there would be a special Winter Edition of the Kindred Spirit Connection because we had so many great things happening at Wesley-Knox, I was pleased to know that there is so much news to share.

We are very blessed with people and programs that allow Wesley-Knox to be a community where you can get involved in so many intentional ways.

This has become even more clear as I have had the opportunity to work with the Nominating Committee whose task is to get us prepared for the New Governance Structure that will come into effect at our Annual Meeting on February 11. As the Committee looked at the opportunities we have to serve within the church and the personal gifts of those who make Wesley-Knox their home, it has been amazing to see the number of people who are excited to be part of the ministry here and become involved. The Committee's focus has been on ensuring that those who offer their time and talents are doing so in areas that excite them and where they feel they have a fit. The Committee has worked hard and

people have accepted invitations to serve. I trust that Wesley-Knox will benefit from the energy and enthusiasm of all of these people.

I also want to encourage you to discern how you might become involved. Research tells us that being an active part of a faith community is good for our health! The Christian faith is one that is lived out and practiced in community. If you have not yet found a way to participate or share your gifts, please know that there is a place for you at Wesley-Knox. In the coming weeks and months, you will receive invitations to become more involved. This is not because our committees "need more people", but because the members of the Nominating Committee and those who will follow them have recognized that the church is stronger and that people's faith lives deepen as they take part in the various aspects of our church's ministry. There are many ways for you to participate, share your gifts and get to know others in a whole new way. I pray that you will each respond as together we "Move in the Spirit." Blessings to you in this season of Epiphany and the season of Lent that will soon follow.—Rev. Tracy Crick-Butler



It was standing room only at Feliz Navidad, the 2017 Christmas concert with the Wesley-Knox choirs, Denise Pelley, Stephen Holowitz and band. Also well attended: the Christmas pageant and our two Christmas Eve services. At Christmas, Wesley-Knox is definitely the place to be.—Saharsh Cherien/Pixelesque Photography photo

In Memoriam

We thank God for the life and witness of

Danny Thomas Smith
March 8, 2017

Elaine Marion Forrest
August 30, 2017

Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Read
November 29, 2017

PANCAKE SUPPER!



All-you-can-eat pancakes plus ham, baked beans, choice of beverage and do-it-yourself sundaes for dessert!

Tuesday, February 13, 2018
5-7 pm

Adults \$6 | Children 12 and under \$3
Wesley-Knox Social Hall

91 Askin Street, www.wesleyknox.com

Proceeds support the Wesley-Knox Community Breakfast Program

From our Director of Music



As we move through winter at Wesley-Knox, I thought I'd shed some light on a burning question in everyone's mind. What is the meaning of all those different coloured ribbons worn by members of the Junior Choir and Mysterium?

Ribbons are a system of choral and vocal skill recognition. The colour of the ribbon indicates level of experience and choral achievement. Ribbons, worn with a gold medallion, are awarded at the discretion of the choir director. Note that ribbon color does not indicate the value of a chorister's contribution to the choir.

White

- Achieved by everyone in his or her second year of choir

Blue

- Can sing the melody and words in tune
- Watches the conductor carefully when singing
- Stands like a Singer

Achievement of the Blue Ribbon indicates a child has enough ability to enjoy singing in a choir for the rest of his or her life.

Red

- Can follow the music with finger
- Can sing descants confidently without confusion
- Has a professional attitude in performance

Green

- Takes low singers' breaths
- Can sing an alto, tenor or bass part confidently without confusion
- Shows leadership in the choir

Gold

- Can sight-sing a hymn part
- Is a leader within the choir
- Helps with management of the ensemble

So now, when you see our children and youth singing, you can understand the achievements they have made!— *Karen Schuessler, director of music*

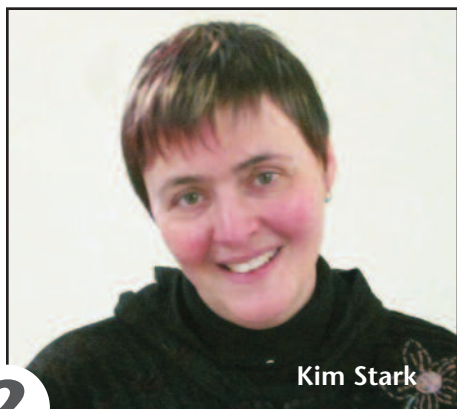
Kindred Spirit Connection

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New and Noteworthy...

Congratulations to **Karen Schuessler**, our Wesley-Knox Director of Music and founder-director of the 50-voice Karen Schuessler Singers. Karen was recently named to the 2018 Mayor's New Year's Honour List. This list celebrates outstanding achievement and a wide range of volunteer and philanthropic work in nine different categories. Karen was honoured in the Arts category.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend! On Saturday, April 21, just in time for Earth Day, the wolf, whale and loon return to Wesley-Knox in a special benefit concert (all proceeds to Wesley-Knox) of **Missa Gaia/Earth Mass**. With Denise Pelley, Stephen Holowitz, the band, the Wesley-Knox organ and some 100 singers including members of our Senior Choir and Mysterium, it's all part of the Karen Schuessler Singers' celebration of 25 years of great music making.

Great news! Just before press time, the Ministry and Personnel Committee announced it had hired **Kim Stark** to be our new Wesley-Knox **Director of Child and Youth Ministry**. While her main focus will be the Sunday School, Kim has also agreed to coordinate a monthly Junior Youth Group and organize a family activity once each quarter. Kim brings a joyous outlook and a wealth of skills and experience to her job. Please take a moment to welcome her and wish her well.

Bread Not Stones Hosted on Parliament Hill

Our November Bread not Stones event on Parliament Hill was a wonderful success! Senator Art Eggleton and the all-party Anti-Poverty Caucus hosted the twelve of us at a very successful breakfast and panel discussion in recognition of United Nations' Universal Children's Day. Meetings were also held with the federal ministries of Families, Children and Social Development, and Indigenous Services. MPs Kate Young and Irene Mathysen delivered powerful statements in the House of Commons about our Bread not Stones initiative. We distributed 360 Dolls of Hope from across Canada, one to every Member of Parliament (MP), and to a number of senators and Canadian icon, Ed Broadbent. Kate Young arranged a great photo op on the steps of Parliament Hill with MPs of all political persuasions holding their dolls. The Prime Minister, in a special video, thanked Bread not Stones for its efforts on behalf of children across Canada living in poverty.

We had asked to have our 338 Dolls of Hope displayed in the House of Commons—one at every MP's desk. This was a longshot because, mostly for security reasons, props are not usually allowed in the House. Despite our extensive efforts, permission was not granted. Instead, the dolls were distributed to MPs in the lobby area. To our great surprise, while seated in the Public Gallery, we saw some dolls actually sitting at MPs' desks. As more MPs took their seats in the House, more dolls appeared! MP Kate Young then delivered her statement about our project and encouraged all MPs to pick up their dolls. Several immediately did! Although technically not permitted, there was not one objection! The power of the dolls remains undisputed!

We conducted ten rag doll workshops to create our 360 dolls. Four were with amazing children, aged five to thirteen. Even the youngest understood they were helping children less fortunate than themselves. These children, aged five to seven, stuffed the dolls' arms and legs. We were amazed at their dedication and persistence. At one church, the children were asked to put their finished arms and legs next to a sewer who attached them to a doll's body. They created a huge pile of arms and legs and then gathered around that pile to choose their favourites. They asked if the sewer could use the ones they'd chosen. She smiled, kindly agreed and said "I'm now taking orders!" The six- and seven-year old children formed a line and ever so patiently awaited their turns. One at a time, they watched excitedly as their chosen arms and legs became an integral part of a powerful Doll of Hope.

We are ever grateful to the devoted women, men and children from United Church congregations across our country, who created our beloved Dolls of Hope, who continue to touch hearts and minds and speak volumes for our 1,242,530 Canadian children who continue to live in poverty. And to Wesley-Knox people who have been a big part of this initiative. —Linda Woods, co-chair with Laurel Kenney, Bread not Stones, London Conference United Church of Canada



Kate Young, London West MP, receives her Doll of Hope in Ottawa. (Fun fact: Kate is the mother-in-law of Kelly Webb who frequently plays trumpet at Wesley-Knox services.)



Challenge of Paul Lenten Study Series

Several times during his November lectures, **John Dominic Crossan** mentioned a new video-based series, **The Challenge of Paul**, that would be free to churches willing to try it out. We now have videos for the first eight sessions and they look very good. How will it work? We will be asking people to sign up. Each week, participants will receive an e-mail with a one-page reading. We'll gather at **3 pm on Sundays starting on February 25**, view the video, break for coffee and dessert, and then discuss. We will usually use a template: What did you see that was affirming? What was challenging? What would you like to know more about? And so on. We expect sessions to finish at 4:30 pm. Historically, Paul has received a lot of bad press. This is an opportunity to learn more about him. We hope you will want to take part.—Harry MacLean

Special Services...

Sunday, February 11, 10:30 am
Reception of new members

Tuesday, February 13, 7 pm
Ash Wednesday Eve service. All welcome

Sunday, February 25, 10:30 am
Barbara McGill leading worship

Sunday, March 25, 10:30 am
Palm Sunday Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday, March 29, 5 pm
Potluck Supper and Communion

Good Friday, March 30
Service at Calvary United Church 10:30 am
Swell Youth Service at Wesley-Knox 7 pm

Easter Sunday, April 1
Sunrise service in our sanctuary 7:30 am
We Celebrate Resurrection! 10:30 am

Special Events...

2018 Annual General Meeting
Sunday, February 11, immediately after service

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Tuesday, February 13, 5–7 pm

First Leadership Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 21, 7 pm, all welcome

OSCO Great Chili Cookoff
Saturday, February 24, 6 pm, meal at 7

KSS Hot Hits of Silver Screen Concert
Saturday, March 24, 8 pm

Winter Movie Nights
Friday, February 16 and March 2, 7:30 pm

Community Breakfasts
Saturday, March 10 and April 14, 8:45–10:30 am

Out-of-the-Cold Dinners
Sunday, February 25 and March 25, 5:30–6:30 pm

Advance Notices...

KSS Missa Gaia Benefit Concert for Wesley-Knox,
Saturday, April 21, 8 pm

Annual Turkey Dinner, Saturday, April 28, 6 pm

Pastoral Care and Stewardship

This is the edited text of a message that Brenda Smith, chair of the District Visitors' and Pastoral Care Team, shared with the congregation just before Christmas.

A person whose work is to take care of something is a steward. A ship or flight steward attends the needs of passengers. This morning, I am thinking about stewardship as a congregation and as individuals, and I want to talk about a team of individuals in our congregation who offer pastoral care—our Pastoral Care Team.

I am one of the team members. We bring skills from various backgrounds and interests. For example, I was a medical technologist and later a hospital visitor for the United Church.

Members of Pastoral Care Team have attended learning sessions and covenanted with one another about how to support and interact with one another in our work. Commissioned by the congregation in June, we continue to meet and learn from one another.

Of course, you are correct in thinking that we already have a large group of Wesley-Knox individuals—our District Visitors—who visit and deliver the Kindred Spirit Connections to folks who are not regularly in church for worship. This too is stewardship and pastoral care, intended to maintain connections with individuals and families who continue to call Wesley-Knox their church home. District Visitors support the Pastoral Care Team. Of course, our ministers visit, bring spiritual support and offer the sacraments. This too is also Pastoral Care.

As a community of Christians, we celebrate certain of the happy events of our lives such as baptisms, marriages, blessings, in worship together. We sing praises and offer prayers. These spiritual practices give shape and meaning to our lives. But there are times in our lives when “stuff happens”—illness, bereavement, breakdown of a relationship, a job loss or a trauma—major changes that cause us to lose our balance, lose hope and question our faith. Where is God? We ask this as we try to understand what losses like these mean to our life.

Wouldn't it be nice to have a friend come alongside, take our hand, listen to our story, hear our pain—a person who was willing and able to hear our anger, sadness or confusion—whatever our emotional reaction—and bring assurance of God's presence to our suffering—a person who could offer the comfort of our faith through scripture and prayer and help us in our struggle for meaning. This connection and recognition of our spiritual needs as well as our needs for love and friendship—that is pastoral care from a Wesley-Knox friend, a trained member of our Pastoral Care Team.

Our Wesley-Knox community of faith supports and encourages wise stewardship and many levels of pastoral care. Know that it is available, just for the asking.—*Brenda Smith, chair*