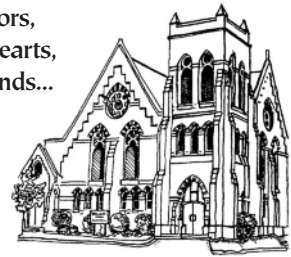


The Kindred Spirit Connection

Open doors,
Open hearts,
Open minds...



Wesley-Knox United Church • 91 Askin Street, London, Ontario N6C 1E7 • 673-4803 • www.wesleyknox.org

Epiphany - Winter 2014

Message from Rev. Tracy



In Walt Disney's new animated movie, *Frozen* (if you haven't seen it, I highly recommend it), there is a song entitled "Love is an Open Door". Of course, in the movie, that title has many connotations and explanations. But as Christians, that title also has an important message for us.

An open door is an invitation, a way of including other people. When we experience an open door, we know there are no barriers keeping us out and that we are welcome and embraced. In scripture, we hear Jesus inviting us to knock, assuring us that the door will be open for us. (Matt 7:7, Luke 11:10) That is why an open door has become a goal of many faith communities.

It is also our goal. Wesley-Knox expresses much of its mission through its tagline, "Open doors, open hearts, open minds..." For this reason, the image of an open door is particularly powerful to us. We can imagine love flowing through that door—love of Christ, love of neighbour, love of our whole community.

But many in our world and even many of us experience closed doors on a regular basis—doors that we close on ourselves and doors that have been closed to us.

This is Epiphany, that time of year when we live in response to the presence of Jesus in our world. Perhaps this is a good time to open some doors and let more love flow. Jesus teaches us the importance of love and forgiveness, of justice and peace, of welcoming neighbor and dining with those who are considered outcasts. He opens doors of love, acceptance and community throughout the scriptures and he encourages us to do the same.

We at Wesley-Knox are blessed with an open community

of good people, a building that is used in many ways and a deep commitment to following the way of Christ. But I also know there are many doors in our individual lives and the life of our church that are still to be opened.

This year, let's embrace an invitation to open some doors of love in Christ's name. Here are some ways each one of us might "open a door" as we continue our faith journeys together:

- Literally, open the door for someone at the bank, the grocery store, school, anywhere. Open the door for a stranger and smile at them as you do so.
- Open the door of your home and welcome in someone with whom you've been meaning to reconnect for a long time. And while that door is open, invite in someone else you otherwise might not think to include.
- Open some doors for others, doors that have been shut to them far too long. Employ someone, accept someone, get to know someone, reach out to someone.
- Open the doors of our church as you invite people to come and see what God is doing in this place. Open them so all feel welcome and embraced and part of our faith community.
- Open a door within yourself that has been shut far too long—a door in a relationship, in your thinking, in your willingness to learn and grow.
- Open the door of your heart to welcome in Christ and make an intentional space for Christ in your life.

My prayer for each of us this year is that we experience and share the love of Christ as, together, we open doors for one another and to God's world.

Love is an open door!

Peace!—Rev. Tracy Crick Butler



Christmas Eve at Wesley-Knox: Sharing the Light

In Memoriam

We thank God for the life and witness of

Ardith Marion Heller
November 3

Margaret Emily McLeod
December 21

Dora Adeline McNeil
January 7

Baptisms

We welcome into God's family

Amelia Rose Westbrook
daughter of
Pete and Meghan

Jean Winnifred Homolka
daughter of
Tony and Matilda

Special thanks to...

- **Cathie Banks** for her fine work as chair of Wesley-Knox Council and Official Board over the past four years. Best wishes to **Cathy Grasby** as she takes over at our February 9 AGM!
- **UCW** for raising \$18,000 for the new tables and chairs in our Social Hall!
- Those who purchased cheese from the **Handbell Choir**. \$400 was raised!
- **Wesley-Knox knitters** for the over 100 hats, mittens and scarves that were distributed just before Christmas!



Richard's Rumblings

2013 SACK Campaign

This year, Christmas seemed to come early. Suddenly, Wesley-Knox's week of volunteering was upon us and we were without a full complement for 36 time slots of 1-1/2 hours each. But four volunteers did double shifts so our kettle was always attended by the welcoming, smiling folk of our Wesley-Knox family.

Our location can be meteorologically chilly. Thus everyone was glad to be indoors at our location. Richard warmly thanks all who volunteered, many for the tenth year now, to make his role one of total joy.—*Richard Yake, SACK coordinator*

MusicLeaks from the Loft

There are two times each year when our Wesley-Knox Senior Choir becomes really obvious. 1) At our annual Christmas concert on the first Saturday of December. For many, this concert heralds the beginning of the Christmas season. Wesley-Knox folk help as ushers and stage crew. And 2) at our sellout April turkey dinners which attract folk from far beyond our church community. Again, many members of our Wesley-Knox family participate, preparing and serving the food at this gala event.

We also perform special music like Vivaldi's *Gloria* or a Schubert mass. Sometimes, we offer musical support at a funeral.

But now, let me take you on a backstage tour. Our Thursday evenings consist of a two-hour rehearsal with a 93-second break. (Really!) No matter one's mood to begin, Karen soon has us singing joy, and we leave rehearsal uplifted!

Wonder why our performance calibre is so high? Karen encourages us to offer our best and also teaches us the best way to achieve the best sound. She insists that we convey the spiritual message in every anthem, not just pure notes of music. She is also careful to listen for the best blend of voices. This dictates where we are physically placed in the choir. We choristers are then exhorted to listen to one another and sound as one voice.

The major project each year, of course, is the Christmas concert. Karen selects music that will excite choristers and audience alike. We begin in September, learning new repertoire and reprising old favorites.

For those who join us on concert evening, some of the music is participatory. The audience sings three carols plus the Twelve Days of Christmas. We choristers love how creative you are on the various verses, especially on "six lords-a-leaping".

We thank the Wesley-Knox family and the extended community for your active support of our ministry of music.—*Richard Yake, president, senior choir*

Flyer-Friendly Flight Makes a New Friend!

Physical exercise + cranial surfing + fresh air = "flyer flight"! Of course, I mean those flyers inviting folk from our 'hood to join in the myriad of activities at Wesley-Knox. This delivery involves a time commitment of about three hours three times per year. Personally, I do an hour per day to prolong the joy.

An anecdote. Just following the late November-early December snowstorm, on my Advent flyer run, it was a challenge to navigate ice-covered walkways and snow-packed front steps. Half way along my Briscoe Street East trek, I was greeted by a smile-bearing woman delivering flyers for a furnace repair company.

She suggested pooling our flyers and alternating houses for the drop-off. All right! In seemingly no time, we both ran out of flyers and then we stopped to chat.

She lives very close to Wesley-Knox. She is of the Jewish faith and has a slight accent. Turns out she was from Québec! Bonus for me, Richard, a retired French teacher! Opportunity to speak my other tongue again, in our 'hood even!

Since then, we've been out for coffee and we plan to repeat. She has offered to help with our spring flyers as she loves walking. She created a Christmas moment just as Advent was beginning! Praise for our Frequent Flyer Foray!—*Richard Yake*

Sudan Update

One year ago, thirteen of us from our congregation embarked on a journey to South Sudan. We tagged along with the founders of Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS), Jane Roy and Glen Pearson, both members of our church. Jane, Glen and other CASS people have been faithfully visiting Southern Sudan at least once a year since 1998, and in spite of the recent violence and fighting, this year is no exception. On January 18, Jane left for South Sudan with CASS partner Carol Campbell and Aben, the South Sudanese woman who cared for Jane and Glen's adopted Sudanese daughter, Abuk, after Abuk's birth mother died during the 22-year civil war that ended in January 2005.

The current president of the Republic of South Sudan is Salva Kiir Mayardit, the Dinka who led the Sudan People's Liberation Army towards the end of the civil war. He officially took political office in July, 2011, when South Sudan became an independent country. Fighting began again this past December when a faction of the military, apparently led by Kiir's former deputy Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer, attempted a coup d'état. This conflict aggravates existing tensions between the Dinka and Nuer ethnic groups and, though both sides have engaged in peace talks, it is also possible the situation will devolve into another civil war.

Many of you will be concerned about the safety of Jane, Carol and Aben as they travel into this unstable region. One factor in their favour is that the fighting, so far, has been in the opposite end of the country from where this year's CASS team will be working. The government is based in the south in the capital city Juba while much of the fighting has occurred in the state of Jonglei which is in the east. Jane and her team will be in the Northern Bahr El Gazal region near the town of Aweil in the country's northwest. Another factor in their favour is that Northern Bahr El Gazal is primarily a Dinka state suggesting that there is less likelihood of local ethnic friction.

We know many of you will join those on the Mission and Service Committee in praying for Jane, Carol, Aben and the embattled people of South Sudan.—*Tony Haworth, chair, Mission and Service Committee*



Newsworthy Notes

- UCW is offering **all-season greeting cards**, \$0.50 each, weekdays in the church office and Sundays in the Centennial Parlour. UCW is also looking for people to make greeting cards. Meet in the Social Hall Tuesday mornings, 9:30–11 am. Bring scissors and fancy cutters and enjoy the fun and fellowship! Need more info? Call Mary Anne van de Vooren at 519.690.2284.
- On Sunday, February 2, right after church, join the Sutherland and Jenkins families in the Social Hall for a celebration of **Chinese New Year** complete with egg rolls, teas and coffee. We thank them for their gift of this celebration!
- On Saturday, February 8, 10 am–12 noon, come for **tubing fun** at River Valley! Meet in the W-K parking lot at 9 am.
- Come and support our **Girls' Junior Choir** on Saturday, February 22, 7 pm, as they sing O Canada at the London Lightning vs Island Storm basketball game. Tickets, 16 and under: \$12, adults: \$15, are available from any choir member or parent.
- All are invited to attend the Monday, March 3 UCW meeting at which Jennifer Fazakerley and Grace Bradish, co-authors of *Just Stay*, will speak on **Dying with Pancreatic Cancer**. Time: 7 pm. Should be an interesting, informative evening!
- Do you make a **dynamite chili**? Wesley-Knox needs someone who has the skill and knowledge to make a chili that will put us at the top of the list at this year's March 1 **Old South London Chili Cookoff**. Info? Call Debbi Jarvis at 519.471.6727.
- Mark your calendars now! Date of this year's **Turkey Dinner**, hosted by the Senior Choir, is Saturday, April 5.
- New to Wesley-Knox? Join us for a **casual evening of conversation and dessert** on Tuesday, March 18, 6:30–8 pm in the Parlour. Learn more about Wesley-Knox, and meet the staff, chair of Official Board, and some who joined our church last year. Bring your children as we are planning for them. Again, for more info, call Debbi Jarvis at 519.471.6727.



Poinsettias, Pageant, Advent candles...



Winter Movie Festival

Movies are shown in the Centennial Parlour on Fridays at 7:30 pm. Free popcorn and soft drinks plus decaf and dessert after the movie, and often a second feature for night owls. A great way to make new friends! Here's the 2014 Winter schedule for this popular program. More information on church bulletin boards and on the church website, www.wesleyknox.com.



- February 7: **Because of Winn-Dixie** with Anna Sophia Robb and Jeff Daniels

- February 21: **The Great Gatsby** with Leonardo

DiCaprio and Carey Mulligan

- March 7: **Philomena** with Judy Dench and Steve Coogan

- March 21:

Austenland with Keri Russell Depp and J J Feild

- 7 pm March 28 Family Movie Night: **Frozen** (Disney animated feature)



Marcus Borg Returns to Wesley-Knox

There's a lot of good thinking about God going on these days, and a lot of good work being done on Jesus and the Bible. Problem is that so much of it is inaccessible or difficult to understand. That's where Marcus Borg comes in. Of all the Jesus and Bible scholars we know of, no one is better than Marcus at explaining it all in a clear and interesting way and getting it all to make sense.



Marcus Borg

That's why we've invited Marcus back to Wesley-Knox for the weekend of **October 17–19**. When he spoke at Wesley-Knox in 2009, his lecture series attracted over 400 from all over Southwestern Ontario and beyond (some even came from Ottawa and Newfoundland) and over 350 on Saturday. There was nothing but praise for his lectures and the series firmly put Wesley-Knox "on the map". We expect a similar response this year.

Marcus is author or co-author of over twenty books on God, Jesus and the Bible. Where can you investigate his thinking? We still think his 1994 book, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* is the best place to start, which is why we've ordered a set for the church. Look for them in the Centennial Parlour early in February. Or you can visit the Wesley-Knox website (home > programs > education) where notes from his 2009 Wesley-Knox lectures can still be found.

Offering a lecture series is always an exciting project and we think we know how to do it well. But this time we would like to find a way to make it easier for Wesley-Knox people to attend. Last time, we charged \$20 for Friday, \$30 for Saturday, \$40 for the entire weekend. That's standard pricing for these kinds of events but prohibitive for many young families in our church. Let us know if you have some ideas on how we might bring the price down.—*Harry MacLean*

Epiphany - Winter 2014 Calendar

Special Services...

Sunday, February 2

10:30 am
Chinese New Year Sunday

Sunday, February 9

10:30 am
AGM Sunday | Holy Communion

Sunday, February 16

10:30 am
Intergenerational Worship

Wednesday, March 5

7 pm
Ash Wednesday Service

Sunday, April 6

10:30 am
New Member Sunday

Sunday, April 13

10:30 am
Palm Sunday | Holy Communion

Lenten services throughout
March and April

Special Programs and Events...

River Valley Family Tubing

Saturday, February 8, 10 am–12 noon, meet at W-K at 9 am

2014 Annual General Meeting

Sunday, February 9 after service

Out-of-Cold Fundraiser Lunch

Sunday, February 23, 12 noon

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, March 4, 5–6:30 pm

KSS Road to Freedom Concert

Saturday, March 8, 8 pm

Introduction to Wesley-Knox

Tuesday, March 18, 6:30–8 pm

KSS Brahms Requiem Concert

Saturday, March 29, 8 pm

UCW Vendor's Sale

Thursday, April 3, 7–9 pm

Annual Turkey Dinner

Saturday, April 5, 6 pm

Movies at Wesley-Knox, Friday,

January 24, February 7 and 21, March 7 and 21, 7:30 pm

Family Movie Night,

Friday, March 28, 7 pm

Community Breakfasts

Saturday, February 8, March 8, April 12, 8:45–10:30 am

Out-of-the-Cold Dinners

Sunday, February 23, March 23, April 27, 5:30–6:30 pm

Wesley-Knox Official Board

Wednesday, February 19, April 16, 7 pm

Wesley-Knox Council

Wednesday, March 19, 7 pm

More information at

www.wesleyknox.com