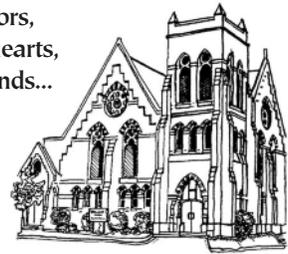


The Kindred Spirit Connection

Open doors,
Open hearts,
Open minds...



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

Advent-Christmas 2014

From Rev. Tracy

At this time of year a frequent conversation in the Butler household is, “When do we put up the tree and decorate?”



The Daddy would love to do it right after Remembrance Day. The Mommy says we need to wait until the beginning of Advent. What happens each year is that we wait too long and life gets crazy-busy and it is often only in the last few days before Christmas that our home becomes transformed and

we begin to feel that we are finally “ready for Christmas”.

Each year I wonder what it means to be ready. Yes, I recognize baking, shopping, wrapping and entertaining are all part of what we have come to know as Christmas. But in the Christian context, what does it mean to be ready?

The Season of Advent means “coming” or “arrival”. This year it begins on November 30. It’s the time in the church calendar when we prepare ourselves for the celebration of Christ’s birth—when we get ready. During Advent our scripture readings include prophetic voices that teach us of the coming of a Messiah and remind us to remain faithful and live with hope. In church, we light candles to mark the way, and we intentionally seek to live our faith in the light of the One who brings justice, peace and truth. It is a time of anticipation, expectation, preparation and longing.

There are many wonderful resources available to help us

have a spiritually rich Advent Season and get ready for Christmas. But if I were asked to suggest one thing that we might do to faithfully prepare ourselves for Christmas, I would offer that the best way to prepare is to be OPEN to all that the season brings. OPEN to God breaking into our lives. OPEN to the presence of Christ who comes into the darkest places and reveals light. OPEN to those around us who struggle and search for hope. OPEN to experiencing joy in the simplest of ways. OPEN to giving and receiving love from those we know and those we do not know. OPEN to being surprised and delighted to see that angels really do sing, wonderful news can come from the strangest places, and miracles do happen. OPEN to welcoming the Child who was born for us, Emmanuel—God with us.

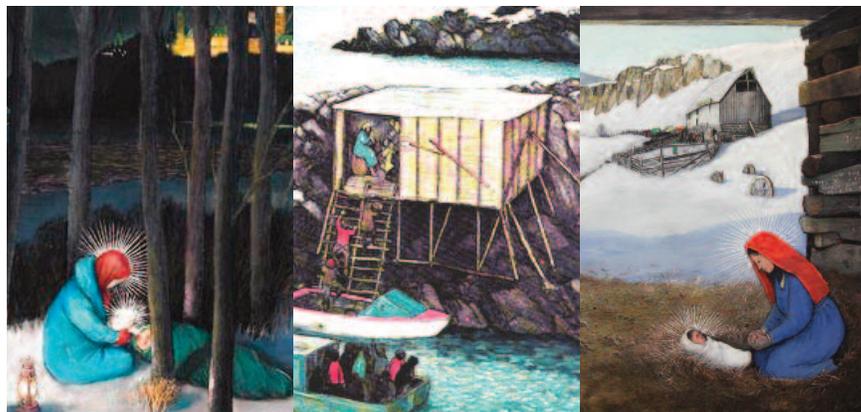


Sometimes we are so busy getting ready for Christmas that we miss the signs of God’s presence all around us. God is in our world. Christ is changing lives and his message of peace, hope, joy and love is a message that the world still longs to hear today. We might never feel quite “ready for Christmas”, but with OPEN hearts we can experience once again the wonder and the joy found in the birth of Christ.

My prayer is that you each will have a Christ-filled Advent and Christmas as you OPEN yourselves to the One who loves you.—Rev. Tracy Crick-Butler

A Northern Nativity

If it happened then, why not now? That’s the question Canadian artist William Kurelek tried to answer when he created his paintings for *A Northern Nativity*. In his book, he imagined Jesus born in a variety of Canadian settings: (l) by the Ottawa River across from the Canadian Parliament buildings, (middle) in a Newfoundland fisherman’s shack, (r) in a Northern Ontario barn beside the Trans-Canada Highway, in a trapper’s cabin, in an igloo, and so on. Of Ukrainian descent, a devout Roman Catholic, Kurelek died in 1977.—HM



In Memoriam

We thank God for the life and witness of

Gloria June Clarke
September 17

Francis Raymond Bawden
October 10

Ronald Barry McConnell
October 11

Ernest Claus Lee
November 2

Baptisms

Sage Elizabeth McComb-McLean
daughter of
David McLean and Janine McComb

Charlie Leo Menhinick
son of
Jacob Menhinick and Tabitha
Nennsteil-Collins

Benjamin Thomas William Lardner
son of
Thomas and Katharina Lardner

Kindred Spirit Connection

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and Bob Read

Deadline for materials for the
Epiphany KSC is Sunday, January 18.



From the Music Department



Another exciting fall! November 2 saw almost 100 choristers from all our choirs—Primary, Junior, Senior and Mysterium—come together to sing the anthem, “Sing a New Song!” What a thrilling experience!

Primary Choir Director, Barb McGill, is directing a bubbly group of young singers. Between the **Cherubs** and the **Primary Choir**, she has over 40 little ones learning important vocal and musical skills.

There are nearly 50 singers in this year’s **Junior Boys’** and **Junior Girls’** choirs combined. They have exciting plans this season. On November 15, they will take part in a city-wide Junior Choir Festival at Metropolitan United Church. On December 6 they will perform in the annual Christmas concert with Denise Pelley, the Senior Choir, and the band. In the spring they will go on a Sunday road trip to sing at another out-of-town United church as well as make their first-ever recording.

On November 28, our **Junior Boys’ Choir** will sing the national anthem at a London Knights hockey game. Since the Knights are playing an American team, the Erie Otters, the boys will sing the American national anthem as well. We need to sell 100 tickets to this game to be able to do this and they’re on sale now! Contact Kimberly Gillespie using the link on the Wesley-Knox website. It will be an exciting experience, our boys on the ice singing for 9000 fans! Go Knights! Go Boys!

On January 18, our **Junior Girls’ Choir** will also sing the national anthem, but at a London Lightning basketball game. Tickets will be on sale in the New Year. It’s another great Wesley-Knox family event. Go Lightnings! Go Girls!

Mysterium is the largest ever with 17 singers. They opened their year by singing at a bereavement service at LHSC Children’s Hospital for the families who had lost little ones during the year. It was a very meaningful service, they sang wonderfully, and they have been asked back to sing at next year’s service. I am proud of our fine young people who have so much to share and who extend compassion through their music.

The **Senior Choir** is deeply into rehearsals for its **17th Annual Christmas Concert** with Denise Pelley, Stephen Holowitz and the band. So many beautiful carols this year! Be sure to get your tickets early as this is often a sellout event! In fact, for many people, Christmas starts with this Wesley-Knox concert!

In closing, I would like to thank all of the wonderful musicians in our congregation who continue to bless us with their musical gifts week after week. They help make our Wesley-Knox community a rich and inspiring place as we worship One in the Spirit! Soli deo gloria!—Karen Schuessler, *director of music*

From our Director of Children’s and Youth Ministry



I am feeling very grateful as I sit and write this article. Also a little sleepy after spending the night at Wesley-Knox with four awesome boys and their Sunday morning leaders, but still grateful! Where many churches struggle to find committed volunteers for their children and youth ministry we sometimes border on having too many! The level of thought, preparation and care taken with lessons and events is extraordinary. Deepest thanks to all involved—to those in the nursery right up to our high school students and young adults. That being said, we will be experiencing a significant shift in our youth ministry in the New Year. After many years of exceptional service, Jane Walker and **Barb’s report continues ►**

A Warm Visit

Early in October, Darryl and I met with Margaret and Carol Robbins, wife and daughter of Padre Robbins. Major H. J. Robbins was the padre of Wolseley Barracks, London, and also served as the interim minister of Centennial United Church for five short months in 1968. This was just prior to the arrival of Rev. Fred Mackinnon and his family.



In those few short months, Padre Robbins won the hearts of many and is still lovingly remembered by many former Centennial folks.

Margaret and Carol came to see the memorial window dedicated to Padre Robbins. It is the Dove window installed in the tower, one of six that are illuminated at night. And yes, they saw it both in daylight and at night.

After his passing, Margaret gave Centennial the brass cross that Padre Robbins always placed on his jeep for religious services in the field after the war. That cross eventually found a home in the Wesley-Knox Sunday School. We shined it up and

showed it to our visitors.

Both Margaret and Carol were thrilled that Padre Robbins' legacy lives on at Wesley-Knox. He certainly is an important part of our history.—*Cathie Banks*

Cheese, Cheese, Cheese!

Once again, the Wesley-Knox Handbell Choir is selling cheese, this year to raise money for the Out-of-the-Cold dinners offered on the last Sunday of each month. Product description sheets and order forms are available at Sunday coffee hour and online, and orders can continue to be taken to the end of November. Delivery date: Tuesday, December 9. Cheese makes a great gift! (Ed. note: As with books, there is a peculiar dignity attached to a gift of cheese that is in no way affected by its price.) Order cheese and support a great cause!—*Cathie Banks*

► David Lumley have decided to step back from their weekly Youth Group commitment. I am excited to report that they intend to remain involved in the London Conference and Middlesex Presbytery youth events they were so instrumental in creating and bringing to Wesley-Knox, as well as with the important family and fellowship events that have made Wesley-Knox a "home" for so many of us, young and old. I hope you will all join us on December 14, Pageant Sunday, to celebrate Jane and Dave's ministry at Wesley-Knox.

We are also excited about several upcoming activities and events designed to help us explore and reflect on the themes of Advent and Christmas. By the time you read this, we will have completed our first-ever **Making Ready** afternoon on November 16 and will be preparing for the **Bethlehem Walk** on Friday, November 21. The bus for Bethlehem Walk will leave the Wesley-Knox parking lot at 5 pm and will return before 9. Be sure to eat a good supper before you come and dress warmly! Participation is by donation to cover the cost for the bus. There are a few spots left on the bus so please contact me at 519.438.4556, e-mail mcgill4556@gmail.com, to register.

A few final notes: **Mission and Service chili and corn bread mixes** will be on sale after church on November 23. Proceeds will support youth mission initiatives at Wesley-Knox. On Sunday, November 30, the grade 7-8 Sunday School class will meet after church to prepare for the Christmas Pageant. Bring a bagged lunch. We will be finished by 2 pm. If you're a parent, you won't want to miss **Parents' Night Out**, Friday, December 5. Drop off your children at the church at 5:30 pm and pick them up at 9. Jane, Dave and the Senior Youth Group will have registration forms available very soon. Please remember that the **Pageant Rehearsal and Party** is on Saturday, December 13, 10am–1pm, and that Pageant Sunday is Sunday, December 14.

I look forward to worshipping, learning, growing and celebrating with you during this Advent and Christmas season.
—*Barbara McGill, director, Children's and Youth Ministry*

Join us in the SACK!*

*Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Drive

December 15–20
11 am–8 pm
Wellington at
Commissioners
Metro



See Donna Light or
Richard Yake Sundays
before or after church,
or contact Richard at
519.438.1597
to book your time

"Make it a Family
Outing"

Christmas Stories Quiz

How well do you know the stories of Jesus' birth? Most of us know there are two different stories in the Bible, one in Matthew, the other in Luke. In popular imagination (nativity sets, greeting cards, etc.) these stories are often run together, but really, they are quite different. Below are 24 elements of the stories. Can you identify which belong to Luke, which belong to Matthew, which belong to both, and which belong to neither—that is, they are later additions not found in the Bible? Choose from L = Luke, M = Matthew, B = both, and N = not in the Bible. Correct answers may be found on the Wesley-Knox website, www.wesleyknox.com. Click on the KSC Newsletters link and see how well you did!

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. ___ angel Gabriel | 9. ___ animals in the stable | 17. ___ camels |
| 2. ___ star | 10. ___ Roman census | 18. ___ warnings in dreams |
| 3. ___ manger | 11. ___ Mary is central figure | 19. ___ shepherds |
| 4. ___ a worried Herod | 12. ___ flight to Egypt | 20. ___ intrigue, murder |
| 5. ___ virgin birth | 13. ___ gifts | 21. ___ Joseph is central figure |
| 6. ___ found in house | 14. ___ King of the Jews | 22. ___ little drummer boy |
| 7. ___ journey to Bethlehem | 15. ___ no room at the inn | 23. ___ light to the Gentiles |
| 8. ___ angels singing | 16. ___ <i>three</i> wise men | 24. ___ multiple prophecies fulfilled |

A Very Busy Fall



Left: Karen rehearses the Junior Choir. Centre: Barb McGill, who is exploring diaconal ministry, with supporters and her new prayer shawl. Right: If there's ever a fire at W-K, we have an evacuation plan! Firefighter Glen explains all.

Vulnerable Sector Screening

It's not every day that the church should celebrate that its ministry team is hanging out at the city police station. However this photo (r) gives cause. It captures Rev. Tracy and Dr. Ross having just taken in their applications for a Vulnerable Sector Screen. Dr. Ross completed his as ministry personnel working for the United Church of Canada (a requirement for all those in active ministry) and Rev. Tracy completed hers to allow her to volunteer in her children's schools (a requirement of the Thames Valley District School Board).

Wesley-Knox has been diligent. All volunteers who work with vulnerable populations in our church are required to have a Vulnerable Sector Screen. If you are ready, you can make your application online or in person at the police station. If you apply in person, you will need a note from the church office naming you as a volunteer. Your screen can then be shown, in complete confidence, to Cathy Grasby, our Chair of Board, and will be returned to you.

Thank you for working together, for sharing in ministry and making Wesley-Knox a community where all can feel not only welcome but safe. If you have any questions, please speak to Barb McGill, Cathy Grasby or Cathie Banks.—*Rev. Tracy*

The Mitten Cane

The fast and furious clicking of knitting needles can now be heard in many Wesley-Knox households! The Mitten Cane is becoming covered with hats, mitts and scarves of numerous colours and sizes! These items will be distributed at the December 13 Community Breakfast and December 28 Out-of-the-Cold meals. The cane will stay up until the end of December to receive all warm donations. Keep knitting!—*Cathie Banks*



Group and Committee Reports

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Our UCW continues to be very busy. All units are making recycled all-occasion cards. They are \$0.50 each and beautiful. Please help us so we can help you. They're a great deal. You will find them in the parlour after church and outside of Heather's office throughout the week.

As I write, all units are preparing for the Harvest to Holiday Festival. Once again, it should be a great success. Unit 4 is making its famous apple pies. Pies are now available for \$8 each. Please see Sue Mennill. Poinsettias should be available soon.

Speaker for UCW Sunday and the January General Meeting will be Jackie Wells. Jackie is a very lively speaker.

UCW Meeting Times

- **Unit 1:** first Monday of each month, 7 pm
- **Unit 2:** first Tuesday of each month, 1:30 pm
- **Unit 4:** second Tuesday of each month, 7 pm

We are very busy with more projects coming. Ladies, join in any time. Or if you like, just come out to help with a project. Check us out and enjoy the socializing and fun.—*Lynda Laskey, UCW president*

WESLEY-KNOX MEN

This fall, Wesley-Knox Men continued its Community Breakfast program on the second Saturday of each month. In November, 63 meals were served, down somewhat from the customary

100 or so. Special thanks to our volunteers, both men and women from the community and from the congregation, who provided the help that made this program such a success.

The annual Ham and Scalloped Potato dinner, held on Saturday, October 26, was very well attended with over 130 served. The supper raised over \$800 for the Community Breakfast program. Thanks to Mike and Margaret Ryan for organizing this event and to all who attended as volunteers and diners. We hope you enjoyed yourselves!—*Neil Eadie*

DISTRICT VISITORS

This September, the District Visitors Committee changed the way that information for District Visitors will be managed. Generally, the changes received a positive response. One change that was particularly well received was not having to pick up DV books and return them to the church after each communion. District Visitors now need to pick up only their Kindred Spirit Connections.

District Visitors have begun completing applications for Vulnerable Persons screening. If any District Visitors have questions about this process, please call Heather Westbrook in the church office and she will direct your call to the appropriate person for an answer.

As always we are looking for new District Visitors. If you have questions about what a District Visitor does, please call me at 519.685.1714. I can

tell you how rewarding it is to be a District Visitor.—*Heather Bedford, chair*

WORSHIP

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.—John 3:16

I'm writing this Advent article on a cold November afternoon when it feels as if, at any moment, it will snow. Our new cat from Animalalert has decided to park himself cosily on top of my Bible from which I have just copied the above quote. And what a quote it is!

Advent and Christmas will soon be upon us—that time of year when we anticipate and celebrate the coming of the Christ. There is no better place to experience the true meaning of the season than in church. Come and join us for an inspired and inspirational Christmas season. We will be offering worship services to meet a variety of needs: a family-friendly Christmas pageant, a Service of Hope for those experiencing loss and are finding it challenging to "feel Christmassy", and a Night Passed service for those in the 12-step programs, their family and friends. On Christmas Eve, come to church early to stake out a seat at the 7 pm Family Service, or come to the quieter service with Holy Communion at 10 pm. Kids, choirs, candles, carols and bells—we have it all to enhance your Christmas season with Christian fellowship, and lots of great music and inspirational messages. See you in church!—*Sandra Fox, chair*

Christmas Outreach 2014

Once again, for our annual Sunday School mission project, we will be joining forces with London Community Chaplaincy and Metropolitan United Church to collect food and pack and deliver hampers. Many hands will make light work. Please contact Barb McGill at 519. 438. 4556, mcgill4556@gmail.com, if you would like to participate. Here is the schedule.—*Barb McGill*

November 30-December 14: Food Drive, London Community Chaplaincy (needed items TBA)

December 18: Deliver food to New Hope Community Church, Lambeth (time TBA)

December 19: 9 am–12 noon pack hampers

December 20: 10 am–12 noon deliver hampers



Advent-Christmas 2014 Calendar

Special Services...

Advent 1: Sunday, November 30, 10:30 am: **Holy Communion**

Advent 2: Sunday, December 7, 10:30 am **Poinsettias and Handbells**

Advent 3: Sunday, December 14
10:30 am: **Sunday School Christmas Pageant**
2 pm: **Service of Hope**

The Swell: Saturday, December 20
7 pm: **For youth, by youth, but all ages welcome!**

Advent 4: Sunday, December 21:
10:30 am: **All Choirs**
7 pm: **Night Passed Service** for those in 12-Step Programs and their families

Christmas Eve: Wednesday, December 24
7 pm: **Carols, Kids and Candles Family Service**
10 pm: **Holy Communion**

Special Events...

Bethlehem Walk
Friday, November 21
bus departs at 5 pm

Karen Schuessler Singers Magnificat Concert
Saturday, November 22, 8 pm

Youth Coffee House
Sunday, November 23, 7 pm

Parents' Night Out
Friday, December 5, 5:30-9 pm

Angels We have Heard on High Christmas Concert with Denise Pelley, choirs and band
Saturday, December 6, 8 pm

Community Breakfasts
Saturdays, December 13 and January 10, 8:45-10:30 am

Out-of-the-Cold Dinners
Sundays, December 28 and January 25, 5:30 pm

Wesley-Knox Council
Wednesday, November 19, 7 pm

Wesley-Knox Official Board
Wednesday, January 21, 7 pm

Annual General Meeting
Sunday, February 8, 12 noon

More information at
www.wesleyknox.com



Acorns

Who are we? We are a group—not yet a committee—that is coming together to support and create an awareness of Five Oaks and its ministry within our Wesley-Knox church family. Acorns members include Heather Greenfield, Cindy Mackinnon, Chris Nichols, Brenda Smith and Richard Yake. Check this spot in the KSC, the church website, and Five Oaks website, www.fiveoaks.on.ca, for information on upcoming programs and events.—Richard Yake

6

KAREN SCHUESSLER SINGERS

Magnificat
Music for the coming of Christmas

John Rutter's exuberant Magnificat plus sparkling music by Pachelbel, Lauridsen, Biebl and Willcocks. With acclaimed London soprano, Sonja Gustafson and orchestral ensemble.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 22 2014
8 pm **WESLEY-KNOX UNITED CHURCH 91 Askin Street**

Adults \$20 / Seniors \$18 in advance (\$22 / \$20 at the door)
Students \$10 / Children 4-13, accompanied by an adult, free
Tickets from Walters Music (Masonville Place), Attic Books, Lambeth Art Gallery and Tuckey Home Hardware
519.455.8895 or www.kssingers.com
Tickets may be purchased online at www.kssingers.com

Orchestra Pit Sponsor **SISKINDS**

London Lambeth Arts Council sterling BMO Nesbit Burns ACLAIRA AGORA WESTCA Tuckey Home Hardware

ANGELS
We have heard on high...

Saturday, December 6, 8 pm

Glorious traditional and gospel Christmas music with Denise Pelley, the Wesley-Knox choirs, Stephen Holowitz and band, directed by Karen Schuessler

Tickets \$20 | \$15 students and seniors at Attic Books, Walters Music, Lambeth Art Gallery and Tuckey Home Hardware

Wesley-Knox United Church
91 Askin Street, London
519.673.4803 | www.wesleyknox.com

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