



The Wesley-Knox Kindred Spirit Connection

Moving in the Spirit...

Advent – Christmas 2017

From Rev. Tracy



As many of us do at this time of year, I recently took the time to begin figuring out my Christmas gift-giving list. I always worry that someone will be forgotten or I will overlook that one important gift. And then there is the task of *how much* to spend.

Each year it seems to get more complicated and this fall I have begun asking, “What is the real purpose of gift-giving?”

At Christmas the answer always takes me back to God’s gifts of hope, peace, joy and love that have come to us through Jesus. In that baby born so long ago, God gave of God’s self so that we might know the depth of God’s love for each one of us and be able to experience and live that love in our midst. It was and is a gift that has the ability to transform hearts and shape lives.

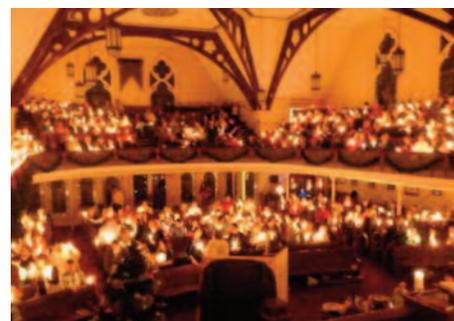
In the Christmas story we discover again how God came to the world to walk among us, live with us, and teach us that into darkness comes light and that love can change our world. It was a message that needed to be heard 2000 years ago and it continues to be a message our world desperately needs to hear: that each one of us can live in ways that inspire hope, grow peace, share love and create joy.

The gifts of God and the life of Jesus remind us that we too, have gifts that the world needs. As those who follow

Christ we can give of ourselves in ways that reflect our faith. This Advent at Wesley-Knox you will be given the opportunity to share *gifts that only you can give*. You will actually be invited to look deeply at how you can offer a gift that comes from your heart (quite literally if you take part in the Wesley-Knox-sponsored December 13 Blood Drive), a gift that meets the need of another or that helps bring about change. There will be many ways for you to share the gifts of Christ this Christmas.

One of the most beautiful gifts that you can give is to invite a friend or loved one to join you for worship. The gift of God’s love is for all people and at Wesley-Knox we are blessed with a worshipping community that is welcoming, inclusive and seeks to move in the Spirit of God. By extending an invitation you may help someone to discover how God’s presence can be felt—in inspirational music, heart-felt prayers, the Word of God in scripture and a community that meets God together. During this Advent and Christmas season there will be many opportunities to worship and celebrate the season, several which you can learn about in the pages of this newsletter.

I look forward to the giving and receiving of gifts that are given from faith-filled hearts and trust that Christ will be born anew for us this Christmas. Peace and blessings.—Rev. Tracy



Left: Margaret Ryan’s “Memories” concert raised over \$800 for the Building our Future Growth Campaign. Centre: Some 180 from all over Southwestern Ontario and beyond attended our John Dominic Crossan lectures. Yes, oppression and violence are eternal parts of the human condition, but Jesus and others had a better idea: not war and victory that only lead to temporary peace, but distributive justice—where everyone gets what they need—leading to a peace that lasts. Right: Christmas Eve at Wesley-Knox, 2016. Plan to be part of the experience this year.

In Memoriam

We thank God for the life and witness of

Isabel McFalls
November 4

Baptisms

Brooklyn Nancy Baille
daughter of
David Charles Baille and
Nancy Andrew

Join us in the SACK!*

*Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Drive

December 11–16
11 am–8 pm
Wellington Road Metro



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Kindred Spirit Connection

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Easter KSC March 4

From our Director of Music



Dear Fellow Travellers,

Another exciting fall is off and running! On November 12, over 100 choristers from all of our choirs—Primary, Junior, Mysterium and Senior—came together to sing Allen Pote's anthem, "Sing a New Song!" What a thrilling experience for all!

Our new Primary Choir Director, Mallory Brennan, is busy directing a bubbly group of young singers. Her choir of little ones are learning important musical and vocal skills. They plan to sing at Christmas-in-the-Village and at retirement homes this year. How fun!

Both the Junior Boys' and Junior Girls' choirs have exciting plans for this year. On December 2, they will come together as a full two-part choir—soprano and alto—to perform in Feliz Navidad, our 20th annual Christmas concert with Denise Pelley, Steve Holowitz and the band. I am very proud of how hard they are working in their rehearsals to prepare for this.

On December 10, our Boys' Choir will sing "O Canada" at a London Knights Hockey game. This year they will also sing the American national anthem, as the Knights will be playing the Erie Otters. We have to sell 100 tickets to this game to be able to do this. It will be an exciting experience to have our boys on the ice singing for 9000 fans! So go Knights, go boys, and buy tickets!

In the New Year, our Girls' Choir will sing "O Canada" at a London Lightning basketball game. Tickets go on sale in January. This is always a great Wesley-Knox family event. So go Lightning, go Girls, and buy tickets!

Finally, in the spring, the two choirs will go on a Sunday out-of-town road trip and sing at another United church.

This month, the entire Children's Community Choir (CCC) program welcomes Maggie Logan as Assistant to the Choir Administrator, Mary Bee Haworth. On Thursdays, Maggie will be welcoming families with her bright smile and helping Mary Bee with the many jobs that make the choir program run so smoothly.

Speaking of Thursdays, a big thanks to our wonderful volunteers who stand at the parking lot door on Thursdays to provide security for our children. This is an important job and your commitment is much appreciated.

This year our Mysterium youth choir is the largest ever with 23 enthusiastic singers. Mysterium will also be at the December 2 Christmas concert. Recently, they purchased new music folders with money they earned over the years through London Kiwanis Music Festival scholarships, performance honorariums and pizza fundraisers.

Speaking of fundraisers, Rheo Thompson Mint Chocolate Smoothies go on sale again in December, just in time for Christmas. These are perfect stocking stuffers and cost only \$2.50 each. Every one you buy supports the CCC program. Purchase after church from Helen Campbell!

The Handbell Choir under the direction of Cathie Banks will be enriching our worship early this year, on November 26. A fine group of ringers, this will be a Sunday not to miss!

Finally, as you would expect, at this time, the Senior Choir is heavily into rehearsals for the Christmas concert. There's lots of exciting music this year! Be sure to get your tickets early as this concert is often a sellout. In fact, for many Londoners, Christmas starts with the annual Wesley-Knox Christmas concert!

In closing, I would like to thank all of the excellent musicians in our congregation. They continue to bless us with their musical gifts week after week. They help make our community of Wesley-Knox a rich and inspiring place as we worship together, Moving in the Spirit!

Karen Schuessler, director of music

New Staff

Lisa Morris, our new Pastoral Care and Membership Coordinator, grew up as a member of Wesley-Knox. She was baptized, confirmed and married to her husband, Dean, all in our church. She spent her early family years in Oakville, Ontario, at Walton Memorial United where she was involved in many areas of that church's life. She and her family returned to Dorchester and Wesley-Knox in 2013. Her personal experiences have shown her the powerful impact that pastoral care can make in someone's life. This compassion and shared care is a constant reminder of God's presence and great love.



Lea Oberle is our new Director of Children's and Youth Ministry.



Worship Committee Report

Worship is one of several Wesley-Knox committees that finds Advent to be a busy time. It can be challenging to keep in mind the four main themes of Advent: HOPE, PEACE, JOY and LOVE. Some thoughts:

HOPE: Those who decorate the sanctuary every year one week before Advent immediately fill our congregation with HOPE. To the "elves" on the decoration team, a sincere thank you.

PEACE: At our last meeting, we planned to discuss and select a small-group faith formation program to offer in the New Year. I was anticipating conflict instead of PEACE. Why? Wesley-Knox once offered the popular Alpha program which was quite different from the Living the Questions (LtQ) programs that were offered later. I anticipated conflict about what we should select.

JOY: Thankfully, I was wrong and that filled me with JOY. I found our discussion insightful. I learned that, when they were offered in the past, both the Alpha program and various LtQ programs had generated much discussion about traditional understandings of the Bible and the newer, more liberal understandings. And all was done peacefully and respectfully. We decided that a proposed LtQ Eclipsing Empire should go ahead.

LOVE: Special LOVE to Sandra Fox for her long and dedicated service on the Worship Committee. Sandra was chair when I first joined. Her opening reflections were heartfelt and meaningful and she did a wonderful job bringing the Spirit into the worship committee and experience. On behalf of the committee, thank-you. We will miss you. We wish you all the best as you share your time and talents in other areas of church life.—*Dean Morris, chair*

Upcoming Remit

A remit is a vote by United Church members on a major issue or change in the national church. Remit 6, to be voted on in the New Year, proposes that ordained, diaconal and designated lay ministers be brought into a single order of ministry. Full details on our Wesley-Knox website, www.wesleyknox.com.

Advent and Christmas at Wesley-Knox

Join us for worship, a bazaar and a concert during this joyous Advent and Christmas season!

Saturday, December 2

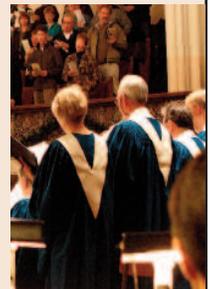
It's Christmas in the Village! Wesley-Knox Christmas Bazaar

11 am to 3 pm

Then at 8 pm...

Feliz Navidad Christmas Concert

Audiences of 500, year after year, can't be wrong! Glorious traditional and gospel Christmas music with **Denise Pelley, the Wesley-Knox Senior, Junior and Mysterium choirs, Steve Holowitz and band.** Tickets at Tuckey Home Hardware, other ticket outlets, and at the church.



Sunday, December 3

10:30 am: Advent 1 – Holy Communion

Sunday, December 10

10:30 am: Advent 2 – The Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 17

10:30 am: Advent 3 – All Choirs Sunday

7 pm: Night Passed service for those in 12-step programs and their families

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve

10:30 am: Advent 4 – Morning worship

7 pm: Kids, Carols and Candles Family Service

10 pm: Holy Communion with string quartet

Monday, December 25

Christmas Day

No service – Merry Christmas!

Sunday, January 1

New Year's Day

10:30 am: Christmas 1 – Happy New Year!

Thursday, January 4

7 pm: The New Year's SWELL

Sunday, January 28

10:30 am: Epiphany 1 – Holy Communion

Looking Ahead!

- Delivery and pickup time and date for **November cheese orders** is 4–7 pm, Thursday, December 7.
- Friday, December 8, is **Family Movie Night**. Join Wesley-Knox friends old and new at 7:30 pm in the Centennial Parlour for a special screening of **The Muppets Christmas Carol** starring—the Muppets!
- The **Mitten Cane** is up and there's wool at the back of the church. Help yourself to the wool and knit up some warm socks, mittens or scarves for the folks at our Community Breakfast and Out-of-the-Cold hospitality meals!
- There will be no **Out-of-the-Cold** hospitality meal on the fourth Sunday of December. That Sunday is Christmas Eve!
- Mark your calendars now! Sunday, January 21, is a **Souper Sunday**. Stay after church for a great lunch and help support the Out-of-the-Cold meal program. Advance tickets only, on sale in December.
- Wednesday, January 17, is a **Council Meeting** night. Our **Annual General Meeting** is on Sunday, February 11.
- On Tuesday, February 13, Wesley-Knox Men and friends offer their **Annual Pancake Supper** in support of the Community Breakfast program.

Charitable Donations and Tax Credits

Wesley Knox depends on charitable givings to provide the programs and services that benefit us all. Fortunately, Canada's tax system provides generous incentives to encourage Canadians to donate to charities in the form of tax credits for charitable givings.

For example, for the first \$200 of donations in any given year, you get a tax credit of about 25%. In other words, when you give \$200 to Wesley-Knox, it's really only costing you \$150 after you file your tax return.

If you give \$500, you will get an even larger tax credit on the next \$300. All donations above \$200 give you a tax credit of about 46%. That additional \$300 will only cost you about \$162.

Please remember that Wesley Knox issues tax receipts for all donations of \$10 or more. Thank you for your ongoing financial support of Wesley-Knox.

Restructuring Update

On November 5, 2017, the congregation held a meeting following Sunday worship service. Purpose of this meeting was to vote on a motion to accept the proposed new governance model, "Renewing our Vitality" to be piloted by Wesley-Knox United Church for one year starting February 2018. The meeting was well attended. Very few questions were asked. **98 votes were cast and 94% were in favour of the pilot.** A nominations committee was struck. It included current Transition Team members Marilynne McNeil, Carl Hearn and Liz Phoenix, plus two nominated from the floor: Ian Hardie and Cathie Banks. Also approved: a motion that, in January 2018, the Transition Team would organize training sessions for the candidates for the new Leadership Council and the chairs of current standing committees to prepare them for their new roles.—MM

Hand Drumming is Back!

Explore the music of the Middle East, Africa, Cuba and Jamaica with Rob Larose. Eight Mondays starting January 15. Kids: 4–4:30 pm, \$50. Teens and adults: 4:30–5:30 pm, \$70. Drums provided but bring your own if you have them. Register with Karen at the church.



Wesley-Knox United Church
CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
We are pleased to be a part of **Christmas-in-the-Village**
Saturday, December 2nd
11am to 3pm
91 Askin Street, London

Decadently Delicious Baked Goods
Fabulous Frozen Foods
Perfect Preserves
Women's Fashion Boutique
Gently Used Clothing
Unique and one-of-a-kind Vendors
Home Crafted - Mittens, Birdhouses,
Jewellery and Books

HOT LUNCHES
available at the
Wesley Knox Cafe
\$10 (limited tickets available)

We are on the Christmas-in-the-Village sleigh route too!

Feliz Navidad
8 pm, Saturday, December 2

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

Tickets \$20, \$15 students and seniors, at Attic Books, Tuckey Home Hardware, Lambeth Art Gallery and Wesley-Knox

Wesley-Knox United Church
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