

# "News for the Pews"

Sunday, January 3rd, 2021

## Minister's Musings

The baptism of Jesus from Mark's gospel tells us much of first century society. Jesus has left home to begin his quest of bringing an updated word of God to the people of his homeland. Now we in Canada expect our children to, one day, leave home; that's the way it works. In many cases they move away. In our family, our members live in Montreal, Toronto, Stratford, Ingersol, St Marys and London. When our children leave, we hope and pray that they have enough education and experience to carry them forward into life. In Jesus' day, unless there was no other course for you to follow, you never left your family. Without your family you were in a very dangerous position. Your safety depended on an extended family, your village and your family patron, for protection. For Jesus to leave it was a brave move. Now we do not know when Jesus left home. At what age did he venture forth? Where did he go? But, if he was the eldest child in the family, it would have been very unusual for him to leave as he was the next responsible male who was to inherit the family honour, name and assets of the father. Perhaps he wasn't the oldest boy.

John Pilch (a researcher into first century culture as it pertains to Jesus' mission) reminds us that much of what is written in the Bible seems to have details missing. The writers assume that we, the reader, know the context of what is missing because each writer was writing for readers of the first century. For example, if I were to write about our church service this time last year, I might leave out the taking up of the offering. I would assume that everyone would know that was done in churches at this time. However, if a future reader was looking at what I had written in the year 4021, where churches did not exist except in shopping centres, and the worship time was a time of fellowship and feasting as communion, then most would not realize how we paid the

## CONNECT WITH US!



91 Askin Street  
London, Ontario  
N6C 1E7



519-673-4803



wesleyknox@bellnet.ca



www.wesleyknox.com



Facebook

## Moving in the Spirit...

**A diverse, welcoming, caring  
and active faith community.**

**A place to learn, grow,  
build a relationship with God  
and make a difference  
in the world.**

Office Hours:

Not available due to the  
provincial shut-down.

**Remember we are now asking  
everyone to call ahead before  
coming to the building.  
This avoids having too many  
folks in the building and  
overlapping areas in use.**



bills by passing the hat each week. Pilch calls this 'high context' writing. 'Low context' writing would be legal documents, loan applications and cell phone agreements which include all details. In the Bible, especially when it comes to the New Testament, high context is the most popular form used by early writers. It's up to us to fill in the blanks.

We must remember that Jesus needed assigned honour in the first century for people to listen and believe his message. That was always the ongoing battle he had with the religious leaders in Jerusalem; what was his authority? Now whether you believe that God spoke to the assembled crowd at Jesus' baptism (Mark 1: 10-11) or whether it was a metaphor placed in the Jesus' story after his death does not matter. What these two little sentences gave to Jesus was honour and authority. We must remember that Jesus had profoundly changed peoples' faith and lives before the gospels were written. The authority was often added as a result of the changes observed by the faithful after his death. In Mark 5:27 we see the same scene acted out in the Transfiguration in Mark 9:2-8 . Whether we see them as actual events taking place or events added to the story in the gospel writing does not matter. What mattered was the sense people had, in their faith communities of Jesus, after his departure from earthly life.

Rev. Pirie

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Hello Everyone,

I hope that you had a nice, if much quieter than normal, Christmas.

I wanted to update you on the London Community Chaplaincy "Children's Christmas Store". As a result of generous donations from members and friends of Wesley Knox United Church, as well as members of the London Hyde Park Rotary Club, this project was an overwhelming success ! I brought 2 1/2 loads in my Forester to the Chaplaincy and they said 'we have enough'. Below is part of the email from Rev Pam Cullen of The London Community Chaplaincy :

It went great! Was busy!!! We used what was left at a second Christmas "sale" for parents. All money raised went to Salvation Army kettles (\$338 in total from our two sites). The stores were a blessing and brought dignity to families and children who were able to purchase a gift in their budget (25 cents for kids, \$1-\$3 for adults).

Several bags and boxes of donated items were also given to ELUCO (East London United Church Outreach), a program helping low income people in the Marconi area, and still, many more additional items were brought to My Sister's Place. The day before I delivered to My Sister's Place there were over 180 women there for assistance.

Thank you for your generosity which has helped many people in London this Christmas.

David Knoppert



## Annual General Meeting 2021 and Annual Report 2020

In December Leadership Council received a memo from the Antler River Watershed Regional Council informing us the General Council Executive approved provisions for congregations unable to hold annual meetings safely.

Currently Wesley-Knox is restricted by provincial regulation to in-person worship meetings of 10 people. This restriction is in place until January 23 and it is expected severe restrictions of numbers allowed in indoor meetings will continue past this date. At a meeting on December 16 Leadership Council voted to cancel the Annual General Meeting scheduled for February 7, 2021.

Following the provisions approved by the General Council Executive a meeting of Leadership Council will be held on February 17 at which the motions normally passed at an AGM will be passed by Leadership Council. This will include the approval of the financial budget for 2021. Wesley-Knox will issue an Annual Report for 2020 which will be available on February 5 on the church website and in printed form. Congregants are welcome to contact members of Leadership Council with their comments and questions. The meeting on February 17 will be an online meeting open to the congregation.

John McFall  
Chair, Leadership Council

## MOMENT FOR MOTHER EARTH

The City is looking for 1,000 participants. Will you help?

<https://londonclimate.ethelo.net/page/welcome-survey>

As part of The City of London's Climate Emergency Action Planning, the city has provided a simulator that allows you to experiment with different climate actions to see how these actions impact our emissions reductions targets. The goal during this process will be to create your ideal plan to reduce our greenhouse gases (GHGs) by at least 1 million tonnes without exceeding a set maximum level of difficulty. In other words: you can't say that we should all do 100% of everything that needs to be done. That seems unlikely to happen, although as we have seen recently with the global response to the pandemic, things can change quickly. The key question in this process is: what do you think we can and should prioritize in the next 10 years to reach our goals?

This is where you come in. The goal is to find what solutions have the broadest support and where there is room for improvement or a need to reconsider.

If we are going to meet our 2030 target, this means cutting our annual emissions by at least one million tonnes by 2030 – and virtually eliminating them by 2050.

Building a better future doesn't have to be hard and if you want to find out how you can be part of the solution, we've got lots of people and resources to help you. In many cases taking these actions can save you money or increase your quality of life.

### UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:

Fri. Jan. 8      **ANNUAL REPORTS**

Due in office via email.

Sun. Jan. 10    **VIRTUAL WORSHIP**

No virtual Sunday School  
Radio broadcasts resume (see last page for details)

Sat. Jan 16    **FAMILY CONNECTIONS**

Family Feud over Zoom!

Sun. Jan. 17    **VIRTUAL WORSHIP**

Sun. Jan 24    **VIRTUAL WORSHIP**

**Due to the provincial lock-down,  
the office administrator will be  
available by email.  
If PHONING the building,  
please leave a message.**

### Minute for Mission

Support of the United Church's Mission and Service Fund is a profound act of faith.

Starting this week, stories about the positive impacts achieved by the M&S Fund will be highlighted periodically in *News for the Pews*. The stories are published on the United Church's website.

This time the story is about you! It's about how the M&S Fund and its partners around the globe are able to respond to emergency situations due to your generosity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. You can read all about it here:

<https://united-church.ca/stories/amazing-generosity-during-covid-19-crisis>.

### PRINTING OF ANNUAL REPORT

The time of the Annual Report is fast approaching! Once again, as a reflection of our environmental stewardship efforts, we will be "taking orders" for printed copies of the report. Everyone in our newsletter distribution list will be receiving a PDF copy when it is ready.

If you, your committee, or you know of an individual who would like a printed copy, please send an email to the office. (Subject line: printed annual report, and in the body of the email let us know your name, committee, or individual who would like it.) You may also leave a phone message.

Regards

Arlene



### **Donations for 2020 have now closed.**

When tax receipts are ready, we will let you know via newsletter, Facebook, and worship announcements.

#### IF YOU GAVE VIA CANADA HELPS...

**Remember, if you donated via the Canada Helps website, you had the option and ability to print your own tax receipts.**

*These givings will not be reflected in the final year-end giving statement from us.*

We have assumed you have printed them and have taken this into account in the method we use to input these into our givings system. Don't worry! They are still input in your name and to the account you indicated when you made your donation.

## PARABLES STUDY

Rev Pirie Mitchell will present  
a series on  
**The Parables**  
beginning Sun. Jan. 17 at 7 pm.

This series will be via ZOOM.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
WILL BE PROVIDED  
IN NEXT WEEK'S  
BULLETIN.

## MOMENT FOR MOTHER EARTH (PART 2)

This 94 year old natural historian was asked “If there was one behaviour you could ask humans to change, to best reduce the impact of the climate crisis, what would it be?”

His response: “I would ask that we reduce the demands that each of us makes on our planet - our demands in terms of how much food we eat, what we throw away and what we use for our power to make sure that we don’t produce carbon dioxide. If we can act with a little restraint in regards to how we treat the world around us, if all of us do this, our problems would be solved.”

His newest documentary, *A Perfect Planet*, takes a look at how we can restore the environment. On BBC Earth and Amazon Prime Video.

If you wish to submit an article for the newsletter, email it to the office at: [wesleyknox@bellnet.ca](mailto:wesleyknox@bellnet.ca)

Hand written submissions are also welcome for folks who do not use email.

**DEADLINE: 12:00 p.m. on Wednesdays**

If you are assisting with upcoming worship services, please have your information submitted to the office by email by **TUESDAY** at 9:00 a.m.

Our current events for the upcoming 2 weeks as reported to the Communications Team 2021.01.06

10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Provincial Lockdown-please call ahead						
10:00 am - 10:30 am Sunday School – online		7:30 pm - 9:00 pm KSS Choir- online	7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Reopening Ctte – online	5:00 pm - 5:45 pm Primary and Junior Choirs (Online)		
10:30 am - 11:30 am Sunday Worship VIRTUAL only				6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Mysterium Choir (Online)		
10:30 am - 11:30 pm Youth Quest (A) virtual meeting						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Provincial Lockdown-please call ahead						
10:00 am - 10:30 am Sunday School – online	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Inclusivity and Affirm Discernment Meeting (Online)	7:30 pm - 9:00 pm KSS Choir- online		5:00 pm - 5:45 pm Primary and Junior Choirs (Online)		
10:30 am - 11:30 am Sunday Worship VIRTUAL ONLY	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Trustee meeting – online			6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Mysterium Choir (Online)		
10:30 am - 11:30 pm Youth Quest (A) virtual meeting						



Region 7 - Antler River Watershed

**PRAYER CYCLE**

January 3, 2021

**VICTORIA AVENUE UNITED CHURCH**

(Chatham, Ontario)

<http://vauc.net/>

January 10, 2021

**RIVERSIDE UNITED CHURCH**

(London, Ontario)

<http://riverside.on.ca/>

Prayers for our church families enduring grief, loss, or loneliness.



If you or a loved one is dealing with a difficult time, such as illness, hospitalization, loneliness, or any of life's challenges, our Pastoral Care team is available for support. Please call the Church office and you will be contacted by a member of our team: Linda Olson, Sandra Fox, Brenda Smith, Liz Dunlop, Paul Stewart, or Pirie Mitchell. On evenings and weekends, you may reach Arlene or Mallory through Facebook Messenger (you do not need a Facebook account to do this.)

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**



**The United Church of Canada**

We are part of the United Church of Canada

[www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada](http://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada)

**Our Region falls within the Antler-River Watershed, Region #7**

<https://arwrucc.ca/>

**Region 7 prayer Cycle and other prayer resources:**

<https://www.prayercycles.ca/antlerriverwatershed>

**Access daily devotionals here, provided by "The Upper Room"**

<https://www.upperroom.org/devotionals>

**Liturgical Calendar Resources for worship planning:**

<https://www.united-church.ca/worship-liturgical-season>

Listen to worship on the radio 87.9 FM! (within a small range of Wortley Village; your vehicle may get the best reception.)

**\*\*\*AVAILABLE DURING TIMES OF ANY SHUT DOWNS\*\*\***

