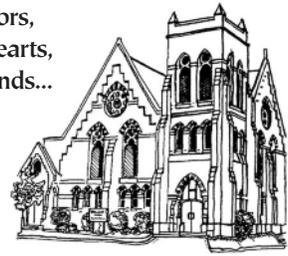


The Kindred Spirit Connection

Open doors,
Open hearts,
Open minds...



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Winter 2012

From the Vestry

Among the many gifts I received at Christmas was a wonderful little book called *Never Far From Home*. It is a collection of radio talks delivered over some twenty years by Carl Scovel, a Unitarian minister in Boston. In it, he tells of a new principal arriving at a troubled inner-city school in Dayton, Ohio. The first thing that he did was call his disheartened colleagues together and talk about their shared task. He talked about the external conditions and challenges that faced both students and staff. Then he talked about the students' souls and declared that from this day forward they were going to make those souls visible to the students, to the parents, to the community and reground their lives in the power of their souls. Scovel tells of the dramatic turnaround that happened in that school and in the lives of students, parents and staff in a culture that treats us as beings without souls.

The church is in the business of caring for souls, "in the cure of souls" as the old Book of Common Order describes it. From birth to death the church is present within the world to stand up for souls in the face of all that reduces us to mere voters, consumers, workers, viewers, beings without souls.

It is now some seven months since Tom left and the reality of that is beginning to set in. While it is "fun" to have David with us, David is not Tom and the sense of "missing" is becoming more clear. This is good. It means that we are moving through the grieving

process which is never easy for individuals and even harder for communities. Within communities people grieve in different ways and at different speeds. Sometimes people get stuck and need help. Sometimes people race ahead and grow impatient with those moving at a slower pace. Some things are never going to be the same and that is hard to swallow. Some things will change again with a new minister and that is difficult to predict or plan for.

So the name of the game is "feeling unsettled" and very few of us like to feel unsettled. However, it is when we are unsettled that we are most open to the Spirit, most aware of the Spirit's presence and leading. So pay attention! Listen up!

This is a rich community, rich in talent, rich in resources, rich in opportunities, but, and it is a significant but, it is a community that relies on the few to do the work of the many. We need to work hard to change that.

One of the critical issues that requires attention is finances. The Board is keenly aware of this as are the Finance and the Stewardship committees. The dilemma is what to do. These are tight economic times. Disposable cash is hard to come by and what little there is, is protected and carefully parcelled out. Church folks, especially United Church folks, do not like to talk about money and yet we need to do so. We are all well acquainted with the "ask" from the United Way, the Cancer Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and

dozens more worthy charities, but we do not take kindly to a hard sell from the local church. If the local church, and specifically Wesley-Knox, is to survive in these tight economic times then we need to talk seriously about givings, about what I give and about what you give. We need to find a way or ways to help us all talk about money, talk about church, talk about what Wesley-Knox means to us and is worth to us, and talk about our financial commitment.

Take a moment and ponder! Wesley-Knox has 278 envelope givers. The annual budget is \$230,000. This means that if each envelope giver gave \$827 per year or approximately \$2.40 a day to the church we would not have a problem. The treasurer could balance the books and sleep soundly at night. The Board could shift its focus and plan for the future instead of sweating about the deficit. Unfortunately such is not the case. It is an issue of which we all need to be aware. It is an issue we all need to address. It is an issue we all need to help solve. We all need to deal with this "elephant in the room" of a Wesley-Knox that inspires and feeds so many within our community.

Personally I think Wesley-Knox is worth much more than \$2.40 a day. As a "stranger in your midst", I can say such things. I hope that each one of you can hear these words and also hear John's words, "Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches..." (Rev.3:22)—*Rev. David McKane*

In Memoriam

We thank God for the
life and witness of

Irene Margaret McConnell
December 1

William Gordon Peaker
December 3

Baptisms

Jacob Douglas Dentlebeck
son of
Leslie and Samantha

Annie Agnes Williamson
son of
James and Ann

W-K trustees wipe out accumulated deficit!

At its January 18 meeting, the Wesley-Knox Official Board unanimously approved a recommendation forwarded by the Board of Trustees that the Trustees pay off the accumulated deficit of Wesley-Knox United Church retroactive to December 31, 2011. Although, at that same meeting, the Official Board also approved a 2012 Operating Budget that once again predicts a deficit, this new, much smaller deficit may be an amount that our faithful givers can relate to. This means that the Trustee Board, in addition to providing some \$45,000 annually for the Operating Budget, will, for 2011, pay an additional amount in excess of \$100,000 to wipe out the accumulated deficit. In doing this, we hope that our new minister will appreciate beginning his/her ministry at Wesley-Knox with a clean financial slate.—Ross Rowe, *chair, Trustee Board*

The stewardship Journey continues....

At Wesley-Knox our vibrant and energetic congregational life requires the commitment of many people, not just a few. Everyone is called to assume a role in the work of God's church. What's yours?

- Is it in ensuring that our worship experiences are meaningful and uplifting? The Worship Committee is looking for people with ideas, as well as greeters, ushers and scripture readers.
- Is it working toward social justice in the world? Get involved with the Mission and Service Committee and its projects, or the Community Breakfast and Out-of-the-Cold outreach programs.
- Is it in passing along the faith? The Christian Education Committee and the Sunday School can use your talents.
- Is it in congregational care? The District Visitors Committee is in need of people to go out to visit our members throughout the year.
- Is it spreading the word through the KSC and the Wesley-Knox website? The Communications Committee needs writers, proofreaders, people to keep the website current, and people with ideas on how to promote Wesley-Knox.
- Is it to make sure that our church home is well-maintained so that it's here for our worship, fellowship and programs? The Property Committee and the Sip and Serve Group need your services.

Ask yourself, "Why am I involved with this congregation?" That could lead you to find your role. It's easy! Just talk to our Board chair, Cathie Banks, or any one of the committee chairs.

Stewardship is about sharing what we have been given. At Wesley-Knox, we have a lot to share: our financial resources, and our time and abilities to further our worship and our church's mission of passing the faith along and reaching out to help the world.—Marilynne McNeil, *chair, Stewardship Committee*

Did you know that...

- This year, our Wesley-Knox UCW—United Church Women—is celebrating **50 years of service**. Congratulations!
- There are now 47 children enrolled in our **Primary Choir**, and over 30 children enrolled in our two **Junior** choirs. This is now a major outreach program!
- On March 2, our **Mysterium** youth choir will sing to as many as 500 people at the annual **L'Arche Banquet** at Hellenic Community Centre in South London.
- The Communications Committee is always looking for **content** for the KSC and the website. Have an event? **Take a photo, write up the details and send it in!**

Come to the Wesley-Knox
Men's Club Annual

PANCAKE SUPPER!



All-you-can-eat pancakes
plus ham, beverage
and dessert!

Wesley-Knox Social Hall
Tuesday, February 21
5-6:30 pm

Adults \$6
Kids 10 and under \$3
Family maximum \$15

Proceeds support the
W-K Community Breakfast
Program

Journey with Sudan—an update

Back on November 20, the Mission and Service Committee officially kicked off its new mission project, Journey with Sudan. As you probably know, a group from Wesley-Knox will be traveling to South Sudan a year from now under the auspices of Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS). The composition of this group is yet to be determined, but all interested individuals were invited to make themselves known to the M and S Committee. A signup sheet was posted outside the Centennial Parlour and, to date, contains more than twenty names! It doesn't necessarily follow that every one of these people will be making the trip. The intent is to allow people to express an interest so they can explore the idea with the help of CASS and our M and S committee. Originally it was announced that the size of the team would be limited to nine or ten people. This number is based on the capacity of the airplane that will ferry the group on the last leg of the trip from Nairobi to South Sudan. However, it might be possible to arrange additional capacity if enough people were deeply committed to going.

Next Steps

Anyone interested in learning more is invited to attend an information session in the chapel on Sunday, February 19, immediately following worship. Jane Roy is just now returning from the region and will have up-to-date information. Those who signed the signup sheet will be contacted directly with an invitation, but all are welcome!

The per-person cost of the trip will be about \$5000. Some fundraising efforts will be made in an attempt to offset this cost. Here are two ways you can help:

- Donations will be gratefully accepted via the collection plate. Specially marked envelopes will be available at the entrances to the sanctuary. If you use a plain envelope please make sure it is labelled "Sudan Project".
- On Saturday, April 21 and Sunday, April 22, the M and S committee will be collecting used household electronics in the church parking lot. Large collection bins will be set-up and all types of household electronics will be accepted including computer equipment, televisions, cellphones and audio equipment. There will be no fee for dropping off items and they will be recycled in an environmentally-friendly way. As an added benefit, the Journey with Sudan project will receive a per-ton commission from the recyclers. It's win-win-win! By the way, April 22 is also Earth Day, so here's an easy and practical way to do your part. Help us spread the word about this event!

More updates about Journey with Sudan will appear in future issues of the Kindred Spirit Connection. If you have any questions or would like to get involved, please speak with any member of the M and S committee.—*Tony Haworth, chair, Mission and Service Committee*

Winter Calendar

Special Services...

Sunday, February 12
10:30 am: Holy Communion

Wednesday, February 22
7 pm: Ash Wednesday

Sunday, April 1
10:30 am: Palm Sunday
Holy Communion

Friday, April 6
10:30 am: Good Friday
Service, location TBA
7 pm: Good Friday Swell

Sunday, April 8
10:30 pm: Easter Sunday

Special Events...

Annual General Meeting
Sunday, February 12, noon

Journey with Sudan Meeting
Sunday, February 19, noon

Annual Pancake Supper
Tuesday, February 21, 5–6:30 pm

**Karen Schuessler Singers
Night at the Opera Concert**
Saturday, March 31, 8 pm

Community Breakfasts: Saturdays,
February 11, March 10, 8:45 am

Out-of-the-Cold Dinners: Sundays,
January 22, February 26, March 25,
5 pm

Movie Nights: Fridays, February 3
and 17, March 2 and 16, 7:30 pm

Wesley-Knox Official Board:
Wednesday, February 15, 7 pm

Wesley-Knox Council: Wednesday,
March 21, 7 pm



A Wesley-Knox photo gallery



Karen leads the Junior Choir at the annual Christmas concert



Olivia Uzan and Jeffrey Cooper reading at the Christmas pageant

Advent and Christmas was a particularly busy time at Wesley-Knox. Over 500 attended the December 3 Christmas concert with Denise Pelley, the Wesley-Knox choirs and band. On December 11, the Sunday School presented another excellent Christmas pageant, and on Choir Sunday, December 18, 120 attended the evening Night Passed service for those in 12-step programs and their families. On Christmas Eve, the 7 pm service led by Barb McGill attracted over 500 from Wesley-Knox, the community and beyond. The quieter 10 pm communion service featuring a string quartet attracted about 80. On Christmas Day, some 13 stalwarts came to church even though there was no minister, no organist and no choir! Chris Mortlock led this service and music was provided by Chris's iPod playing through the sanctuary sound system!



The Handbell Choir playing on Poinsettia Sunday



Barb McGill and the children at the 7 pm Christmas Eve service



The Sunday School enjoying its day at Westminister Ponds

If you were in church on **January 15**, you might have wondered where the children were. Sunday School director Barb McGill says thanks to all who participated in the Sunday School trip to Sitting Tree School, Westminster Ponds, on that day. It was a cold, crisp morning but despite the -17°C temperatures, 40 enthusiastic participants hit the trail! Kim Stark toured the group around the ponds and managed to squeeze in a trust-and-awareness game, games of speed and skill, as well as time for the kids to (almost) run wild! They finished the morning inside with hot tea, snacks and stories. A reminder of the upcoming Budding Artists fundraiser. More on this project in the next KSC.

Deadline for items for the Easter KSC is Sunday, March 11.