

An Invitation to Advent

By Rev. Philip Newman

As I write this, a New Year is nearly upon us. Advent, which begins November 29th this year, marks the launch of the Christian Year. It is a season of expectation and hope for those who gather around the story of Christ's coming. In our culture, it seems that Christmas has already arrived. But Advent isn't Christmas. It's a time of preparation and waiting more than celebration. In a way we're like Mary – we have a due date, but not yet a baby. There is work to be done, in us and in the world, to be ready for the coming of the Christ child.

So the new Christian Year is about to begin, and the calendar year is coming to an end. We are looking forward and backward at the same time. The past year was an important one for our church family, and for many of the families who make up our congregation. Some of us welcomed the gift of new life in the birth of a child or grandchild. Others lost family or friends whose lives touched and blessed our own for ever. This is true every year, we know. But we remember to give thanks for them and carry with us the gifts they shared.

We - you and I - met! We've been getting to know each other since August. We've been learning names, asking questions, telling

stories, listening. In a way our work has been a bit like Advent itself – preparing the way for what comes next! We are counting on the same generous spirit and encouragement that has seen us through so far, to continue. Thank you. And well done.

Already, we have been through much together. From Sunday worship to the refugee sponsorship project, from weddings and funerals to baptisms and communion, feeding the hungry, studying the Bible, supporting and encouraging each other along the way. I believe that what we do as a church is important. It matters. It makes a difference in the lives of literally thousands of people, in our community and around the world.

The world needs generous, compassionate, hopeful people. The future depends on those who are able to see its brokenness, who feel its pain, and who yet remain faithful and loving in the face of it. Advent is an invitation for us to join with John the Baptist, preparing the way, and pointing toward the love God has shown to the world in Jesus Christ. It is a reminder that even when things seem most hopeless, something new is waiting...and we are not alone. It was into this same world that the Christ child was born. He is with us still.

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WVUC Advent Devotional Guide 2015

Daily devotionals, written by members of our church family, have been compiled into a meaningful tool for your daily use through Advent. Pick one up at the welcome table or in the office. It is also available on-line at www.wvuc.bc.ca

Special Advent and Christmas Services

Sunday, November 29

10am—Clay Event for children

Thursday, December 3

6 pm—Annual Honour a Life Service

Sunday, December 13

10 am—Christmas Pageant

Thursday, December 24

4:30 pm—Christmas for Kids

7:30 pm—Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

10:00 pm—Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Friday, December 25

10 am—Christmas Day Service

Carols and Communion Service

With reception to follow in the lounge



Do you have room at your Christmas dinner table?

The Caring Ministries encourages you to invite family, friends, and your church family to share your Christmas Table.

Stay in Touch

WVU
WEST VANCOUVER UNITED CHURCH

..Tis (not quite) the season!..
Coming soon at West Van United!

You can classify this under "WAY too soon", or, hopefully, under "Thanks for helping me be organized" (we're hoping for the latter!) Either way, there is lots happening: new babies, a new minister, work on Syrian sponsorships, and lots and lots for your kids to keep growing in their own faith. It is always a pleasure having you around!


Simon LeSieur
Youth & Family Pastor


Dylan Nofziger
Sunday Club Director

Oppenheimer Christmas - November 21 @ 9:30am

In November, our monthly service project includes items to help residents of the East-side get through the colder months. Teens meet at 9:30am in the church kitchen.

Pageant Casting - November 22 @ 11am

The Christmas pageant is upon us! Children and youth wanting a role should be at the casting after the service on November 22!

The pageant is Sunday, December 13.

Clay Event - November 29 @ 10am

Children and teens are invited during the service to make their own nativity figures out of clay, with a retelling of the Christmas story at the end.

Youth Christmas Dinner - December 17 @ 6pm

We gather all those who have come through our youth programs over the years for our annual homecoming Christmas dinner. Grades 7 and up welcome!

Christmas for Kids - December 24 @ 4:30pm

There's a Christmas Eve service for everyone! For those of you with young ones, the 4:30pm service is 30 minutes long and action packed, designed for kids by kids!

New Year Bash 2016 - December 31 @ 8:00pm

Come ring in the New Year in with your church family! All proceeds will be going to our Syria refugee sponsorships.

Meghan baby shower - January 17 @ 2:00pm

Simon and Meghan are expecting little LeSieur - a girl! - in February, and they can't wait to share the love with all of you!

Parent & Tot - coming January 2016

What does it mean to be a praying parent? How can we best accompany our children as they grow up? Stay tuned for more details on our new initiative!

Parenting Teens Alpha - coming winter 2016

One of the things that came out of Family Camp was a deep desire for parents of teens to unite! So, dear parents of kids aged 11 to 18, hope is coming! Haha! Stay tuned.

Coming in January!

Parents & Tots Group

A mom unfamiliar with faith came to us in a panic a few years ago. "My daughter asked me "What is God?" and I realized I had neglected a whole area of her development! Help!" There are so many resources available when it comes to beginning a family, from prenatal classes to exercise classes. But what about the spiritual aspect? How do we help equip new Moms and new Dads with tools to help them from a faith perspective?

That's the heart underlying a weekly group where parents can meet together and connect with others in the community going through the same phase in life. There will be a time for chatting and catching up, a time for discussion over scripture, a time for prayer, as well as a special spoiling time with tea and treats. We will be meeting starting in January on Tuesdays at 10am. Stay tuned for more details!

If you are interested in connecting, or know of anyone who might be, please contact Dawn or Simon at the church office: 604-922-9171.



Stay in Touch

Honour A Life Dec 3, 2015

The annual community memorial service and celebration HONOUR A LIFE will be held on
Thursday, December 3, 2015.

The Honour a Life Celebration is for anyone on the North Shore who wants to remember and honour a loved one. This is an **non-denominational event** to which everyone is invited and welcomed. Join us in this special community celebration of the lives of our loved ones:

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2015 6:00 - 9:00
WV United Church, 2062 Esquimalt Avenue, West Vancouver

The Honour a Life event starts with a **reception and light refreshments at 6:00 pm.**

The **memorial begins at 7:00 p.m.** and features local speakers and music.

The service is **followed by a candle-lit procession** to the Seawalk Garden Park at the bottom on 19th Street in West Vancouver. There, a Memorial Tree will be lit and decorated with your own personalized memorial cards.

The Memorial Tree stands in the Seawalk Garden throughout December and the New Year holiday as a continuing celebration and remembrance of our loved ones.



Two great **masterworks** **December 6th | 3pm**
one joyous **concert** **Save the Date!**

Vivaldi Gloria

Bach Magnificat

The Pacific Spirit Choir and Orchestra under the direction of Gerald van Wyck is proud to present Vivaldi's GLORIA and Bach's MAGNIFICAT on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at 3:00 pm. at West Vancouver United Church.

Both Vivaldi's harmonically daring and vibrant music and Bach's richly textured, wonderfully complex compositions show off the virtuosity of soloists and choir alike. The pieces were composed just eighteen years apart, yet so differently express celebration and joy. What a splendid and magnificent way to herald the Christmas season.



Tickets (\$30/\$25) are available from the church office (604-922-9171), choir members or on line from www.pacificspiritchoir.com. Please come and share this joyous celebration with us.

Scenes From This Fall at WVUC

Community luncheon – October 28, 2015

Guest speaker – Mary Grant talking about her life in London during the second world war.

In 1939 when war was declared, Mary was a child living in London, not far from Hyde Park and Buckingham Palace. The battle of Britain started in May, 1940 with bombs falling day and night. She remembers the sky over London was bright red and the noise from the bombs and anti aircraft guns was terrible. Her school was totally destroyed and those children in her class who were not evacuated to safe areas in the countryside, were taught in a house. People slept in subway stations and air raid shelters, everyone carried gas masks and all the windows had blackout curtains so no light showed for the bombers to have a target. At the house where she lived they went to the wine cellar in the basement during the raids which was all concrete and considered safe unless there was a direct hit. Everybody listened to Mr. Churchill on the radio for his reports. Early 1944, the Germans launched V-1 rockets and then that September the V-2's arrived, killing many people and destroying many areas of London. Food, clothing and staples were rationed and everyone had an ID bracelet, ID cards and ration books with them. Mary remembers when VE day came, the country celebrated, all the lights came on and she walked to Piccadilly Circus to watch the joyful crowd.



-Written with thanks by June Hann

With Thanks:

Thank you! Thank you for the addition of this amazing technology that has made the service more accessible to both me and my son. I no longer need to worry about whether or not I brought my reading glasses, ... and I love being able to look up and sing out instead of having my head down in a book. What really brought a tear to my eyes was watching how they affected my son, Tristan. Although Tristan is almost 18 years old, he reads at a kindergarten level because of a processing disorder. A few weeks ago, we were sitting in the sanctuary and for the first time, Tristan was able to participate in the service! I saw him following along and attempting to read the words on the screen. The combination of distance and the size of the font made reading accessible to my son for the first time. It was so beautiful to see and experience.

With thanks, Lori Zondag



The Reverends.
Philip, Cliff, John, Dal and Simon



Remembrance Day

Stay in Touch

WVUC Syrian Refugee Project

After research, discussion, and consultation with authorities, the Official Church Board has agreed to expand the outreach of WVUC to include the official sponsorship of Syrian refugees and to pursue the necessary required applications.

The Board also approved providing the necessary financial commitments of up to \$50,000 for two sponsorships; \$10,000 for the North Shore United Churches combined effort and \$40,000 for the direct sponsorship by WVUC. The Board endorses fundraising efforts to meet this financial commitment.

On Monday evening, November 23, in our building, we will host The North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership's presentation on the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Rev. Newman will offer the opening remarks, followed by North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership Co-Chairs, Jenny Benedict, (Director, West Vancouver Memorial Library) and Elizabeth Jones, (Executive Director, North Shore Multicultural Society). Professor Dan Hiebert, Department of Geography, UBC will explain the crisis and present on the basics of why so many have fled Syria, the pathways of escape, how they have become interwoven with other migrants, the impacts on surrounding countries, the challenges arising in the EU, and the Canadian responses.

Our congregation's committee is chaired by John Mendes, and includes Jan Leonard, Victoria Mendes, and Lea Borlick. We ask for your support, your prayers, talents and resources to engage in our call to do God's work.

'Truly I tell you, just as you do it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you do it to me.' Matt. 25:40



Crafts Made with Prayers

Join us on Wednesdays at 12 noon in the Lounge for one hour of fellowship making cards, gifts, and crafts needed to support the Caring Ministry of the church. Bring your lunch if you need to! Many of us already do. Bring your hands and heart to support those in our midst who just need a little encouragement through a card or small gift. We'd love to have you join us!



Dawn
And
Susan

Oppenheimer Project

An Oppenheimer Basket will be placed in the Sanctuary on the first Sunday of the month to receive gifts for the Oppenheimer Project. We need canned meats (i.e. tuna, salmon, ham, etc.), cookies, grocery store gift cards or cash.

All is gratefully accepted. Oppenheimer is a humbling reminder that our affluent lives on the North Shore aren't the reality of most people. On the third Saturday of each month, the Youth at WVUC, in grades 8 and up, meet in the church kitchen and together they prepare lunches which they serve to residents of the Downtown East side in conjunction with the community centre staff at Oppenheimer Park.

Your help would be appreciated through your donations. We especially give thanks for Julie Walsh and her unending support and coordination that puts this effort together.



Christian Study Opportunities

Church Bible Study/Prayer Group – **Tuesdays at 1-2 pm** in the Library Lounge. All are welcome. Each week we review the previous Sunday's worship and Sermon, and have opportunity to ask questions and have thoughtful discussion.

Community Bible Study Canada has a chapter that meets in our building each week on **Mondays from 12:45—2:30 pm** in the Library Lounge. In January, the class will resume through a curriculum focusing on 1&2 Timothy and Titus. All are welcome to participate. For more information, please contact the church office.



COMMUNITY
BIBLE STUDY
CANADA

New Year's Bash 2016

At the church 8:00 pm



We've Gone LIVE!

We live-stream our Sunday worship in order to provide greater access to our worship experience and our congregation. We believe we enjoy the privilege of stirring worship. We do not want to keep this to ourselves. It's a tremendous gift. We want to share it. We want to tell the old, old story in ever new ways, and we want to do this beyond our walls. Already, persons are asking when they will be able to connect with our worship through live-streaming. The possibilities are exciting!

If you wish to sit beyond the view of our cameras, you will want to sit in the back seven rows of pews, the ends of pews on the outside of the wooden pillars, or in the chapel. Children and youth who wish to remain beyond the view of our cameras during the children's conversation (intro to Sunday Club) will want to sit on the right-hand side of the front steps in front of the choir.

Access to the live-streaming can be made through the church's website: wvuc.bc.ca. Share it with your friends and family near or far.

Opportunities for Your Talents

Powerpoint help needed – The office needs help putting together the Sunday power point presentation. We are looking for people to fill in on a part-time basis, usually Thursdays. If you have reasonable computer skills and are detail oriented, please contact Susan in the church office.

Booth Operators -Would you be interested in being a behind the scenes contributor for worship services, memorial services, or public functions in our building? If this is something calling out to you, please contact the church office.

Graphic Design Technicians -Sometimes words just don't communicate the message. Are you gifted with graphic programming? We are looking for people who have the talents to help put together communication items.

Smiles and Friendly Faces are always welcome to help the church office by answering the phone and helping with your hands. Susan would love to chat with you about how you could find ways to serve.

Stay in Touch

West Vancouver United Church
2062 Esquimalt Avenue
West Vancouver, BC
V7V 1S4

Phone: 604-922-9171

Email: office@wvuc.bc.ca

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email or read it on-line, please contact the church office by phone at 604-922-9171 or e-mail: office@wvuc.bc.ca

Office hours:

Mon-Thurs 8.30-4pm, Fri 8.30-12 noon

Thurs Dec 24—Friday Jan 1 office closed



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facebook page:**

West Vancouver United Church

www.wvuc.bc.ca

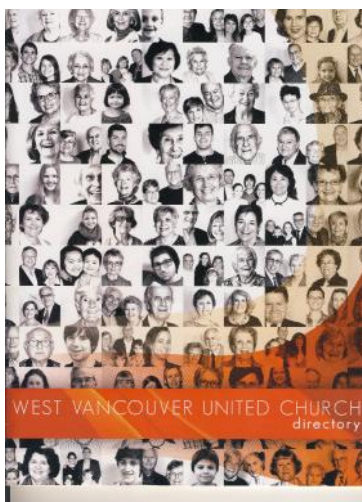
Youth Group Website

www.westvanyouth.com

Congregational Photo Directory

Available in the church office.

Keep your contact information up to date with us! We love staying in touch with you.



Calendar of Events

Baptism

Once a month on Sunday morning. Please contact the office a month or two in advance.

Communion

We will be celebrating Communion on Sunday, November 29, 2015.

Congregational Dates and Events

Every Tuesday from 1-2 pm in the Lounge, Bible Study discussion.
[excluding Dec. 22&29]

Every Wednesday 12-1 pm in the Lounge, Craft Group
[excluding Community lunch days]

Every Thursday at 6:00 pm, Youth Group [excluding Dec. 24]

Sat Nov 21 Oppenheimer Christmas, 9:30 am

Wed Nov 25 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Sun Nov 29 Clay Event for children, during 10 am worship service

Thurs Dec 3 Honour a Life Service, 6 pm

Wed Dec 9 Naomi Unit meeting, 10 am

Sun Dec 13 Christmas Pageant, 10 am worship service

Mon Dec 14 Oikoumene Unit, Christmas pot luck dinner, 7:00 pm

Wed Dec 16 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Wed Dec 16 Men's coffee group, 10 am

Thurs Dec 17 Youth Christmas Dinner, 6 pm

Thurs Dec 24 4:30 pm Christmas for Kids worship service

7:30 pm Candlelight worship service

10 pm Candlelight worship service

Fri Dec 25 Carols and Communion Service, 10am,
with reception to follow

Thurs Dec 31 New Year Bash 2016, 8:00 pm in the Church Hall.

Thurs Dec 24—Fri Jan 1 Church office closed

Mon Jan 11 Community Bible Study begins, 12:45 –2:30 pm

Mon Jan 11 Oikoumene Unit meeting, 7:30 pm

Sat Jan 16 Oppenheimer Park Youth project, 9:30 am

Wed Jan 20 Naomi Unit meeting, 10 am

Wed Jan 20 Men's coffee group, 10 am

Wed Jan 27 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Mon Feb 8 Oikoumene Unit Meeting, 7:30 pm

Wed Feb 10 Ash Wednesday, start of Lent

Upcoming Concerts



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