

## Lent Is Hope

by Rev. Philip Newman

Lent is hope. When most people think of Lent, we think of something else. Lent is seen as a time of sacrifice, or possibly service. For many centuries, the practice was to “give something up for Lent.” Christians looked to the life of Jesus as the example for us to follow. We might not spend forty days fasting in the wilderness, but we can deny ourselves just a little. Giving up chocolate is one of the standards. Some deprive ourselves of a favourite drink, or even a TV show. We know that this is far from the level of deprivation that Christ endured, but it can remind us of just how much we take for granted.

In more recent years we have rediscovered the thought of “taking something on” for Lent. Reading our way through one of the gospels is an excellent way to go. Setting aside a time for daily prayer works well for some. Others offer a gift of time - to a community grouping, a friend (or even a stranger) in need. The life of Jesus was informed by the reading of scripture, prayer and reflection, compassion and service. When we take any of these on we may find our lives and our faith deepened as a result.

Whether you are drawn to any of these practices, or have discovered one of your own, it’s helpful to remember that the purpose of Lent is not to feel bad. For Christians in the early centuries, the forty days of Lent were a time of preparation for baptism which would take place on Easter Sunday. It was a time of learning and growth, of encouragement and struggle, all for the purpose of receiving the gift of new life and hope. It was headed to joy and celebration.

So Lent is hope. Lent has actually always been about hope. And it is where the whole story has been pointed right from the beginning. It is a story of compassion and care, from the first moment of creation. It is the story of the birth of a people, their journey through the disasters and the triumphs of slavery and liberation, kingdom and captivity, restoration and renewal. Through all of this God was at work, sharing grace and leading us in hope. In the life of Jesus Christ we see even more clearly the character, the depth of God’s love for this crazy family of ours.

As we move through Lent this year, I invite us to do so in a spirit of hope. God is still leading us, in the midst of the disasters and triumphs of our time, the struggles and the joys of our lives. We are followers of the One whose life, death and resurrection, is the most hopeful gift we have ever received. With you, I look forward to where God leads us next.

Grace and peace...Rev. Philip Newman

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### WVUC Annual General Meeting Sunday, March 6

Lunch will be provided by the people of the church immediately after worship. The meeting will follow lunch.



# Stay in Touch

## Lenten Opportunities For Growth

### Ash Wednesday Service

February 10th  
12:00 noon  
WVUC Chapel  
With Rev. Newman

### CROSS TALK **Struggling with God: Lenten Reflections on Jacob**



After a few years of hiatus

we are recovering the  
opportunity to come together as Christians-  
Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Uniteds  
for "Cross Talk"

(presentation and conversation)

Wednesday evenings

February 17—March 16

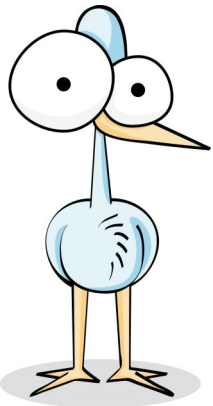
7:00—8:30 pm

[Locations to be determined. Check the church  
website, or call the office for locations]

### CROSS WALK **During Holy Week Weekday Morning Worship Services March 21, 22, 23, 24 9:30 am**

Join us in Christian Community with our  
Anglican, Presbyterian and United friends.

[Locations to be announced. Check the church  
website, or call the office for locations.]



### **Prayerful Stork Group For Parents & Tots**

This group is for new and expecting  
parents and tots. It is a weekly  
caring group where parents can  
get together and connect with  
others in the community going  
through the same season of life.

**Tuesdays at 10:00 am  
in the Youth Room upstairs**

There will be a time for chatting and catching up  
with tea and treats, a time for discussion over  
scripture, and a time for prayer.



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

### **Tuesday Bible Study** **1-2 pm in the Library** **All are Welcome.**

Each week we gather together and discuss the  
sermon, the scripture, and other aspects of the  
previous Sunday's worship service. Bring your  
questions to this friendly and safe discussion.

### **Monday Bible Study** **12:45 –2:30 in the Library** **[excluding Family Day and Easter Monday]** **All are welcome to join in.**

WVUC hosts a weekly study group in our building,  
part of the international Christian Bible Study  
Community. Currently we are studying New Testa-  
ment books, 1&2 Timothy and Titus. Contact the  
church office for more details.



**COMMUNITY  
BIBLE STUDY**  
CANADA

# Stay in Touch



The excitement and enthusiasm for the sponsorship of Syrian refugees continues to grow. This project arose out of our imagining a world in which all have adequate shelter, food, and provisions, and are able to live in safety. With this as our vision we determined to grow our sense of mission, justice, and generosity by bringing help to Syrian refugees who long to begin a new life away from the violence and threat of terrorist

forces by sponsoring a family(ies) through an authorized refugee sponsorship program.

Our vision and mission is undergirded by guiding scripture questions and texts such as "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8) "I was a stranger and you welcomed me...just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25) "Who is my neighbour?" a question posed to Jesus who then told a story about a man who was robbed and beaten and then was cared for by an unlikely helper. (Luke 10)

Our Refugee Sponsorship Project began with a desire to work with the other six United Churches on the North Shore. That initial desire has expanded to a three-pronged effort.

The initial commitment with the North Shore churches has demonstrated sufficient financial and volunteer resources to begin application for a second refugee family. While the first refugee family is yet to arrive a decision was made early in the new year to continue this ministry of hospitality and justice. That's the first prong.

The second is our own congregation's sponsorship of a refugee family, a decision made by the Official Board in the fall of 2015 following a request from members to become involved in this humanitarian crisis. A family of four, the Fandi family, a dad, a mom and two boys, has been identified and the application to sponsor them is underway. This family already has members of its extended family living in the Vancouver area which will prove helpful with respect to language, familiarity, and orientation. The arrival of this family is anticipated sometime this spring.

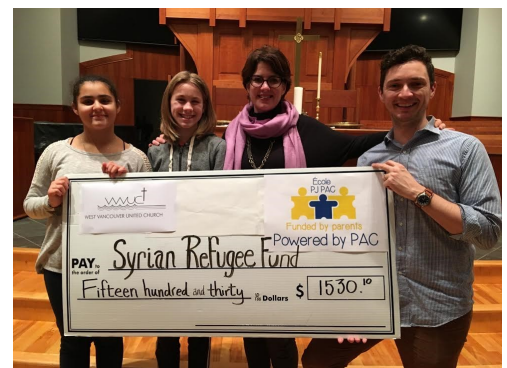
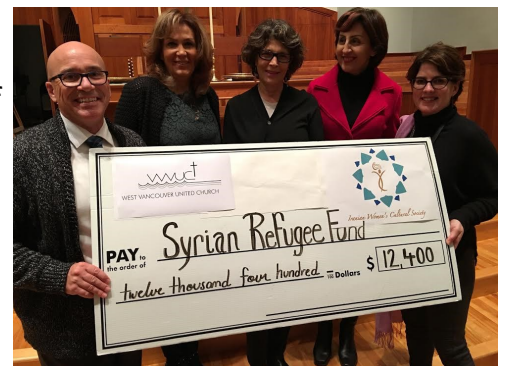
The community around WVUC continues to express interest in helping the sponsorship project to the extent that a community group known as "North Shore Friends" has formed for the express purpose of sponsoring a fourth family. This community group has been brought under the refugee sponsorship umbrella of our congregation as is being encouraged across Canada. This partnership expands the work of sponsoring by impacting one more Syrian family who longs for safety and peace. The work and financing of this sponsorship will be carried out by "North Shore Friends" with oversight from WVUC.

Our congregation, our endowments, and our community have been generous in providing \$66,800 to fulfill our sponsorship mission. \$13,000 was forwarded to the shared project by North Shore United Churches by the end of 2015. Another \$3,500 was given for humanitarian relief overseas which will be matched by the Canadian government. Well done!

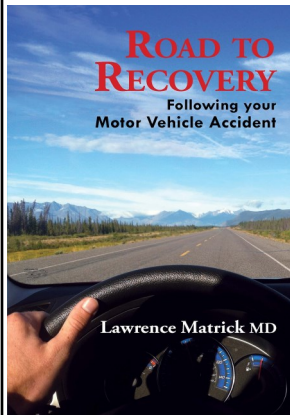
Fund raising is ongoing and could continue into the foreseeable future if peace and stability remain elusive in the Syrian region. A festival of choral delight was hosted by WVUC on February 6th featuring the choirs and music directors of North Shore United Church churches. It tickled our musical sensibilities. Many tasks need you to make this large project a success.

Stop by the Refugee Table after Sunday worship and add your name to the growing list of helpers. Can't volunteer? Your donation will help animate this effort of love and justice.

(Please note that we are not accepting donations of furniture at this time.)







## Book Review

Our church library has a new book, "Road to Recovery Following Your Motor Vehicle Accident" (Granville Island Publishing, 2015) written by psychiatrist Dr. Lawrence Matrick. It is the perfect guide for anyone who has been in an accident involving a motor vehicle. Whether you are a driver, passenger, pedestrian

or cyclist, you will learn how to navigate the medical as well as legal and insurance processes which can be daunting for any accident victim. Real life case studies illustrate a variety of situations and outcomes, providing the reader with useful information and suggestions from all provinces in Canada. Very helpful tips and clear explanations of all stages of this often emotional and life changing event make this book a must read for anyone who has been in a motor vehicle accident.

*Larry is a long time active member of our congregation with a heart for caring. Aside from his busy life as a practising psychiatrist and an expert court witness, Larry will be facilitating our first gathering of "You are Not Alone". [see page 5 of this "Stay In Touch"]*

## "Building Bridges"

The Church Library Association of BC  
2016 Conference

[www.clabc.ca](http://www.clabc.ca)

**Saturday, April 2**

**8:00—3:00 pm**

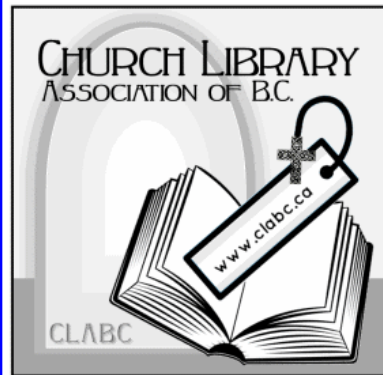
**West Vancouver United Church**

**Presenters:**

Jason Byassee, professor of Homiletics VST  
Judy McFarlane, author and CBC documentary producer  
Grace Chen, co-author "Writing With Grace"

Simon LeSieur, Minister, WVUC

**Registration required.**



Contact our  
church librarian,  
Donna Simon  
[donna.simon@telus.net](mailto:donna.simon@telus.net)  
604-926-4582

## How We Spent our Christmas Vacation

by Alexia Clerx

This December my family decided to spend Christmas differently than usual. This Christmas didn't come with tangible gifts, yet the gift of visiting the two families which we (a group of us from church) built two houses for last spring. Our different Christmas experience impacted my family and myself so greatly in a way which we haven't been impacted before. Something about changing Christmas up and going off the grid for a few days was definitely a challenge we were all up for. Spending time in a developing country after spending all my Christmases in Canada, showed me how commercialized Christmas really can be, especially after seeing that these families have so little in terms of "stuff". Since my first Christmas I have been taught and raised with the idea that Christmas is a time of giving. That's why we decided to go to Ensenada this year. This experience is something I wish that everyone could experience, not necessarily because it made me feel good about myself, but because it made me feel like I received the biggest gift of spending time with another family which I am now very close to. After the trip my family and I

concluded that spending Christmas in Ensenada helped shape us as people, but more importantly gave us the biggest gift to first hand witness what love is.

Lastly I wanted to touch on how evident faith was on this journey, I think we could all see it as soon as we crossed the Mexico border. When we were driving through Ensenada I noticed how little everyone had and yet how God's hands were at work by the number of smiles I saw. When my brother, Sterling, was teaching Arturo how to ride a bike, or my mum Shelley drawing with the girls, Laura and Elizabeth and even when Adeladilla (the mum) held my dad's hands as if she were thanking him for what we had done for their family, I could tell that God was working.

There is no better way to describe it other than, beautiful.





## Adult Ministries



### You Are Not Alone

for those wrestling with  
**memory issues**  
will meet on the  
4th Tuesday of each month, beginning

**February 23**  
**10—11 am**

for coffee and conversation

Dr. Larry Matrick will be facilitator the first week. This is an informal group where people can talk in a safe environment.

Poinsettias were delivered to 57 people who are unable to attend church - thank you to Bill Mann for organising the delivery.



Hampers were also given to two people who now live on the downtown east side.



The Adult Ministry hosted a very successful Christmas Lunch on Wednesday December 16th. Michael and Loree Foster - dressed for the part! - entertained us with seasonal tales and of course there was a visit from Mr. & Mrs Claus! Everyone who attended was given a beaded angel made with prayer and love by the women of WVUC. These were so very much appreciated and will be treasured by many.



Raina

Liz

### With Thanks to our Office Volunteers

If you've ever come into the office on a weekday, you are aware of the healthy bustle of activity and ministry that goes on. Once a year, we give special thanks to these remarkable and dependable people who give their time so generously.



Kim



Gwen

Alf



Barbara

Marjorie

Donnie



Isobel



June

Marg



Helen

Lorraine

## CRAFTS

&

## PRAYERS

**Join us on Wednesdays**  
**12-1 pm in the Library**

and bring your lunch if you'd like.

We gather to create cards and gifts of prayer and love for use in the Caring Ministries of the church community. ALL are welcome!

Contact the church office if you'd like to receive reminders and communication.

[We do not meet on Fellowship Luncheon Wednesdays.]

# Stay in Touch

## Day of Discovery - Women's Retreat



On Saturday, January 23, 2016, we held a Women's Retreat at Capilano Golf and Country Club. Fifty women attended from our Church and spent a wonderful day listening, dialoguing, singing and dancing with Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan Kaplan. We explored the lives of 4 very interesting women of the Bible: Rahab, Tamar, Abigail and

Bathsheba. These were very fascinating women, and women that we could spend more time exploring. We learned about Prayer Beads, and the connection of Prayer Beads to other religions. Dr. Kaplan explained about beads and knots used in the Hebrew traditions. We all made Protestant prayer beads, and then followed suggestions on how to pray with them.



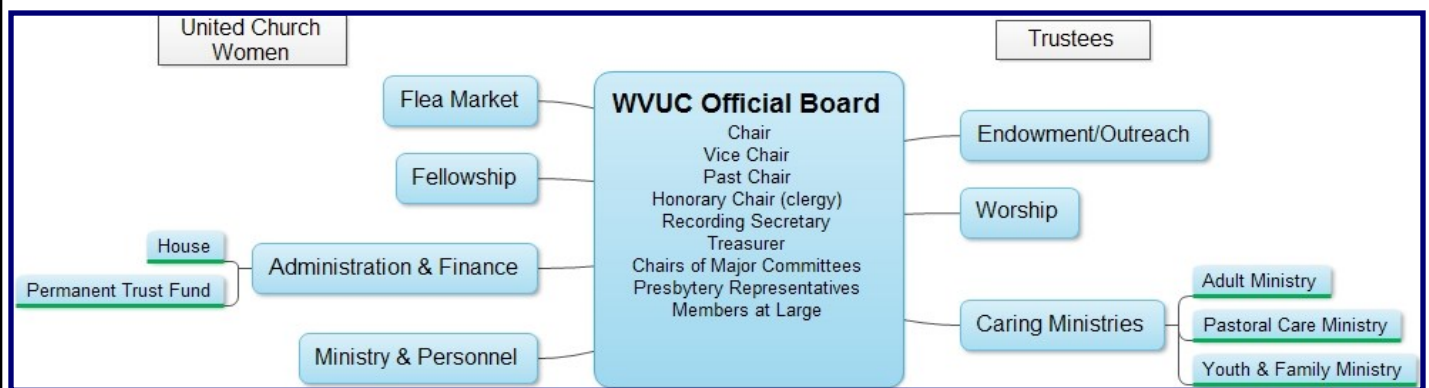
Dr. Kaplan taught a Jewish dance, and we all danced and sang. It was a wonderful day.

[With thanks to the UCW Oikoumene Unit, Marilynne Nowell, Linda Gunn, and Helen McCrindle]



## Nominating Committee announcement

We are responsible for developing a slate of candidates for service on the Board and its Committees for the coming year. Service on the Board is a great opportunity to have a deeper involvement in our church life by joining a dedicated team of volunteers central to the work of the church. We need people in all areas of church governance and other areas of active ministry. Each of us have gifts we can use to serve, so if you are interested in discussing the exciting possibilities, please contact Bill Carpenter, Chairman of Nominations: [vicechair@wvuc.bc.ca](mailto:vicechair@wvuc.bc.ca), 778.875.6586.



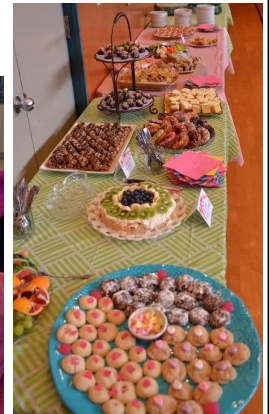
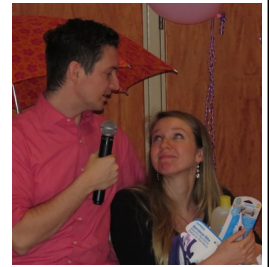


# Stay in Touch

## Baby Shower Thanks!



Simon and Meghan want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who have supported them into their journey towards parenthood. "Thank you for celebrating with us at the baby shower, thank you for contributing to gifts which will ensure our baby can get to church safely, and most of all, thank you for praying for us. There are few things in life that are better than belonging to such a caring, supportive community of faith. We feel deeply loved, and we hope you feel the same way, too."



SILVER SOIREE





# Stay in Touch

## Telling the Christmas Story: Children's Pageant



## Telling the Christmas Story: Clay Event



## Celebrating The Story



## Youth Christmas Dinner





# Stay in Touch

West Vancouver United Church  
2062 Esquimalt Avenue  
West Vancouver, BC

Phone: 604-922-9171

Email: [office@wvuc.bc.ca](mailto: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](mailto:office@wvuc.bc.ca)

Office hours:  
Mon-Thurs 8.30-4pm, Fri 8.30-12 noon



Like or Share our  
facebook page:

West Vancouver United Church

[www.wvuc.bc.ca](http://www.wvuc.bc.ca)

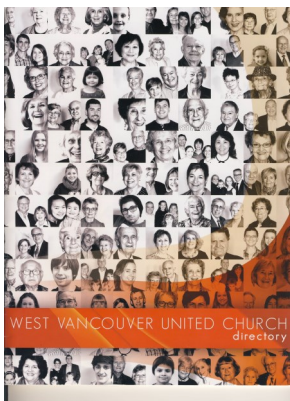
Youth Group Website

[www.westvanyouth.com](http://www.westvanyouth.com)

**PLEASE inform the office regarding any changes in your contact information or updated photos.**

Would you like to receive the weekly ministry emails? Let us know.

There is a Congregational Photo Directory available in the church office or after worship in the Church Hall.



**STAY  
In  
TOUCH!**

## Calendar of Events

### **Baptism -April 10**

Please contact the office a month or two in advance to arrange.

### **Communion - February 14**

### **Congregational Dates and Events**

**March 6—** Congregational Annual General Meeting 12 noon

Mondays from 12:45 –2:30 pm, Community Bible Study.

Tuesdays from 1-2 pm in the Lounge, Bible Study Discussion.

Wednesdays at 10 am, Prayerful Stork, in Youth Room

Wednesdays 12-1 pm Craft Group, in the Lounge

(Excluding Community Lunch days)

Thursdays from 6–8 pm, Youth Group

Mon Feb 8 Oikoumene Unit, 7:30 pm

Wed Feb 10 Ash Wednesday service, 12 noon

Wed Feb 17 Men's coffee group, 10 am

Wed Feb 17 Naomi Unit meeting, 10 am

Sat Feb 20 Oppenheimer Park Youth project, 9:30 am

Wed Feb 24 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Sun Mar 6 WVUC Annual General Meeting

Mon Mar 14 Oikoumene Unit, 7:30 pm

Wed Mar 16 Men's coffee group, 10 am

Wed Feb 17 Naomi Unit meeting, 10 am

Sat Mar 19 Oppenheimer Park Youth project, 9:30 am

Wed Mar 30 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Sat April 2 Church Library Association of BC conference

Wed April 6 Alpha Parenting Teens starts, 7 pm (runs for five weeks)

Mon April 11 Oikoumene Unit, 7:30 pm

Tues April 12 UCW Annual General Meeting

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

Wed April 20 Men's coffee group, 10 am

Wed April 20 Naomi Unit meeting, 10 am

Wed April 27 Community Luncheon, 12 noon

Sat June 4 Celebration of Ministries (Simon's ordination)

## **HOLD THE DATE!**

**SUNDAY, 15 MAY 2:00 P.M.**

Pacific Spirit Choir and Orchestra under the direction of Gerald van Wyck will be presenting Brahms' "**German Requiem**".

Our beloved former soloists Bahareh Poureslami and Max van Wyck will be flying in from Chicago and Toronto to join the choir and a huge, live orchestra. Put your name on our concert contact list through email at

[friendsofpssc@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofpssc@gmail.com).

You will receive immediate notification when tickets go on sale.

