



## Good News of Great Joy by Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart

*"Be not afraid! I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."*

With the first dusting of snow on the North Shore mountains I decided it was time to carve out some time to edit the many contributions to this year's Advent Devotional Guide. For several years now I have invited church members (first in Ontario and now in British Columbia) to offer Christmas reflections, based on a specific Scripture reading, that can be

shared with others as words of hope and inspiration for the holidays. This year was no exception. In fact, as I sat in my study reading through the contributions it felt like an angel was peering over my shoulder whispering, "I bring you good news of great joy." One by one, the little booklet took shape with personal stories of Christmases past from members of West Vancouver United Church. Some stories were funny including misadventures brought on by unexpected snowstorms or car

trouble. Others were deep and painful from the death of loved ones to the fallout from divorce. All were faithful, offering good news of great joy in light of what God in Christ has done, and is doing in the world and in our lives. As I sat there reading these stories from our church family, with the age of contributors ranging from pre-teen to octogenarian, I was reminded how blessed we are right now to belong to this family of faith at WVUC. By the grace of God we are ex-  
*...continued on Page 4*

## A Light in the Darkness by Rev. Laura Lockhart

As I mentioned during a recent children's time, the signs of the season are all around us! It is as if retailers are just biting at the bit for Halloween to be over, then they let a little merchandising slip through their fingers until Remembrance Day, and then BANG! Christmas full on! Running around Metrotown the day after Remembrance Day felt more like December 12th than No-

vember 12th! Of course, we all know why there is the push for Christmas. The cynic in me says it is a cash cow for retailers. The optimist in me reflects on the warmth of emotions that flood people's hearts and minds, and because it is so joyous, there is a desire for it to start as soon as possible. Advent and Christmas ARE the most wonderful time of the year! For many, it is a

chance to see friends and relatives they haven't seen since last Christmas. For small children (and even some older ones too!) it is a chance to be unabashed about wanting gifts. I was reminded of that when my children each circled 45 items in the Toys R Us flyer! For practicing Christians, Christmas is a time where we marvel at  
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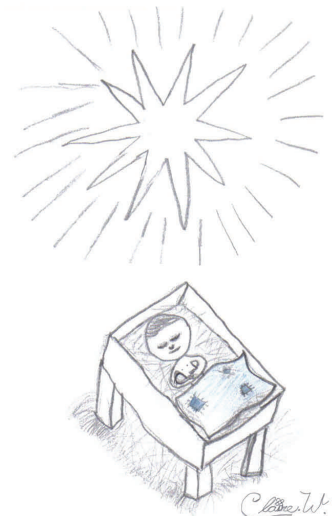
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Do you have room at your Christmas dinner table?

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

Merry Christmas



## Noticing by Rev. Laura Lockhart

I see you from the communion table.  
I make eye contact, smile and quickly look back to the hymn book.  
I've seen her a couple of times now.  
Who is she?  
Is she a visitor?  
Is she a member's child?  
Worship comes to an end.  
Choral amen has been sung.  
I make my way down the chancel steps,  
Walk down the aisle.  
I can no longer locate her.  
Has she slipped out?  
At the door I shake hands.  
If I don't shake her hand will someone else?  
I am pulled in a dozen directions.  
Will an elder approach her?  
Will any one?  
I pray.  
Thank you God for bringing her to our church family.  
Now, will our church family bring her to God?

### A Blue Christmas Service

Sunday December 19th  
3 pm

Sometimes it's tough to be merry at Christmas.

On December 19th at 3 pm there will be an intimate Christmas Service for those saddened by life's challenges. There will be thoughtful prayers, times for reflection and traditional Christmas music. Following, in the Lounge, mulled cider with Christmas cake will be served. Please call the office if you need transportation.

### Poinsettias

If you know of anyone who may be isolated or lonely this Christmas, please let the Caring Ministry know as we will be delivering poinsettias to shut-ins in mid December.



### Caring Ministry Christmas Tea

Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2-4 pm  
in the church hall

A warm welcome is extended to all involved in the Caring Ministry, care givers, receivers, volunteers and all who attend the Luncheons and Teas, to join in a Christmas party of music, games, entertainment, and a delicious tea. Please call the Caring Ministry office at 604-922-9171 if you will be attending or need a ride.

## Mark your Calendar: Robbie Burns Dinner

Tired of Christmas turkey and all the stuffings? Well get ready for some haggis. Come to the Robbie Burns W.V.U.C. congregational party at Hollyburn Country Club on Sat, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 for wonderful fellowship, good food with a superb buffet menu, entertainment with Scottish music and singing. The haggis will be piped in with a traditional festive ceremony to celebrate Robbie and all the lads and wee lasses. Think of setting up a table with friends and family for lots of fun and frolic. Tickets will be available soon.

## Mexican Musings by Simon LeSieur

Two years ago, I came alongside two churches in Southwestern Ontario - Wellington Square United and St. Jacob's United - as a leader for their joint youth mission trip to Ensenada, Mexico. In one week, with nothing but a slab of concrete to start, we built a house from top to bottom for a family that had been previously sleeping under weathered tarps. I absolutely loved the look of realization on the face of one of the teens as it sank in that, by taking a week off from normal life, he had helped completely transform a stranger's life; after all, putting a roof on someone's house is...huge! I will also never forget the look on the mother's face as we handed her family the key to their very first house.

It is precisely those two vivid memories that compelled me to share such a

life-changing experience with our own community here at West Vancouver United Church. And so it is that, this upcoming March, a group of our youth and youth leaders will be heading down to Mexico. All of them have either been involved with the confirmation class that took place this past spring, or with the Oppenheimer Project.

This last point is one that I'd like to highlight. Often times, such short term trips are questioned on the basis of the tremendous needs that exist locally, which is why it is important to me that this trip to Mexico be held in balance with our existing involvement in our own neighborhood and community. You can be proud to know that this congregation has raised and is home to many teens who take such social action to heart, as is evidenced by the grow-

ing number of young people who show up early Saturday morning once a month to help make and serve sandwiches to those living in the Downtown Eastside. My hope is that, as we head out of a context that is more familiar and comfortable, all of us will encounter new and different aspects of our own humanity and spirituality while making a very real difference in the life of a Mexican family.

Thank you for the great support and enthusiasm you have already shown in encouraging the teens in our church. It is inspiring to know that the work involving youth in this congregation takes place primarily amongst a host of people who recognize the potential in young lives. Please keep us in your prayers as we prepare for Mexico - prayers for safety, prayers for health,

prayers for unity - we can use it all!

The team:

The team consists of Alex McCarter, Ben Morley-Senkler, Caleb Lee, Dylon Nofziger, Jen Weidner, Katie McBride, Robbie Simpson, Sam Ives, Simon LeSieur, and Vivian Morley-Senkler.



## New from the Church Library

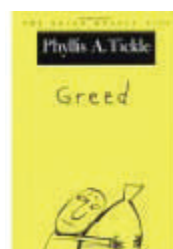
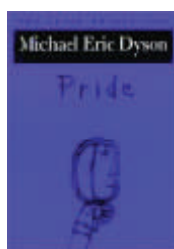
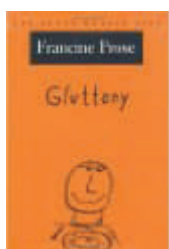
Oxford University Press and the New York Public Library

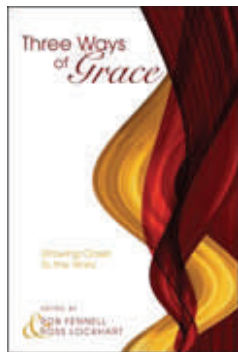
recently co-sponsored a lecture series on the seven deadly sins

drawing a wide variety of speakers from theologians to novelists. These lectures have been published by Oxford Press and offer a witty, scholarly, and contemporary interpretation of

this fascinating topic. Dr. Ross is preaching a new sermon series in January entitled, "The Sins We Love" that will focus over seven weeks on a different "deadly sin." Come in the

library anytime after church to speak with Donna Simons, our church librarian, on how to check out your own copy of a book in this new series.





Here's a little questionnaire for you to do:

1. Do you want to get to know yourself better in understanding your Christianity and your values and beliefs and your role in this complex world?
2. Do you want to get to know others in our congregation in a smaller group setting and understand their understanding of Christianity and their values and

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periencing revival in spirit and strength as a congregation. We are affirming our passion for Christ by showing compassion for people. We are encouraging many generations to gather at the same time to discover their God-given meaning and purpose in life. We are blessing our community through acts of grace and loving kindness. We are opening our doors and proclaiming to a sin-sick

## Book Studies by Wendy Lea

- beliefs and their role in this complex world?
3. Do you want a peaceful safe place to talk about your Christianity and banter ideas about?
  4. Do you want some help understanding some very complex, formidable concepts from the Bible?
  5. Do you want a mid week break from the hectic daily world we live in and get your battery re-charged?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above I recommend joining one of the WVUC Book Study Groups. I have attended (not perfectly, I might add) both recent ones and have found that my

answers to all of the above questions is a resounding "YES" !

Last winter we studied together Anthony Robinson's book "What's Theology got to do with it?". Here we got to look and discuss his arguments that theology is the core conviction that helps members of a congregation understand their common perspective and shared identity and is foundational in the Christian experience.

This Fall we are studying Rob Fennell/Ross Lockhart's "Three Ways of Grace: Drawing Closer to the Trinity", their exploratory collection of essays

as the title suggests. To quote from page 1 "Now, especially now, the Trinity holds a particular promise for us". It is a formidable topic but we discuss it in very user friendly terms and thought provoking conversation.

And Lastly

6. Do you want to ask an author what did he really mean by that?

"Come, share in the gift of friendship, study, ideas, conversation about Christianity and living a thoughtful, faithful, responsive Christian life, in light of the Trinity" (Fennel & Lockhart, 2010, pg. 1).

## Good News of Great Joy (continued from Page 1)

and weary world, "Fear not! We have good news of great joy for all people." This Advent season I trust that you will take the time to share your stories of what Christmas means with one another just as your fellow "pewmates" have done in the Advent Devotional Guide. In fact, why not give an extra copy of the guide to a neighbour or mail it to a friend or relative as a hopeful sign of what God is doing in our church family! As we move deeper into the sea-

son of Advent Rev. Laura and I look forward to seeing you Sunday morning at 10 am as well as Christmas Eve at one of our three celebrations of Jesus Christ's birth at 4:30, 8 or 11 pm. Why not invite a friend along to worship this month as a concrete act of faith? Who do you know at home, in the neighbourhood, at the club, or at work that is in need of "good news of great joy?" Together, let us tell our stories boldly and trust that in the midst of

the December darkness the light of Christ will once more shine brightly for all to see.

Wishing you and your loved ones all the very best,

The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart

*Editor's Note: Please drop by the church office to pick up your own copy of the 2010 WVUC Advent Devotional Guide or download a copy from our website [www.wvuc.bc.ca](http://www.wvuc.bc.ca) and share the good news with a friend!*

## Christmas Carolong

**Christmas Carolong with Pacific Spirit Choir and West Vancouver Youth Band; Saturday evening, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm; Sunday afternoon December 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.**

Join us for our annual Old-Tyme Family Carol

sing-a-long. Carols with choir, brass, woodwinds and organ. A Miracle Voice Lesson guarantees to have you participating freely, joyfully, and with no inhibitions. Fun for the entire family: an hour & 15 minute programme that is child friendly and

engaging for all ages. Join us as well for the reception following the Carolong. Bring family, friends and neighbours.

Tickets \$25 \$20 and \$10 (for children) available at the church office: 604 922-9171.



## UCW News

The Naomi Unit meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 10 am. Call Christine Gardner at 604-922-0764 or Helen Young at 604-922-7910 for more information. The Oikoumene Unit meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 pm. Please call

Helen McCrindle at 604-925-7530 or Elaine Barkey at 604-926-9041. Oikoumene Unit will be having a pot luck dinner on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Both groups meet in the Church Lounge. New members or visitors are most welcome. Good speakers, fellowship and

service are our priority.

Every month Mary Eyre and a group of volunteers from the UCW make 20 loaves of sandwiches for First United Church.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> members of the former Agape Unit gathered to pay tribute to a past convenor, Meta Moore.



## A Light in the Darkness (continued from Page 1)

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how much God loves us. God loves us so much, that he came as the tender baby Jesus to dwell amongst us, love us and show us how to live.

And yet for many in our community and in our families, Christmastime is not joyous, warm or exciting. Perhaps a spouse or child has died. Perhaps there is great turmoil in one's family and it is extremely stressful

gathering together. Perhaps there has been a recent diagnosis and this Christmas is faced with fear. It can be very difficult for someone who is struggling with grief and/or fear to be enveloped by the "rambunctiousness" of the Christmas season. When your world is falling apart, the "over the top" factor of Christmas can be alienating.

God came as a tender and mild babe to this broken

world to bind the alienated to him. Rev. Ross, Gerry van Wyck and I started a now annual Christmastime worship service called "A Blue Christmas". In this service, we recognize that for some in our congregation, they are feeling lost, alienated, broken, sad - blue. In this tender and mild service, we invite the Light of World to shine his loving light upon those gathered who walk in darkness. If you

or someone you know would benefit from this service, we encourage you to come out on Sunday December 19, 2010 at 3pm in the chapel. After the service, The Caring Ministry will host a reception time of mulled apple cider and Christmas treats. We look forward to seeing you and supporting you through this difficult time.

Grace and peace,  
Rev. Laura

## Stay in Touch

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

## Elegant Flea Market

We are grateful to the many volunteers from both the church and the community who work tirelessly sorting throughout the year, setting up all week before the sale, and working on Flea Market day. It is this effort that has made it a success for so many years, and the Flea Market on Saturday October 30<sup>th</sup> was no exception.

The final tally for the flea market was \$58,972.48



## Calendar of Events

### Baptism

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

### Communion

Sunday November 28 and Sunday February 27

### Congregational Dates and Events

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Saturday Dec 4        | -Caring Ministry Annual Christmas Tea, 2 pm                  |
| Monday Dec 13         | -Oikoumene UCW Unit meets, 7:30 pm                           |
| Tuesday December 14   | -Committees and Full Board Meetings                          |
| Wednesday Dec 15      | -Men's Coffee Group, 10 am<br>-Naomi UCW Unit meets, 10 am   |
| Monday Jan 10         | -Oikoumene UCW Unit meets, 7:30 pm                           |
| Tuesday January 11    | -Committees and Full Board Meetings                          |
| Saturday January 15   | -Youth Oppenheimer Park Project                              |
| Wednesday Jan 19      | -Men's Coffee Group, 10 am<br>-Naomi UCW Unit meets, 10 am   |
| Wednesday January 26  | -Fellowship Luncheon, 12 noon                                |
| Saturday February 5   | -Robbie Burns Dinner,<br>Hollyburn Country Club              |
| Tuesday February 8    | -Committees and Full Board Meetings                          |
| Monday Feb 14         | -Oikoumene UCW Unit meets, 7:30 pm                           |
| Wednesday Feb. 16     | -Men's Coffee Group, 10 am<br>-Naomi UCW Unit meets, 10 am   |
| Saturday February 19  | -Youth Oppenheimer Park Project                              |
| Wednesday February 23 | -Fellowship Luncheon, 12 noon                                |
| Sunday March 6        | -Annual General Meeting                                      |
| Tuesday March 8       | -Committees and Full Board Meetings                          |
| Monday March 14       | -Oikoumene UCW Unit meets, 7:30 pm                           |
| Wednesday March 16    | -Men's Coffee Group, 9:00 am<br>-Naomi UCW Unit meets, 10 am |
| Saturday March 19th   | -Youth Oppenheimer Park Project                              |
| March 19-26           | -Youth Mexico Trip   |
| Wednesday March 30    | -Fellowship Luncheon, 12 noon                                |
- ### Christmas Worship Services
- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Sunday November 28 | -Annual Clay Event for children, during<br>Worship, 10 am   |
| Sunday December 12 | -Christmas Pageant, during worship, 10 am   |
| Sunday December 19 | -A Blue Christmas Service, 3 pm   |
| Friday December 24 | -Children's Christmas Eve Service, 4:30 pm<br>-Readings and Carols Christmas Eve Services,<br>8 pm and 11 pm (both with harp) |