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# Our Westside Story

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Volume 15 Issue 1

February 2012

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Dear Friends in Christ:

In the month ahead, we have things to look forward to – the hearts and chocolates of Valentine's Day to remind us of love's delight and the somber reality of ashes on our foreheads Ash Wednesday.

Look forward to Ash Wednesday and its dreary penitential tone? Really!! You need a vacation, Pastor Ann! But let me ask you this – how can we ever get the monkeys off our backs, if we don't confess them to God?

Confession and absolution is a sacrament in the Lutheran church. We use the word “sacrament” because this is a time when the Holy Spirit comes to us, blotting out the things that haunt us and setting us free.

We cannot be free without confession – it just won't work – we're not wired that way - but with confession and absolution, our spirits are cleansed and we can take the first steps into a new life in Christ.

So if you have a heavy sack of bitter memories and hurt that you've been toting around – a problem or relationship that you've been struggling with – OR if life is actually pretty good, no major problems but things feel a stale, and you feel a restlessness inside - come to Ash Wednesday and enter into the season of Lent as a time for personal healing and restoration, a time to recover joy and a zest for life.

Alcoholics Anonymous lifts this up in its program of recovery. Here are the first steps [abbreviated]:

First, admit that you are powerless. Second, believe that a power greater than yourself can restore you. Third, make a decision to turn your will and your life over to God, as you understand him. Fourth, make a searching moral inventory of yourself. Fifth, admit to God, yourself, and another human being, the exact nature of your wrongs.

The steps continue with being willing to receive God's help, making amends, etc.

The twelfth step begins: *Having a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps...*

That is our hope in Lent – that the steps we take will lead us to a spiritual awakening. This is God's doing. God leads us, putting a desire in our hearts for the freedom and joy only He can give. It is God's good pleasure to do this for us.

This year, may Easter morning be marked with joy and a sense of new life! I invite you to take the first step of that journey toward joy on Ash Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Ann

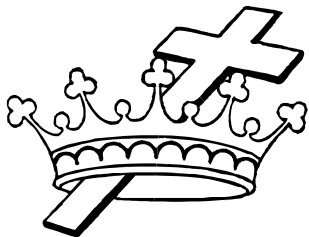
## Family Worship & Adult Forum Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup>

Family Worship & Adult Forum Sun Feb 26: Major Roy Randall from the Salvation Army Mission will be our guest speaker at the Adult Forum. Please plan to stay and learn about positive changes and the work of the mission in our city.



### Lenten Opportunities to Learn, Pray and Grow in the Spirit

1. Wednesday night supper & service: This will begin Wed. Feb 29 at 6:30 with learning time/worship to follow. This will be shared with St. Margaret's Anglican Church and Rev. Steve Pessah.
2. Gospel of John DVD study: You can sign up for Thursday nights from 7 to 8:15pm, beginning Feb 23 or Sunday afternoons from 3 to 4:15 pm. beginning Feb 26. It will be offered for the largest group only so email Pastor Ann [rev.ann.k@gmail.com](mailto:rev.ann.k@gmail.com) or sign up in the church narthex.
3. Women's Bi-weekly Bible Study: Contact Pat Ash 705-431-4225 or Ruth Keffer 705-436-5371 for meeting time and place. Women of every age are invited.
4. Messy Church: Bring your family and invite your neighbours – Messy Church dates during Lent are Tues. March 6 and Tues. April 3 from 5 to 7 pm – but come when you're able!
5. More opportunities will be available – please let me know if you have an interest in topic or a book you'd like to explore in book club



### WOW

WOW are also supporting a new outreach called "A Can in the Hand". Every Sunday we are asking each family unit to bring a can or useful food bank item to church. This will continue all year not just Thanksgiving or Christmas. Remember, "A CAN IN THE HAND" Suggestion – place can at your front door, so you trip over it on the way out!



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Messy Church is a fresh new way of experiencing church.

It's for all ages.

It's fun.

It's family friendly.

Every month, it's built around a theme - activities, celebration and the meal

- Explore your spiritual questions
- Caring Community
- Celebrative Atmosphere
- Learn about Jesus
- Craft and Activities for all ages
- Family Fun
- Share a meal

**Time:** 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**Dates:** first Tuesday of each month:

February 7, 2012

March 6, 2012

April 3, 2012

May 1, 2012

June 5, 2012

October 2, 2012

November 6, 2012

December 4, 2012

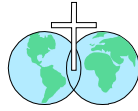
**Messy Church is Christ centred -**  
it's not a club.

Messy Church began in England in 2004 - google "Messy Church" for more information

<http://www.messychurch.org.uk>

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday March 2, 2012  
1:30pm  
Westminster Presbyterian Church  
171 Steel Street



This year's service has been written by the Women of Malaysia. Everyone (men and women) are invited to attend this wonderful ecumenical service of prayer.

“Can you spare one hour, one day a week? Grove Park Home is looking for feeding assistants. We need individuals to assist residents with maintaining dignity at meals while providing social stimulation and motivational support: keeping mealtimes pleasant and homey. We will provide training. If you can help out, please give either Barb or Nikki a call at 705-792-7398, thank you.”

If there's anyone interested in filling the vacant Sunday School Superintendent position, please contact Leslie Horn 728-7150.

### "A Peak into the World of Canadian Lutheran World Relief [CLWR]"

Yousef Shalian, director of the Lutheran World Federation–Jerusalem's Vocational Training Program (VTP) was recently in Canada. Here is what he had to share:  
The VTP trains Palestinian youth in high-demand trades including carpentry, auto-mechanics, telecommunications, plumbing, and central heating, with a focus on training women, refugees, and those in financial need. Female students receive special support through culturally acceptable trades training on campus and through satellite courses held in villages in the West Bank. Palestinian women and girls are often discouraged

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from traveling for school, so this outreach provides educational opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be possible.

“It's an opportunity to really serve these youth who don't have many options in their lives,” says Shalian, who is a VTP alumnus himself, and worked as an auto-mechanics trainer and coordinator of the VTP's Ramallah branch before becoming director.

He says technical skills are important but so are the life skills students gain at the VTP. Classes on entrepreneurship and apprenticeships that give students experience working in their fields give graduates an advantage in the occupied Palestinian territories, where the political and economic situation makes job opportunities scarce and poverty common. After graduation, many students gain work through their apprenticeships or by starting their own businesses.

For Shalian, it's rewarding to see how VTP students learn and mature through the course of the program. The training gives them confidence and hope for the future, and they come away equipped with skills they can use to support themselves and their families.

“I remember a mother coming to me at a graduation ceremony and thanking me,” Shalian says. “It's a great feeling.”

*You can help support a VTP student's education. To donate to the work of the Vocational Training Program, call 1.800.661.2597 or visit the Gifts from the Heart catalogue at [www.clwr.org](http://www.clwr.org).*

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