



IN THE LOOP

Keeping you in the Loop – An update from the Knox Board and Session

The Session of the church is the gathering of the congregation's elders. Session meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7pm. The Session oversees all of the work of the church. The Board of Managers meets the third Wednesday of every month and reports to the Session. The Board ensures that our building is in good repair, and monitors our church's finances. In the last few months, the Board and Session have been busy preparing for our annual congregational meeting, to be held on March 10th, following worship.

The financial statements for the year 2023 were reviewed and discussed. A budget for 2024 was created, discussed and approved for discussion at the Annual meeting. The Board and Session extend their appreciation to the congregation for their generosity in the last year. Our congregation finished the year with a deficit just shy of \$8000. We are fortunate to be able to have this small deficit covered through the Building and Restoration Fund. Everyone is invited to pick up an annual report from the church for a more detailed look at our church's finances.

The Board and Session continue to contemplate changes to our choir loft to make it more accessible and safer. We are currently waiting on computer generated plans for what this might look like. The issues with the washrooms in the CE Hall has been corrected. (these two toilets were prone to backups!) The Board is aware that updates are required to the sign at the front of the building. We are waiting for the weather to warm for this work to be completed. There are also several lighting (and fan) challenges in our sanctuary. Given the height of the ceilings, this work will be completed in the summer months.

The Session has approved the use of our sanctuary for several upcoming community events, including a Good Friday Evening concert with Choral Connection, and another concert featuring woodwinds. Eleven new people were welcomed into the Knox family on Sunday February 11th.

The congregation is reminded that the doors to the Christian Ed Hall are required to be closed during Sunday Kool time. In order to ensure that our Sunday Kool lessons are not interrupted, we are invited to use the other three washrooms during "Kool" time.

The Welcome Committee has noted that many people joined our congregation between 2020 and 2023, and that these people did not receive the usual Knox Warm Welcome – as the pandemic made gathering difficult. Therefore, a Belated Welcome to Knox Evening is being planned in April for those who joined in 2020, 2021, 2022 or 2023. The Welcome Committee is also hoping to co-ordinate the production of a new photo directory for the fall of 2024.

Food for Thought from Jim and Darlene Aldridge...

Darlene and her husband Jim, joined Knox Church in 2023. We are grateful for Jim and Darlene's willingness to share devotionals that have touched them through Knox Talks.

If Only - By Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content.

Philippians 4:12

Over the years, I've grown to realize that contentment is a choice. True joy isn't the result of having everything I want but of gratefully receiving exactly what God has given me. The enemy has robbed many of us of our joy by getting us to live in that foolish realm of "if only." "If only I had a husband." "If only I *didn't* have a husband!" "If only we had children." "If only we didn't have so many children." "If only I had a different job." "If only I lived in a different place." "If only I could own a home." "If only our winters weren't so long. . . ."

The fact is that if we're not content with what we have, we will never be content with what we think we want. The key to joyous living is to embrace the will of God and to receive with gratitude the gifts He chooses to give us in each season of life.

What's the Point of Church?

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. He wrote:

"I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column.

Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals.

But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work.

If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

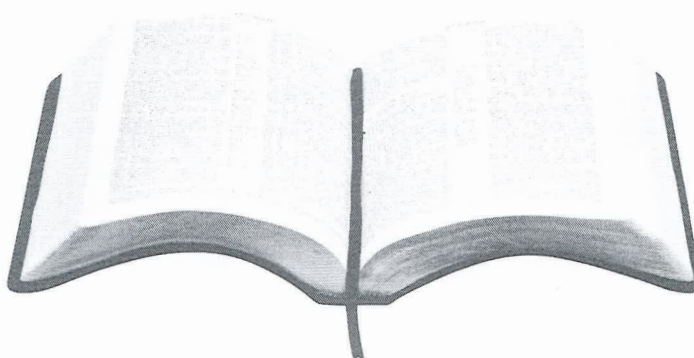
When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible & receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL !

B I. B L. E. simply means: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!



Lent and Easter 2024

Didn't we just celebrate Christmas???

Lent and Easter are early this year. Every year, the Lenten season is determined by the date of Easter Sunday. Easter is a moving Christian holiday. The date can't be fixed since Easter is always on the first Sunday after the Paschal full moon, which is the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. This year, Lent began on February 14th and Easter Sunday is on March 31st! We are hoping we won't have to wear our parkas to Easter Sunday worship!

For many years, churches like ours – Reformed churches – did not celebrate Lent. The early reformers rejected the notion that some days are “more special” than others in the eyes of God. They also expressed a deep concern that Christians were focusing on their own devotion, rather than God's devotion to them. They felt the idea of “giving up something for Lent” had an inclination toward Christians attempting to earn their own salvation.

Nowadays, we have a more tempered understanding of this season leading up to Easter. We know that it is useful to set aside a time to remember the story of the life and death of Jesus. We know that our own life stories are complicated: filled with times of sorrow, wondering, worrying, suffering, grieving, forgiving, and being forgiven, starting again. The season of Lent reminds us that God knows what this is. God knows what it is to be human. During Lent we are invited to see the sacred even in the darkest times of life. We are invited to contemplate the love of a God who would choose to take on flesh to be our friend.

As time has passed, reformed Christians (like us, Presbyterians) have come to recognize that some of the ancient practices of the church -- the laying on of ashes, the celebration of the Last Supper, the recognition of Good Friday – help us to understand more fully the depth and breadth of God's love through the story of Jesus.

This year at Knox, we celebrated Ash Wednesday in the chapel on February 14th.

For the first time, we will be offering several services during Holy Week. (The week before Easter Sunday). You are invited to join as you are able:



Palm Sunday Worship March 24th 10:30am, featuring the Palm Sunday Parade with the children, and the Knox Choir singing “Hosanna” from Jesus Christ Superstar.



Maundy Thursday Dinner and Worship Service - Thursday March 28th

5:15pm catered dinner (Shepherd's Pie, salad, dessert) - \$25/person

Please note: You must pre-register for the meal by Sunday March 24th. Please email Rev. Mavis Currie at m.currie@knoxstthomas.ca or call the church to reserve your spot.

Worship Service to follow at 6:30pm – Maundy Thursday commemorates Jesus' Last Meal with his friends – This will be a service of Communion and Hand Washing

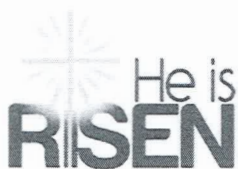


Good Friday Worship – Friday March 29th 10:30am

A traditional service of lessons and music where we will recall the story of the Crucifixion. Special Music by the Knox choir, and guest musician. Sunday Kool and Nursery will be offered for children.

Good Friday Concert by Choral Connections – Friday March 29th at 7:30pm Mozart's Mass in C Minor.

\$38/person Tickets available at www.choralconnection.ca or by calling 519-661-6902.



Easter Sunday – Sunday March 31st 10:30am with Choir, Trumpet, Organ and an Easter Eggstravaganza egg hunt during Sunday Kool time for the kids! He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday March 10th** following Coffee Time in Rodney hall.

Everyone is invited to pick up a copy of our church's annual report. This important booklet highlights the work of our church in 2023, and includes a detailed budget for the upcoming year. At the Annual meeting, we will be reviewing our church's work and finances, and planning for the year ahead. The budget for 2024 will also be reviewed.

Knox has a long history of generosity. There are five separate funds within our church. Below is a little information about these funds.

1. The General Fund - This is the day to day operating fund of the church. Money comes into this fund from weekly envelopes, pre-authorized bank transfers, donations and investment income. This fund covers utilities, salaries and ongoing programs like advertising and taping our services. A portion of these regular givings also goes to Presbyterians Sharing – helping those outside our building. This fund is managed by the Board of Managers.

2. The Legacy Fund (Formally known as the Endowment Fund) - This Fund was established over 100 years ago to provide operating funds for the church. The Fund accepts donations but is structured in such a way that we may only use the interest accrued while the nest egg remains. Given our large and old building, this fund is important. It means that some of the extra costs of our building are carried by the generosity of these long-ago members. This Fund is managed by the Board of Managers.

3. The Building and Restoration Fund - As you may have guessed, this fund is to fund structural repairs and improvements in our church. These funds are used for things like making our church more accessible, installing new windows, boilers or air conditioners, painting rooms etc. This fund is managed by the Board of Managers.

4. The Rodney Outreach Fund - established to fund projects with an outreach focus and scholarships for church members entering post secondary education, this fund is operated by a committee of church members, separate from the Board.

5. The Special Music Fund (formally known as the Organ and Music Fund) - This fund was established for the one time purchases related to music and for the specific repairs or additions to our organ. This fund is managed by the Organ and Music Committee. In the past, this fund has been used to purchase instruments, choir folders and similar kinds of items.



Knox Foodgrains Committee

The Knox Foodgrains Committee is pleased to announce that a cheque for \$14,034.92 has been forwarded to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank Head Office in Winnipeg, Manitoba on behalf of the members and friends of the Knox congregation. Since its inception, the Foodgrains Fund has now donated over \$162,000 to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to fight world hunger. With the Canadian government grants, Knox has sponsored the delivery of almost \$800,000 in food to starving people in 36 countries.

The Committee appreciates the continuous support of the congregation and our on-line friends across Canada as well as the many volunteers who pitched in to make the Luncheons so successful. The Committee was again very grateful for the contribution of food from Briwood, St. Thomas Foodland, Shaw's Ice Cream and the Original Cakerie. Letters were sent out to each business thanking them for their continued support and generosity.

The next meeting for the Knox Foodgrains Committee will be on April 24, 2024 to plan for the Spring Luncheon on June 2, 2024. As always, any Knox member or adherent is more than welcome to join the Foodgrains Committee and help us to continue feeding the starving people in this world.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack McBride
Secretary, Knox Foodgrains Committee



Kirkin' O' the Tartan

The Kirkin' Committee held a soup lunch to celebrate the Birthday of Robbie Burns, the poet of Scotland on January 22, 2024.

Jim Scott, a piper from the London firefighter's pipe band piped the minister and congregation out of the church and down into Rodney Hall at the end of the service. Rev. Currie had preached that Robbie Burns wasn't a particularly good person, but had imperfections like all of us. Celebrating his birthday added a bit of fun to a bleak month.



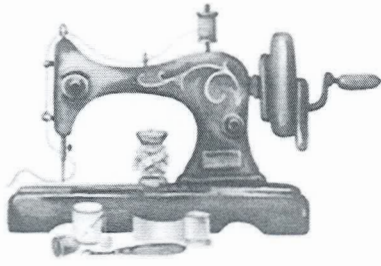
The haggis was piped into Rodney Hall, and carried by Art Gutmanis. Art addressed the Haggis using the Burns poem, providing a few verses in both Gaelic and English. Once the haggis was properly stabbed and addressed, the congregation enjoyed a lunch of soup and rolls and of course shortbread cookies.

Our next event is the Kirkin' O' the Tartan to be held on Sunday September 15, 2024. Please save the date!

Submitted by the Kirkin' Committee:

Mary-Ellen Bolt, Bonnie Brown, Art & Kate Gutmanis, John & Sue Lyle, Lena McCormick, Barb Muma, Bonnie Tait,

Sew it Seams



This group continues to meet at 9:00 a.m. every other Sunday in the CE Hall. So far in 2024, we have made 25 arm slings for those that can't afford to purchase them. This is a project that is coordinated through Canada Sews, London Division. We have also committed to making pillow cases for the same group as well as once again getting involved with making the hygiene kits for the girls in Africa. So far, all the material has been provided for the slings, pillowcases and bags for hygiene kits.

These projects use a lot of thread which so far has all been donated from the sewers in Sew It Seams. This can get costly for our sewers. We would be happy for any financial help to purchase serger and machine thread to use for these projects. If you would like to make a donation, please hand your donation in the office or contact Pam O'Sullivan.

You can even drop into one of the days we are sewing and see what we are up to, or maybe join the group. We would love to see you! Our sewing days for the month of March are the 12th & 15th.

Kitchen Whiches



We have met once in February. On the menu was Chicken Pot Pie and Stone Soup. Hopefully by the time you are reading this we have sold out of these items and we will have others to offer you.

Last year, with all of our efforts in the kitchen we were able to pay for 90% of the ingredients needed for our meat pies, jams and pickles for the Tartan Bazaar. We enjoy the time spent together splitting the cooking days in two time slots. BUT in between we have a great coffee break with lots of laughs and desserts to share.

RUMMAGE SALE

Saturday, March 23, 2024

9:00-11:30 a.m.

Start decluttering, we want your stuff! (Clothes, home décor, kitchen/bathroom, small appliances, tables/chairs) Any items that you want to get rid of, we would be more than happy to take off your hands! You can drop them off at the church starting Monday March 18th.

Please put them in the small room beside the nursery in the CE Hall.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As you can imagine the rummage sale requires many volunteers. We need people to help organize, sell and tidy up following the sale. If you have an hour, 2, 3 + to spare we would be very grateful for your help. Any amount of time you have is appreciated! Below, are the times that we will require helpers.

Set Up

Thursday March 21 1:00-7:00p.m.

Friday March 22 9:00-6:00 pm

Sellers

Saturday March 23 8:45 -11:30 a.m.

Clean up Crew

Saturday March 23 11:30-12:30

Please contact Joy Wendling or Pam O'Sullivan if you are able to assist in anyway.

To Live A PEACEFUL LIFE
YOU MUST:

Good Morning

Let go
of those who stress you.

Embrace
those who bless you.

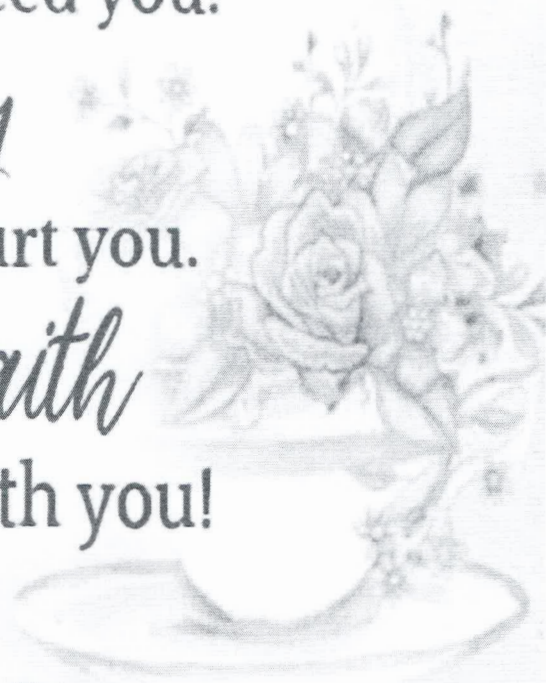
Cherish
those who you love.

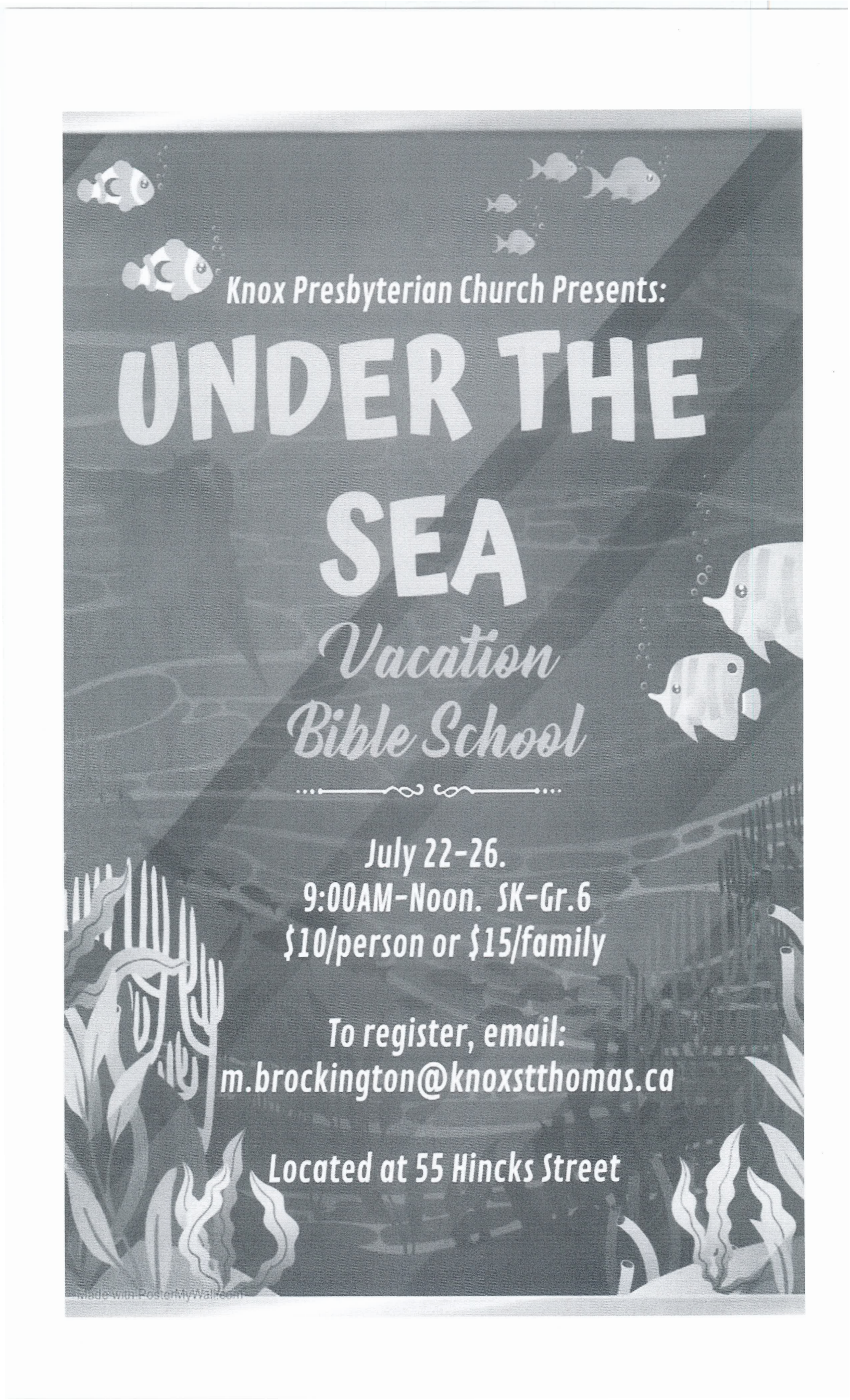
Be kind
to those around you.

Give
to those who need you.

Pray
for those who hurt you.

Have faith
God walks with you!





Knox Presbyterian Church Presents:

UNDER THE SEA

*Vacation
Bible School*

July 22-26.

9:00AM-Noon. SK-Gr.6
\$10/person or \$15/family

To register, email:
m.brockington@knoxstthomas.ca

Located at 55 Hincks Street

Food Handlers Certificate

You might not know this, but our church kitchen gets inspected by the Health Unit. One of the requirements is to have someone who is certified in the kitchen anytime food is being prepared, served and stored. This is for any food that is sold, including breakfast/coffee breaks/lunches/suppers that are, "pay what you can, or by donation". With this certification it ensures that we can continue sharing fellowship in this way.

It is time for some of us that our using the kitchen to get this certificate, which is offered through our Health Unit online. It is important, especially for the individuals that are heading up groups, such as Funeral Catering, Kitchen Whiches, Community Breakfasts, Food Grains, Men's Club, Coffee Breaks, Pay it Forward Luncheon, Robbie Burns Luncheon etc. to have this certificate. It would be great if there is more than one person in the group to have it!

To do this online the cost would be \$24.98 (tax & exam fee included). You can print off the study pages or just read them online. The good news about this ---the cost will be covered by the church once you show proof of passing and a receipt with paid amount. The office will also keep a copy of your certificate. This will be kept on file for our kitchen inspection.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, and I will be able to assist you.

Pam O'Sullivan.



FUNERALS



Johanna Van Wyk—Dec. 2, 2023
Muriel Stavert—Dec. 8, 2023
Lloyd Matthews—Dec. 15, 2023
Pat Oldham—Jan. 2, 2024
Marion Richardson—Jan. 21, 2024
Deryl Dawdy—Feb. 3, 2023

NEW MEMBERS



Brian Broughton
Sue Broughton
Hazel Broughton
Julie Broughton
Richard Broughton
W.J. (Bill) Arthur
Audrey Harloff
Alexis Drake
Eva Kuhn

Jim Harris
June Harris
Sharon Hutchinson
Maggie Moore
Margaret Neil
Edith Nimmo
Christina Willison

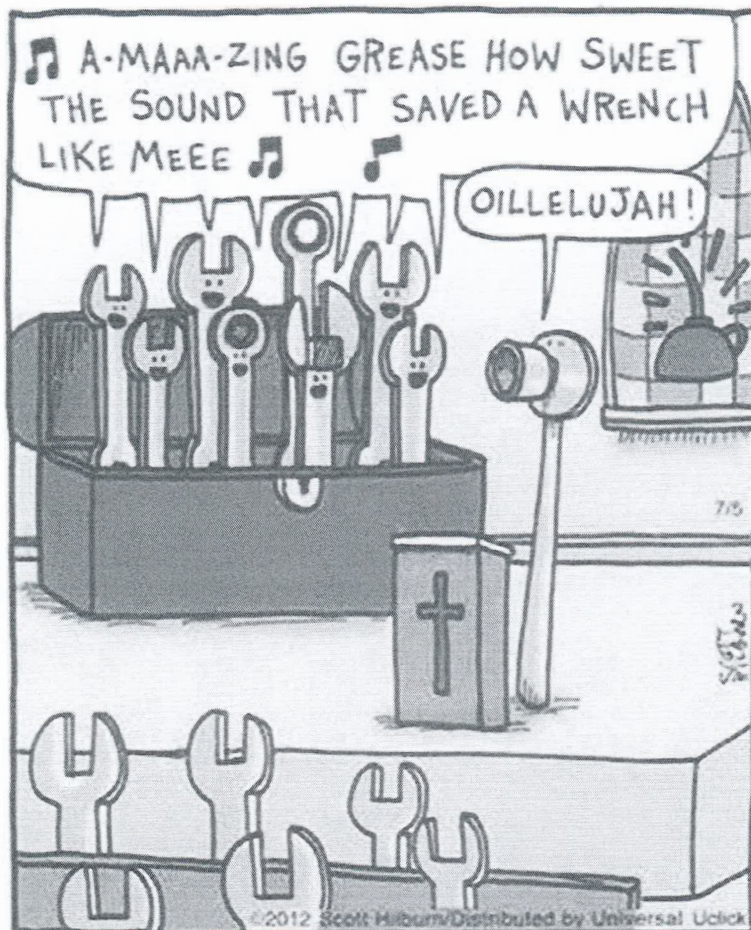
If you have questions or would like more information about our church, reach out to one of the elders or to the Knox staff.

KNOX ELDERS

Dr. Ian Begg
Brian Bolt
Bonnie Brown
Carole Cowan
Jo-Anne Deblieck
Donna Ellis
Malcolm Ferguson
Jennifer Holt
Bill Horn
Maggie Horn
Tom Jackson

Bryce Jones
Wanda Kapogines
Wendy Liebrechts
John Lyle
Elizabeth MacLeod
Jean MacPherson
Jack McBride
Angus McKenzie
Marion McKenzie
Patricia Meathrell

Suzanne Mills
Randy Mills
Pam O'Sullivan
Diane Pease
Sharon Pinylo
Marg Rieger
Brent Sifton
Richard (Tony) Stacpoole
Pete Taylor
Frank Williamson



KNOX STAFF

Minister: Rev. Mavis Currie 519-860-1380 (cell) 519-631-2414 (office) m.currie@knoxstthomas.ca

Christian Education and Family Minister Co-ordinator: Meghan Brockington
m.brockington@knoxstthomas.ca

Office Administrator: Kathy Kestle 519-631-2414 office@knoxstthomas.ca

Director of Music: Amadeusz Kazubowski-Houston amadeusz.scherzo@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thurs. 9:00 am – 1:00 pm.

(NOTE: Fri. 9:30—12:00 noon. The office door is locked but Meghan is in the building. Please call ahead so she can ensure the door is open.)

Presbyterian Church of Canada: www.presbyterian.ca

Presbyterian World Service & Development: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd