



AT A GLANCE

All Saints Edition, November 2025

Workin' for Kirkin'

Kirkin' O' the Tartan was celebrated on September 14, honouring a tradition from the 17th – 18th century, when Scottish clans were repressed and public displays of tartan banned. Instead, church-folk hid small pieces of tartan under their clothing to be blessed. Today's pageantry carries forward a Scottish-American celebration begun in the 1940s to support the war effort.

Thanks to the Kirkin' committee for organizing pipers, drummers, flag-bearers, swordsmen, a mace-bearer, and various members with their colourful banners and kilts. Diana Arthur led us in an English-Gaelic version of the Lord's Prayer. And invited guests, Mayors Joe Preston and Andrew Sloan and Deputy Mayor Todd Noble, attended and socialized at a reception after the service. It was a lovely, loud-and-proud celebration.

But the near-miracle of Kirkin' this year is that it took place in Knox Sanctuary. Just a week earlier that was very much in doubt.



Knox Board of Managers oversees the upkeep of our beautiful old building and sees that its slate roof is checked annually. After recent roof-repair, the board determined that water damage to the sanctuary ceiling needed fixing.

To make space for scaffolding, teams needed to move out pews and pads, hymnbooks and instruments. Cue three crews of experts: HD Painting, Talbot Trail Electrical, and Horizon Solutions. Then muster an army of volunteers for all the moving and cleaning and restoring needed to re-open the Sanctuary.

Justin Darlington praises the strength of the volunteers and their time and patience during this entire effort. But Knox also thanks Justin for his ability to organize multiple work-teams and keep the ball rolling throughout a very hot summer.

The good news is that all was done just in time for the Kirkin'! And we should be good for another 20 to 30 years (as long as the roof passes its annual check-up.)

Knox Remembers Orange Shirt Day

Orange Shirt Sunday began at Knox in 2019, went online for COVID, and has continued annually—this year on September 28th. The service was led by Bonnie Brown, Margie Gloin, Jean Macpherson, Alison Thomas, Joy Wendling, and Rev Kerrigan—all with connections to Indigenous people and/or an interest in their history.



Many congregation members wore official orange shirts or orange clothing, and orange ribbons were handed out by the children. Thanks to Jack MacBride for a TV photo display and to those who brought Indigenous books and items to Rodney Hall. Five people borrowed library books on Indigenous issues.

Organizers encourage us to participate in ongoing conversations to learn more about Indigenous history and the PCC's role in reconciliation, and about the issues surrounding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2 Spirit people (MMIWG2S.)

Special thanks to Jaimie and Brian Malott for their input as the service was planned. Also to Knox Session members, who voted to support a seasonal reading at worship services to acknowledge Indigenous lands and our desire for reconciliation.

C.E. COURAGE

That's the word for Knox youngsters this season. CE coordinator Meghan Brockington says they're learning to trust God and stay strong, with crafts and activities to highlight the message.

Meghan and CE volunteers have separated the Junior and Senior Elementary rooms and refreshed them to create a more welcoming environment. But Meghan notes that a different kind of "space" makes the biggest difference. "We're learning that kids grow in faith best through strong relationships, hands-on experiences, and space to ask big questions," she explains. "They really learn by seeing faith lived out and feeling like they truly belong."

Heartfelt thanks to Emily Hartle and Alison Thomas, and all CE volunteers for the love, energy, and care they pour into this ministry.

KPW

“As long as I can remember, KPW has been a mainstay at Knox,” writes chair/treasurer Pam O’Sullivan. “My memories include the ladies always dressed neatly, usually in heels, gloves and pearls. As a child I wasn’t sure what they did, but then I became more aware of their fundraising and involvement within the church and community. Now we have representatives (still neatly dressed, but usually in pants, with very comfortable shoes.)”

For 2025, KPW has donated to the church library, community dinners, Hygiene Kits for Malawi, the church sound system, Women’s Retreat, Women’s Shelter, Hospice of Elgin, Canadian Food Grains, and the Christmas Shoppe. Following the bazaar they will be making decisions on our donations for 2026.

“Thanks to all of Knox, Pam writes. “With their ongoing support, we are able to help out so many different groups within the church and community.”

Here’s what some of groups are up to this season:

Sew-it-Seams members have always sewn for the bazaar in their own homes, reports Marg Rieger. But now they meet in the church to share new ideas, fellowship and fun. They sew for community outreach projects, altering nightgowns for Hospice and making hygiene bags for girls in Malawi.

Kitchen Whiches, Wendy Liebrechts reports, has for 20 years had fun making meals for the congregation to purchase and items for sale at the Tartan Bazaar. Proceeds help with church expenses and KPW’s outreach to the community. They were also delighted to serve for a 100th Birthday.

In whichly laughter, they’ve found certain kitchen truths abide: Too many cooks really do spoil the broth, and a watched pot never boils! Wendy says, “Our recipes may not be Michelin Star but our friendships are.”

Their Irish Kitchen Prayer: *Bless us with good food, the gift of gab and hearty laughter. May the love we share be with us ever after. Amen*

Knitters’ Janice Todd has been coordinator since 2023. Meetings are held Thursdays from 1 to 3pm--in winter at the church but in warm weather at Pinafore Park. All are welcome to attend and get coaching, if necessary. Lately the group has helped create a display for Remembrance Day, and is busy preparing items for the Tartan Bazaar. Knitters love socializing, informal discussion and good friendships.

Outreach Circle’s Lynn Oprenochok reports they have over 30 members and meet for good fellowship and conversation in the library the second Wednesday of the month. The agenda includes an opening prayer, business report, a program and luncheon provided by two members. The Charity Jar is passed to support the Caring Cupboard.

Bible and Outreach

“When we pray, preach, sing, or simply live out our faith, we do so through the Spirit’s power,” says Jean Macpherson. “Because the Spirit lives in us, we are equipped with strength beyond our reckoning.”

The Spirit is certainly evident each month as Knox leads worship at Elgin Manor, Royal Oaks, Seasons, and Metcalfe Gardens. Jean and Elizabeth McLeod coordinate this effort, with musical support from Pat Meatherell, Linda Todd, Pat Thornton, and Bill and Laura Macpherson. Rev. Donna leads when Holy Communion is served.

Attendance varies from home to home, with 8-18 gathering to worship, sing, and hear God's Word. Each service is a reminder that the church goes with our seniors, wherever they are.

Many thanks to Gail McHardy-Leitch, who led services at Metcalfe Gardens after Mavis retired. Blessings, Gail, on your ministry to hospice patients and their families. Also, thanks and prayers for pianist Pat Campbell, as she heals from carpal’s tunnel difficulties.

Archives: The Home Front

This Remembrance Day, Knox archivists Annamaria Tolgyes and Rev Herb Hilder will mount a display focused on The Home Front. Each November, they strive to give a public face to the names inscribed on the Honour Rolls in our Narthex and to encourage remembering beyond Remembrance Day.

Archiving has been a labour of love! A few years ago, Annamaria started cataloguing decades worth of materials, such as church bulletins kept from the 1940s. Archival boxes were piled on to dozens of other boxes and stored. Now the boxes are sorted and accurately labeled. “This work takes hours of effort, digging, and sensitivity,” Herb and Annamaria agree. “But we’re getting to know who we are as a church and where we’ve been.”

This year’s display will feature binders (not display boards) to make the pictures and articles more accessible for viewing. The collection is far from complete, however, and most vets have passed away. So if you’re a Knox member and have family artifacts or information from the war years, the archivists want to hear your story.

They also extend special thanks to St Thomas Military Museum and the Public Library for their support.



Care-giving

The Pastoral Care Committee probably dates back to the days of Rev Rodney, with Laurie Gardener instrumental in starting it. Members this year will host three pastoral care events in Rodney Hall for the elderly from Knox and nursing homes. They are looking for themes that will appeal to seniors and ways to spread the word.

Pastoral care-givers continually review their lists and try to visit, call, and send cards. Help is gratefully accepted!

Special thanks to Tony Stacpoole who, with his wide circle of acquaintances, is a champion in sending cards! Also thanks to our four-legged friends, whose visits delight nursing homes residents.



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Music to the Rafters

Organist Sandy Kazubowski-Houston reports that the choir will expand its repertoire with new selections leading up to Christmas and looks forward to sharing them with Knox. *And learning, reading and music-making is now so much easier under the new lights installed last summer.*

“Choir practice brings together many community members from different walks of life,” Sandy reflects. “Practice allows us to collaborate to make beautiful music as one ensemble. There are few better sounds than a harmonious choir singing in a sanctuary with phenomenal acoustics!”

The Knox choir will be singing at the Festival of Carols, Sunday, November 30 at 7 pm at First United Church. It’s great to see familiar faces from Knox, so bring your friends and family to hear multiple choirs from the community singing lovely seasonal music.

Sandy thanks Justin Darlington for the hard work he put in to make all of the improvements to the sanctuary (including the new and improved lighting.) Because of those efforts, we can worship and make music even more joyfully in this special place.

Book Club

Knox Book Club members meet with Gail McHardy-Leitch by Zoom, the second Thursday of each month at 1:30. So far, they've enjoyed *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* by Lisa See (with Donna Ellis) and *The Many Lives of Mama Love*, a true story by Lara Love Hardin. Here's what's to come:



November 13, 2025, *How to Age Disgracefully*, Modern Fiction by Claire Pooley

December 11, 2025, *Small Things Like These*, a Novella by Claire Keegan

January 8, 2026, *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be*, Children's Literature by Farley Mowat

February 12, 2026, *They Said This Would Be Fun* for Black History Month by Eternity Martis

March 12, 2026, *Leaving Church* by Christian Author Barbara Brown Taylor (available at Knox Library)

April 9, 2026, *The Guncle*, about LGBTQ2S+ by Steven Rowley

May 14, 2026, *The Berry Pickers* by Indigenous Author Amanda Peters (Book Club in a Bag from the STPL)

June 11, 2026, *The Frozen River*, Historical Fiction, by Ariel Lawhon

Hope in a Hungry World

Canadian Foodgrains Bank ambassador Jack Koetsier spoke to Knox congregation on October 19th, reflecting both on his tour in Zimbabwe last spring and on the need for sustained effort to end world hunger. Jack's message of hope through cooperative effort touched our hearts and prompted deep thought about the 720 million souls who face food insecurity worldwide.

Numbers do not daunt the many farmers in southwest Ontario who donate a portion of their crops' proceeds to CFGB. They work together with local co-ops and with the advice of an agronomist to sell their crops locally. The Canadian government offers a 4:1 match up to \$25 million on their part. This year, CFGB has spent \$70.1 million on programs and grants.

Canadian farmers have found that by selling their food locally and donating the money to CFGB, they do not undercut the efforts of producers in other countries.

Instead, they help train and support those producers, working with them on such projects as mitigating climate change, using cover-crops where livestock have grazed, managing water resources, and promoting male and female cooperation in both food-production and family togetherness.

Knox has participated in the CFGB program for about 18 years, and it joins many churches that have chosen this as one of Canada's top ten charities.

Jack McBride reports that Knox raised \$6783 for our project in October. Including the government grants, those donations will allow CFGB to send over \$30,000 in food to hungry people in refugee camps and to those suffering from constant poverty.

Many thanks to Jack Koetsier and his family for coming to Knox and inspiring us. Also to Jack McBride, the Foodgrains Committee, and the many volunteers who helped prepare our delicious luncheon on Foodgrains Sunday.

And blessings to the generous hearts at Knox, who see the image of God in every man, woman and child—no matter where they live. Cooperation, like hope, is a blessed thing.

