

KNOX UNITED

United in Sharing God's Love & Justice, Affirmed in a Community of Diversity

Annual Report 2021

Vision Statement

Knox is a progressive Christian community that seeks to walk fully in the path of Jesus while recognizing the wisdom inherent in our world's wisdom traditions.

Our community of faith puts the UNITY in community! We are United:

- In our love for God, one another, and our neighbours, recognizing that justice is what love looks like in public;
- In our desire to honour personal, cultural, and religious diversity;
- In our celebration of spiritual experiences that stimulate heart and mind;
- In our practice of spiritual disciplines and opening ourselves to the leading of the Spirit;
- In our commitment to Mission and Service in the UCC and beyond;
- In our dedication to living in right relationship with Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island;
- In our reverence for the Earth and its systems;
- In our celebration of innovation as we are open to the creative transformation led by the Spirit;
- In our pursuit of equity in our relationship with Canada's racialized (diverse) peoples.

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**Spirit Kids' Club
Gathering at the
Bike Park**



**The Bear Clan Visits
Our New
"Every Child Matters"
Tipi**



**Livestream
Equipment Is
Installed For The
Knox Konnexion**

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Agenda for the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting
February 13, 2022

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Knox Mission Statement
4. Moments of Remembrance
5. Approval of Agenda, Minutes of Last Congregational Meeting, and Voting Rights of Members and Adherents.
 Omni motion:
 That the agenda be approved as written, that all present have the right to vote at this meeting, and that the minutes of the May 2, 2021 Congregational Meeting be approved as distributed.
6. Introduction of Council
7. Committee Reports – Questions and Answers
8. Mission and Service Fund
9. Review of the 2021 Financial Report (not reviewed externally at this time)
13. Operating Budget 2022
10. New Business
 - a. Strategic Planning Report
 - b. Tipi Project Update
14. Adjournment
15. Commissioning and Blessing

Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths

Baptisms 2021

November 15, 2021 Ainsley Paige Brown, child of Robert Brown and Natalie Poiron

November 15, 2021 Reid Douglas Brown, child of Robert Brown and Natalie Poiron

Marriages 2021

None

Deaths 2021

<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Date of Burial</u>	<u>Name</u>
March 26, 2021		Shirley Anne Patricia Bollman
May 15, 2021		James Cornett
July 27, 2021	Sept. 25, 2021	Vera Marian Glawson
September 5, 2021		Helen "Alice" Lutz

Knox United Church Council

MINISTER: Rev. Craig Miller

CHAIR: Sharon Christmas

VICE CHAIR: Debby Dandy

SECRETARY: Sharon McIntosh (January-August) / Kimberly Poole (Sept. to present)

TREASURER: Shelley Tataryn

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL: Coleen Wall, Deb Carnegie, Art Godfrey, Karen Turnbull, Laurie Crowe

WORSHIP: Diane Shepherd, Pat Cavanagh, Peggy Barrows, Phyllis Digby, Cheryl Doull

PROPERTY: Roger Bright, Tony Wall, Robert Campbell, Steve Derendy, Brian Manns, Barry Bromley, Orval Henderson

CONGREGATIONAL CARE & MEMBERSHIP: David Barrows, Shirley Armstrong, Gayle Watt, Ida Hallatt, Linda Schrader, Lynn Cupples

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Leanne Sprung, Mel Doyle, Jill Hannah-Kayes, Madelyn Robinson, Antoinette Gravel-Ouellette

OUTREACH: Wayne Digby, Debby Dandy, Maureen Cobb, Susie McPherson-Derendy, Lorraine Pompana, Gerald Whetter, Lydia Glawson. Madelyn Robinson

GREEN TEAM: Quentin Robinson & Madelyn Robinson (co-chairs), Ken Wojnarski, Orval Henderson, Wayne Digby, Les Kelly, Wayne Clayton (chair through June)

STEWARDSHIP: Alan Moulin, Duncan Waddell, David Paul, Vivian Mitchell, Peggy Wojnarski (2021), Kathyne Lumgair (October to present)

AFFIRM COMMITTEE: Laura Crookshanks, Lynne Manns, Sharyn Hayter, Mel Doyle, Deirdre Taylor-John, Tara Leach, Gail Shepherd-Clark

TRUSTEES: Wayne Clayton, Vivian Mitchell, Doug Crookshanks, Craig Miller

Chairperson's Report

In last year's report I had said that I was optimistic we would be able to get back to in-house worship, meetings, friendly gatherings and the opportunity to feed our souls at Knox. We had optimism for only a few months. Once again we find ourselves watching livestream worship services, zoom meetings and not being able to share food together in person.

What will 2022 bring? I'm going to be very cautious in my predictions for this year. We do have many blessings to celebrate at Knox and I pray for strength to see us through this tumultuous year again.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the hardworking staff for guiding us through this past year. There have been some "ups" and some "downs" but because of your tireless hard work, things always appear to run very smoothly. The live streaming service on Sunday morning has been a huge asset for those who are not comfortable meeting in person and now we look forward to returning to this form of Sunday worship until it feels safe to gather in-person again.

I need to say thanks to all the committee chairs that attend council meetings every third Tuesday of the month, and to the members of those committees. You all work very hard under trying circumstances to keep the congregation informed about our church, our community and the wider world.

Thanks to our Treasurer, Shelley Tataryn and to Roger Bright our property man. You both put in many, many volunteer hours so Knox can be aware of our financial picture at all times and for keeping the church always looking new and refreshed. As you enter the main doors to the Sanctuary one cannot help but admire the new cubicle which houses the livestreaming/sound equipment, all built by Roger. It looks awesome!

We had to say goodbye to Sharon McIntosh, our office manager for 10 years, who retired in November of this year. We wish you well Sharon in your future endeavors. We welcomed a new office manager, Kim Poole who started in the fall. She is bubbly, easy to talk to and very willing to try and keep up with all our requests that are thrown at her. We welcome you to our Knox Family.

We are blessed at Knox to have such a dedicated group of volunteers that work silently behind the scenes. We thank you all for your expertise and for keeping Knox a vibrant place to be. A "silent" thank you is extended to you all.

The year 2022 will be a work in progress and we hope not too many surprises will be thrown our way. We will come out at the end of this year, dare I say, in a better place than we ended 2021. With God's blessings and giving each of us strength to go forward we will get through this year like we have done so before, with respect and love for one another.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Christmas

Annual Report by Rev. Craig Miller

A Future with Hope at Knox United

During our fall stewardship campaign, we reflected on our sacred stories of wandering, exile, and homecoming. And we gave thanks for the tools to connect even in this time of physical separation during the pandemic, offering us the opportunity to be together in Spirit even when we aren't together in body.

There's one more step in the dance of Christian life.

There is exile, there is homecoming, and then there is a third movement: being sent back out into the world for the sake of our neighbours and creation as a whole. It's being commissioned, sent for the sake of love and justice, a future with hope.

You already know this as one of your favourite hymns is, "Here I Am, Lord." And it goes like this, "Here I am, Lord / Is it I, Lord? / I have heard You calling in the night / I will go, Lord / If You lead me / I will hold Your people in my heart."

Knox United is a community of return, a place of homecoming. And it's also a community of sending, a place that commissions us as agents of love and justice, so that all may experience a sense of homecoming into a new community of compassion, dignity, and joy.

Christianity was made for this: building bridges of homecoming and commissioning, sending and return, welcoming the stranger and being sent forth to visit the sick and imprisoned. Knox United is made for it, too, as is each one of us is affirmed as one of G_d's rainbow children. To be clear, though: we are made to do this together, offering up all our skills, our hopes, our ideas, our money, and our hearts to answer the call.

Thank you for your generosity and leadership in answering the call, as together, we seek a future with hope!

In this Annual Report for 2021, you'll discover a sacred story of exile, homecoming, and commissioning. Please take the time to read all of the reports and express your appreciation for the leadership of our council and committees.

We completed the Livestream equipment installation in the sanctuary, installed a new wifi network in the building, completed the Tipi Legacy Project, and installed a new alarm system for the building (this provided significant savings on our insurance). In addition, we continued to use Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube to keep our community connected and expand our affirming ministry network.

As of 14 December, our YouTube channel had 7,742 views during 2021, for a watch time of 141.2K minutes. The majority of folks watching are from Canada, although we regularly have views from the US and the Philippines. We received 86 likes and 54 comments. Since creating the channel in March of 2020, we've had 350 likes and 956 comments (We received many more comments during the lockdown). We currently have 190 subscribers. We currently have 458 followers on our Facebook page, a significant jump since 2019.

I've calculated that I hosted 146 Zoom meetings during 2021, and I also attended another 86 Zoom meetings that I was not hosting—a significant change due to this pandemic.

My ministry extends beyond the walls of Knox United, and you've been gracious in supporting my time commitment to these areas. I continue to serve as a Spiritual Care Associate at the Brandon Regional Health Centre, completing my ninth year there. I regularly patrol with the Brandon Bear Clan and volunteer with the Brandon Friendship Centre vaccination clinic. In 2021 I agreed to serve as a member-at-large on the Prairie to Pine Region Executive.

I am grateful for the work of our council and staff. Navigating our way through this pandemic required significant resources: energy, discernment, wisdom, humility, and humour. This journey was not without conflict. However, we maintained a strong commitment to our community of faith's health, growth, and well-being.

With a grateful heart,
Craig

Chaplain's Report to Knox 2020 From Joe Ball

My sisters, brothers, and others in Christ Jesus,

With my prayers of gratitude for your ongoing care for me in this time of pandemic ministry, I am grateful for the opportunity and invitation to give you a bit of glimpse of my work in the context of the Brandon Regional Health Centre Foundation over this last year. As you know, we are today nearing the end of two years of the world-wide COVID-19 Pandemic. During the worst of the pandemic, Knox has been gathering on-line, rather than in person for worship. Like many of you, I have very much missed the community gathering for prayer and worship. However, at various points throughout the past year, I have met with some Knox folks in hospital; and we were glad to be able, if briefly, worship together in the fall and early winter.

In terms of my work at the hospital, in 2021 I was able to see 1196 patients, or outpatients in hospital and community. This is probably the most contact I've had with people at work, in terms of raw numbers. None of them have any idea who I am, however, as I was pretty much always in a mask! I spent 908.5 hrs in direct service to patients and clients, and was available after hours on call for a further 1624.5hrs in 2021. To help you envision what that looks like, a full time job is about 2000 hours/yr. Which means that I was with people about 45% of the time at work. The rest, as they say, is meetings.

The evidence of the pandemic is displayed in the number of weddings for which I was the celebrant: exactly 0. This is a first in more than 25 years of ministry. The number of funerals was also, for me, somewhat reduced. I presided at 14 funerals over the year; and 8 of these were graveside services.

The full impact of the COVID pandemic is yet to be revealed, but one thing that is clear is that the work we do, in the Spiritual Care Department at BRHC, is valued more than ever by staff throughout the facility. With reduced opportunities for families to visit, and clergy visits almost entirely curtailed, we are often asked to be the link between the patient isolated in hospital and the family at home. The work has been rewarding and I am only grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role.

In our work, we are supported and sustained by the prayers of many, and by the service of a few; among them, Rev. Craig Miller of Knox. Let me also mention here, Rev. Doug Neufeld of Trinity United, Rev. Ken Quiring of Grace Mennonite, Rev. Matt Koovisk of St. Mary's Virden, Rev. Laura Hargrove of First Presbyterian, and Roy Dearing, who is a member of the Gate Community Church in Brandon.

In November, our team was joined by Daniel Lam, formerly Associate Pastor at McDiarmid Dr. Alliance Church. He is taking a unit of CPE under the supervision of Chenene Layne, at St. Boniface Hospital. We are fortunate to be able to provide him with placement here at BRHC for his 200 Clinical Hours.

Our task as Christians is always to be faithful in our time, and the COVID Pandemic has certainly shaped and in many ways defined this past year. However, as followers of Christ

Jesus our identity comes, not from the age in which we live, but from the G-d we love and seek to serve. May the Holy continue to bless, call and use us in this community, throughout the coming year.

Gratefully,
Joe

Knox Music Team Report

The Knox Music Team remained as active as the imposed pandemic health and safety restrictions would allow. With the restrictions bouncing back and forth like a yo-yo, we frequently adjusted the numbers of musicians on the chancel to maintain our safety. The six-foot measuring tape was deployed more than once to be sure we kept our distances.

For most of the Sunday services, organ, piano, percussion, and one voice were used to present our ministry of music. As restrictions were relaxed, Knoyse joined in with more voices and acoustic instruments.

We have been so fortunate to have the bells while we are not able to have the vocal choir. For one service in Lent and again Easter morning, we presented two anthems with the bell choir, composed and directed by Mindy Campbell. The bell choir was also pleased to offer a piece “For Vera” at the memorial service for Vera Glawson also composed by Mindy Campbell. Christmas Eve saw the bell choir setting the stage for a beautiful service that was to be for a full house but changed to virtual at the last moment as the omicron virus began to rage.

While Knox’s Vaccination mandate means that some of our music team cannot attend church, we are pleased to have Eleanor Taylor (piano) and Naomi Russell (voice) join us. Naomi gave us a BIG Christmas present by telling us her brother and his partner were coming home for Christmas and would like to join us on Christmas Eve. Wow! Hugh Russell, a highly praised baritone, has performed opera on stages around the world. Craig Terry, a collaborative pianist, and Grammy Award winner, has also earned international acclaim. They joined in with our choir’s vocal anthem and treated us to their rendition of Gesu Bambino.

While we would rather be with our friends in person, we are heartened by the enthusiasm and desire we all have to be together again and doing what we love to do – make music.

Respectfully submitted,
Bernie Whetter, Choral Director

Worship Committee Report

Committee: Diane Shepherd, Peggy Barrows, Pat Cavanagh, Phyllis Digby, Cheryl Doull.

Worship services in 2021 were live streamed until October. Live streaming continued with the addition of in person services. It was decided by Council that only persons that were fully vaccinated could attend. Worship Committee took on the task of scanning cards and checking in congregants on Sunday mornings. We also marked off the pews to facilitate social distancing. The first few Sundays we also ushered, in order to acquaint people with seating.

It was wonderful to see and greet people as they arrived for services and then to hear and share the worship service.

Service Themes:

Lent - Holy Vessels – A Lenten Season of Recovery

Easter Season – A Place to Call Home

Called by Earth and Sky – praying with the Elements

Advent – The Inn – Housing the Holy

This committee gathered for a meeting in October to plan for the Advent season. We met again in November to ready the sanctuary for Advent. Thanks to everyone who helped put up wreaths, decorate the tree and put up banners. Thanks to Bernie and Craig for preparing the chancel area. Everything looked amazing.

There were two Baptisms, Ainsley Paige Brown and Reid Douglas Brown, on November 14, 2021.

It was decided to cancel the “in person” portion of the Christmas Eve service. That service was live streamed for people to enjoy. Thank you to those who provided music for our enjoyment, including guest musicians. The Bell Choir was wonderful!

When we are able to return to our sanctuary in person we will be there to greet you!!

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Shepherd
Worship Committee

Affirm Committee Report

Committee: Mel Doyle, Sharyn Hayter, Tara Leach, Lynne Manns, Gail Shepherd-Clark, Deidra Taylor-John and Laura Crookshanks.

Again this year, we were limited in terms of in person gatherings. We did, however, have some meetings via Zoom and were able to conduct some events – both in person and virtually. This past year, the following activities were carried out within the Knox Congregation and in the broader community:

- “PIE” (Public, Intentional and Explicit): While the in-person component was cancelled, a celebration was held virtually on March 14. We watched a video from Affirm United followed by discussion. We sold and delivered mini pies, with a profit of \$190 going to SERC to support services for the LGBTTQIA community.
- Although Brandon Pride celebrations were cancelled a Pride Worship Service was held at Knox in June.
- We have been offering support to other congregations. This past year, this has included answering emails from a congregation in Saskatchewan and one in Winnipeg and inviting members of other congregations to our events (e.g. PIE). We were honoured to be asked to participate in presenting Trinity United Church with their Affirming Certificate at their Affirming celebration on November 21st.
- Some of our committee members have attended webinars and Zoom meetings across the wider UCC community. It has been helpful to hear what resources are available and what other congregations are doing.
- One of our members joined Spirit Kids Club event in October to discuss what being affirming means. We can learn a great deal from the actions of our children!
- Affirming Anniversary Service of Celebration to mark the anniversary of becoming an Affirming Ministry was held on October 31st. The children and youth participated in presenting the new Progress Pride flag.
- On Nov. 12, 27 people attended an in person session entitled “Beyond the Binary” with Racheal Wu, 2SLGBTQ+ Facilitator at SERC as she presented information about trans and non-binary issues. There were many questions and great discussion. A follow-up event will be planned.
- Knox hosted the livestreamed Trans Day of Remembrance Service at noon on November 19 and participated in the Zoom evening candlelight vigil on November 20.

If there are events/discussion ideas that you would like to see addressed, or you would like to join our committee or help out at an event, please contact one of us or the Church Office.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Crookshanks

Christian Education Committee Report

Committee: Leanne Sprung, Jill Hannah-Kayes, Mel Doyle, Madelyn Robinson, Antoinette Gravel-Ouellette (Youth Director). The Sunday School Superintendent position is vacant.

We have completed a second year of uncertainty and wondering about how Spirit Kid's Club could gather safely and within the mandated guidelines. As concerns around the pandemic continued, we, continued to engage children and youth with spiritual and relationship building by virtual platforms.

Spirit Kid's Club – Kindergarten to Grade 5 Group

We met three times in March by Zoom. The "SKC at Home" kits for the families with children age three to grade five proved to be meaningful for families in the prior months, so teachers and parent volunteers undertook to prepare and deliver 14 packages for two Tuesday Zoom sessions in March. The kits include a variety of things including craft supplies to use on your own, or together during the online gatherings. There is always a great response from the children and families for participation and follow-up activities. The resources used include activities from the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum as well as SALT Ministries and Illustrated Ministry.

We hosted two Tuesday April gatherings. On April 13th, the guest speaker was Laura Crookshanks sharing the theme time from the prior Knox service "Let Us Build a House". The April 27th activity leaders were the Senior Youth group, who had created an interactive, interpretive version of The New Creed. The youth took turns teaching this version to the junior class wherever in their homes or yards they were watching. Continuing this mentorship opportunity between our children and youth has been awesome and we are so thankful for Antoinette facilitating the process.

Fall provided a chance to meet in person. We were excited to meet at the Kin Bike Park for some bicycling on the trails. Since the joint project with the Affirm Committee to paint or decorate Knox's front sidewalk for Pride Week in June was postponed, the fall event focused on the theme was inclusivity. The Affirm Committee Chair, Laura Crookshanks joined us and spoke with the children about the Pride flag and how colours and symbols represent ideas or things we believe in, such as inclusivity of all. A "balloon dart art" activity followed the talk resulting in a rainbow themed canvas for the church. The creative activities were very well received and the biking in the park was an awesome way to capitalize on the group's high energy! All ages of SKC were included and invited to bring a friend. Everyone went home with a bar of homemade rainbow coloured soap, a cupcake and some memories having reconnected with their Knox friends after summer.

In recognition of Clergy Appreciation Month in October, SKC participants was invited to submit photos of Craig or video messages to him. They were compiled and shared during worship as a surprise for Craig. Several of the children were in attendance that day and assisted with the Affirm Anniversary celebration.

In early November, the committee met by Zoom to assess the what, where, who and how's of in person SKC on Sunday mornings. From mid-November until 12 December,

we offered the K-Grade 5 and the Junior Youth classes in person. The Wigglin' Worship Room was open for parents to supervise while listening to the service. Leanne Sprung and Mary-Jane Orr lead the K-Grade 5 group in the lower classroom, Antoinette Gravel-Ouellette lead the Grade 6+ in the Youth Room. There were between five and eight children in the K-Grade 5 class and three in the Junior Youth class.

An Advent Event on November 28 featured a nativity making activity, lunch, carol singing and a cake walk with lots of prizes. Eight SKC families as well as members of the congregation joined in the event.

Following the success of *An Ugly Christmas Sweater Pageant* in 2020, we offered our Spirit Kids' Club families the opportunity to create a new pageant experience for this Advent/Christmas season at Knox. We chose, *Do Not Be Afraid* from Illustrated Ministry as a program that would offer us flexibility and creativity. A sample of scene one and an invitation to participate was sent out to all of the SKC families.

Ten families committed to creatively acted out the scenes, recording them and submitting to Craig who edited them together. Costumes, participants, props and setting were all chosen by the individual families resulting in a unique, quirky and heartwarming rendition of the story which was shared during worship on Sunday, 19 December. The service was Livestreamed and then archived on our YouTube channel.

The efforts of the committee and SKC leaders are always rewarded with wonderful participation, support and encouragement from SKC parents and members of the congregation. We are honoured to be able to continue building relationships within the Knox community.

Knox Youth

Over the past year the older youth and Antoinette continued to meet weekly and worked on leadership skills. We met in person when we were able to and on times when we were not we met by Zoom. The older youth met weekly until June. For Pride week youth made signs again and they were posted on Knox front lawn. The youth met for a celebratory supper in the summer time as the wind up for the year and then come fall we were excited to come back to inperson!

Antoinette organized, and both she and Craig facilitated two youth gatherings last week at the church. November 10 for high school aged youth with five attending and November 12 for Grades 6-9 aged youth with eleven attending. Both events received very positive feedback from the youth attending.

We had planned follow up youth group events which have been put on hold. Ideas the youth wanted to participate in as we move forward we are still holding hope to be able to do those events as we had plans to do so and then we were not able to.

For SKC we have a new family who has started attending Knox that has two youth grade 6 and up and they when we have been able to meet in person have been consistent in attendance. SKC when able to meet in person we have been able to socially distance also bubbling families closer together.

Adult Education

Book Study

During the season of Lent, Craig facilitated a book study of, White Fragility: Why It's So hard for White People to Talk About Racism. Members of our Outreach Committee were reading this book from the U.S. scholar Robin DiAngelo and wanted an opportunity for many of us to process the information together. Four sessions were held with sixteen participants. As a result of this study Craig was invited to present information from the book study to the Third Age Learning Group at BU during their November meeting.

Online Learning

We promoted a variety of online learning opportunities for our community of faith including:

- Race & Religion: Cultivating Anti-Racist Faith Communities
- Anti-racist Preaching, Biblical Interpretation, and Realities of Racism in the United Church
- A Rainbow Journey
- Short History of Trans People's Long Fight for Equality
- Beyond the Binary: Supporting Community
- Bee City Brandon
- A Good War: Mobilizing Canada for a Climate Emergency
- Indigenous Rights, Reconciliation and Climate Justice with Kairos
- Survivor Panel on Missing Children
- Summer Solstice: Honouring the Change in Seasons
- A History of Pride
- The Other Side of the River: Exploring Reconciliation with Alf Dumont
- Sky, Sun, Sea, and Stone: Celtic Spirituality and Creative Writing

Respectfully submitted,

Antoinette Gravel-Ouellette, Craig Miller, Leanne Sprung

Ministry & Personnel Committee Report

Committee:

Coleen Wall -Chair- Liaison to Craig Miller, Charles Ingram
Deb Carnegie-Secretary- Liaison to Bernie Whetter & Antoinette Gravel-Ouellette
Art Godfrey-Liaison to Sharon McIntosh Jan-Nov, Kim Poole Sep 27—present
Karen Turnbull-Liaison to Jane Skinner
Laurie Crowe- Financial Advisor

As we come to the beginning of another year I reflect on how 2021 started off pretty much the same as the end of 2020.

This year we continued with zoom meetings even in the fall when we were able to start meeting face to face. It seems to work best for our busy committee members. We did agree if we needed to pivot to in person meeting anytime we would.

January we wrapped up another successful set of annual reviews with all staff.

In February we welcomed Karen Turnbull on to the committee. Karen took a few months to become familiar with M & P committee requirements. Then we had her take over as a liaison for Jane Skinner.

Knox is truly blessed with our complement of staff. I do appreciate how well-oiled our Knox Team is in the way they work together to see that the church office & services are organized and professional.

The province remained in Code Red with Covid impacts until fall. Craig and the music team continued offering us livestream services weekly. The services are reflective and the music is appreciated.

May 15th Prairie to Pine offered a zoom M & P training for Committee members. These are always informative sessions and we all came out of it learning something new.

In August, Sharon McIntosh made the decision to retire from Knox to be able to care for Scotty. She remained on staff till we hired Kim Poole who started Sept. 27th & Sharon did training from home as well as coming into provide assistance once or twice a week. November 1st was her last day, although Sharon remains available to Kim to provide training as required. November 7th we were able to say Thank you & farewell to Sharon at brunch for her 10 years almost to the day of working with Knox.

Kim Poole is our new Office Administrator and we welcomed her and her family officially a bit late due to busyness in her life and Knox's even though she had been working since Sep 27th. It certainly has been a different environment for Kim. Not having an open church I think makes meeting the members easier to remember them. It has been different being trained off site – we tell her. “Give yourself a year to experience all the workings of the church.”

We must not forget all our staff:

- Craig- for always being on top of things his finger is on the pulse of the church, community and the wider church & world. Craig is a true leader for the church;
- Bernie- our choir director – providing his voice as his own solo choir and for arranging when possible other musicians to the service & he has also been a scripture reader during lock down;
- Jane- providing the organ & piano accompaniment;
- Antoinette- for providing zoom meetings with all Spirit Kids Club with the C E members making sure our youth have remained engaged, providing outdoor activities and zoom get together;
- Charles-for keeping the church clean & sanitized to keep all that enter the doors safe.

September saw Knox make the decision to reopen to the community on Oct 3rd. Again our staff pivoted back to in person services still following Covid Protocol. Our new livestream equipment has been a great asset to the team especially now when not all are able or comfortable attending. As of Dec 24th we returned once again to virtual services due to escalating Covid cases in the province.

December 5th M & P members and staff met in the auditorium for an appreciation staff lunch with the exception of Jane due to a last-minute work commitment.

Well I didn't know what I was going to say about this year 2021. In reflection, the last part of the year has been busier & I feel that has been a good thing as it meant we are working our way thru this pandemic.

On behalf of the M & P committee to all our staff and all our church members who help out when asked by the staff "Thank You." We are very grateful for our staff team and all they have done and continue to do in extenuating circumstances.

Respectfully submitted By

Coleen Wall
Chair of M & P

Stewardship Committee Report

Committee: Alan Moulin, Chair (2012 to present), Duncan Waddell (2013 to present), David Paul (2016 to present), Vivian Mitchell (2018 to present), Peggy Wojnarski (2021), Kathyne Lumgair (2021 to present).

The Stewardship Committee supported the Knox congregation with respect to service and fund raising, and provided input to council. Our committee thanks the congregation for their generosity during 2021, which resulted in an operating surplus for Knox. Church giving in 2021 occurred in the context of reduced income due to rentals, decreases in expenditures, and significant government grants.

The past year was a challenge for the Stewardship Committee, as our fundraisers were cancelled due to the covid regulations. Furthermore, the committee does not anticipate organizing a fundraiser until the current Omicron pandemic is resolved. The activities of the stewardship committee will continue with respect to supporting service to Knox United Church, as the budget for donations from the congregation in 2022 will increase.

Church donations in 2021 reflected those in 2020. The number of pledges returned to Knox for the fall 2021 campaign was low. Our committee will review the year-end summary of giving to the church, to assess the potential for donations and service in 2022. New ideas for church giving will be shared for discussion with council. The committee recognizes the significance of bequests to the church in 2021, and the importance of planned giving.

Membership in the Stewardship Committee changed in 2021: Peggy Wojnarski resigned from the committee in 2021, while Kathyne Lumgair joined in October 2021.

Please contact Alan Moulin, chair of Stewardship, if you have any new ideas for service and fund raising. Our church and many service organizations are rapidly adapting to new circumstances due to covid, we need new ideas and opportunities.

Submitted by,
Alan Moulin

Congregational Care and Membership Committee Report

Committee: Shirley Armstrong, Ida Hallatt, Linda Shrader, Lynn Cupples, Gayle Watt, David Barrows

The committee is responsible for a variety of activities that involve pastoral care, social events, and general oversight of the care of the congregation. Several subcommittees are appointed to look after the following:

Pew Registers

Kitchen Care

Sunday Morning Coffee

Friendly Visitors

Mailing Cards

Knitting Circle

Funeral Luncheons

Because of Covid 19 and the various restrictions that were put in place during 2021 most of the committee's normal activities were not possible. The only thing that continued as usual was the sending of cards to those who experience significant milestones or a major transition in their life. Christmas greetings were also sent to those who might be in need of some extra Christmas cheer.

In-person worship resumed in mid-October and this gave the congregation a chance to reconnect with many they had not seen for quite some time. This was certainly a welcome change but this time of in-person worship was short-lived as only online worship had to begin again in late December.

Of course we look forward to the time when worship in the sanctuary can begin again but until then we will do what we can to provide the best congregational care possible under these difficult circumstances. We begin 2022 with many cases of Covid in the community and many restrictions in place. While the whole congregation is impacted by the pandemic we all need to remember to keep in contact with others as a phone call or email can be most welcome and uplifting in this challenging time.

Submitted by

David Barrows for Congregational Care and Membership Committee

Spring and Fall Luncheons

Due to Covid restrictions in 2021 neither the spring or fall luncheons were held.

The last luncheon was in the fall of 2020 and it was pick up or delivery only.

We hope to have a Spring Luncheon this year, possibly in May and most likely it will be pick up or delivery as well. Keep looking for further information as the year 2022 progresses.

Submitted by:
Sharon Christmas,
Luncheon Coordinator.

Brunch Bunch

I feel like a broken record but due to Covid restrictions we were not able to provide brunch for the congregation for the better part of 2021.

Usually brunch is cooked the first Sunday of the month, excluding June, July and August. The dedicated team of kitchen workers are ready when and if we are called upon.

Brunch was able to be served in October and November with a limited number of congregation folks allowed because of social distancing. We could seat about 72 people in the auditorium with these restrictions. Our kitchen crew were ready to go and the congregation was to. Everyone was very happy to gather again and share a meal with one another.

We are hopeful we are able to serve the congregation again this year, perhaps in a few months.

Our Brunch Bunch volunteers are: Irene and Barry Bromley, Bob and Marguerite Campbell, Lynn Couples, Bernice Hemmingway, Barb Cary and Rene and Sharon Christmas, and a great clean-up crew who manage all the dishes at the end. We have had two youth volunteers as well, Emma and Bailey Bromley, great to have you with us!

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

Submitted by,
Sharon Christmas

Outreach Committee Report

Committee: Wayne Digby, Maureen Cobb, Debby Dandy, Lydia Glawson, Susie McPherson, Craig Miller, Lorraine Pompana, Madelyn Robinson, Gerald Whetter

In submitting the Outreach Annual Report, we have included the name of the Committee Member who is primarily responsible for each of the Program areas. If you would like further information or have an interest in being involved, please be in touch with the appropriate Committee member.

Knox Strategic Plan and Outreach Input – Debby Dandy

A committee of Knox members worked together over the course of a few months to create a strategic plan for Knox for the next three years. A significant goal of the plan related to building intentional partnerships with organizations in Brandon who respond to the needs of vulnerable populations. Members of Knox community of faith will be linked with organizations to act as liaisons, sharing needs and providing feedback on their work. These liaisons will share any specific opportunities for Knox to partner with an organization in meeting the needs of vulnerable persons. This information re needs will be received by the Outreach committee, who will take action to assist, whether through fundraising, recruiting volunteers or raising awareness.

Antiracism – Debby Dandy

A number of Knox members, including Rev Craig Miller, participated in on line training provided by the UCC on anti- racism. The day was very helpful in uncovering the systemic racism in our church and communities, which we often do not recognize. This issue is an important one as we are committed to eliminating racism in our lives. Several members who attended the training plan to present learning opportunities for members of Knox.

Samaritan House – Maureen Cobb

Thanks to Knox members who drop off food in the church donation box. Once a month food is delivered to the Food Bank location. Barb McNish, director alerts us to the most needed items.

Knox chose not to have a team participate in the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser – rather we collected through a special appeal to our members and donated \$1500.00 directly to the food bank.

Bear Clan – Maureen Cobb

Cyndi Price, liaison member of the Bear Clan alerts us to what items they need. Knox members have donated clothing and food throughout the year as needed. A donation of \$200.00 was also given.

An offshoot of the Bear Clan requested help this summer in providing snacks for vulnerable people on Sundays. Knox members were generous in dropping off drinks, energy bars, fruit, nuts, cookies and icicles.

7th Street Health Access Centre – Maureen Cobb

Thanks to the sale of the Sobeys/Safeway cards, we are able to continue making cash donations to the 7th Street Health Access Centre.

Mission and Service Fund – Lydia Glawson

“Giving to the Mission & Service Fund is our opportunity to join in the work of our national United Church as it seeks to support outreach projects here in Canada and around the world. This work is highlighted in the materials printed in our weekly email and supported by videos and worship themes. Knox has a long history of generosity when it comes to M&S. This year our contributions totaled \$39,363, about \$650 short of our \$40,000 goal for 2021.”

Fair Trade Annual Report – Madelyn Robinson

The Fair Trade Committee was not very active this year.

We have started a Knox Coffee Club and are taking orders once a month for Fair Trade Coffee and Tea from Level Ground. The link is: [Shop Online | Level Ground Trading](#) and you can get more information from Madelyn at: KnoxKafe@wcgwave.ca

Climate Conversations – Madelyn Robinson

Held 3 Climate Conversations with a total of 20 people participating. This was an opportunity for folks to come together and learn about the Climate Crisis and feel supported. After the final Conversation the group decided that we would work toward Brandon becoming a Sustainable City.

Support to incarcerated people leaving BCI – Debby Dandy

The Outreach Committee has been aware of a need for support for individuals leaving Brandon Correctional Center and transitioning into our community. There are many challenges in establishing oneself in the community after incarceration including identifying resources, finding housing, seeking employment, reunification with family, and finding supportive relationships. Outreach plans to invite other faith communities to join us in talking about matching individuals leaving BCC with volunteers who would form a relationship and assist in the transition. The John Howard Society will provide training and support for the project.

Kairos – Debby Dandy

One of KAIROS’ areas of action is Eco Justice, or Climate Justice. Locally Madelyn Robinson of the Green Team has taken on offering Climate Conversations virtually using the KAIROS resource. A number of people have come together to first share knowledge and concerns, and then ideas for action. KAIROSCANADA.ORG has excellent research-based information and theological reflection regarding Climate Change.

Brandon KAIROS hosted the Manitoba- Northwestern Ontario fall gathering. Four sessions were held virtually, with up to 80 people attending. Sessions included: Debra Tacan – Care of the land from an Indigenous perspective; David Barnes – Repair of our environment, Assiniboine Food Forest; Marje Rosceli - Traditional Healing Centres; Katherine Nichols - Burial Sites at site of Brandon Residential School. The sessions were very positively received.

Westman Sharing Circle – Craig Miller

Our Westman Sharing Circle celebrated its fifth anniversary in December. The circle continues to meet on a monthly basis and facilitation is shared by Susan McPherson - Derendy, Debby Dandy, Aaron McKay, and Craig Miller. Most of the meetings took place over Zoom with some circles taking place at the Riverbank Discovery Centre and at least one in-person meeting in the chapel. Participation from our community of faith has been limited; however, new folx from the Brandon area continue to join us.

2020 Manitoba Multifaith Council Corrections Art Contest Report – Craig Miller

In March, Chaplain Bernie Mullins, Coordinator of Chaplains at the Government of Manitoba, shared about this unique art contest which Knox sponsored in 2020. The Outreach Committee hoped to host an exhibition at Knox in 2020; however, with the restrictions, Chaplain Mullins agreed to do a PowerPoint presentation on Zoom.

"This is My Story" was a collection of art work by inmates in Manitoba's youth and adult correctional facilities. Each year, the Prison Chaplaincy Services of Manitoba organize an art competition for the inmates and in 2020 received 41 entries. Artists explored themes on personal narrative, resilience, and spirituality.

The project was produced by the Manitoba Multifaith Council and sponsored by Knox United. Our community of faith provided \$450.00 in funding for awards provided to the artists. Your purchase of Sobeys Gift Cards made this sponsorship possible. As sponsor, the Outreach Committee was invited to choose the theme for the 2020 contest.

Brandon Residential School Work and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Craig Miller

During the months of June and July we provided resources and support to regional and national staff as the church struggled to respond to the news from Kamloops and Cowessess First Nation. On 12 July Craig took part in a meeting with national and regional staff and representatives from the United Church in Regina and Red Deer working groups on residential schools.

At a special meeting of the General Council Executive on 20 July, it approved three million dollars to fund the work of Indigenous communities for the identification of unmarked graves, which also includes archival research and providing communities access to documents. The UCC turned over all its existing records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Winnipeg.

This summer Knox was approved as a partner on a grant application submitted to the Indigenous Agriculture Science Partnerships Program through Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada (federal government). Additional partners include Sioux Valley Dakota Nation and the Brandon Research and Development Centre.

In the application we requested funding to support five areas:

1. Access to the site: Improve access for those with permission while controlling access to others – gates, grading the road, road improvements, benches for Elders.
2. Site clean-up and rejuvenation: Remove illegally dumped waste, develop signage to make people aware that this is a sacred site, to commemorate and educate (in multiple languages)
3. Protect the burial sites: Expand the North Hill burial site fence to include grave currently outside the fence, fence the North-East Fields and East Hill burial sites.
4. Identify, manage and plant culturally important plants: Conducted vegetation surveys, map plants, look to increase populations with transplants and

management, develop a walking route to act as a medicine teaching tool, identify areas near the burial sites for enhanced plantings to honour the children.

5. Host a cultural feast: Honour of the BIRS survivors and those buried on the site & community consultation. Partner with SVDN for tent rental, transportation, hospitality, support for ceremonial needs, display proposed signage and conduct community consultation during the feast.

The grant for \$50k was approved in July. Knox made a commitment to recruit volunteers to assist with the site clean-up/maintenance and raise \$5000 for in-kind funding. A donation can be given to Knox, noting that it is for the Brandon Indian Residential School Cemetery Fund. All monies raised will go directly to the project.

The City of Brandon designated 27 September - 1 October as its first "Truth and Reconciliation Week." We provided images and information from the mobile learning centre to Assiniboine Community College, City Hall, Brandon University, Brandon School Division Offices, Vincent Massey High School, and Prairie Hope High School.

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation organized a gathering for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Ceremony began at the former site of the residential school and moved to the campground at Grand Valley. Marg and Gerald Whetter joined Craig for the day and we represented Knox and the UCC. Other members from Knox attended the blanket exercise at the Riverbank Discovery Centre and the walk from the centre to the former school site.

Tipi Tour Legacy Project – Craig Miller

In 2021 Knox United became a host of The Tipi Tour Legacy Project of Brandon. The tipi was installed by Alternative Landscaping in July and the signage was installed in September. The installation was administered by the Tipi Tour Legacy Project working group.

The Outreach committee wishes to thank Bernie Whetter and the Greenspot for removing the shrub that was near the location of the tipi, removal of grass at the site, and providing ground cover for the inside area of the structure.

The colour of the "Every Child Matters" tipi is orange, as it is the colour associated with the campaign to raise awareness about the legacy of Canada's residential schools. The focus of the tipi is on the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The tipis are a platform to share knowledge and culture and commemorate past events. The Tipi Legacy Project began when Brandon's Walking With Our Sisters Committee received a grant from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Commemorative Fund. Knox provided volunteers, food, and additional resources for the WWOS project, hosted at Brandon University.

Submitted by,
Wayne Digby

Refuge Brandon

We have been continuing to support Fatemah, Iman and children Arif and Ummu with phone calls and the occasional in person visit now that they have moved to Winnipeg. When we spoke to them on Jan 1/22, they had a single woman and her two children (from Myanmar) staying with them over the holidays in their apartment on Balmoral St.

Brent White from our group was able to find one person in Winnipeg who has continued to do overall supervision for their reduced needs, and she has been diligent and loving to them.

The group hasn't had any meetings for a while as Covid restrictions prevail. There is still a good balance in the fund as seed money to do some more support. Some from our group may feel they don't want to do anymore because they did a lot of driving and troubleshooting over those initial two years. However, we are hoping to look at the situation with fresh eyes at some point in the future.

Some have provided very good support to the Syrian families before they moved to Edmonton this year. Others are in close touch with recent immigrant families from African countries some of whom are doing very well with jobs at Maple Leaf.

Submitted by,
Gerald Whetter for Refuge Brandon members

Green Team Report

Committee: Quentin Robinson, Wayne Digby, Orval Henderson, Les Kelly, Ken Wojnarski, Wayne Clayton, Madelyn Robinson, and Craig Miller

The Knox Green Team is responsible for encouraging and supporting individuals to become involved in greening initiatives in our Knox faith community as well as the wider community.

Another interesting year!

The Knox Green Team activities in 2021:

- Just A Green Minute: Information on the Climate Crisis sent out in the email news most weeks. Then published as a blog on the Knox website.
- Film Recommendations-Throughout the winter searched and reviewed films that dealt with various topics that would be interesting and educational.
- Climate Strike-the last Friday of every month
- Ryan Boyd - Toward a Sustainable Food Chain; Relearning our Role - Many people joined us for a Zoom presentation with Ryan Boyd talking about the benefits of Regenerative Agriculture.
- Virtual Direct Farm Marketing Conference-Did some preliminary learning on how we might help farmers through Farmer's Markets and Direct Marketing.
- Lunch & learn session regarding Brandon being a "Bee City"
- Seth Klein Watch Party re: his new book; "A Good War; Mobilizing Canada for the Climate Emergency"
- Climate Conversations- Held 3 Climate Conversations with a total of 20 people participating. This was an opportunity for folks to come together and learn about the Climate Crisis and feel supported. After the final Conversation the group decided that we would work toward Brandon becoming a Sustainable City.
- With assistance from Roger Bright, the GT committee finished an energy audit of the Knox building. Replaced 2 thermostats with programmable thermostats for better energy efficiency.
- A Green Team representative attends regular meetings of the Brandon Environment Committee and relays information back to the Knox GT.
- Green Team members are active participants in the Manitoba Sustainable Energy Association (ManSEA) and the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association (MEIA)
- The Green Team attempts to have a representative at each Knox Council meeting

Submitted by Madelyn Robinson
on behalf of the Knox Green Team

Property Committee Report

Committee: Roger Bright, Tony Wall, Robert Campbell, Steve Derendy, Brian Manns, Barry Bromley, Orval Henderson

- New vinyl laminate flooring and baseboards installed in Lounge.
- Programmable thermostat installed in the Lounge, Nursery School and Babyfold, with thanks to Green Team & Ken Wojnarski.
- Repairs and refinishing completed to Memorial Table in Sanctuary, as well as refinishing of table at back of Sanctuary by Sound System.
- Narthex and Sanctuary doors refinished/repainted. Narthex display tables refinished.
- Risers in Auditorium repainted.
- Graffiti on outside shed investigated by BPS, and painted over.
- Knox garden beds cleaned, prepped and planted for the season, with thanks to Norm Brown, Duncan Waddell, Jim Cobb and Cec Foster.
- Dehumidifier in crawl space entry, under the 17 St. Entrance hall “died” after about 8 years of nearly continual operation, and was replaced, as well as additional unit installed in crawlspace under sanctuary with hook-ups to drain, so manual emptying of water collected no longer required.
- Flower bed watering and maintenance performed by Jim & Maureen Cobb, Garth & Debby Dandy, Madelyn Robinson, Betty Kelly, Duncan & Audrey Waddell, Syndy Wright, David Paul, David & Peggy Barrows, Marilyn Van Walleggem, Jill Hannah-Kayes, Al & Isobel Robertson.
- Monitored alarm system installed to provide enhance building security and insurance cost reduction.
- Audio-Video booth constructed to house all AV & Live-stream equipment and operation.
- Florescent Light-tubes in Narthex upgraded to LEDs to reduce electrical cost.
- Parking-lot lines repainted.

Respectfully submitted
Roger Bright
Property Chair

Trustees Report

The current trustees are Vivian Mitchell, Doug Crookshanks, Craig Miller, and Wayne Clayton. As per the UC Manual – the Minister is automatically a member of the Trustees.

The insurance policy for Knox (*June 1/2020 to June 1/2021*) included:

Replacement cost on the building \$4,927,253 and contents of– \$439,931

Total coverage was \$5,367,184 with building and contents

With a total premium for all insurance of \$11,196.48

As reported last year there have been significant increases in property insurance, not just for Knox, but for most all property owners. Knox had seen an increase over 30% in one year and 50 % increase in the last 2 years.

- In light of the significant increases, the Trustees were in discussions with our insurance broker to review options for Knox.
- During those discussions an error was uncovered in the square footage on file with the insurance company. 18,500 sq. ft was what their files had for the Knox building.
- A subsequent review of the original blueprints of the building indicated the square footage was 13,645 sq. ft. or a difference of 4,855 sq ft or 26% too high.
- There is no indication who made the error (insurance company or Knox) or when.
- This led to a re-estimate by the insurance company of the building value. The broker now estimates the building to be \$4,107,653, down from the \$4,927,253 under the current policy --- a reduction of \$819,600 in insured value, or about 16.5%.
- After meeting with the Knox Executive and the Trustees, we advised the insurance company to proceed with the lower insured value for the building.
- Total cost of all parts of the insurance for 2021 - 2022– \$11,232.75 - **Without the decrease in building valuation and the sales tax change, the premium for 2021-22 would have been \$14,000.**
- Property Inspection & Evaluation
Further to this the insurance company has agreed to do an inspection and evaluation on the Knox property however due to the pandemic this is on hold for now. Just a reminder, the inspection may find deficiencies that need to be corrected for us to maintain our insurance. Also, the appraisal of the building may be higher than our present valuation so this could increase our annual premium however the decision was that we are best to know what are situation is.
- With regard to COVID-19 -- there have been no changes to coverage.
- Further discussion at Council led to:
 - Installation of the central fire and central burglar alarm. Change to the insurance for this went into effect Aug 3/21 for a prorated rebate of \$790.
 - Change in our deductible from \$2,500 to \$10,000. This went into effect Sept 1/21 for a prorated rebate of a prorated amount of saving of \$677.00

Also included in the Knox insurance is:

- General liability \$3,000,000 with a General policy aggregate on the liability \$10,000,000
- We also have a separate Accidental Death and Dismemberment Policy (CHAD) that covers church members, adherents and volunteers participating in church sponsored activities.

- There is an umbrella Directors and Officers Liability Insurance with the United Church of Canada so each United Church does not need to carry their own policy.
- Inventory
Doug had been working on the inventory. He has proposed that we maintain the current coverage on contents of \$439,000 -- which is 33% increase from the 2013 figure when a last full inventory was conducted. We have advised the broker we will maintain the same content coverage.
- Archive Committee
Laura Crookshanks & Colleen Wall completed an Archive Review and have submitted a report to be included in the Annual Report. We appreciate very much all the work they did on archive review.

Submitted on behalf of the Trustees
By Wayne Clayton

Planned Giving Committee Report

The Planned Giving Committee did not meet in 2021, due to there being no requests for expenditures from the Planned Giving Fund. However, there were funds disbursed during 2021 from the Fund. As recommended to Council in 2020, funds for the purchase and installation of live-streaming equipment at Knox were disbursed in 2021, with the amount spent being \$24,161.19. As of the end of November 2021, the balance in the Planned Giving Fund is \$102,836.57.

The Planned Giving Committee will continue to meet on an as-needed basis as further requests for funding consistent with the mission and vision of Knox are received in 2022. It is anticipated that such requests may be made during the upcoming year given the process of finalizing the visioning document in recent months.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Bromley
Doug Crookshanks
Brian Manns

Archives Committee Report

The Archives Committee is responsible to the Trustees. This past year it was identified as time for Knox to review our documents and files that have been stored up in Room 4 of the Club Room in readiness to be sent to the United Church of Canada Archives in Winnipeg.

We are happy to report that the MANY boxes in that room were thoroughly gone through and all materials that need to be sent in to have been readied for transport. We also amassed 16 boxes of recyclable paper which was shredded by a commercial shredding company.

It was an interesting task to review the many kinds of documents that are important to the functioning of our church. One recommendation we would make is that we endeavor to decrease the amount of paper used in printing documents like reports, records, proposals, etc. While it is sometimes important to have a hard copy, those of us who are able to operate with a digital copy should do so. Better for the environment!

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Crookshanks & Coleen Wall



Getting organized, year by year

Off to the recycling truck!

Inbetweeners

We are a group of friendly women who meet the fourth Tuesday of each month except for the two summer months. This year we only met twice due to Covid restrictions hampering our gatherings.

In September, 15 ladies and 4 men spent the day at Clear Lake at the cabin of Rene and Sharon Christmas. We had lunch in the "cookshack" and then all were invited to walk, shop, meet for ice cream or stay around the "cookshack" and visit etc. Supper was served at 6 PM and all guests left for home between 8-8:30 PM. The day was cool but sunny. We had no rain. Everyone enjoyed the day of freedom, being outside and visiting with friends.

On December 15th, 18 women enjoyed a Christmas luncheon at Lady of the Lake restaurant. It was fun catching up with one another and finding out what everyone's Christmas plans were.

If you are new to Knox, we would love to have you join us. Call Sharon 204-728-0541 if you would like to be on our email list.

We are hopeful we can meet in person again soon but until then stay safe and keep in touch with a friend.

Submitted by,
Sharon Christmas

Java Jabbers

Every Tuesday morning a group of women gather at the Shoppers Mall around 10:30 AM in the food court. All are welcome to join us.

From January until early fall we had to cancel our coffee talk but we did open it up again in late August, early September as the health restrictions allowed. We have had as many as 12 or so women, sometimes smaller but as usual the coffee is hot and so are the topics of conversation. Let's hope we can continue our friendly meetings in the mall. Please join us if you feel comfortable.

Submitted by,
Sharon Christmas

Indoor Garage Sale Report

COVID-19 restrictions again prevented us from holding any indoor garage sales this year. However, we did have a silent auction in the fall.

Hopefully we may be able to hold sales this year. We will update you further as the year progresses.

Submitted by,
Cec Foster

Christmas Cheer

The Knox COVID Christmas Cheer Campaign 2021 was a huge success! THANK YOU!

On Wed. Dec. 15th Knox United Church once again shared from our collective abundance to provide Christmas Cheer hampers 23 Brandon families, including gifts for 90 children. The need continues to grow, and YES once again, the Knox family stepped up.

The Knox family always supports outreach projects like the Christmas Cheer Hampers and this year was no exception. It truly was a congregational effort. This year due to Covid restrictions the White Gift process was a bit different, but it worked well. Thank you for each of the White Gift Sunday envelope donations, plus the earlier contributions of handmade toques and mitts. These quality knitted items are a special component of the hampers. The white gift financial contributions helped to purchase the food and gifts needed to fill the hampers. This year, we say thanks as well to a local book club who donated the majority of the children's books. We were told that instead of exchanging gifts amongst themselves, each year this group chooses a local organization to support. The gift of books for children was special indeed. These donations all helped make it possible for Knox United Church to provide hampers to 23 families including 90 children. With the increased cost of groceries this year, the hampers were even more important for the families receiving them.

A special thanks to all who volunteered their time and effort to find, sort and wrap toys and then to pack and deliver hampers! Volunteer Drivers and vehicles descended upon Knox at 11:30 on Dec. 15 to help deliver hampers! It was a moment of well-organized chaos, and of true caring. Also thanks to Charles for setting up the tables in the narthex ready for the packer elves to work their magic.

The Brandon independently owned stores were especially helpful as the elves searched for toys. Each year, Knox's Christmas Hamper effort gets quiet, willing support from Kuiper's Family Bakery and Safeway/Sobeys. This year was no different and again we say Thank you. The delivery men from Safeway always deserve special mention. Organizing and delivering those truckloads of groceries to Knox first thing in the morning is no easy feat.

Afterwards team members shared highlights that made their involvement especially meaningful:

- *I very much enjoy preparing and wrapping the gifts for the children. Imagining their happy faces when they open a new book or toy makes my heart glad!*
- *The families made a point of saying a special thank you. One family had a Thank You card ready to give the delivery team. There was joy in the receiving & in the giving.*

A collective THANK YOU for helping Knox United Church spread some Christmas Cheer!

The Knox Christmas Cheer Team for 2021

*Nancy DeRoo
Kirsten Ardron
Lynn Cupples
Syndy Wright
Cheryl Doull*

*Phyllis Digby
Audrey Waddell
Lynne & Brian Manns
Betty Kelly*

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More Users of Knox

- Brandon Nursery School
- BU Early Learning Program (before-and-after-school program)
- Bochasanwasi Shree Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha Inc. (BAPS Inc.)
- Scouts, Cubs, Beavers
- Japan Karate
- Al Anon
- Crystal Meth Anonymous
- SMART Recovery
- Brandon Community Orchestra
- Prairie Blend Men's Choir
- Brandon Festival of the Arts
- South West Branch, Manitoba Genealogical Society
Margaret E. Goodman Memorial Library
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (music therapy program)
- AJ Music (Aislynn Johnson)
- Roads to Rhythm Music (Courtney Lindenberg)
- Westman Immigrant Services (cooking classes)
- "Physical Literacy" workshop
- Kathy Sheppard Piano School (student recital)
- Sheridan Anderson Piano School (student recital)