



# Knox News

Spring 2017

## *Getting to the Good News - Rev. Craig*

A few years ago our sister denomination in the States, the United Church of Christ, created a new ad campaign similar to the work of our Emerging Spirit initiative. I was interested in what their ad agency gleaned from interviews with focus group participants in two metropolitan areas.

The participants revealed strong negative feelings about Christian churches in general, regardless of denomination. As well, 40 % said that they belonged to a religious group but did not actively practice their faith.

What was not surprising but still painful as a minister to read was that: “A large percentage of respondents said they considered churches to be responsible for past hurts in their lives, and many traced their feelings of inadequacy to negative church experiences.”

People here at Knox have shared painful experiences with me. A religious leader personally condemned them (or even worse, their children), others did not feel welcome at a service (baptism, wedding, funeral, 1<sup>st</sup> communion) of a friend or family member, and a few became disenchanted after encountering unethical behaviour by clergy or congregational leaders.

Stories like these often lead me inward. I ask myself, “In what ways have I contributed to someone’s personal pain, made someone feel unwanted, excluded, or judged?” While I believe my ministry has been about “good news” I know I have missed people who were hurting and longing for someone to reach out to them.

The church as an institution has also done harm. The good news has at times started and remained bad news. Stories of abuse, discrimination, and manipulation. Add to this the way we have treated one another in our own congregations at times and we wonder if there’s a good reason for the bad press we’re getting.

The report continued, “Too many congregations, the respondents said, left them feeling unwelcome, financially inadequate and inappropriately dressed. Not only had the church injured them, they said, but the church had hurt those they loved. And too many

congregations cared more about their own security than about those in need.”

How ironic that a faith community founded upon the ministry and teachings of Jesus, an invitation for all to join in life-transforming community, and the affirmation of G\_d’s ability to transform suffering into hope, would leave people feeling injured, inadequate, and unwelcome. What have we done? What have we left undone?

What is there about our understanding of the Christian message and our community at Knox that may provide a balm for people who are feeling injured, inadequate, and unwelcome? That is liberating? Are we willing to make additional sacrifices to allow folks to get to the good news?

I know Knox has something to offer to these folks. And we need to find every way we can imagine that’s effective and authentic to get to the good news.

Our Council is currently considering ways for us to share our story and tell our story more effectively. Our Easter series is entitled “Love is my Religion” and will offer some ways for us to think creatively about sharing our faith. Do you have a story, positive or negative, you would like to share? Ideas to assist us in meeting this challenge? Join us in the conversation.

**Thank You** to those who submitted items for this Spring Newsletter – yes folks, it is spring! Thank you to both Roger Bright and Doug Crookshanks who operate the sound system on Sundays, and also thank you to the operators of the visual aid equipment – more volunteers would be appreciated, on-the-job training is available. Rev. Craig is currently leading us through this season of Lent and Easter, and recently the Youth of Knox U.C. have been teaching us Bible stories through drama – great job guys! Please keep in mind those who are less fortunate than ourselves; you may wish to consider donating a non-perishable food item to the local food bank. A bin is located in our Narthex as you enter the 17<sup>th</sup> Street doors. Have a Safe and Happy Easter everyone.

-Lynn Cupples

**Knox Green Team** - Members of the Knox Green Team would like to draw your attention to the Annual Manitoba Sustainable Energy Association Conference that is being held in Portage on April 5, 2017. The theme of the conference is: **Sustainable Energy & Carbon Pricing, What Does It Mean For Me?**

Curt Hull, project manager with Climate Change Connection who spoke at our 2016 Green Team Fall Speaker Series, will be the lead off speaker. He says: "The global disturbances that climate change are influencing now and will initiate in the future, go far beyond severe weather: the global economy, food prices, refugees, cultural tensions, conflict... We need to prepare ourselves by building self reliance and local resilience. Ultimately, increasing sustainable sources of energy and reducing our demand for energy will be crucial to our ability to continue to enjoy a civilized society."

Dale Friesen, a Professional Engineer with over 25 years experience in energy efficiency and conservation at Manitoba Hydro who is also presenting says: "Emerging energy technologies will have a profound impact on our world over the coming decades. These innovations will not only change the quantity and form of energy we use... They will eventually impact the who, why, where, when and what of the energy equation for our homes and businesses."

In addition to speakers from Climate Connections & MB Hydro we will have presenters from the Provincial Government, Manitoba Trucking Association, the solar, geothermal and biomass industries. One speaker will delve into how one first Nation community is proposing to virtually eliminate their outside reliance on hydrocarbon fuels.

The Keynote Speaker will be David Cork, Managing Director of TREC and Federation of Community Power Coops. from Ontario, who will present on Community Energy in Ontario to help us understand opportunities for Manitoba communities.

You're invited to hear these expert panelists provide their insight into how renewable and sustainable solutions might be part of the strategy to reduce carbon emissions. The discussion will explore the challenges as well as the opportunities for renewable energy projects to play an increasing role as we progress toward the future.

Interested individuals from Knox may want to organize a car pool to attend this exciting conference.

Early Bird Registration for the conference is only \$30 if you register before March 22, 2017, late registration is

\$40. There is a special student registration of \$15. Display space and conference sponsorship opportunities are also available.

To register for the conference or for more information visit our website at [www.mansea.org](http://www.mansea.org) or email [info@MANSEA.org](mailto:info@MANSEA.org) or phone (204) 730-0559. "Submitted by Wayne Clayton"

## **Knox Outreach Committee** - A

subcommittee of the Knox Outreach Committee has continued to reach out in the community to share the message of reconciliation. One of our initiatives has been to host a sharing circle at Knox, inviting members of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community. The goals of the sharing circle are to acknowledge and overcome the separation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, and to deepen relationships among all nations in the Brandon area by: being together in circles of respect, understanding, healing, friendship and prayer; sharing personal experiences and wisdom; learning our shared history; challenging people to support and create local initiatives for justice and right relations; and to move forward in a good way.

To date we have hosted three sharing circles. We have had as many as thirty people participate. Some came hesitantly, unsure of the openness and acceptance they would find. Some have shared stories of experiences in residential schools, and of feeling the pain of living amongst people who do not understand their history, culture or spirituality. Many around the circle shared experiences which have been illuminating, in bringing them to better understand the journey of reconciliation in a very personal way. The sharing circle has been a hopeful, meaningful experience for all who have attended. It is through ongoing relationship building that we will begin the work of reconciliation in our community.

All who want to be part of moving forward in this way, are welcome. Notices will be posted on the Knox Facebook page. "Submitted by Debby Dandy"



## Knox Coffee/Tea Gathering Time -

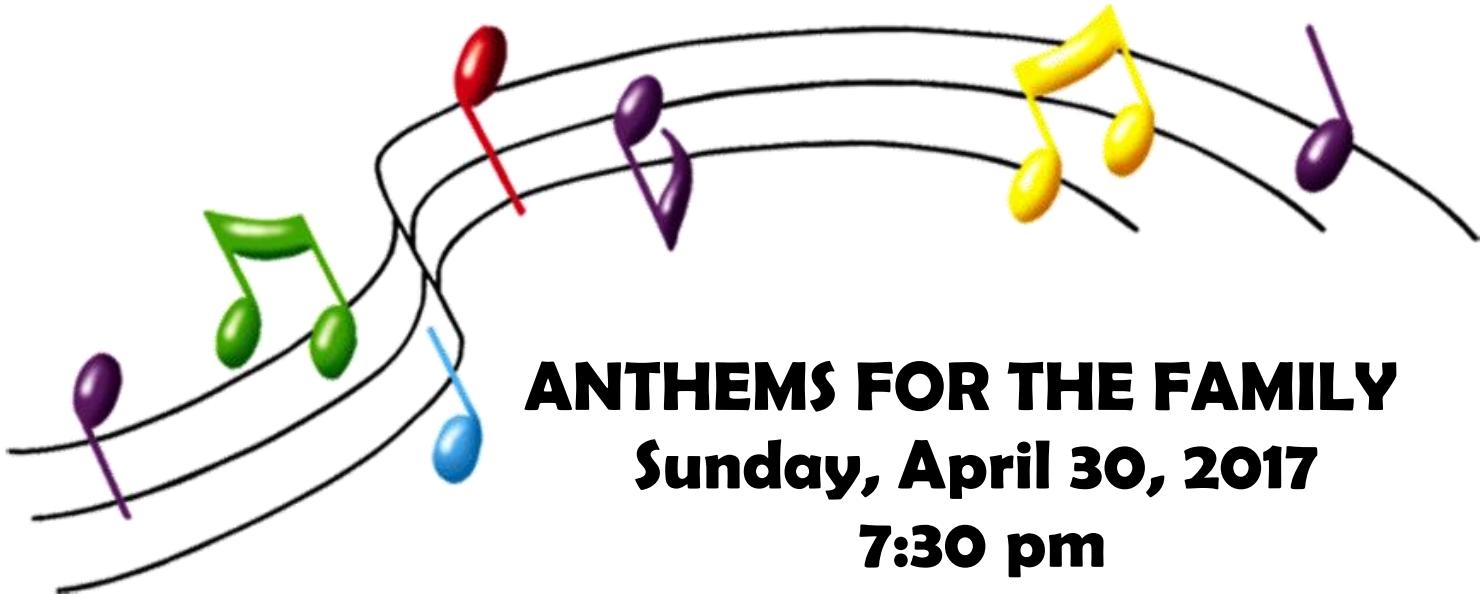
It is wonderful to see folks enjoying coffee/tea and fellowship before church and also remaining afterwards for coffee/tea and more fellowship! It's a great time for community building and intergenerational interaction.

As you may have noticed, we have a new coffee machine at the back of the church - thanks to Sharon Chrismas! That makes the coffee duties even easier. I haven't personally timed it, but Sharon tells me it takes 90 seconds to drip through a pot of coffee! Thus, to make "before church" coffee, you should start about 9:45 to get everything ready. Similarly, the "after church" coffee is easier, too. Instructions are posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex, in the kitchen and at the coffee machine.

Thanks to all those who volunteer to make this work. We can always use more volunteers. Please consider signing up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. If you are unsure of what needs to be done, talk to Laura Crookshanks, Lynn Cupples or Sharon Chrismas.

## "Raising Children in an Inclusive Community"

The Affirm Committee will host a repeat of the "Raising Children in an Inclusive Community" session on Saturday, April 8 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. Shawna Munro will make a brief presentation followed by a facilitated discussion. There will be resources available to look at; feel free to bring any resources you have found helpful. This evening is designed for parents, grandparents and all adults interested in our young people. This session is targeted for anyone interested in how our church and our community supports children in learning to deal with challenges they face in today's society. Please call the church office to confirm your attendance. Arrangements may be made for child care if pre-registered.



## ANTHEMS FOR THE FAMILY Sunday, April 30, 2017 7:30 pm

The Knox Singers will present "Anthems for the Family" at our 2017 Annual Spring Concert. Following up from our Christmas Carol Service "Mother and Child", our spring concert will feature songs, anthems and voicings that celebrate the Family. Families are a dynamic unit that have no set description except that they are a collective of people who are bonded by the love, care, and support they have for each other. You will be treated to familiar pop and big screen theme songs to new choral compositions. It's not too late if you would like to join us. Rehearsals are Sunday's right after church, 12:00pm to 1:00pm. We would love to have you. The concert admission is free but we will be requesting a "free will offering". This is our only fund-raising event of the year. Proceeds go towards costs of music resources and guest artists.

## Assiniboine Presbytery Meeting, February 25, 2017

Worship was led by David Howell with the theme of Transfiguration: The coming down from the mountain and the sharing of God's love. The financial statement states presbytery has a bank balance of \$8,734.80. Registration for Conference can be accessed on line at a cost of \$175.00. It is being held on May 25-27 in Portage la Prairie and will focus on Indigenous Relations, youth, singing, environment and spirituality.

**Education, Students and Church Vocations** - Pulpit supply for ordained, diaconal, and licensed lay worship leaders is to be paid \$206. Suzie McPherson is switching from the diaconal program to the ordained program.

**Outreach, Justice, and Education (UCW)** - The residential travelling exhibition went out in February to Sioux Valley which was attended and well received by Government officials. Some struggled with the pictures but it was also a healing experience. It will be going to Harrow Church in Winnipeg and to Brandon School Division. The plan is for a permanent learning centre. Please contact elders in your area before hosting a booking. This is seen as a tool for reconciliation. The Heart Bank is still looking for donations. Money is needed to assist with the refugee work in Emerson. Rock Lake camp is still looking for volunteers for this summer.

**Zeebu** - Navan Forsythe reported that the next Zeebu retreat for young people will be held in Minnedosa. The National Conference (Rendezvous) will be held in Montreal from Aug. 16-19 for those 15-30 and funding is available. Youth will be attending Conference in May. Those 15+ will stay for the entire weekend. Manitoba UCWs will meet at St. Benedict's on Tuesday May 2. Their 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be held this summer in B.C. There is a special Explorer project where two young adults will spend a summer in another area. Carmen and Minnedosa will host one from Saskatchewan and B.C.

**Pastoral Charge and Oversight** - The committee had concerns re: church closures and would like assistance. The Birtle church has been paying hydro \$1,000 per month during winter when not being used. **Pastoral Relations** - Ministry Profile (MP) is replacing the JNAC and 5 churches are going through this process. Those currently in searches are Reston, and Central. A workshop for Pastoral Charge Supervisors will be held in the spring. Retired clergy take appointments for 1 year

from July 1 to June 30. Ministers are not to do funerals when on vacation.

**Presbytery Planning** - We were reminded to make sure that pastoral charges are getting remit information and are voting. The next meeting will be held Apr.29 in Killarney with the theme of intercultural ministry focusing on refugees. Registration forms for Conference will be out soon and use e-mail to register in April. Saturday will be a day of workshops with the theme 'being church'.

**Conference Executive** - Once again a reminder of Conference being held this May. Remit submissions need to be in by June 30. Remit 6 can be accessed at GC42.ca. Betty Kelly from Knox is the president elect of the Manitoba and North Western Ontario Conference. "Submitted by Marilyn Van Walleghem"

### Time & Talent Auction -

The auction was held March 18 - Total "take" for the evening was \$5301.10, with \$591 coming from the Silent Auction, \$3630 from the Live Auction, and \$575 from the Live Pie Auction, with the balance being derived from donations, table bidding, & table center (flowers) sales, etc. It was a great evening and auctioneers Cec & Joe kept everyone in stitches as they pried money loose! "Submitted by Duncan Waddell"

### Spirit Kids Club – Easter Sunday, April 16

Children and youth will gather in the lower classroom following our Theme Conversation on Easter Sunday and participate in learning centres that interpret our theme for the day, "The Cymbals/Symbols of Easter". There will be a puppet show, face painting, creative arts, and many ways to celebrate the love of Christ rising once again among us. Bring your children, grandchildren, and friends to this special SKC event.

## **Imaging the Word: Visual Arts Informing our Journey Through Lent & Easter**

### **Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in the Chapel at Knox**

You don't need to have a background in the visual arts or art history. You don't even need to have visited a museum during your lifetime. You do need to be open to seeing in new ways and being open to experiential ways of learning. Open to all ages.

#### **Birth, Death, and Rebirth Through Pietas – Tuesday, March 28**

Several pietas depict not only the death of Jesus but also his birth from Mary and his rebirth in resurrection. Works by Michelangelo and Stephen De Staebler.

#### **"Sleeping and Resting Still" Through Jesus' Agony & Resurrection – Tues, Apr 4**

"Sleeping and resting still?" Jesus asks his three closest disciples when they have gone to sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night in which he is betrayed. Works by Mantegna and Francesca.

#### **Resurrection in Michelangelo's Art and Our Expectations – Tuesday, April 25**

Our expectations strongly affect what we see. A kinesthetic approach to Michelangelo's work.

### **Rendezvous 2017**

#### **United Church National Retreat for Young Adults & Youth**

**Grade 9 to 30 years**

**Montreal, Quebec**

**August 16-19, 2017**

Like our Zeebu and Alf retreats within our conference, this retreat will give opportunities for participants in large, medium and small group settings to explore their faith in the company of youth from the wider church, as in, nation-wide! Follow this link for more info <http://www.uccrendezvous.ca>. If you are considering attending this event, please contact Twila at [tmacnair@confmnwo.mb.ca](mailto:tmacnair@confmnwo.mb.ca), even if you have yet to figure out your funding or confirm your availability. This way we can alert you of new information as we receive it and we can organize travel collaboratively so that youth may be able to travel together.

To apply for funding towards your registration/travel to this national retreat, please submit an application form. Forms are available at

[https://gallery.mailchimp.com/c39835a3545e362025c5b0e02/files/d5a835ab-6531-44d8-a666-18478895fca4/Funding\\_Application\\_for\\_Rendez\\_vous.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/c39835a3545e362025c5b0e02/files/d5a835ab-6531-44d8-a666-18478895fca4/Funding_Application_for_Rendez_vous.pdf).

Your application will be considered based both on your answers and the date your application is received. To be considered for funding, you must live within the United Church's Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.

Costs to consider: Registration will be \$325 if registered by May 30th. Registration does not include your travel to and from Montreal. As of Feb 1<sup>st</sup> flights were about \$600 round trip from Winnipeg.

Application Deadline: Monday March 20, 2017, but please note that "date received" may come into play in the success of applicants with similar merits. Return to Twila MacNair [tmacnair@confmnwo.mb.ca](mailto:tmacnair@confmnwo.mb.ca)

**Be Our Guest - Newcomers Brunch on  
Sunday, April 2**

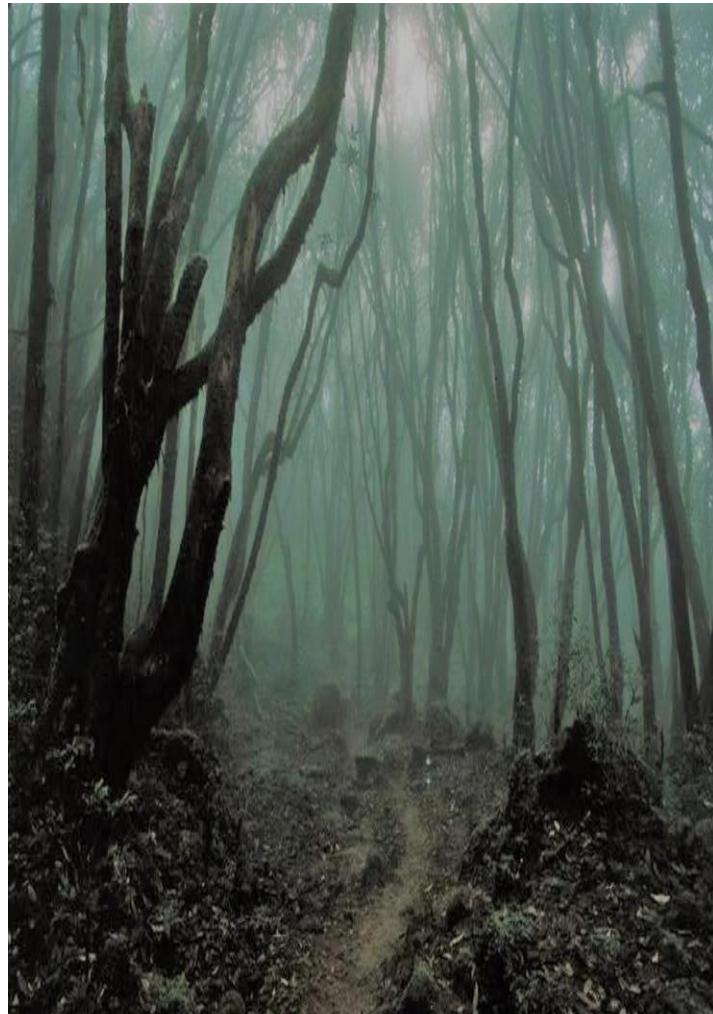
The Congregational Care Committee invites newcomers to Knox to join them on Sunday, April 2 for a complimentary brunch. It's been more than a year since we offered this gathering - 2015 we think - so

please feel free to attend even if you think you're no longer a newcomer. Rev. Craig will give a brief overview of our ministry, offer some resources, and we'll have a chance to get to know one another better. Please R.S.V.P. to the church office if you are able to attend.

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**Coming Events at Knox**

Saturday, April 8	Raising Children in an Inclusive Community
Sunday, April 30	Knox Choir Concert
Saturday, May 6	Knox Spring Rummage Sale
Sunday, May 7	Annual Congregation Meeting – Part 2
Wednesday, May 17	Knox Spring Luncheon



**Gifts of the Dark Wood - Lenten Series 2017**

This series, based on the book by the same name by Eric Elnes, is about "seeing life through new eyes, recognizing that experiences of failure, emptiness, and uncertainty are as critical for finding our way through life as they are unavoidable." We will see how experiences of life through the "dark wood" are actually clues to our "calling" or "life path." How can the struggles of life be the seedbed of spiritual awakening to the fullness of life?

- The Gift of Getting Lost – Sunday, March 26
- The Gift of Temptation – Sunday, April 2
- The Gift of Misfits (Palm/Passion Sunday) – Sunday, April 9
- **The Gift of Disappearing (Maundy Thursday) – Thursday, April 13 at 7 p.m. Communion**
- Good Friday – Central United Church, 11:00 a.m.
- Where We Go from Here (Easter Sunday) – Sunday, April 16