

**Knox United Church
2020 Annual General Meeting
February 28, 2021**

The Annual General Meeting of Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, was held via Zoom on the twenty-eighth day of February in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-one.

The meeting was opened with a quick Zoom tutorial for those who may not be familiar. Beth Martin, Chair of Council, then clarified how quorum works for a congregation of our size, which is over 100. This means we need to have at least 20 people in attendance. Attendance was recorded with forty-eight (48) names.

All were welcomed and Beth invited those in attendance to recite our Mission Statement. The meeting was then called to order at 12:08 p.m. by Chair of Council, Beth Martin. The meeting was constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, for the business to come before it. The Christ candle was lit, and an opening prayer was offered by Rev. Sandra Cox.

In Memoriam

Rev. Cox read the names listed in the *In Memoriam* section for the year 2020, as recorded on page 24 in the Annual Report.

Beth then noted that today's meeting was being recorded, then provided a brief introduction. She offered that it's been an honour and privilege to be the Chair of Council for the past year and wishes to thank all Council members for their hard work, especially during a challenging year with COVID-19. Fortunate to have so many working diligently on our behalf. Everything is noted and appreciated. There is full agenda, meaning we are alive and well; faith has pulled us together as a family.

Beth also addressed what she called a potential "white elephant", noting that at last year's Annual General Meeting, the Knox Futures Team proposed an organizational structure after nearly two years of congregational input and involvement. She noted that this was an independent process, as we looked to who we might be in the future; ultimately, the work did not pass motion.

This year, we are being presented with an updated *Community of Faith* profile, which is required by Region 15. It includes information on who we are, our demographics, financial situation, etc., and is used by Region 15 to determine ministerial requirements. Our contract with Rev. Cox expires on June 30, 2021, but the *Community of Faith* profile was requested by Region 15 before any discussion on a minister replacement at Knox could occur. She urged that we do not confuse the two documents, noting they are separate pieces of work. Many hours of work have gone into producing today's materials. We may not always agree, but dignity and respect are expected today.

For today's meeting, we have set roughly one and-a-half to two hours for the timeframe. If you want to say something, please use the "raise your hand" feature; a demonstration on some simple Zoom etiquette was offered.

It was moved by Shari Landy, seconded by Debbie Chisholm that we set the length of time for today's meeting to approximately two hours. **Motion Carried.**

Beth then called for the election of a Chairperson for today's meeting. It was noted that this person will remain the Chair for any Congregational meetings held in 2021, up to next year's Annual General Meeting. Nominations from the floor were then requested for the congregational meeting Chairperson.

- It was moved by Heather Robinson to nominate Beth Martin. Beth declined the nomination.
- It was moved by Henry Ellsworth to nominate James O'Connell. James accepted the nomination. Scott Martin seconded the nomination.
- It was moved by Jean Collier to nominate Paul O'Brien. Paul declined the nomination.

A second request for nominations was called.

A third request for nominations was called. No other nominations were received.

It was moved that nominations cease.

It was moved by Henry Ellsworth, seconded by Scott Martin to nominate James O'Connell as Chairperson for today's meeting, along with for any Congregational meetings held in 2021, up to next year's Annual General Meeting. **Motion Carried.**

Beth then called for the election of a Secretary for today's meeting. It was noted that this person will remain the Secretary for any Congregational meetings held in 2021, up to next year's Annual General Meeting. Nominations from the floor were then requested for the congregational meeting Secretary.

- It was moved by Henry Ellsworth seconded by Tony Mombourquette, to nominate Vanessa Voerman. Vanessa accepted the nomination.
- It was moved by James O'Connell, seconded by Max Martin, to nominate Rainie Murphy. Rainie accepted the nomination.

A second request for nominations was called.

A third request for nominations was called. No other nominations were received.

It was moved that nominations cease.

Voting for the secretary position then commenced by sending a private chat message to James with the name of their preferred candidate. The majority of the votes received were for Vanessa.

It was moved by Henry Ellsworth, seconded by Tony Mombourquette to nominate Vanessa Voerman as Chairperson for today's meeting, along with for any Congregational meetings held in 2021, up to next year's Annual General Meeting. **Motion Carried.**

The meeting was then turned over to James. James first order of business was to request a motion be made to allow those who are not full members, i.e., those who may not be confirmed yet, be allowed voting privileges for today’s meeting.

It was moved by Sandra Braye, seconded by Max Martin, to allow those who are not full members, i.e., those that may not yet be confirmed, voting privileges for today’s meeting. **Motion Carried.**

Approval of Agenda

The chairperson asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Hearing none, approval of the agenda was requested.

It was moved by Max Martin, seconded by Judy Hayes, that the Agenda for the 2020 Annual General Meeting be approved as circulated. **Motion Carried.**

Minutes

The minutes from the 2019 Annual General Meeting held on March 8, 2020 were included in the 2020 Annual Report and on the Knox website.

It was moved Floyd Fullerton, seconded by Rainie Murphy, to approve the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting dated March 8, 2020. **Motion Carried.**

Business Arising from the Minutes

- Point of discussion on page 6 – Janet Mombourquette noted that Fellowship Committee gets confused regarding two other groups with names that have “fellowship” in the title (Bible Fellowship Time and Christian Men in Fellowship). She wondered if the names of these groups were changed in the last year and noted that no reports were submitted to the 2020 Annual Report from either of these groups. The suggestion was made that these two groups remove the word “fellowship” from their names to avoid confusion.

Ted McIlldoon noted that the name “fellowship” is entirely appropriate for these groups. Boyd Hunter agreed with Ted’s comments. Judy Hayes noted the Bible Fellowship Time would continue to meet regardless of their name. The question was then called for.

It was moved by Jean Collier, seconded by Henry Ellsworth, that the Bible Fellowship Time and the Christian Men in Fellowship groups be asked to remove the word “Fellowship” from their name to avoid confusion with the Fellowship Committee. **Motion Carried with 29 in favour, 10 against, and one abstention.**

Committee Reports

Omissions/Additions to 2020 Annual Report:

- On page 10 Florence noted in the Ministry of Music report, about half-way down, that the word “Ted” is missing.
- Florence noted that in the *In Memoriam* report, it says those with an asterisk had their visitation held at the church, but none are recorded as such. It was determined this is not an error.
- Janet noted that there are several reports listed on page 2 as being not submitted, but wanted it known that the UCW Felicity Report was submitted and can be found on page 16.

Spiritual Oversight Committee:

Jean Collier wants to bring the name of Scott Martin forward to be installed as an Elder; Scott has a keen interest in Pastoral Care. Nancy Kent asked Scott if he accepts the nomination, which he

It was moved by Jean Collier, seconded by Debbie Chisholm, that Scott Martin be nominated as an Elder of Knox United Church. **Motion Carried.**

Nominating Committee:

Paul O’Brien and Heather Robinson went through the list of church officers; found that some are not willing to serve for another year and will retire. Beth Martin would like to continue as Chair of Council. Paul O’Brien would not like to continue as Vice Chair and would like to nominate Vanessa Voerman. Kevin Webb will continue as Treasurer. Rainie Murphy has agreed to be Secretary of Council. Sinclair Bannerman to join the Trustees. There are a couple of vacancies, including Region 15 Representative, and the Chair of Communications. Suggest we go forward and approve the nominations, and we are open to any nominations today. Heather noted that Pauline Stanick-Kerr has been added to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

James called for nominees for Chair of Council.

Second nomination request.

Last call for Chair of Council nominees.

Hearing none, Beth Martin is declared Chair of Council.

James called for nominees for Vice Chair of Council. Vanessa Voerman has been nominated. Any additional nominations?

Second nomination request.

Last call for Vice Chair of Council nominees.

Hearing none, Vanessa Voerman is declared Vice Chair of Council.

James called for nominees for Secretary of Council. Rainie Murphy has been nominated. Any additional nominations?

Second nomination request.

Last call for nominees for Secretary of Council.

Hearing none, Rainie Murphy is declared Secretary of Council.

James called for nominees for Representatives to Region 15. There is room for three representatives and the current representatives are July Hayes and Gail Miner, now that Henry Ellsworth has stepped down. Are there any nominations from the floor?

Second call for nominations. Jennifer Williams volunteered.

Beth Martin nominates Jennifer Williams, seconded by Judy Hayes.

Last call for nominees. No other nominations received; Jennifer Williams accepted as third representative to Region 15.

Nominations for Committee Members:

- Vacant – Chair of Communications Committee. Once administrative position filled, role would be more defined. Beth agreed to step into Chair position for time being, however, she cannot be due to being Chair of Council.
- Vanessa to join the Finance Committee.
- Caroline noted that she would love to have people join the Outreach Committee.
- Henry is willing to go back to the Ministry and Personnel Committee. Sandra Braye may also have an interest in joining.

At 1:27 p.m. James took the opportunity to call for a break in discussion. The meeting then resumed at 1:42 p.m.

Finance Committee:

This is Kevin Webb's 21st year as Treasurer and he has been on the Finance Committee for 35 years.

Today we are looking at the proposed budget for 2021 and the actuals for 2020. At the top are the unrestricted funds, the restricted funds have been taken out. If we compare the Actual '20 to Actual '19, you can see that Covid-19 has been the main driver. We are down \$12K in donations but held our own in special donations. Under Capital Expenditures, \$24K in grants have been received; these were for office renovations, doors, etc. The year before we received \$84K in grants but complete many more projects. Fundraising has seen very little this year, approximately \$2,600.00 compared to \$24K last year. Nursery School has seen a net profit increase and have received Covid grants. Leases, both tenants and casual rentals are down (\$32K this year versus \$39K last year). The solar energy project in its first year earned \$12K in revenue. A \$13K bequest was received. Investments didn't earn as much as last year. Under Expenditures, capital spending was around \$25K which was all virtually funded by grants (we haven't spent much of our own money for capital expenditures). Janitorial costs are down due to Covid, but we did have some costs with a special cleaning. We are down in utilities (\$22K versus \$31K last year). We are closer to breakeven without Covid grants.

Thank you for Boyd Hunter for applying for all the Covid grants, etc., as it has made a huge difference. Thank you to all those who applied for any grants that we benefitted from.

It was questioned why there was an increase in insurance – was it the solar panel project along with Freedom Kitchen? Kevin noted that insurance rates have gone up and there is nothing specific related; Boyd shocked by increases but nothing broker could do about it.

On to Budget discussions for 2021, and looking at Actuals for 2020, donations have been left at the same amounts as we are not sure of any impact from Covid. We are being moderately conservative and have increased what we expect for special donations. New item this year is the ice cream stand. They propose to use the Freedom Kitchen building six days per week. We are assuming we will get back to some fundraising projects in the fall. Freedom Kitchen does have some overhead with associated costs, such as utilities, garbage removal, maintenance, etc. To cover these increased costs, a \$500.00 per month charge is being implemented.

There was some concern raised around this fee, as it was felt that we will be doing a disservice to Freedom Kitchen if we are taking from their resources. Fred Gallop confirmed that a conversation was had with Rainie; if Freedom Kitchen has the resources, we can expect the payment; if they don't have it, we are not going to be looking for it. The line is primarily included in the budget in order to apply for grants, to show the increased costs of providing these services. Beth noted that funds from grants written for Freedom Kitchen go into Restricted Funds. As grants are written, we have to be able to show the costs of running the program, costs including security, garbage, lights, etc. It is specific to the grant writing component. We are not taking money from the street; it is coming from these grants specific to the operation. A lot of grants won't pay for food but will cover overhead expenses and we have to reflect the true cost of the work. We are considered an essential service and we wouldn't support anything that takes money away from feeding the community. Sandra Braye wanted it known that she is against the implementation. Kevin reiterated the line was added for full transparency; they are real costs.

Moving on, the Nursery School is only showing \$12K in profits and are proposing a change in operation, with more information to come. Leased premises includes the basement rental to Motion Dance Centre, some casual rentals. Covid grants are coming to an end and we not expecting as much for this year. Under Expenditures, Capital Expenditures moderate amount left in. Janitorial going to be near full service. \$10K set aside for moving expenses/recruitment for new minister. Salaries and benefits are higher as we assume one and a half ministers, broken down as one minister for six months and 1.5 ministers for six months. Utilities are increased including the Freedom Kitchen building. Showing a modest deficit of \$15K, which is relatively conservative. Ice cream stand is a new venture, Nursery School proposal, uncertainties. Statement of net assets is showing \$330K in unrestricted monies – excludes Freedom Kitchen, Memorial Fund, etc.

It was moved by Kevin Webb, seconded by Henry Ellsworth, to accept the 2020 financials and the proposed budget for 2021. **Motion Carried.**

Remaining Reports:

It was moved by Dave Duggan, seconded by Caroline Gallop, to extend today's meeting indefinitely to ensure the business is completed. **Motion Carried.**

It was moved by Sandra Braye, seconded by Gail Miner, that the remaining reports in the 2020 Annual Report be approved as printed. **Motion Carried.**

New Business**Model of Governance:**

Jean Collier commented that in May of last year, an Ad-Hoc Committee was appointed by Council to align the references of our governance to the United Church Manual, and for the purposes of clarifying the reporting function of each committee, and to make decisions more effective by reducing the number of members on Council. The members of the committee are Jean Collier, Judy Hayes, Henry Ellsworth, Sinclair Bannerman, and Rev. Cox.

The document goes through each Committee, outlining what they do, how quorums are determined, how they are responsible, and notes that Chairs of Committees are to take reports to Council.

Changes:

- Page 2, section 5, bullet (g) – change Food Truck Coordinator to Freedom Kitchen. All mentions of Food Truck Coordinator to be changed to Freedom Kitchen.
- Page 2, section 5, bullet (a) – Minister does not get a vote; this needs to be removed.

It was moved by Jean Collier, seconded by Judy Hayes, that the Model of Governance be reviewed and updated, if necessary, every two years going forward. **Motion Carried.**

This document is highly linked to the United Church Manual, and it should be reviewed at least every two years (or every time the manual changes). The manual is updated annually at General Council and a whole new manual comes out every three years. We need to ensure we stay on top of it.

It was moved by Jean Collier, seconded by Dave Duggan, that the Model of Governance as requested by Council, and updated in 2020, be accepted with the amendments as noted. **Motion Carried.**

At this time, James temporarily stepped down as Chair of the Annual General Meeting to present the *Community of Faith* profile and related job descriptions. Rev. Cox agreed to step in as Chair of the AGM.

Community of Faith Profile:

James opened the discussion by reiterating what Beth said earlier about Region 15 requesting an updated *Community of Faith* profile. The *Community of Faith* profile document is posted on the Knox website. This is an important document to the church; information is collected to accurately describe the work of Knox. The report details all facets of the church in our living faith story. This is what we use to attract a minister to come work with us. The accompanying job descriptions were created from the *Community of Faith* profile.

Full-time Minister position (40 hours per week)

- Propose they preach all but one Sunday per month. Would be a face in the office working with Administrative Assistant. Small amount of time devoted to Pastoral Care. Larger responsibility to Christian Education – spread the word of Knox, bring in new members, raise our profile, develop ministries. Responsibility to Outreach, particularly around Freedom Kitchen to those in need of spiritual guidance, events, networking. Administrative responsibilities. Desired skills include interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills. Allows for ordained, diaconal, or other ministers to apply.

Once finished, James asked if there were any questions on the description. Max noted there is required anti-racial training – boundaries training and anti-racism training. Clarification that Ministry and Personnel Committee is a guidance tool that falls under Council. It was noted there is a typo in the description – should be Pastoral Care Team, not Fellowship. It is noted there is too much work for one person.

Pastoral Care Minister position (20 hours per week)

- Large portion of work will be spent on Pastoral Care. Propose they preach one Sunday per month to help build their relationship with the congregation. Desired skills include interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills. Allows for ordained, diaconal, or other ministers to apply.

Once finished reviewing the second job description, James asked if there were any questions. Under the Administration section, change Fellowship to Pastoral Care (although we could potentially leave Fellowship in this section and add Pastoral Care). Weddings and funerals are the responsibility of the Full-Time minister, not the Pastoral Care minister. Nancy noted she is not comfortable with the Fellowship Committee being named in the description; it was noted that Fellowship falls under the Spiritual Oversight Committee, so is inherently included, and does not need to be named.

Other documents required to accompany the *Community of Faith* profile, including financials, payrolls, and other numbers are still being finalized. Olive McIlldoon and Jean Collier have spent the last three weeks going through the numbers of people who support Knox, not just financially. It was noted that the numbers on the left are not correct and the numbers on the right are more correct. According to page 23 of the Annual Report, we have 367 households. There is a deadline to send the *Community of Faith* profile to Region 15; all documents will be updated before they are posted. It was noted that the deadline is relevant to passing the *Community of Faith* profile and the job descriptions. If the report passes, then we need to strike a Search Committee, and it is hoped that the committee that wrote the job descriptions will be nominated and be able to begin the search to fill them.

It was moved by James O’Connell, seconded by Nancy Kent that the congregation accept the *Community of Faith* profile with the noted edits, along with the two job descriptions.
Motion Carried.

Boyd Hunter suggested the following changes to the Full-time Minister position:

- Add a bullet under Worship: marketing of Knox and membership growth for people under the age of 50.
- Implement innovative programs to attract new members.
- Change number of hours allocated from Christian Education (reduce by three), Administration (reduce by one), and Outreach (reduce by one).
- The concern is for growing the church and it was felt that a final bullet could be added to the Christian Education section about the need to attract those aged 50 and younger.

It was moved by Fred Gallop, seconded by Rainie Murphy to include “innovative programs” to the section on Christian Education in the job description for the Full-time Minister. **Motion Carried.**

Fred Gallop noted that this type of work wouldn’t fall under Worship, but rather under Outreach or Administration. Caroline Gallop noted that this is the how, but we want to be less specific. She also noted that it is up to the person we hire to attract a younger demographic – we don’t want to tell them how to do their job.

Suggested Search Committee members as nominated by Council include:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| - James O’Connell | - Rainie Murphy |
| - Vanessa Voerman | - Caroline Gallop |
| - Henry Ellsworth | - Scott Martin |

Are there any nominations from the floor?

Second call for nominations.

Third call for nominations.

Move nominations cease.

It was moved by Fred Gallop, seconded by Kevin Webb, that we accept the Search Committee members, listed as James O’Connell, Rainie Murphy, Vanessa Voerman, Caroline Gallop, Henry Ellsworth, and Scott Martin, as nominated by Council. **Motion Carried.**

At 4:05 p.m., it was moved by Henry Ellsworth, seconded by Debbie Chisholm, that the meeting be adjourned.

Chair: _____
James O’Connell

Secretary: _____
Vanessa Voerman

**Knox United Church
Congregational Meeting
July 18, 2021**

A congregational meeting of Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, was held both in the sanctuary and on Zoom on the eighteenth day of July in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-one.

All were welcomed and Beth Martin, Chair of Council, reminded everyone that James O'Connell was elected as the Chair, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021, and that Vanessa Voerman was elected as the Secretary, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021. The only item on the Agenda is the presentation of the recommendation of a potential new Minister from the Search Committee. Beth then invited Rev. Sandra Cox to provide an opening prayer.

The meeting was then called to order by James O'Connell, Chair of Congregational Meetings. James then invited those in attendance to recite our Mission Statement. The meeting was constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, for the business to come before it.

As he is also the Chair of the Search Committee, James then asked Beth to temporarily take over as Chair of the Congregational Meeting while he presented the Search Committee's recommendation to the congregation.

James opened by introducing the members of the Search Committee, who include James O'Connell (Chair), Caroline Gallop, Scott Martin, Rainie Murphy, and Vanessa Voerman; Henry Ellsworth stepped down from the Committee due to personal reasons. Before conducting any interviews, the Committee went to Council and received approval to continue as a team of five. The committee reviewed over 60 profiles before conducting interviews, they also received over 20 profiles from interested candidates. They shortened the list to seven name and were able to set up interview with five candidates. After discussion, it was decided to only proceed to a second interview with one candidate. After a unanimous vote, the committee is proud to put forward a name for the position of Full-time Minister.

Presentation of Candidate

The name of the candidate the Search Committee is recommending be hired as Knox's Full-time Minister is Rev. Penny Nelson. Rev. Nelson graduated from AST in 2013 and has been in ministry for eight years. She is currently the Minister at a three-point charge in Tatamagouche, NS. She is a Founding Member of the *United Church Atlantic Regions Anti-Racism Network* and is a Member-at-Large on Region 15's *Children, Youth and Young Adult Committee*. Amongst other accomplishments, she created community outreach initiatives, including, The Village Supper (a free, monthly communal supper program in partnership with the local food bank, long-term care home, and Regional Health Board).

Testimonials from Search Committee Members

Rainie

- Impressed that Rev. Nelson had done her research on Knox.
- Glad to see she is a big supporter of outreach initiatives, particularly the village meal.
- Willing to continue the work on our affirmation status.

Scott

- Had the opportunity to check her references; all those contacted reiterated her good works.
- Impressed that she befriended families that were outside of the church.

Caroline

- Connected strongly to Rev. Nelson's spiritual, caring personality.
- Appreciates her Indigenous connection, which is so important for our future and moving forward with the kinds of visions Knox has identified.

Vanessa

- Appreciates that Rev. Nelson will bring challenges to Knox to keep us moving forward.
- Involvement with community and various initiatives.

James

- Will be a good connection musically at Knox, has prior connection to John Lindsay-Botten.
- Great program development and youth participation.

United Church of Canada – Dictated terms

- \$60,168 Annual salary
- \$1,475 Annual continuing education budget
- \$0.41/Km reimbursement for work-related travel expenses
- Three weeks of study leave per pastoral year
- One month with five Sundays of vacation, or 23 working days
- Vacation for the 2021/2022 pastoral year will be prorated

Additional Negotiated Terms

- Start date: November 1, 2021
- Cell phone reimbursement of \$30.00/month (minus data)
- 100% of moving costs covered, up to \$10,000.00 (three quotes must be provided)
- One week of standard vacation will be taken the week following Easter.
- If Knox decides to leave the church open the week following Christmas, she is entitled to an additional week of vacation during that time.
- Three full weeks of study leave will be available in the first pastoral year (November 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). Study leave must first be approved by the Ministry & Personnel Committee.
- The full study leave budget will be available in the first pastoral year (November 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022).

Questions and Comments from Members of Congregation

- What was her background prior to attending AST?
 - Originally from Alberta, earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Alberta, Edmonton.
 - AST was her first choice for Divinity school.
- Housing?
 - Salary includes housing
 - There are two different pay scales; one for those with a manse, and one for those without a manse (we do not have a manse).
 - Pay scale adjusted to include cost of living expenses
- What is her age?
 - Not at liberty to discuss.
- Is she moving here? What community will she live in?
 - Spouse has accepted position in Wolfville at the Anglican Church, which has a manse.
- If Knox decides to leave the church open in the week following Christmas, does she get the week off, or the Sunday?
 - Clarification around wording provided: If the church is closed, then Rev. Nelson will pre-record a service; if the church is open, then Rev. Nelson will be off.
- \$60,168 is not a lot of money. What other compensation is offered?
 - United Church of Canada has pay scales which we can't change.
 - Can offer bonuses but can't set it up as salary.
- Does time off have to be approved by Ministry & Personnel?
 - Yes, if congregation decides to leave church open, then M&P has to approve time off (return date); they also approve study leave.
- What degree of comfort does she have to handle difficult situations?
 - We asked these types of situational questions in the interviews and were satisfied with her responses.
- Does she understand the majority of congregation is older?
 - We were open and honest on who we are and that we're in the midst of change. She is a strong person is ready for a challenge. We need to open our hearts and demonstrate that we are a loving, supportive congregation.
 - Sandra Braye noted that she and Rob have been involved in one of her churches in Tatamagouche, and they bring the average age down when in attendance.

- Rev. Cox commented that this has been a wonderful charge with work in. She also said to give Ministers some credit – they have been trained to handle difficult situations/people. Ministers feel deeply when they are called to go. She reiterated that we are to welcome Rev. Nelson and make her feel as special as we have made Rev. Cox feel.
- Thank you to Rev. Cox for your work. Thank you to the Search Committee for doing the foot work.

It is moved by James O’Connell, seconded by Scott Martin, and on behalf of the Search Committee, that we accept the recommendation of Reverend Penny Nelson, along with the negotiated terms presented, as the candidate for the position of Full-time Minister at Knox United Church, effective November 1, 2021. **Motion Carried with a unanimous vote (52).**

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Chair: _____
James O’Connell

Secretary: _____
Vanessa Voerman

**Knox United Church
Congregational Meeting
September 26, 2021**

A congregational meeting of Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, was held in the sanctuary on the twenty-sixth day of September in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-one.

All were welcomed and Beth Martin, Chair of Council, reminded everyone that James O’Connell was elected as the Chair, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021, and that Vanessa Voerman was elected as the Secretary, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021. The only items on the Agenda are the presentation from the Knox Futures Team, a presentation from the Organ Committee, and an update from the Search & Selection Committee. Beth then invited Rev. Sandra Cox to light the Christ candle and offer an opening prayer.

The meeting was called to order by James O’Connell, Chair of Congregational Meetings. James then invited those in attendance to recite our Mission Statement. The meeting was constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, for the business to come before it.

Knox Futures Report

Don Farmer presented the following report from the Knox Futures Team.

Summary

- If Knox continued forward without corrective action, we anticipated an operating deficit of about \$124,500.00 by 2030 (without allowance for a long-term negative impact of Covid-19 on attendance and support).
- The Property Redevelopment Team has explored options to ensure the long-term financial viability of Knox United Church (Knox) by leveraging the value embedded in our reputation and property.
- Fundamental options considered include:
 - Sell and rebuild smaller.
 - Enter into a business partnership with a developer or Senior’s Housing Operator; share space with another religious organization.
 - Buy “green field” land in Sackville and enter into a “green field” Affordable Housing development opportunity with a third-party developer.
 - Maximize rental opportunities of current floorspace.
 - Operate a Day Care as initiated by the Nursery School Director and the Finance Committee.
- The recommended short-term strategy is to maximize space rentals and operate a day care – results in a forecast operating surplus of about \$102,000.00 by 2030.
- The Team also recommends further study of the long-term strategic option of using Knox’s social capital (reputation) to enter into an assisted living, or affordable housing, partnership with a third-party developer, at a “green field” Sackville location.

Current Church Environment

- The National Trust for Canada – Canada’s national charitable not-for-profit organization that leads and inspires action for places that matter, estimates that 9,000 religious spaces in Canada will be closed in the next decade.
- Bob Richards – Consultant with UCC EDGE, and our prime Advisor at EDGE – spoke to the congregation in October 2018. He indicated, “It is hard to believe, but in 1959 the United Church opened four new congregations every week – we now close one church every week.”
- Bob Richards – “Your property was identified in an evaluation of all United Church property across Canada as being one of 250 strategic properties. This does not mean these are properties that General Council should take over, which they can’t, but rather if the congregation is considering redevelopment, the United Church should provide sufficient resources and expertise to maximize the missional value of the property, as defined by and decided by the congregation.”
- Knox, like other churches, has an aging population, and a forecast of declining revenue with a growing dependence on projects (which are dependent on aging volunteers for success, many of which were not feasible in Covid days), for financial viability. Unlike many churches, Knox has a current cash surplus giving Knox the luxury of having a window to develop, and implement, a strategy for long-term financial viability.

Team Mandate

- Based on financial projections, and a related round-table discussion of many active and past Knox volunteers, completed in November 2017, the Knox congregation, at the March 2018 Annual General Meeting, established “a committee to seek out a developer to explore redevelopment of the church property.”
- Agreement for support (“MOU”) and financing (“LOC”), of the effort were signed with UCC EDGE in October 2018.
- Working with EDGE, a Viability Report was developed in 2018, and the congregation gave the Futures Team their view on what they want Knox to “do and be” in a Scenarios Survey and a following Congregational Workshop in February 2019.
- One result of the February 2019 Congregational Workshop was to split the overall Knox Futures project into two distinct Feasibility Study Teams – one to study and make recommendations RE: Programs and Organization; and one to study and make recommendations RE: Property Redevelopment (Team members: Don Farmer – Chair, Fred Gallop, Floyd Fullerton, Paul O’Brien, George Savage, Sinclair Bannerman, and Boyd Hunter).
- The October 2018 Viability Report and the February 2019 Congregational Workshop confirmed the congregations wishes to pursue Knox’s Mission by having both a strong community outreach and a strong Pastoral Care component.
- Knox’s very successful Freedom Kitchen, and ongoing very effective Pastoral Care initiatives, are the manifestations of this congregational will.

Goal: “Survive and Thrive”

- The Property Redevelopment Team’s goal was to have a well-developed Property Redevelopment Proposal, for congregational consideration, when/if required “down the road” to ensure the continued financial viability of Knox.

Objectives

The Property Redevelopment Team objectives have been to:

- Provide facilities for church programming.
- Provide income to the church to supplement declining income.
- Provide a needed service or facility to the Community.
- Enter into a beneficial business partnership.

Fundamental Options: Pros & Cons

- The “Sell and Build New and Smaller” option would be an emotionally difficult decision for the congregation. It is clearly high risk. The option would attract developers because of our location and would permit Knox to realize revenue by leasing the underlying land to a developer.
- Entering a development partnership with a private developer (housing, retail) requires building sharing, which is not attractive to developers. It may restrict church activities and availability of parking but would shift much of the business risk from Knox to the developer.
- Entering into a development/operating partnership with a Senior’s Housing Operator would require building sharing but remain consistent with Knox’s will to serve the Sackville community, capitalize on its reputation, and complement its other community strengths. A reputable partner would ensure operating success but require Knox to give up some degree of decision-making re: the facility.
- Maximizing building rental opportunities (operate a day care and rent upper hall rooms to Community Service Agencies), is the lowest risk option. Growth and vacancy rates in Sackville presently an opportunity, however, the option risks rental market changes over future years.
- Share all space with another religious organization. No current opportunities exist but may arise and could be workable without unacceptable changes on Knox.
- A long-term “green field” affordable housing, or similar Community Service project in partnership with a developer would enhance Knox’s mission in the community, as well as provide long-term revenue stability. The associated risks of such a project, as well as consumption of volunteer resources, would however be significant.

Work Completed

- Viability Study report prepared in association with UCC EDGE; published November 2018.
- Formal property evaluation by Turner-Drake; property value, \$1,185,000.00 to \$1,360,000.00, as of August 2019.
- A land-use study by Dalhousie Planning Students; thanks to Dr. Chuck Hostovsky and four students.
- Sought interest in a partnership from many developers and most local institutions, such as Northwood Care and similar facilities.
- Explored success and failure stories, with visits and conference calls, with other congregations both locally and across Canada. Particularly impressed with All Saints/Shannex Spring Garden Rd, Halifax, NS partnership, as well as Cochrane St. United/St. John’s Community services facility, St. John’s, NL.

- Worked with Canmac Economics Ltd., Dr. Mike Foster, on dimensioning several generic development options and opportunities. The Canmac Report’s analysis projects an operating deficit of \$124,503.00 by 2030 if we continue without corrective action. It also projects an operating surplus of over \$102,000.00 by 2030 if we successfully operate a day care centre and are able to rent all building space not required for worship and church programs. It suggests a further long-term revenue and community service opportunity re: an Affordable Housing initiative.
- This led to a two-point recommendation strategy of immediately maximizing property rental opportunities (including Nursery School/Day Care) and exploring a long-term “green field” partnership opportunity to build an Affordable Housing or Assisted Living facility.

Major Work Results and Conclusions

- The Knox property is part of the Sackville Drive Plan and is zoned as Pedestrian Retail (PR).
- We believed that a land lease, with a responsible private developer or Senior’s Housing Operator, would be a good financial option for Knox. The Property Evaluation Report gave us a credible basis for considering either sale of the property or entering a land-lease financial partnership with a developer or institution.
- Although we have received lots of encouragement from developers and institutions, we have not been able to get them to the point of making any concrete proposals.
- We learned that both developers and private institutions fear the prospect of working with churches in terms of ongoing decision-making.
- The Dalhousie Planning Students study was a conceptual land-use document with a conceptual revenue producing development. We estimated construction cost for the mixed-use (some apartments, some retail. No basic change in sanctuary or hall) at around \$4,000,000.00. The report became a support document for discussion with potential development/operational partners, but not the basis for a project we felt Knox could pursue without a committed and credible development partner.

Final Conclusion

- We adopted a strategy of having Canmac Economics Ltd., Dr. Mike Foster, do a detailed financial analysis of Knox’s “base case” future and various generic alternative options and opportunities.
- Canmac recommended a two-point strategy:
 - a. Maximize building rental opportunities and immediately modify the current Nursery School operation to be a Day Care operation (a proposal that was also recently made by the Knox Finance Committee and the Nursery School Director, and approved by Knox Council), and
 - b. As a long-term option, begin evaluation of an offsite “green field” affordable housing development (take advantage of Knox’s social capital and current Federal Government funding for Affordable Housing).
- The Canmac recommendation (a) as above, enables Knox to maintain the current property, maintain current major tenants (Motion Dance Centre and the Lower Sackville Nursery School/Day Care), does not require sanctuary or other major building modifications, and provides a revenue stream to offset deficit projections through to 2030.

Costs

All consultant costs to date are approximately \$11,000.00. These are covered by the line of credit from UCC EDGE as approved by the congregation in March 2018. Costs are not payable until such time as Knox completes a successful redevelopment project or sells the property.

Recommendation to the Congregation

The Knox Property Redevelopment Team recommends that the congregation accept and approve this Interim Property Redevelopment Report to:

- a. Implement the Day Care and “other Rentals” proposal, over 2021 and 2022, and
- b. Take advantage of Knox’s social capital, begin preliminary investigation of the option of a “green field” affordable housing facility in Sackville, for consideration by the congregation after Knox’s post-Covid strengths and weaknesses are known.

Questions and Comments from Members of the Congregation

- Does the Futures Team have a proposed budget?
 - No. Trying to take advantage of our reputation – consumer/non-profit could take on role. Need credibility to apply through Federal Government. Developer brings the money; we bring the caring and compassion. Someone other than Knox would manage/operate.
- Most of the work was done pre-Covid and we have since experienced a significant decline in givings. How to bounce back?
 - Early projections based on pre-Covid, during Covid, etc. Rentals have their own research. Data is based on early Covid. It might be that “green field” opportunities are the encouragement to keep going.
- Are there copies of the report available?
 - Yes, it is on our website, www.knoxsackville.ca under News/Church Reports.
- Very informative report. We are the only United Church in Sackville. Keep spirits up in order to continue. Like idea of renting space upstairs.
- We should be proud of elevator installation. A member of the Narcotics Anonymous group that meets upstairs believes they would have slipped back to old habits, but due to the installation of the elevator they were able to continue attending meetings.
- Most of affordable housing grants require accessibility.

It is moved by Don Farmer, seconded by Fred Gallop, that the congregation of Knox United Church:

- a. Approve the Interim Report of the Knox Futures Team;
- b. Instruct Council to implement the short-term recommendations of the Team, and;
- c. Authorize the Futures Team to explore “green field” Affordable Housing partnerships.

Motion Carried with 45 in favour.

Organ Committee Presentation

Jean Collier presented the following report from the Organ Committee.

Knox's Pipe Organ – History

In 1992, when we were building this sanctuary, the congregation approved looking for a pipe organ to enhance worship, and to lead and inspire congregational singing.

It has been known for a number of years that there were problems with our pipe organ. It was:

- Never wholly completed.
- When played it sustained notes and sound quality was unreliable.
- It required inspection; there are no consistent records of maintenance since 2012.

Background

September 20, 2020

- Colin Walsh, of Acadia Pipe Organ (as local pipe organ company with over 40 years of experience), inspected the pipe organ.

October 30, 2020

- Colin Walsh notified Knox that the pipe organ was not safe due to:
 - Dry oil wells.
 - The improper installation of the pipes, plus a sub-par framework of the organ behind the façade making it unstable.
 - Placement of the blower in the Choir Room creates a fire hazard.
- Action – the Chair of the Spiritual Oversight Committee had the organ turned off and the blower shut down.

Knox Council's Response

November 24, 2020

- In the report of the Spiritual Oversight Committee:
 - Council was informed of the issues with the pipe organ.
 - SOC recommended an Ad-Hoc Organ Committee be appointed.
- Council made further recommendations:
 - That the Organ Committee investigate the repair/refurbishment or total replacement of the pipe organ.
 - That Acadia Pipe Organ should be involved as a consultant and expert in the field.

January 26, 2021

- An Organ Committee was selected by Council and asked to report back to Council.
- Members of the Committee include Jean Collier (Chair), Heather Robinson, Gardia Voerman, and John Lindsay-Botten.

Organ Committee*February 3, 2021*

- The Organ Committee met to discuss the history of the current organ.
- Contacted Colin Walsh re: his report of October 30, 2020.
- Agreed to gather information on how to proceed, including cost estimates, etc.
- Contacted Colin by phone and agreed to meet on February 10, 2021

Findings

- Initially, there was concern that the floor structure of the choir loft had been damaged due to the weight of the organ.
- Former Chair of the Property Committee, Mannie Lewis, verbally assured us that the floor of the choir loft is structurally sound. No written report was acquired.
- Due to the instability of the structure and the condition of the pipes behind the façade, immediate removal of these components is essential.
- The blower is a fire hazard and must be removed from the Choir Room.
- The above are safety issues and must be addressed. Cost quoted by Acadia Pipe Organ is \$10,000.00.

Milestones*October 30, 2020*

- Acadia Pipe Organ Report
 - "...in my opinion, this instrument is dangerous and serious consideration should be given to its condition. The location and position of the organ blower is extremely dangerous. The motor has exposed bearings and shafts that could cause serious injury."

January 26, 2021

- Knox Council selects Organ Committee
 - Jean Collier, Gardia Voerman, Heather Robinson, John Lindsay-Botten

February 21, 2021

- Organ Committee requests Council Executive meeting

February 22, 2021

- Council Executive met February 22, 2021 and is informed:
 - First Baptist Church offering to donate Casavant Pipe Organ
 - Initial project cost estimates
- Organ Committee asked to:
 - More clearly define costs
 - Obtain long-term maintenance plan/cost
- Property Committee asked to:
 - Obtain structural engineer report

Week of March 8, 2021

- The property developers of First Baptist Church posted a Casavant Pipe Organ for donation on social media. Local and national news agencies picked up the story.
 - First Baptist and Knox discuss need for immediate decision/action.

March 12 to 14, 2021

- Organ Committee submits detailed and updated report to Council Executive
 - Detailed cost breakdown of removal and transportation from First Baptist
 - Organ weight
 - Annual maintenance estimates
- Asks for permission for immediate spend of \$10,000.00 to secure, transport, and store the Casavant Pipe Organ
 - Council Executive approves \$10,000.00 expenditure:
 - Six votes in favour, two votes against

Spent to date

Current Funds

- Organ Fund: \$12,863.00

Expenditure

- Removal and transport of organ from First Baptist to Knox

Total Funds Requested

- \$10,000.00 + HST = \$10,750.00 (*Knox receives 50% of HST as rebate)

Current organ fund balance as of September 26, 2021 is estimated at \$3,000.00

Next Steps

- \$10,000.00 is needed to remove the safety hazard of the current pipe organ.
- Approximately \$7,000.00 is needed to ensure occupational health and safety standards are met. We will need to spend this money from General Funds, but fundraising will replace the funds as soon as possible.
- Beyond the immediate addressing of safety concerns, the Organ Committee is not recommending any further action at this point.
- Further detailed cost analysis and review of all possible options will be brought forward at the Annual Congregational Meeting in 2022.

Questions and Comments from Members of the Congregation

- If the blower is disconnected from the electrical then it negates the fire hazard. The roof is more important at this time. Is there a report that details the structural issue and why the organ needs to come out?
 - The Organ Committee has put in a lot of work and Acadia Pipe Organs has a lot of expertise. A disconnect could work but that doesn't address that the pipes are unstable. If we could 100% guarantee that no one goes behind the façade then it would be okay, but there are huge wooden structures that are not supported. Back in July we had a sprinkler issue in the sprinkler room and a repairman had to come in. There was an air leak in the sprinkler system under the organ. There is no way we can guarantee that repairment don't have to enter behind the façade.

- Are you asking for \$10,000.00 from capital funds and nothing from the Organ Fund?
 - We don't know where the money needs to come from, but it needs to be spent. The committee will then fundraise to replace it; some donations are already coming in. There are also insurance issues – if something were to happen and the insurance company finds out we knew about the problem, what would the outcome be? Will this congregation give permission to Council to remove the pipes and blower from the sanctuary, then have the Organ Committee fundraise to replace the funds?
- Could you not ask for \$3,000.00-\$4,000.00, plus use what is in the Organ Fund, and what donations have been promised? Do you want \$10,000.00 or \$10,000.00 plus \$3,000.00?
- Does the Organ Committee have permission to spend the monies in the Organ Fund?
 - Organ Fund meant for maintenance. General Funds would still need to go into the Organ Fund. Suggestion was to ask for \$10,000.00.
- Does the Organ Fund have to maintain the piano and other electrical paraphernalia?
 - Yes
- Is there only one provider able to do this work?
 - Yes, this was part of the ongoing problem with the pipe organ.

It is moved by Jean Collier, seconded by Gardia Voerman, that the congregation grant permission to Council to spend \$10,000.00 + HST to have the blower in the basement removed along with the pipes behind the organ façade, with the caveat that the money will be replaced by fundraising. **Motion Carried with 34 in favour.**

Update from Search and Selection Committee

- At the Congregational Meeting on July 18th, we voted to accept Rev. Penny Nelson for the position of the Full-time Minister; this has now been approved by Region 15.
- Due to summer vacations, no further work was done until the end of August, but we currently have a candidate for the position of the part-time Pastoral Care Minister and are prepared to start negotiations, then we will hold a vote to accept a call with them.
- Rainie Murphy left the congregation and therefore the Committee, but we have a lot of support from Council and Region 15 to carry on.
- Considering a start date of January 1, 2022 in order to allow candidate time to potentially wrap up with their current congregation/get through Christmas, and allow time for Rev. Nelson to settle in.
- The Pastoral Care Team is willing to continue to step up during this time and will involve Rev. Nelson as needed.
- Will be some cost-saving since we are waiting until January 2022, which brings us closer to next year's budget.

General Comments

Fred Gallop commented that the last few months have been a pleasure to be here, while the last few weeks have been trying. He wanted to say there is lots of great stuff happening; people are stepping up and have a vested interest in the building – it’s more than four walls...and a roof!

Many thanks to Beth Martin who has stepped up to keep things running; we have a great team making this place work. Thanks to everyone who is contributing to the wellness and faith going forward.

Beth Martin then noted that we have a wonderful faith family. We agree and we disagree, but ultimately, we have to remember we are a family with a fantastic history and a fantastic future.

Jean Collier closed the meeting with a prayer, and there being no further business to discuss, at 1:18 p.m. it was moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Chair: _____
James O’Connell

Secretary: _____
Vanessa Voerman

**Knox United Church
Congregational Meeting
November 21, 2021**

A congregational meeting of Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, was held in the sanctuary on the twenty-first day of November in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-one.

All were welcomed and Beth Martin, Chair of Council, reminded everyone that James O’Connell was elected as the Chair, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021, and that Vanessa Voerman was elected as the Secretary, Congregational Meetings for the year 2021. Attendance was recorded with fifty (50) names.

The only item on the Agenda is the presentation from the Search and Selection Committee of a candidate for the part-time Pastoral Care Minister position. We were reminded that back in February 2021, we voted to enhance our worship with two ministerial positions, one full-time and one part-time. This was approved by both the congregation and by Region 15. Two members of the Search and Selection Committee stepped down; Region 15 was made aware and gave permission for the Committee to complete their work. Beth then invited Rev. Penny Nelson to provide an opening prayer.

The meeting was then called to order by James O’Connell, Chair of Congregational Meetings. James then invited those in attendance to recite our Mission Statement. The meeting was constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, for the business to come before it.

As he is also the Chair of the Search Committee, James asked for nominations for a temporary Chair of the Congregational Meeting while he presented the Search Committee’s recommendation to the congregation. Beth Martin nominated Judy Hayes as Chair; there being no other nominations, Judy stepped into the role.

Overview of Role

- The Minister of Pastoral Care is a part-time position with shared responsibility, alongside the full-time Minister, Spiritual Oversight Committee, Worship Committee, and the Pastoral Care Committee, for pastoral care ministry to and with adults and families within the church.
- There are defined responsibilities and a total of 20 hours/week.
- Role was approved by Knox congregation, Region 15 and is now part of team approach Ministry at Knox in order to build a sustainable future.

Presentation of Candidate

The name of the candidate the Search and Selection Committee is recommending as Knox’s part-time Pastoral Care Minister is Rev. Kym Burke-Cole. Rev. Burke-Cole graduated from AST in 2012 and has been in ministry for eight years. She is currently the part-time Minister at Lawrencetown-Lake Echo Pastoral Charge (2-point charge), Lawrencetown, NS.

Negotiated Terms

General:

- January 3, 2022 start date
- Cell phone plan: Calls, texts & data \$40/month
- No moving expenses (move not required)

Worship Services:

- Will perform one service per month, excluding Christmas, Easter, World Communion Sunday.
- If three months notice is required to the current pastoral charge, the preaching rotation would not start until the fourth month of employment at Knox.

United Church of Canada Mandated Terms

- \$30,475.00 Annual salary
- \$737.50 Annual continuing education budget
- \$0.41/km reimbursement for work-related travel expenses
- Standard study leave (3 weeks annually), prorated for 2021/2022

Vacation:

- An ordained Minister in the United Church of Canada is entitled to four weeks vacation. This includes a total of five Sundays and equates to 23 working days/year.
- A Part-Time Minister continues to be paid part-time, so during vacation, the actual days used are also part-time days.

Full-Time Minister	Part-Time Minister
1 week = 40 hours	1 week = 20 hours
5 weeks vacation = 200 hours	5 weeks vacation = 100 hours

Negotiated Terms

Vacation:

- Prorated vacation between January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022 would be two weeks including three Sundays (part-time days).
- Regular vacation allowance is from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.
- As per regular business practices, Knox United will remain closed during the week following Christmas. Should this change, the Pastoral Care Minister would be entitled to this week off.

Questions and Comments from Members of Congregation

- Can you give us any idea of her experience in Pastoral Care?
 - She is a people person and loves to talk. In one of her previous positions every second week was spent on Pastoral Care instead of a worship service. People loved it but ultimately missed the worship service. Rev. Burke-Cole missed the pastoral care work, so this position drew her in.

- Has she ever worked with a Pastoral Care Team, or has she only done the work on her own?
 - She has only worked on her own – her current congregations are not involved in the work of the church and are really taking advantage of her time. Scott Martin then noted that hers are aging congregations, so she does some pastoral care work within those congregations. Caroline Gallop commented that Rev. Burke-Cole shared with us that if she is aware of pastoral care needs, then she drops everything to help that family.
- Tell us what it is was about her that made the Committee consider her a candidate for the position.
 - Her sense of humour, compassion, life experiences, and insight. She appeared very relaxed and not afraid to share.
 - Provided situational scenarios, very compassionate in the way she presented herself.
 - Excited to work with a team and not have to do everything by herself.
 - Very organized, sees where she is spending her time.
 - Innovative services and cool ways to connect with youth – Blessing of Backpacks (for back-to-school), Blessing of the Boards (surfers at Lawrencetown).

It is moved by Tony Mombourquette, seconded by Sandra Braye, that we accept the recommendation of Reverend Kym Burke-Cole, along with the negotiated terms presented, as the candidate for the position of Pastoral Care Minister (part-time) at Knox United Church, effective January 3, 2022. **Motion Carried with 45 in favour.**

There being no further business to discuss, at 12:24 p.m., Max Martin moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Chair: _____
James O'Connell

Secretary: _____
Vanessa Voerman