

**Knox United Church  
Annual General Meeting  
March 8, 2020**

The Annual General Meeting of Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, was held in the sanctuary on the sixth day of March in the year of our Lord, two thousand nineteen.

The meeting was opened with a prayer offered by Rev. Sandra Cox. Nominations from the floor were then requested for a congregational meeting chairperson. It was moved by Beth Martin that Betty Lou Killen be nominated as chairperson of the meeting. **Motion Carried.**

Betty Lou called the meeting to order and extended a warm welcome to all in attendance. 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.

**Attendance**

Attendance sheets are recorded with seventy-eight (78) signatures. Attendance sheets were circulated but some may not have signed.

**Approval of Agenda**

Those in attendance received the printed agenda. The chairperson asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Requests were made to include two items under New Business: Fellowship (Janet Mombourquette) and Time Out for Ladies (Judy Houlihan).

It is moved by Beth Robinson, seconded by Al Matheson, that the Agenda for the 2019 Annual General Meeting be approved with the above additions. <b>Motion Carried.</b>
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**Minutes**

The minutes from the Annual General Meeting held on March 10, 2019 were included in the Annual Report.

It is moved Linda Hefler, seconded by Heather Robinson, to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of March 10, 2019. <b>Motion Carried.</b>
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**In Memoriam**

Rev. Cox read the names listed in the *In Memoriam* section for the year 2019, as recorded on page 35 in the Annual Report.

**Correspondence**

There was no correspondence to bring to this meeting.

**Committee Reports**

Omissions/Additions to Annual Report:

There were no identified omissions/additions to the Annual Report.

Spiritual Oversight Committee:

There were no identified questions on the report provided by the Spiritual Oversight Committee.

Finance Committee:

Kevin Webb commented on the financial report published in the Annual Report, pages 24-32, with a focus on the Statement of Revenue and Expenditures on pages 25-26. He also noted that the headers are missing from the columns; they should say Actual 2019, Budget 2019, and Actual 2018.

Kevin highlighted the following items from the report:

- Statements include restricted (Memorial Fund, Anderson Fund, etc.) and unrestricted funds (operating budget of the church)
- Revenue – down a bit year over year, down approximately \$89,000.00 this year
- Capital Expenditures – have received approximately \$56,000.00 in grants for capital items
- Fundraising budget at \$23,500.00 but realized \$45,000.00 from Men of the Deeps, yard sale, other concerts, and approximately \$17,000.00 from Freedom Kitchen and the COME meal.
- Nursery School profit of approximately \$35,000.00 – one-time charge related to two years ago when payments were deferred but shouldn't have been
- Investments – realized \$22,000.00 but only budgeted for \$5,000.00
- Expenditures – Capital items: hearing loop, doors replaced, lighting, flooring, roof shingles, equipment purchases for kitchen, etc. cost approximately \$85,000.00
- Solar project cost \$109,000.00; we received a grant for \$30,000.00 plus a loan of \$61,000.00 from the United Church of Canada
- Forecasting net deficit of \$26,000.00
- General operations of approximately \$226,000.00

Nancy Kent noted that we only paid \$1,400.00 in property taxes; Kevin explained that we are currently appealing the taxes for the Nursery School, as we have not been charged as a commercial property. Many thanks were offered to Kevin and the Finance Team for their work.

A short presentation on the potential budget for 2020 was presented, with a projection to 2021 (based on the need to find a minister).

Update on Knox Futures – The work of the Knox Futures was split between Don Farmer and his team (bricks and mortars), and Betty Lou Killen and her team (ministry, faith/food/events). The teams are here to present something that could be long term. We are currently looking for a new minister and Region 15 is allowing us to continue this process to figure out what we want to do, who we need as staff based on this process. Region 15 is still very much involved. The budget development provided a very status quo budget. No new staff is included but we are budgeting for a new minister (i.e. Rev. Cox to be replaced by a full-time minister). The proposed budget allows for 1.6 ministers to be hired, to allow Rev. Cox to remain, plus bring in a new minister. This allows for continuity of spiritual leadership and developing spiritual interest for younger members. Rev. Cox's role would be a part-time position; she is currently working at 35 hours per week, while this position would keep her at 25 hours per week for the first year.

The Futures presentation was shown on February 18th; some tweaks/changes were made, and it was presented to Council on February 25<sup>th</sup>. It is important to note that these are not final documents but are working documents. The flow charts presented represent Faith, Events/Programs, and Food. The focus today will be on Faith and Events/Programs, as our Food ministry program is strong. The Faith part of

the document is leading us to a Senior Minister at 0.6 time. The reading of "Our Church Profile" was then presented. There is a high level of overview in this role, not so much tasks. The Faith Ministry is 24 hours per week (0.6). A new role would be developed – Minister of Community Development & Partnerships. The next steps were to be presented here at the Annual General Meeting. It was noted that the Ministry Search Team is a demographic representation of the congregation. Boyd Hunter and Don Farmer are proposing a motion that no additional staff be hired. They noted that collectively they have served as Finance Chairs for 25 years. Linda Hefler then asked why they won't allow the congregation to ask any questions around the proposal. This opened the floor for questions.

Wayne Johnson asked how many ministers are out there looking for a job, noting that this is a dying race, churches are closing, etc. He wanted to know if Rev. Cox would be here. There have been conversations with Region 15 – Rev. Cox feels called to stay with us but not full-time, nor can she do the things needed for growth. She would be the team lead, i.e. the spiritual leader of our faith family. She has no capacity for full-time, long-term work, nor the energy to grow the congregation. Someone asked if there is any idea of how many clergy people are out there looking for a job, but we can't know how many are looking until we advertise a position, with some people noting they have heard rumblings of interest. It was noted this position if not necessarily an ordained minister, seeing that we do have an ordained minister with Rev. Cox. It was felt this position could be left open and a determination made later. Jean Collier then commented to say it doesn't behoove anyone to be unkind to each another, and that we're here for the same purpose – to do the right thing for the church – noting that Rev. Cox has said she will be here with us until we find a new minister. Henry Ellsworth noted that a full-time position would need to be produced; what he sees in the report is only a couple of paragraphs, not a job description. The Futures Team was asked to create job descriptions, but Region 15 said that it is the role of the Ministerial Search Team to write job descriptions. The Futures Team was directed by Council to produce job descriptions but kept it as proposed roles. It was noted that we do not write a role for Rev. Cox but write for what we need. They also asked themselves to look ahead for five years and think what will happen. No one has a crystal ball, but we need structures put in place and for these structures to evolve as needed. Jennifer Williams thanked the Futures Team for their proposal, asking if there is to be collaboration between the two ministers – it was noted that all staff must work collegially. Ron Kent stood to ask what the target is for the new full-time position – are we looking for more people, more outreach? How long will this position be in place before we determine if it is working or isn't working? The position was developed based on what the team heard we need to continue to grow and be sustainable. There are four key budget line items this position would influence. They would grow the congregation, have an administrative role regarding the facility, the staff, and the scheduling. They would be growing our event/program ministry (i.e. Men of the Deeps, The Barra MacNeils, etc.) so that we're not relying on volunteers. There are opportunities to secure grants and partnerships. This does not necessarily mean increasing the number of people in the pews on Sunday mornings. We must establish some new protocols, do some benchmarking with Region 15, etc. The team requested the budget projection to 2021 to help measure the outcomes, as we won't see direct results in 6-12 months. Linda Hefler commented there are two groups, noting the best case scenarios are for the building/land if we can't become more sustainable. She went on to say that we have to try something different, something new to increase the financial side, and that the proposed Futures report might be the way to go. She also remarked that if we continue as is, we will be closing the doors and looking at something else, noting that Rev. Cox is trying her best, our food ministry is strong, and we need to kick things to the next level. Boyd stood to say that he respectfully disagrees that we are on a downhill slide. Henry wanted to know, looking at the proposed figures in the budget, what the rationale is for increasing the envelope donations by \$14,000.00, then by \$47,000.00 the next year. Kevin noted that these figures do need to be more detailed, but they are a projection of possible increases. Pat Galbraith had some

questions on the organizational chart where it references committees, wondering what the 4s and 6s mean (these indicate the number of people on each committee). She also questioned if the 0.6 minister is responsible for worship, how would the other minister be involved? They would participate approximately twice per month, give updates on what they're doing, back-fill vacation time, etc. This would be a full partnership in ministry – a team approach. Janet Mombourquette noted the other position is not necessarily a minister – it was clarified this could either be someone not ordained yet, or a lay minister. Holly Hunter commented that the 0.6 position is for a minister, while the 1.0 position is not ordained but administrative; this keeps the option open for that position. Wayne wanted to know if that was the going price for a minister, with the answer being it is a salary scale based on experience. The top end of the scale is \$62,000.00 plus benefits and the salary can increase based on qualifications. There are also housing allowances, travel allowances, etc. Olive McIldoon highlighted the difference between the 1.6 ministers and the 1.0 minister, noting the difference seems to only budget for 6 months for the new minister.

Don Farmer and Boyd Hunter then got up to speak, with Don expressing his admiration for the congregation and the committee on their work, noting these are the fundamentals of our future. We have a strong body that has value and we need to keep it going if we can. Boyd reiterated Don's comments, noting that we may disagree, but they do so with regret. He indicated he has heard comments that we should have faith that it will work out, noting that they do have faith, but also have a responsibility as faithful stewards. The history is that the donation revenue (envelopes) has been flat for the last five years. He noted we are fortunate financially and spiritually to have Rev. Cox; we currently don't pay benefits, so we are looking at increased costs with a new minister. Our givers are over 60 years of age. We are too dependent on fundraising projects. We have been fortunate to have tenants in the basement (approximately \$40,000.00 in revenue), but tenants skip out, have financial difficulties, etc., and we don't know if they will be successful. The bottom number on the proposed 2020 budget is a \$29,000.00 deficit, with no guarantees on revenue. Monies we raise could have an impact on the bottom line and we have a lot of good things going on, which may lead to some groups. Don reminded us of some of our history; he and Pat started here in the late '60s when we were a small congregation, then the 70s/80s population boom happened – we had 350 kids in Sunday School, and we needed to catch up. We grew because of the environment we found ourselves in. Today we find ourselves in a new environment. It is projected that 9,000 church buildings will close in Canada over the next 10 years – we want to survive in an environment that threatens us. The book, Fishing Tips, talks about growing a church by taking risks. Don and Boyd spoke with the author, but this was done in 2000 and their revenue has since gone down over the past few years, including over \$200,000.00 in the last two years. They also spoke to the people at Cochrane St. United who are much like us. We want to survive as we are doing wonderful things. They went on say they both love Rev. Cox and would like to keep her as our full-time minister for as long as she is prepared to fill the role, but they are prepared to make a motion that no ministerial staff be hired. It was then determined that a budget motion, for either the "status quo" budget or the 1.6 minister budget, needed to be made.

Rev. Cox then thanked everyone for their vote of confidence, saying she will make this her business until she can't do it anymore. She is willing to stay as full-time until she can't do it anymore, then she is willing to stay on a 0.6 basis to help transition to a new minister. However, she does not want to be used or seen as a pawn.

Fred Gallop stood to say that in his understanding, if a motion is put on the floor first for the 1.6 budget, then we would have an opportunity to listen to any amendments. The motion by Don and Boyd was then presented to the congregation.

It is moved by Don Farmer, seconded by Boyd Hunter, that no additional ministerial staff be hired by Knox, based on affordability and uncertainty of benefits, and that Knox continue its current Ministerial and structural path until such time that Rev. Sandra Cox no longer wishes to continue in the Ministerial role as currently defined, and that Knox appoint a Committee to prepare to hire a direct replacement for Rev. Cox, to be activated when Rev. Cox advises Knox of a date that she wishes to fully retire.

Before the motion could be voted on, the Agenda for today suggested that a presentation be given by Knox Futures, then Kevin would present the 2020 budget. Scott Martin rose to say that with the 1.6 budget, that gives us Rev. Cox and room to move forward to continue. Rev. Cox then noted that, according to the Manual, at the Annual General Meeting, the budget needs to be approved, noting there will be two motions on the floor and no budget. She asks that either Fred or Kevin present a budget for approval – either the “status quo” budget or the 1.6 budget, noting that we’ve already had the benefit of discussion.

It is moved by Henry Ellsworth, seconded by Gail Miner, to table the motion presented by Don Farmer and Boyd Hunter until the congregation has heard a motion for the 2020 budget. **Motion Carried.**

It is moved by Fred Gallop, seconded by Boyd Hunter, to accept the “status quo” budget for a 1.0 full-time minister for 2020, as presented in the Annual Report.

Before the motion could be voted on, Henry Ellsworth noted that we can choose to amend the budget later if the motion passes for the 1.0 full-time minister, indicating there could be another motion presented at another time. Janet Mombourquette feels that after today we need a regrouping for the Annual General Meeting, noting that we should table this meeting if we can do that. Wayne Johnson wanted to know if this is a yes or a no, with the response being that right now, it is a year or a no. Beth Martin then stepped up to clarify that there is a motion on the floor to propose the 2020 budget with the 1.0 full-time minister only, at a projected deficit of approximately \$29,000.00 (option A), while also noting that the other side is the 1.6 minister at an approximate deficit of \$38,000.00 (option B). Kevin noted that revenue assumption would raise an additional \$14,000.00 in revenue. Boyd commented that this was all presented at a Council meeting and involves Rev. Cox staying. We have no details on a new person. There is more concern if this is the right role for Knox versus hiring a brand new qualified person, then we could bring in Rev. Cox if needed, noting it’s not incorrect to say we need more time.

With those final comments, voting on the two motions took place.

It is moved by Fred Gallop, seconded by Boyd Hunter, to accept the “status quo” budget for a 1.0 full-time minister for 2020, as presented in the Annual Report.

All those in favour – 41

All those opposed – 21

**Motion Carried.**

It is moved by Don Farmer, seconded by Boyd Hunter, that no additional ministerial staff be hired by Knox, based on affordability and uncertainty of benefits, and that Knox continue its current

Ministerial and structural path until such time that Rev. Sandra Cox no longer wishes to continue in the Ministerial role as currently defined, and that Knox appoint a Committee to prepare to hire a direct replacement for Rev. Cox, to be activated when Rev. Cox advises Knox of a date that she wishes to fully retire.

All those in favour – 40

All those opposed – 18

**Motion Carried.**

#### Remaining Reports:

It was moved by Tony Mombourquette, seconded by Henry Ellsworth, that the remaining reports in the Annual Report be approved as printed. **Motion Carried.**

#### New Business

##### Nominating Committee Report:

Heather Robinson and Jean Collier presented the Nominating Committee Report. New members in positions include Betty Lou Killen as Chair of Council and Beth Martin as Vice Chair of Council. They also noted there are several committees that are not identified, including Stewardship and Christian Life and Growth.

It is moved by Judy Hayes, seconded by Debbie Chisholm, to accept the Nominating Committee Report as presented. **Motion Carried.**

##### Fellowship:

Janet Mombourquette noted that she has been on the committee for 24 years. She then drew attention to the Fellowship Committee report in Volume 2 of the Annual Report. Fellowship groups were mentioned in two other reports and she would like to have those groups change their name.

##### Time Out for Ladies:

Judy Houlihan wanted to note that the restricted funds do not mention the Elevator Fund, of which \$1,000.00 per year is to go toward general maintenance, the telephone line, etc. for the elevator.

#### Open Forum

Paul Russell (Councillor) and Fred Gallop rose to talk about requests for funding that were made for an AED, as well as funding for the food ministry, including shelving, etc. Paul then presented cheques to Fred for \$1,600.00 (AED), and \$14,771.00 (food ministry). Thank you for your tremendous support to the community.

#### Appreciation to Church Staff

Betty Lou Killen noted we are blessed with fabulous staff; she is open to how appreciative we are for Rev. Cox. Sincere appreciation was offered to John Lindsay-Botten, an incredible member of staff for his

gifts of music, teaching, faith – we’re glad you are here. Thanks to Tracey for her hard work and support to our volunteers, etc. Great work is being done in the office. Betty Lou has really appreciated the business support, sponsorship, ministry support, and the ongoing work with our community partners, Councillors, etc.

There being no further business, Rev. Sandra offered a benediction.

At 1:56 p.m., Scott Martin made the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_  
Betty Lou Killen

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vanessa Voerman