



Knox News

Advent and Christmas 2020

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WITH THIS CANDLE

Author Unknown

Where there is light, there is
hope.

Where there is friendship,
peace and truth.

Christmas is a time for
celebrating the special people
in our lives.

When I cannot find my way, I
light a flame.

And at Christmas, I think of
you!



The Birth of Jesus December Reading Plan

Day 1 - Isaiah 7	Day 17 - Psalm 67
Day 2 - Isaiah 9	Day 18 - Psalm 70
Day 3 - Isaiah 11	Day 19 - Psalm 82
Day 4 - Isaiah 32	Day 20 - Psalm 96
Day 5 - Isaiah 35	Day 21 - Matthew 1
Day 6 - Isaiah 49	Day 22 - Matthew 2
Day 7 - Isaiah 54	Day 23 - Luke 1:1-38
Day 8 - Isaiah 56	Day 24 - Luke 1:39-80
Day 9 - Isaiah 60	Day 25 - Luke 2:1-20
Day 10 - Isaiah 63	Day 26 - Luke 2:21-51
Day 11 - Isaiah 66	Day 27 - Galatians 4
Day 12 - Jeremiah 23	Day 28 - Psalm 145
Day 13 - Micah 5	Day 29 - Psalm 146
Day 14 - Zechariah 9	Day 30 - Psalm 147
Day 15 - Psalm 48	Day 31 - Psalm 150
Day 16 - Psalm 61	



Christmas Message from Rev. Paul's Desk



Dear Knox Family,

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery of the Christ child and the hope, peace, joy, and love he brings to a world in need.

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the son of Mary, is the hope of the world. He is the rock upon which we stand and we shall not be shaken. While rulers come and go, and famous people are soon forgotten, while empires rise and fall, the baby from Bethlehem endures forever. His power will never diminish, his glory will never fail, and of his kingdom, there will be no end. For his name is the name that is above all names.

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery that Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. There is no storm that he cannot calm. There is no relationship that he cannot reconcile. While we are filled with conflict, Christ lives in harmony with God the Father, Christ is at peace with himself, Christ is at peace with all creation, and Christ is at peace with us.

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery that Jesus Christ is the giver of joy. As we ponder this mystery, may we experience the joy that was demonstrated by Mary, the mother of Jesus, when she learned that she would give birth to the Messiah. May we experience the joy of John the Baptist when he heard Mary's voice, and leapt for joy in his mother's womb. May we experience the joy of the shepherds and angels who exuberantly proclaimed the birth of Christ to the world.

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery that Jesus Christ is the Fountain of Love. As Scripture tells us, "God is love." As the Apostle Paul writes, "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." As the Apostle John writes, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

In the season of Advent we ponder the mystery of Christ the King. In this season we are reminded of the words that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, where he says, "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In the season of Advent, as we ponder the hope, peace, love, and joy that we receive from Christ the King may we be uplifted in our faith and strengthened for the service to which we have been called. In this season of Advent, which will be unlike any Advent we have experienced in our lives (on account of Covid-19) may we be of good cheer, knowing that Christ has overcome the world.

Blessings,
Rev. Paul Sakasov
Interim Moderator
Knox Presbyterian Church, Tiverton

A Message from Session

Clerk of Session, George Potter

At the end of the year we always like to look back at our accomplishments and acknowledge areas where we could have done better. Well 2020 has been one of the strangest years that I have encountered. Our accomplishments have been considerably muted by Covid-19 and the associated shut down of the church and restrictions on the activities of our congregation.

In January, Session made plans to revisit all the activities surrounding worship and the spiritual aspects of our church. We planned to fully integrate the united Sessions of the previous St. Paul's and Knox churches. We expected to define our and goals and objectives as a united congregation. We anticipated renewed vigour as we rearranged the personnel on our many session committees.

The first step in the breakdown of our "best laid plans" came when the Reverend David joined the military. We wish Reverend David and Yoomi all the best in their new careers. But it immediately put these "plans of men" on hold. And if that were not enough to throw us off, along came Covid-19.

Not long ago I was reflecting on my own personal past. I recall great plans made – only to fizzle and die. And if I look back carefully with an ounce of faith, I can see God's hand in directing my path to a better place. I

wonder what "better place" God has in mind for Knox Tiverton after the dust settles.

"I wonder what 'better place' God has in mind for Knox Tiverton after the dust settles."

Even with the crowbar thrown into the gears of our wonderful plans, I observed some remarkable things happening around Knox Church this year. I observed the members of the previous St. Paul's church fitting into our united Session and putting forth their views and ideas with the confidence that comes from a feeling of belonging. Our Interim Moderator, the Reverend Paul Sakasov, is the epitome of organization and diplomacy and a master of innovation. (That may be just a tad thick). Several ongoing issues that session has been puzzling over for a long time are now in the process of being resolved as a result of decisions made by session under his guidance. The remarkable thing about leadership of this style is that when it's all done you tend to think it was your idea all along.

Our experiment with the worshiping under the protocol of social distancing was rather short lived. But even under these conditions it was wonderful to see people step up to arrange and organize all of the pieces

necessary to gather safely. Also it was gratifying to see the extra effort by people associated with presenting the service with no bulletins hymn books or singing. These things underline the importance people of our congregation attached to worship at Knox Church.

As I watch the news I am pleased to see a number of vaccines with promise to provide the return to life as normal. When this happens I look forward to the reopening of our church, renewed and revitalized. And watch for that, "better place"!



A Message from the Board of Managers

Chairperson - Carolyn Hamilton

Wow, it has been quite a year for everyone. Covid-19, Rev. David moving on to become Chaplin with the Armed Forces, no church services, no fundraisers, no meetings, no getting together in person for everyone. We have all had to find new ways to accomplish our goals.

The Board of Managers have decided that a holding pattern is best for our finances, but we still have quite a few expenses that need to be taken care of.

We had planned to put in a new furnace at the manse at our annual meeting, but we have put that on hold for now, but have gotten the natural gas marked out and ready to be installed when the time comes at both the manse and the church.

Gladys our treasurer applied for and received the subsidy offered by the government to help salaries at the church. Gladys has kept a close eye on our finances and kept the Board of Managers informed each month with her report. I thank her so much for all she had done and continues to do.

We are quite fortunate to have such a caring church family. I have received many compliments this year about how nice the outside landscaping at the church looks. This shows how much we care about our church.

"We are quite fortunate to have such a caring church family. I have received many compliments this year about how nice the outside landscaping at the church looks. This shows how much we care about our church."

Thanks to a bunch of hardworking volunteers who took the time to this. Thanks to everyone who helped out. We are fortunate to have many people

who when they see something that needs done, they go ahead and complete the task.

The manse, of course is empty at the moment, but is checked daily by our caretaker Eldon Roppel, who also checks the church daily. We thank him for doing this and letting us know if anything is amiss. The manse was left in very good shape, with only a little minor painting touch ups that need to be done. New closet doors were installed on all the upstairs closets in January, replacing the older metal ones.

Not having any fundraisers, such as Church Suppers, Yard Sale, Cookie Walk etc., does show in our bottom line for meeting expenses. We are blessed to have money from donations, and these events in the past to help meet our expenses that we have no direct control over. To make things easier for people who would like to keep up with their donations we had added e-transfer as a way to donate. E-transfers can be sent to cldobson@bmts.com, with a follow-up email as to which area you would like your money to go. The PAR system, which allows your donation to come directly from your bank account every month. This is a real benefit at times like this when we are unable to meet in person at church.

As we head into the New Year, we will continue to have faith in God that he will lead us in the right direction, to look after our church and community. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact myself, or any board member.

As we all work together to remain healthy & safe, I pray that everyone has a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.



Greetings from your Worship and Mission Committee

Gerda Roppel

The members of our Worship and Mission committee are the minister, Gerda Roppel, George Potter, Lillian Leggett, Alex Duthie, Rosemary Grover, and Dylan Young. We have recruited help when we needed. Some helpers have been Islay, Stan and Steve Eby, Eileen Simpson, Rick Alexander, Chuck Exel, Blair Kempers, and Eleanor Thompson.

Our purpose is to oversee Sunday Service led by laity during an emergency (storms), the minister's absence or cancellation of scheduled pulpit supply. We also plan, organize and participate in the annual Anniversary Service, the Service of Memories, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service and the World Day of Communion. We meet as a committee. Pray for guidance and plan who will do

what during the service. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve God in this way.

We were unable to do much this year due to Covid-19, but are ready to go, hopefully soon.

God continues to bless our church even during our absence from the sanctuary. As we prepared to reopen the church, Rosemary, Rick and Gerda met to set up the ground rules for reopening. Because our congregation is small, we are able to enter and exit the church single file, socially distanced and wearing a mask. There is hand sanitizer available on entry and at several locations in the church. Your name will be recorded for contact tracing as you enter the church. Please use the parking lot entrance only. You must take your coat with you to your pew. You are allowed to sit in family groups. Every third bench is to be used. Singles must be 6 feet apart. There are no hymn books or bulletins. We are not allowed to sing but we can follow along on the overhead screen. We can do responsive readings. Offerings are to be placed on the collection plates that are on the railings upon entering the sanctuary.

When the service is over, please exit from the front to one side only, practicing social distancing and go directly to your vehicle; no stopping in the hall to chat. If the weather allows you can talk in the parking lot. The same rules apply for meetings held in the church basement.

It was so wonderful to be able to

praise God again in the sanctuary and to have the fellowship of being together as a congregation. Thanks be to God!

Although we have had to take another break from church I pray it won't be for long and I thank God that we can worship at home on the TV or YouTube.

Keep praying for your church family and keep safe.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all during this blessed season and always.

In His Service.



The Men's Group

George Potter

The Men's Group completed the final Soup and a Bun for 2020 rather abruptly just before our March presentation. The stop came so abruptly that we already had groceries on hand that had to be redeployed. It is a pity we had to shut down as we were off to some very impressive attendance

numbers – my notes say 52 and 53 for January and February.



With this much of a layover we are really fortunate to have Chuck who actually knows what he's doing. Most of the rest of us men will probably require some serious retraining. Things like the proper way to dice an onion and the exact thickness for sliced carrots, these things that were once common knowledge may have to be revisited.

While some things change others remain the same. The members of the Men's Group have fun preparing the meal under the expert direction of Chuck. Chuck picks out the menu and the rest of the guys do the best we can to follow instructions and cover the details of preparation. We usually find plenty of time to have a coffee and chat while the soup is cooking. We are very fortunate in having a number of men who come out regularly to prepare and serve these lunches. Now when it comes to cleanup – there appears to be diminished enthusiasm, but there are several ladies who pitch in and help fill this void. The men say (or should say) thanks for your valuable assistance.

While we were in action (The Men's Group) continued to

discuss the problems of the world and resolve the ones we could. While we were out of action the committee responsible for solving problems of political chaos was unable to meet. As a result you may have noticed unusual political upheaval going unresolved for a considerable time. The Men's Group apologize for your inconvenience concerning this matter.

When this Covid-19 pandemic is finally under control, The Men's Group intend to be back in business.

Thanks to everyone in the church and community who support our Soup and a Bun.

The Thompson Family of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Glamis

Gord Thompson



St. Paul's Presbyterian, Glamis, like all country churches, was for 161 years a place where families from the surrounding area gathered to worship and profess their faith, celebrate marriages, baptize new arrivals and mourn the passing of loved ones. Perhaps as important, especially in the times of the early settlers, the church family was there for its

members as a source of fellowship and friendship in good times and needed support when the going got tough.

In a certain sense, country churches like St. Paul's Glamis and Knox Tiverton usually were and are a family unto themselves. Even as the member families depend on their church for spiritual and community support, likewise, the community church itself is nurtured by its member families. The Thompson family and its forbearers of the Glamis area has been one of these families for 162 years.

The story of St. Paul's Glamis began in the 1850s when several pioneer families, mostly of hardy Scottish origin, required a church for the new Glamis community. To give you an idea, the original roll included MacKenzies, McDonalds, McLeods, Camerons, McKays, McCaldens, Beatons and MacSweens and many more, mostly Scottish names. When originally founded the Glamis church was actually known as the Greenock Congregation of the South-Bruce (which was Tiverton) and Greenock joint congregational charge. The name St. Paul's came later. So St. Paul's Glamis and Knox Tiverton have indeed come full circle.

John MacSween (or McSwain according to the early session records) was a charter member of St. Paul's and was ordained as an elder in 1873. An immigrant from the Isle of Lewis in Scotland, he settled on lots 33 and 34 on the 2nd of Bruce - as the crow flies, one mile and a quarter directly north of the Glamis church grounds. This is where the

Thompsons come in. John MacSween was the great-great-grandfather of Ron Thompson and forbearer of the Thompsons and several of the Alexanders now members of Knox Tiverton.

This came about as 21-year-old James Thompson of Cargill, took up a farm at the northwest corner of the Bruce-Greenock Boundary (now Bruce Rd. 1) and the 2nd of Bruce. This was in 1880. He was the son of James Thompson, an Irish immigrant and his wife Jane Dunbar, daughter of a Scot who settled between Walkerton and Mildmay. In 1887 young James married Christina MacSween from three farms over.

Christina was the granddaughter of John MacSween, the charter member and later elder of St. Paul's. As such, Christina and James were very much involved in St. Paul's Glamis church life. They were an active part of the congregation that constructed the new, brick church building in 1896. James and Christina had eight children - six sons and two daughters. Three of the sons, Thomas, Murdock and Kenneth were active members of St. Paul's throughout their entire lifetimes.

Thomas (Wilfred), often referred to as T.W., was a stalwart of the church, serving as elder, clerk of session and Sunday School Superintendent for decades beginning as an ordained elder in 1925 (aged only 33 at the time). He farmed the home farm while his parents James and Christena built a new home and relocated to one of the MacSween family farms up the road on the 2nd. T.W. and his wife Sadie (Matheson) had one son, James Matheson.

James Matheson (J.M.) Thompson was a distinguished scholar and became an ordained minister, accepting a call as assistant minister in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Ottawa in the early 1950s, eventually becoming a professor at Carleton University.

In 1923 Murdock Thompson married Gladys Stewart who was from a farm near Armow. They settled and raised their large family on the farm immediately west of the St. Paul's Church grounds. They had eight children, four sons and four daughters. During their long and industrious lives, Murdock and Gladys were active in St. Paul's - Murdock participating as a member of the Board of Managers over the years and Gladys in the women's groups and activities. Their children were raised as church members.

Two of Murdock and Gladys' sons remained on family farms in the Glamis area and raised their families in the St. Paul's church family. These were Howard and Ron Thompson.

Howard married Shirley Morris of the 10th of Kincardine in 1955. They raised their family in the large buff brick home across the street from St. Paul's (the former St. Paul's Church Manse), while they farmed several 100 acres around the village. Howard also worked as a long distance trucker. Shirley was organist in the Church for many years and Howard served on the Board of Trustees of St. Paul's. Their daughter Cheryl and Bob McCulloch raised their children within the St. Paul's Church

family and Bob was a dedicated member of session and a Sunday School teacher for many years. A gifted carpenter, Bob made and oversaw many improvements to the church building which remain to this day. Cheryl looked after the crafts and music for the Sunday School.

Ron married Eleanor Surridge of Tiverton in 1954 and they settled on one of the family farms, across the road from Murdock and Gladys – so just up the hill from the St. Paul's Church grounds. Together Ron and Eleanor farmed several hundred acres in Bruce, Kincardine and Greenock townships. Eleanor also taught school in the early years of their married life. They raised three sons and a daughter in Glamis and within the St. Paul's Church family.

Ron and Eleanor were and Eleanor remains very active in the life of the Church. Ron served on the board of managers, as a Sunday school teacher and as an ordained elder and clerk of session for decades. Eleanor was ordained an elder in St. Paul's and continues on session at Knox Tiverton, acting as the Presbytery representative. In St. Paul's Glamis, Eleanor was also active in the women's groups and activities, taught Sunday school and sang in the choir. Both Ron and Eleanor joined with others in the congregation as well to produce some plays for fun and as fundraisers for Church projects. Eleanor has come full circle in her church life, having been part of the Knox Tiverton Church family from childhood until she joined Ron in Glamis.



Their four children – Gordon (and Judy), Tom, Nancy (and Stewart Alexander) and Allan remain on the roll at Knox. Gordon and Judy's and Nancy and Stuart's children are also on the roll at Knox. Gordon and Judy, Tom and his late wife Mary Anne and Nancy and Stuart all were active in the work of the Glamis Congregation - on the Board of Managers and Trustees; the women's groups and activities and in the Sunday school. Nancy was the last Superintendent of Sunday School at St. Paul's. Gordon was an interim member of session during planning towards the recent shared ministry which led to amalgamation with Knox Tiverton. Allan, who resides in Ottawa and is a Professor at Carleton University, often led special services at St. Paul's by way of marking special occasions, usually including audio-visual presentations.

Kenneth Thompson (generally known as Kenny), the youngest of James and Christina's eight children, married Flora Munro (known as Flo), also of the 2nd of Bruce, in 1928. They took over the family farm on the 2nd from Christina and raised two sons there, George and John Kenneth (known as J.K.). George went west to seek his fortune and J.K. remained on the farm and married Lorraine Keyes of Glamis.

Kenny and Flo were also very active members of St. Paul's throughout their lifetimes – Kenny serving on the board of managers and trustees and Flo in the women's groups and activities. Kenny was a good story teller and often told of how ministers of St. Paul's during the Great War years and the 1920s would stop at his parents' "modern" home on the 2nd to take a hot bath. A real luxury for that time, when the home was built in 1911-1912, a built-in hot water heating system was installed.

J.K and Lorraine Thompson had three sons. They moved to Paisley in the early 1960s and sadly, due to poor health, neither lived to old age. Their oldest son Dean and his wife Betty (Schmidt) of Walkerton, returned to St. Paul's in recent years, with Dean serving on the Board of Managers and Trustees and both Dean and Betty helping out with all of the special Church events.

James and Christina's son James (Jim) saw intense action in Europe near the end of the Great War along with his twin brother John. After the war Jim made his way to Toronto and raised his family there. One of his sons, Donald (Don or Donnie), grew up and made his living in Toronto but spent many of his summers in retirement in Paisley. During those years he was proud to attend and support the church of his father and forbearers, St. Paul's, Glamis and until his passing in 2014 he was a familiar sight at services and functions there.

So that is the history of the Thompson family within the St.

Paul's Glamis and now Knox Tiverton Church Families. Beginning with their forbearer, John MacSween in the 1850s through to the young Alexanders and Thompsons of the 2020s, you have eight generations of a family that has been an integral part of the St. Paul's and continuing now in the Knox Tiverton Church families.

You may have noticed the second baptismal font now located at the front of the Sanctuary in Knox Tiverton. It was placed and dedicated in St. Paul's in the 1950s in memory of James and Christina Thompson by their surviving seven children. A picture of that dedication ceremony - a rare photo of a gathering of those siblings, most by then beginning to enter old age - hangs proudly today in many of the family homes.

The MacSween-Thompson Family History compiled by Alma (Mac) Thompson in 1978 and Colleen Thompson in 2016; Bruce Township Tales and Trails, published by the Bruce Township Historical Society in 1984; and The Centennial of Presbyterianism St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Glamis, Ont., published by the Session of St. Paul's on its 100th Anniversary in 1958; and some family lore, all are acknowledged as sources for this story.



Sunday School Greetings

Nancy Alexander

I would like to take this time to wish everyone in the Congregation a very Merry Christmas.



This year has been more than challenging, and also quite confusing to our younger members of our church family. Our Sunday school members have had to go through so many extended months without seeing family, friends and our Church family.

This April myself and our faithful volunteers of the Sunday School, Judy Thompson, Lorna Hutton & Patti Hutton were scheduled to attend Leading with Care, but this has been postponed to a future date.

As Sunday School Superintendent, I have missed the interaction with the young children. Several seasons have come and gone, Easter and our annual Sunday School Picnic. Also the excitement of possibly going to Camp Kintail on day visits, as part of our new Vacation Bible School.

Our Joint Sunday School during the annual Tiverton Fall Fair and

of course Thanksgiving and enjoying the fall supper.

Now with a second wave of Covid-19 our Christmas Season may also not be celebrated in the Sanctuary.

We pray all will remember the importance of giving to those less fortunate during this season.

As Covid-19 has reinforced, our family and faith family are very important during this unusual time. I wish everyone all the best in the upcoming season of Lent and the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Stay safe and enjoy your families. Season's Greetings.

Search Committee Greetings

Rosemary Grover

Members of the search committee are Rosemary Grover, George Potter, Islay Eby, Dean Thompson, Heather Kempers and Rev. Paul Sakasov.

Due to Covid-19 we were not able to get together for a meeting until July 16. Meetings were also held in September and October.

Thank you to all who took the time to fill out the Pastoral Skills and Inventory survey.

The congregational profile that the previous committee in 2016 made was revamped.

Rev. Paul's computer skills were very helpful in getting all the necessary revisions done as requested by the Transitions Committee. The profile was approved by session and then sent to the Presbytery who accepted the profile at their November 10th meeting.

"The profile was approved by session and then sent to the Presbytery who accepted the profile at their November 10th meeting."

The Congregational Profile is now posted on the national church webpage and can be distributed to prospective candidates. Now we wait.



Presbytery Report

Eleanor Thompson

As representative elder of Knox Church Tiverton, I have enjoyed attending the Presbytery meetings of Grey-Bruce-Maitland.

Before Covid-19 they were held in different locations of churches each month. In the good weather they were in the evenings and bad weather in the mornings. This gave you an insight into other churches and enjoyment of their hospitality.

With Covid-19 the form of the meetings had to be changed. So

Zoom meetings were set up and arranged. They have proved very successful and accomplish what has to be done.

John Gilbert, clerk of Presbytery is very competent and faithful in sending out e-mails covering all the correspondence from head office and reports of all activities and dates of meetings.

Rev. Randy Benson is moderator of Presbytery. He is very capable conducting the meetings. They are always opened with a worship service by different individuals and constituted with prayer.

There are always reports given by chairs of each committee which are helpful in keeping up with information of all churches.

Knox is fortunate to have Rev. Paul Sakatov as our Interim-moderator during vacancy. He was commended at the meeting for his work with the search committee for submitting such an excellent profile for distribution.

I thank you for the opportunity of serving you and wish my successor all the best.



Knox Auxiliary

Rosemary Grover

The Knox Auxiliary have been idle since January 14, when they prepared a lunch for those attending the Presbytery meeting.

The Auxiliary paid for the church kitchen renovations which were done in late January. A new floor was laid, painting was done and new blinds were installed. The total cost for this project was \$4958. Thank you to Don MacArthur, Norm Dobson, Don Manary, Barry Blackett, Murray Munro, Doc Roppel and Irv Kennedy for all your work on this project .

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the annual summer salad supper and the fall turkey supper were cancelled. Thank you to those you made donations to offset the lost revenue from these events.



Hi everybody.

Thanks for the Knox News Christmas edition. We send greetings & wishes that that you are all safe.

We have reopened (from March closure) at St. Andrew's Strathroy for a few weeks now. We meet in our summer home (downstairs) as the sanctuary is not suitable and awkward to sanitize.

Our numbers are small due to the average age of our congregation. I am programming projector & Pat is on reader list so 2 in attendance are assured. We had ~16 today (we are limited to 30) due to the lousy weather not the will to attend I'm sure. We may

have to re-suspend operations soon.

Not that many cases (past & present) in Strathroy, but we are lumped together with London/Middlesex healthy services.

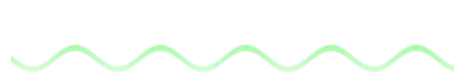
We are keeping well. Got tested once with negative results near the beginning as I was exhibiting symptoms.

Our daughter in Toronto isolated once (no test) & tested positive just 3 weeks ago. Isolated & has tested negative after 14 days. Our other immediate family in Sault Ste. Marie, Calgary & U.K. are all safe so far. One other suspected case on my side of the family.

Thanksgiving was & Christmas gatherings will be cancelled for both sides of our family. But we keep in touch as best we can.

Blessings to you all. Merry Christmas to all

Pat & John Copeland



Greetings Knox Church Family,

Merv and I trust all of you are well and "staying safe." We are blessed that with our blended families, only one was diagnosed with the virus last spring and is fully recovered. All of our families are doing well.

It certainly is a different year and time, and even though all of us

are separated from having special events with family and friends we can be thankful technology keeps us in touch.

We have heard that Knox has reopened for worship and hopefully that is working out well for you. We have not returned to St. Giles yet but we watch Worship Services on television or on the computer. Having minister friends gives us many options to choose from (6) and usually a different one every Sunday until we go back to the first person. It is unusual to sit in our living room with our coffee relaxing but Worship is comforting to hear the Good News and reassures us of God's love for us.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your Christmas newsletter. May God surround each one of you with His love, hope, and joy as you celebrate the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ - the best Gift ever.

With Joy
Reverend Jeanette and Merv



Happy Advent & Warm greetings to all our friends and faith family at Knox, Tiverton!

I hope you are all well, staying safe and wearing masks! So much has changed since we last saw each other and yet so much is still the same. Franck, the kids and I are blessed with life continuing personally to stay much the same. Although we dearly miss family and seeing our friends we

continue to work and go to school.

Franceska lives in London for school and attends Huron University/Western virtually.

Jakob lives in Sarnia for school and attends Can-Weld welding school.

Franck works for Watford Home Hardware on the install/small reno team and is as busy as ever and I continue to serve the church in my newly amalgamated pastoral charge just outside of Strathroy.

The pandemic has created challenges to ministry, as I'm sure you have experienced, however I continue to learn and grow in new ways to help my faith community come together for events on Zoom, in socially distanced ways and to worship on Facebook Live each Sunday.

These days of pandemic have created such an ache in many of us and so this Advent I've decided to preach a series "I Believe", it's based on a sermon series that uses the poem said to be etched onto a wall by a Jewish prisoner in a concentration camp during the Holocaust of WWII.

I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining.
I believe in love, even though I don't feel it.
I believe in God, even when God is silent.

This poem is a sign of Hope & Light written during a time filled with so much darkness and

suffering. I find it easy to fill my house with the brightness of Christmas, it certainly can help lift one's spirit but I think it's more important for us to do things to fill our hearts and the hearts of others with the brightness of God's Hope, Love and Light!

One way I am seeking to do this is to be one of God's angels here on earth! It doesn't take much! *Remember how much light a small nightlight lights up a bathroom or hallway?* It doesn't take much, go out and fill the world with Light! Reach out to one another in Hope and Love. Can you imagine if we *all* did this? Imagine what a bathroom would look like if it had 100 night lights in it? ***I believe, how about you?***

Friends, we wish you and yours, a safe & blessed *Merry Christmas!* & *Happy New Year!*

In love and friendship,

Rev. Shelly, Franck, Franceska and Jakob Kocis



Garden Report

Cora Lee Dobson

Even though the Church would be closed for the summer, we felt it was important to keep our established gardens tended to.

June and Cora Lee pointed out areas needing attention and we "dug in". June trucked in loads of mulch - other areas were trimmed, plants moved and removed. Curb Appeal was often mentioned in our decision making.



We met every two weeks adhering to social distancing and enjoying wonderful camaraderie. Yes, we did work up a sweat! Seasonal plants and potted plants brightened up the front of the church and were replaced for the fall months.

We tried to stay out of the way of Don MacArthur, Norm and Doc. They were busy installing french drains, replacing cement sections in the sidewalk and painting the entrance doors from the parking lot.

Early November Cora Lee gave all the plants a scoop of her Knox Church compost and numerous bags/truckloads of leaves were delivered to landfill.

Thank you for all the encouraging compliments and dropping by to see the gardens. We were pleased to hear that during the summer the Knox Auxiliary group held a

meeting outside in the area of the Manse Gardens.

Special thanks go out to Linda and Barry for all the watering they did during our very hot summer.

Eileen Simpson continues with precision to keep our Church sign updated and informed - a shining light for our community.

May we continue to work together to the Glory of God.

Your Gardening Gals' June, Cora Lee, Carol, Lorrie & Sandra



Alberta Smith

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men /Gang aft a-gley ". These words were written hundreds of years ago by Robert Burns, a renowned Scottish poet. They are just as relevant today in the year 2020, as they were long ago. The W.M.S. began the year with a New Year's service. We had a special meeting to plan our meetings and activities for the year. We met again in February and March and by mid-March our world had changed. Health units and others were asking us to employ certain protocols to help contain the spread of Covid-19. During that time the W.M.S. sent a monetary donation to the Kincardine Food bank as well as the paper products that were collected the first few Sundays in March to the Women's House.

The W.M.S. are hoping to have a Christmas meeting on Wednesday, December 9, if circumstances permit. On that same day at 1 PM the National W.M.S. President has arranged a zoom Christmas program, encouraging all members to watch.

Looking ahead we will celebrate the birth of the Baby Jesus, not with big family gatherings, but with hope and prayers for a better future.

A Note from Your Editor...

Cheryl Cottrill

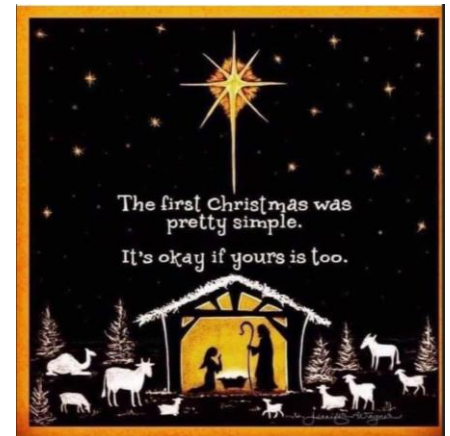
This was certainly a different newsletter to put together for Christmas 2020. No cookie walk to advertise, no calendar filled with Advent and Christmas dates where we could all come together and celebrate the birth of Jesus together.

Instead, thanks to the efforts of George Potter, we have a newsletter full of greetings from various committees and groups within the Church, who have continued, throughout Covid-19, to do great work.

It was so nice to hear from those who have moved away. A big thank you to George for pulling all this wonderful content together.

As we plan to celebrate Christmas this year in a different way, I hope the extra time provides an opportunity to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, without the hustle and bustle that usually

accompanies a 'normal' Christmas.



As this lovely little picture suggests the first Christmas was pretty simple and it is okay if yours is too. It will be difficult not to spend time with our extended family and I have to admit I will truly miss the get-togethers with friends and family leading up to Christmas Day, but we all have to do our part to keep our community safe.

This Christmas I wish for you much love in your heart for the life that Christ has provided, with gratitude for the extra space the pandemic has created to reflect and much joy to be shared as we anticipate being able to celebrate with family and friends in 2021. Stay healthy everyone!

