

Knox News & Notes



October/November 2021

Closer to God

During my recent trip to South Africa, I visited the Valley of Desolation close to Graaff Reinet - I took a picture at this unique nature reserve – (Camdeboo National Park).



The experience left me without words.

In silence and awe, I just listened to the slight breeze and the birds calling in the cliffs.

When I am out in nature I many a time feel closer to God and the closer I feel the quieter I sometimes get.

Thomas Aquinas (1225 -1274) is considered one of the important thinkers and theologians of his time. He was legendary for his hard work and for his reflections. His humility and his devotion to God were also widely acknowledged. Towards the end of his short but influential life, it is said that Aquinas experienced God so intensely that he was lost for words and fell silent.

Some believe he was suffering from burnout, but others believe Aquinas fell silent not because he had nothing further to say but because he glanced into the “indescribable”.

God experiences many a time leave us quieter rather than louder.

The realization of the Lord's greatness leaves us dumbfounded – almost like having our tongues glued to our mouths. Ask Job.

In Job 42: 3-6 he wrote: *I babbled on about things far beyond me, made small talk about wonders way over my head. You told me, 'Listen, and let me do the talking. Let me ask the questions. You give the answers.'* I admit I once lived by rumors of you; now I have it all firsthand - from my own eyes and ears! I'm sorry - forgive me. I'll never do that again, I promise! I'll never again live on crusts of hearsay, crumbs of rumor." (The Message)

Job knew what others said about God but meeting God in a unique way made Job's words run dry.

In a world full of all kinds of "noise" we need to learn from Job and from Thomas Aquinas.

Become more and more aware of God's greatness. Allow wonder to overwhelm your soul. Create new space for holy reverence and awe of the Lord. Do not let the world set your agenda because then worry and pettiness might become the main items in your life. Seek greater inner peace and quiet. God is always with us, and this brings peace the world cannot give.

Rev Johan

YouTube Help



Greetings to everyone at Knox Guelph, and beyond! I hope you are well, and staying healthy.

I am writing to appeal to *ANYONE* who thinks they would like to help with our weekly YouTube livestreams. You don't need any background with cameras, microphones or computers. If you can use a mouse, type an address into a web browser, and push a few buttons... you're qualified! I am able to provide detailed training to anyone who is interested. We can do the training at your own pace, and you wouldn't be expected to operate anything until you are 100% ready.

However, we urgently need support for this very important ministry. We average over 150 YouTube viewers per week, who may only have this livestream option to connect with our church. I have been operating this system by myself for an entire year now. If I need to take a week off for any reason, we have no one trained as a backup, leaving over 150 viewers without a *great* Knox Guelph church service to watch! Please, prayerfully consider getting trained for this important role in our church ministry. It is a very fulfilling experience to view the professional looking results of our videos, and knowing that you had a hand in its creation.

Contact Brian Redpath at: livestreaming@knoxguelph.ca

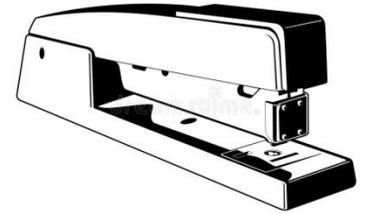
*One child, one teacher,
one book and one pen
can change the world.*

malala yousafzai

"Where Did I Put That Stapler?"

Why I wonder, do things go missing just when one is in a great hurry? This morning, I have been rifling through the drawers of my desk, moving the books, shuffling through the papers on the top of my desk, and all the time, grumbling to myself, "Where did it go! I had it in my hand just a minute ago?" Finally, in frustration, I drop into the chair and toss the datebook in my hand onto my desk.

"Ka-chunk." From under the small pile of loose papers on the side of my desk comes the reproaching sound of my stapler. Eureka! The lost is found! My spirits - and my mood - are definitely lifting as I retrieve my stapler and proceed to fasten together the pages of my document. Once, twice, three times with increasing intensity, I tap the stapler - but the pages are still loose. The stapler is empty. "Now, where are the staples?" "What time is it?" "Ouch!" "There, it's full again." "Great, it worked!" I'm finally ready to go. I'll still make it on time. "Thank God for his mercies - and patience!"



Staplers, like many things in our lives, can sit unused for minutes or days or even months and are rarely thought of, or missed, until we need them and can't find them - or find them and they're empty. I must admit that in some ways, my faith has some things in common with my stapler. And maybe yours does too. When my life seems to be going along rather well, I assume that since my faith has kept the pieces of my life held together in the past, it will continue to do so regardless of how much "life" gets piled on top of it or pulls at its edges.

But, when things seem to be getting a little out of hand or threaten to become undone, I find myself scrambling and rummaging to uncover my faith, to rediscover my convictions about the way my faith should be lived-out, to get in closer touch with the One in whom my faith and life are anchored. It's at such times I feel a need to find assurance - no, re-assurance, that God is greater than any unsettling, disturbing, demanding or threatening incident or concerns in my life. And that God is always attentive to my well-being, even amid confusion, discord, and various forms of overload or trials - be they physical, emotional, mental or otherwise.

However, like my stapler, my faith needs frequent "refills" or at least 'topping up". But unlike my stapler, refilling my faith is not as simple as taking sharp-pointed staples from a box and dropping them quickly - if not painlessly - into the stapler. No, refilling one's faith takes more effort and time. And, it needs the helping presence and touch of others, our church family, and especially of God's indwelling Spirit.

The purpose of the stapler and staples is to fasten and hold together sheets of paper. Similarly, one of the purposes of my faith - your faith - is not only to hold our individual lives "together" but also to hold and sustain our life together as a family of God's people here in Knox.

A staple is a relatively tiny, insignificant bit of wire, yet the stapler would be of no use without it. And so it is with many things in our lives. Some of the most minor, seemingly ordinary things can serve to refill our faith and keep it ready for use. For instance, the few moments spent in prayer or reading a favourite passage of scripture; the phone conversation with a friend or neighbour; the card, email or text message you send to let someone know you are thinking of them or that something they have done has blessed your life; or the casserole you prepared for a family grieving the death of a loved one; or inviting the new-comer to sit with you during worship or at your table in the fellowship hall. There is also the proven refill experiences of supporting the ministries that reach beyond the congregation into the community and beyond.

In the course of teaching his disciples about living as his witnesses in the world, Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." In other words, one of the wonderful things about intentionally refilling our faith in ways such as mentioned earlier is that the faith of both the giver and the receiver is inevitably nurtured, strengthened, and blessed.

Many of us will remember when women did spring cleaning to freshen up their homes and even the family wardrobes. Today, these tasks are done throughout the year because of lifestyle changes and new "labour-saving" devices. And so it is with our faith and the living out of our faith. We can continuously 'refill' our faith throughout the year, knowing that we cannot do this alone and trusting that all the while, God is faithfully at work nurturing our faith and enabling our service in the name of Jesus Christ.

During the pandemic (as restrictions allow) and beyond, may God continue upholding us as our faith is "refilled" and we seek to faithfully care for one another, for our neighbours near and far, and to take time to be together in worship, whether in person or live-streaming, and in fellowship and service for and with Jesus Christ.

Submitted by:
Dr. Shirley Gale
Pastoral Assistant



CIBC Run  for the Cure
CANADIAN BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION

The Big Day is almost here! Nine members of Knox have signed up to walk or run 1 or 5 kilometres on or before Sunday, October 3rd, 2021 to help raise money for breast cancer research. Many thanks to John, Geraldine, Forrest, Larahanne, Ann, Wendy, Nancy, Tony and Judy. Thank you also to those who have supported our walkers, and therefore the cause, financially. It's not too late to go online and register to participate or donate (Guelph CIBC Run for the Cure). The event is virtual, meaning you can watch the Opening Ceremony online and then walk or run at your convenience in your neighbourhood or favourite trail. Look for photos of our participants in the next issue.

*Life is like riding a bicycle.
To keep your balance you must keep moving.*

Albert Einstein



Musical Notes

by Chris Fischer, Pastoral Musician (*pronouns: they/them/their*)

“Return to Music Ministry”

Hello again, Knox family! I was just reading the last article I wrote for Knox News, back in the winter of 2021, before my medical leave. I was excited to begin with the words, “I’m back!” Well, I’m just as excited now, but I sincerely hope that my stay will have more of a sense of permanence this time, as I am now nearing the six-month mark following my life-changing stem cell transplant. I am returning, gradually and pandemic permitting, to my duties as your Pastoral Musician, and wanted to update you on our process of reopening our music ministry at Knox, as we begin once more to rehearse in small groups in different spaces within our church building.

Our handbell ringers have split into two distinct quartets, for the moment, with one group rehearsing and ringing in worship on an ad hoc basis, and a second group meeting at our traditional time, each Thursday from 6:15 to about 7:00 PM in the MacGillivray Room. This second quartet hopes to ring in church about once a month, starting in October; rehearsals are distanced (with one six-foot table per ringer), with masks and no shared bells, and – at least for as long as practically possible – with the windows open and the fan always on. It is really nice to be ringing again, even in these strange conditions!

Our Sanctuary Choir had the rug pulled out from under us in the middle of March, 2020, and since then we had periodically met outdoors (Riverside Park) to sing hymns, a cappella, and we attempted a few rehearsals over Zoom, recording some virtual choral offerings for worship (prior to the beginning of live streaming). I am very much looking forward to restarting in-person choir rehearsals (no Sunday appearances yet, under current public health rules), starting on the first Thursday evening in October. I am in the process of drafting a double vaccination policy for all choir members. For now, at least, we will meet, **masked**, at 7:30 PM in Metcalf Hall, and after 30 minutes and a short break, move into the Sanctuary (**distanced**, in the first row of pews) to sing for another 30 minutes at the most. In time, I hope to have the entire choir singing on Sundays again – and to have all of you filling our Sanctuary with your voices, too! – but for the moment, we are restricted to a maximum of four singers. Accordingly, we will have a rotation of various configurations of singers to sing hymns and occasional preludes for our Sunday services.

I know this isn’t perfect, but this arrangement will at least get some of us singing together again, and soon (I hope!) we will be able to return to something closer to “normal.” I believe we will get there. We will just have to be patient for a while longer... “We shall rise up on wings as eagles; we shall run and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31) Amen!



The Knox Book Club has resumed meeting in the Community Room on the last Monday of each month as of September 27, 2021. Each person must be vaccinated, masked and will sit socially distanced. Books are available to be signed out in the church library and must be returned on or before our meeting date so that they can be returned to the library for distribution to the next club in line. All are welcome to join us on meeting night to rate and discuss the current book. **Next meeting date: Monday, October 25, 2021 – 7:15 p.m.** If you have any suggestions for the book club to read please send an email to worship@knoxguelph.ca.

2021 Thanksgiving Offering

Hard to believe that Thanksgiving is around the corner.

The Knox Family every year encourage one another to take time to reflect on what we are thankful for and as a tangible expression of our thanks to then offer one day's pay or pension as our Thanksgiving Offering to God over and above our regular offering.

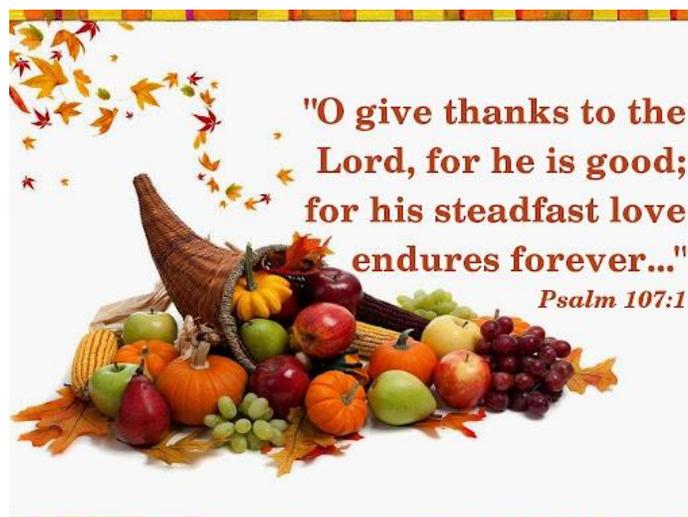
What are you thankful for as you prepare for Thanksgiving?

Take a few minutes and jot down your thoughts and present them along with your "Give a Day of Pay" offering on Thanksgiving Sunday October 10.

Special offering envelopes will be available in the sanctuary and in your offering boxes. You can also use our E-Transfer option.

Should it not be possible to give a full day's pay or pension as your Thanksgiving Offering, please give whatever you are able. We would like everyone to participate as they are able in this offering of Thanksgiving to God.

Happy Thanksgiving!



Congregational Life Committee

Brings You

Their 177th Knox Anniversary Cupcake Take-Away



In celebration of our Knox anniversary for 2021 we will once again feature our Knox Anniversary Cupcake Take-Away on **Sunday, November 7.**

Complimentary individual containers of chocolate and vanilla cupcakes will be available after worship service to take home.

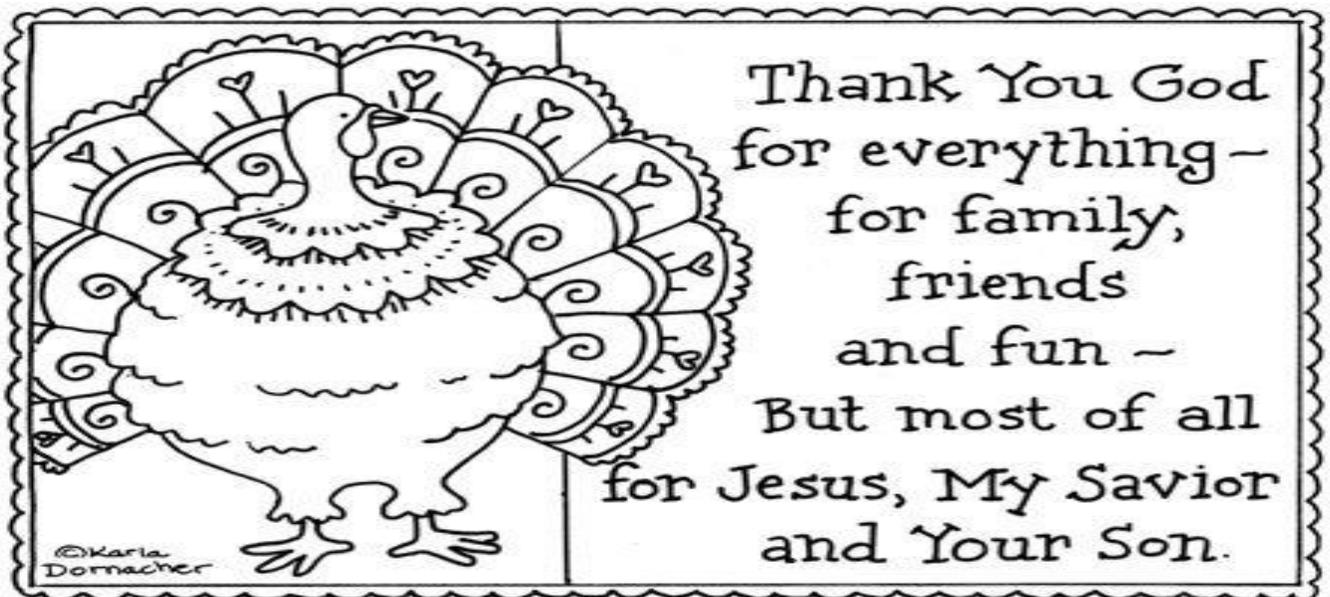
In Memoriam



Church Register of Clergy Records received:

Members Deaths:

<i>Abe Westerveld</i>	<i>Died September 16, 2021</i>	<i>Age 83 Years</i>
<i>George Chrichton</i>	<i>Died September 23, 2021</i>	<i>Age 80 Years</i>
<i>Beryl Nash</i>	<i>Died October 3, 2021</i>	<i>Age 93 Years</i>



LOGOS



The LOGOS Board has been struggling to make a decision about whether or not to go ahead and re-start LOGOS after Thanksgiving this Fall. We set September 30th as the date by which a decision had to be made. Unfortunately, we have decided that it is not safe to go ahead at this time.

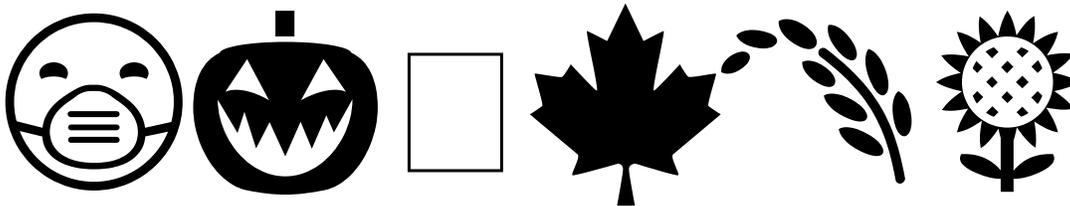
Here is some of the information we used to make our final decision:

1. As of today, (September 30th) there are 10 confirmed COVID 19 cases in schools in Guelph. 6 classrooms are closed.
2. Provincial Science Advisors made a new report this past Tuesday. In it, they praised Ontario for its high vaccination rate, but described the situation as, “fragile.” The high vaccination rate has flattened the fourth wave for vaccinated adults, but, “infections are on the rise among young children who aren’t currently eligible for vaccination.” The group cautioned that it is too early to see the impact of in-person schooling and work resuming and of people spending more time indoors during cold weather.
3. Earlier this week, Pfizer announced that it has tested its vaccine on children aged 5-11 years and it has proven to be safe and effective. Pfizer has applied for Government approval and hopes that we may see vaccines for young children by the end of the year.
4. Karen and I have attended two workshops about re-starting children’s ministries. A couple of things really stood out. One was the need for improved ventilation in the teaching rooms. The second was the willingness of adult volunteers to be exposed to the virus. We were told to ask ourselves if we are willing to be the church who starts too early, has a case or two and then the unthinkable happens.

Our Spring Session is currently scheduled to begin March 2nd. We will see if children can be vaccinated by that date. We will also keep hoping and praying that this pandemic will soon end and we can safely resume our activities. As well, we will keep following the evidence, news and most current government guidelines. That is the very best we can do to keep everyone safe.

Even though LOGOS will not be starting as planned this Fall, we haven’t forgotten about our families and volunteers. We have been thinking about you and about implementing some new ministry ideas. Stay tuned to see what comes up!

We love you and miss you. Wishing you a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving and Fall season and hoping we can be together soon!



Nancy Stepien.