

# *Knox E-Knews*

*December 1, 2011*  
[www.knoxhalifax.ca](http://www.knoxhalifax.ca)



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## *Minister's message*

Many of you are aware that a special committee of Presbytery has been struck to work with us to assist us in determining what the future of our congregation will look like. It will be no surprise to any of you the financial situation we face, and yet, God continues to work with us and through us in ways that startle us.

At the congregational meeting with the special committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, a number of ideas were floated and I want you to know that a couple of them have been immediately acted upon. The first, is a prayer group which will be meeting each Sunday from 10:15 to 10:45 in the parlour. This will be an opportunity for folks to gather in prayer and discern God's will for us as we look to the future and what God has planned for us.

The second, is this e-newsletter which I am undertaking as a way of keeping in touch with all of you. It has been a while since a newsletter was produced and it required a fair amount of effort on 1 or 2 people's parts and so it kind of fell by the wayside. However, in our electronic age, an e-newsletter may be a better way of keeping in touch. It is my intention for this to be a weekly newsletter and of course, our website is updated weekly with sermons, videos and other useful information.

I thank all of you who attended the meeting, contributed your ideas and concerns and generally and genuinely expressed your desire to see this community of faith continue. As I mentioned at the meeting, there are a number of possibilities for us: We could enter into an arrangement with a developer who would build a senior's residence where the hall now stands and pay us a lease for an agreed upon term. This option would leave the sanctuary intact and would allow us to continue to worship in our present location. Another option is to move the congregation to a different part of the

HRM not currently served by a Presbyterian Church. Still another option would be to amalgamate with another congregation. Still another option is to reform the ministry in another way where the necessity of the upkeep of a building would be removed.

These are just a few possibilities that the Session has bandied around; there are of course many others; Rev. Cynthia shared the example of a United Church congregation in Cole Harbour that established a funeral ministry within the church to meet the needs of those who do not have a church affiliation but who still would like a funeral service in a formal place of worship. At this point, I am not sure what the future holds for Knox, but I will, without ceasing, turn to God for wisdom and guidance through prayer and meditation on His Word, as we continue to glorify His name through worship and mission. I ask you to do likewise and together, who knows what God will accomplish through us.

May God richly bless each one of you, His beloved children.

In Christ's service,

Rev. Brian

### *News from the flock:*

This feature will require some help from all of you. As many of you know, the minister is always the last to know. However, if you are aware of some news that is permitted to be shared, please let me know.

✚ We are delighted to celebrate the Sacrament of baptism on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup> during worship. Meghan Fowler and Jon Nixon were married by me in the summer of 2010 at Oak Island Resort and currently live in Australia. They were blessed with the birth of their first child, a daughter whom they named Georgia on July 16<sup>th</sup> of this year. Many of you may remember Meghan; she is the daughter of Herni and Clay Fowler. Meghan and Jon will be home to the Maritimes for Christmas and we are overjoyed to be able to welcome them back to their home congregation on this very special occasion. Please join us in expressing God's blessing upon this beautiful child of God.

- ✚ Clary Croft is no stranger to the folks at Knox and indeed citizens of Nova Scotia. Clary will be performing his show, A Nova Scotia Christmas Celebration with fellow musicians Gordon Stobbe and Margo Carruthers at **St. Alban's Anglican Church, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** The church is located at:345 Pleasant Street, Dartmouth. For tickets please call 463-2493. If you have not seen his show, I would highly recommend it.
  
- ✚ As many of you are aware, I have begun serving at the Out of the Cold Shelter in downtown Halifax and will be doing so each Wednesday evening throughout the winter. The shelter has space each night for 15 guests and most nights they have to turn folks away. The shelter is staffed by volunteers like myself and the food and clothing that is provided to the guests comes by and large from the generosity of individuals and organizations like Knox. We will be collecting items each week which I will deliver on Wednesday evening when I work my shift. If you would like to contribute, a list of needed items is on our website in the News section, on the Out of the Cold's website, <http://outofthecoldhalifax.org/> click on the Volunteers tab, or check the list on the bulletin board in the church lobby. Any and all support for this vital ministry will be greatly appreciated.
  
- ✚ We are excited to be supporting the Angel Tree program this year. Angel Tree is a program that ministers to the families of parents who are incarcerated, the innocent, invisible and often forgotten victims through no fault of their own. Thanks to the generosity of folks in the congregation, we have received in excess of \$200 to purchase the gifts for the children. Thank you to everyone who has supported our efforts to bring a little joy into others lives.
  
- ✚ Hope Cottage has asked Knox if we would be willing to commit to supplying 9 dozen sandwiches on the last Wednesday of every month. The sandwiches are given to the street people who utilize the services of Hope Cottage on a daily basis. Though they get a hot meal once a day, the sandwiches help to tie them over. This is a ministry that operates 365 days a year and will need to commit to at least a year. I have put this request out to the congregation and have received a

couple of responses. I am open to suggestions for providing this service; we could meet Tuesday evenings or Wednesday mornings or afternoons to make the sandwiches. They do not need to be fancy, decorative, and the crusts do not need to be removed. This is simple food for hungry people. Please let me know if you are able to help out in supplying this great need to “the least of these, Christ’s brothers” in our community.

✚ Our Advent Bible Study continues on Thursday Evenings at 7 p.m. in the parlour and of course everyone is welcome to join in the discussion.

## *Dates to Remember*



**Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m.** – We invite you to join us for our congregation breakfast at Jim’s Restaurant, 243 The Bedford Hwy. This is a relaxed time of fellowship, sharing table together and we are always happy to have more folks attend.

**Sunday December 18<sup>th</sup>** – We will be celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion during our service of worship and we welcome all comers, for Christ’s Table is open to all who want to know Him and be fed by Him in order that we may go out and serve Him and His Kingdom.

**Saturday December 24<sup>th</sup>** – We will gather for our Christmas Eve service at 5:30 P.M. for a service of lessons and carols. It has come to our attention that 5:30 may be problematic for many folks because retail outlets and businesses are staying open later these days; so if you would kindly let me know if this time poses a problem for you, I would appreciate it.

**Sunday December 25<sup>th</sup>** – We will be gathering for worship at 11:00 a.m. on Christmas Day. We hope to see you as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour who is Christ the LORD.

## *Musings and other Stuff*

### Just a Tap on the Shoulder

A passenger in a taxi leaned over to ask the driver a question and tapped him on the shoulder.

The driver screamed, lost control of the cab, nearly hit a bus, drove up over the curb, and stopped just inches from a large plate glass window.

For a few moments everything was silent in the cab, and then the still shaking driver said, 'I'm sorry, but you scared the daylights out of me.'

The frightened passenger apologized to the driver and said he didn't realize a mere tap on the shoulder could frighten him so much.

The driver replied, "No, no, I'm sorry, it's entirely my fault. Today is my first day driving a cab.....I've been driving a hearse for the last 25 years."

### Santa's Wish

One Christmas Eve, a young boy with light in his eyes,  
Looked deep into Santa's, to Santa's surprise,  
And said as he sat on Santa's broad knee,  
"I want your secret. Tell it to me."  
He leaned up and whispered in Santa's good ear,  
"How do you do it, year after year?"

"I want to know how, as you travel about,  
Giving gifts here and there, you never run out.  
How is it, dear Santa, that in your pack of toys  
You have plenty for all of the world's girls and boys?  
From rooftop to rooftop, to homes large and small,  
From nation to nation, reaching them all?"  
And Santa smiled kindly and said to the boy,  
"Don't ask me hard questions, don't you want a toy?"  
But the child shook his head, and Santa could see  
That he needed the answer. "Now listen to me,"  
He told that small boy with the light in his eyes,

“My secret will make you sadder and wise.”

“The truth is that my sack is magic. Inside  
It holds millions of toys for my Christmas Eve ride.  
But, although I do visit each girl and boy,  
I don’t always leave them a gaily-wrapped toy.  
Some homes are hungry, some homes are sad,  
Some homes are desperate, and some homes are bad.  
Some homes are broken and the children there grieve.  
Those homes I visit, but what should I leave?”

“My sleigh is filled with the happiest stuff,  
But for homes where despair lives, toys aren’t enough.  
So I tiptoe in, kiss each girl and boy,  
And I pray with them that they’ll be given the joy  
Of the spirit of Christmas, the spirit that lives  
In the heart of the dear child who gets not, but gives.”

“If only God hears me and answers my prayer,  
When I visit next year, what I will find there  
Are homes filled with peace, and with giving and love,  
And boys and girls gifted with light from above.  
It’s a very hard task, my smart little brother,  
To give toys to some, and to give prayers to others.  
But the prayers are the best gifts, the best gifts indeed;  
For God has a way for meeting each need.”

“That’s part of the answer. The rest, my dear youth,  
Is that my sack is magic, and that is the truth.  
In my sack I carry, on Christmas every day,  
More love than a Santa could ever give away.  
The sack never empties of love, or the joys  
‘Cause inside it are prayers, and hope, not just toys.  
The more that I give, the fuller it seems,  
Because giving is my way of fulfilling dreams.”

“And do you know something? You’ve got a sack, too.  
It’s as magic as mine, and it’s inside of you.  
It never gets empty; it’s full from the start.  
It’s the centre of light, and love. It’s your heart.  
And if on this Christmas you want to help me,  
Don’t be so concerned with the gifts ‘neath the tree.  
Open that sack called your heart, and share  
Your joy, your friendship, your wealth, your care.”

The light in the small boy’s eyes was glowing.  
“Thanks for your secret. I’ve got to be going.”

“Wait, little boy,” said Santa, “don’t go.  
Will you share? Will you help? Will you use what you know?”  
And just for a moment the boy stood still,  
Touched his heart with his small hand and whispered,  
“I will.”

[www.ezrock.com](http://www.ezrock.com) as told by Mike Cooper



**A Sunday school teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way  
to church service,  
“And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?”  
One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”**

**A little boy was overheard praying:  
“Lord, if you can’t make me a better boy, don’t worry about it.  
I’m having a real good time like I am.”**

**3-year-old Reese:  
“Our Father, Who does art in heaven;  
Harold is His name.  
Amen.”**