

Knox News & Notes



June/ July/August 2016

Listening for the voice of the Lord: 1 Samuel 3

In reading I Samuel 3, and especially if we only read it up to (10) where Samuel answers: “Speak, your servant is listening” we find this chapter almost like a charming children’s lesson - sometimes God works through children; So you see, boys and girls, God can talk to you, too. Will *you* listen for God just like Samuel did?

But if we read the entire chapter we discover that the *message* Samuel heard clearly frightened him so much so that the next morning Eli practically had to threaten Samuel just to get him to share all of God’s message - may God strike you and even kill you if you hide anything from me!(17).

Nothing wrong in sharing this powerful story with children motivating them to be open to God’s voice, which is also a message for adults, but the question could also be asked why did God make a young boy the messenger for such a grim message: I am going to carry out all my threats against Eli and his family, from beginning to end (12).

This question becomes even more troubling when we realize that Eli had already heard this message. At the end of 1 Samuel 2, (vs27vv) we read about someone who is called "a man of God" coming to Eli delivering a harsh word of judgment, and the reason for this message is because for too long Eli had allowed his two sons who was serving in the Tabernacle to perform their ministry way below standard – his boys stole the people's offerings and other times they forced themselves sexually on some of the young women who came to worship.

In a way these boys behaviour embodied everything that was wrong with the nation of Israel during the time of the judges. People were just generally running wild, doing what was right in their own eyes. Long ago God gave them a blueprint for living but that changed as people started sketching their own plans for life, making up the rules as they went along.

This was not what God had in mind when he led the people out of Egypt and settled them in the Promised Land. If things did not turn around, Israel would become as pagan and secular as Egypt.

1 Sam 3 leads us to the discovery that Samuel’s calling represents a new thing God was about to do in order to bring about the turn-around that Israel needed.

And the turnaround begins with the return of God's Word.

God’s word occupies center stage and the precise midpoint is found in 3:10 when Samuel says: “Speak, LORD, your servant is listening”.

It is in listening to this divine word that makes all the difference. Maybe the reason God's Word had been rare in those days was not so much because God wasn't trying to say something but because no one was tuning in, no one was listening. And maybe that is true in our modern day world as well.

The message Samuel heard that night was that things were about to change dramatically. The old ways were over; God was breaking into his people’s lives with a new beginning.

God had a vision for Samuel's life, and by responding to that vision Samuel found his vocation where God would use him to share the message of God's hope and renewal in the life of his people.

What a comfort to know that God never allows things to remain the same. Evil will not shape society forever. The divine Word of God changes everything.

The chapter opened by saying: in those days messages from the LORD were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon (1). But the chapter ends with a new reality that through Samuel God re opened communication with all his people: The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh and gave messages to Samuel there at the Tabernacle (21).

We should not underestimate the influence of our lives.

Eli's sons influence was very negative; Samuel's very positive and Eli's influence when Samuel heard the voice and didn't know where it was coming from was positive in eventually directing him in the right direction.

We are all affected by what other people do or say. It's almost like an invisible pull of one life upon another. We cannot get rid of our influence, it affects others. Influence is not an option for us; all people have it whether good or bad.

In a world where we have a sense that everything is changing, know this: God does not change "For I the Lord do not change" (Malachi 3:6). In the New Testament, the author of the book of Hebrews, said, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). But this God who never changes uses his people to bring about the changes necessary so this world will become a better place.

May we at Knox be as open to listen to God's voice as was Samuel and may our personal lives and our life as a family of faith have a positive influence on others.

Rev Johan



Musical Notes

By Chris Fischer, Pastoral Musician

“A New Chapter”

This past May 1 was my tenth anniversary on the staff of Knox Presbyterian Church. Where has the time gone?! As the past decade has seemed to race by, our congregation has experienced much change: new staff and ministry personnel, exciting new ministries and initiatives like small groups, LOGOS, Seniors Connecting, and mission and outreach partnerships with the Life Centre (Royal City Church) and our sister congregation of St. Andrew's (refugee sponsorship).

In the area of music and worship, we have grown to include an extensive intergenerational component, in our praise (youth bells, chimes, and percussion groups, young instrumentalists, and university students as choral scholars), and in our ministries of hospitality (ushering) and the proclamation of scripture, with increased participation by our children and youth through our monthly LOGOS Sundays. As Johan frequently reminds us, Knox congregation is a family of faith, and a family includes and embraces all its members, both young and old.

Still, as Frank Sinatra sang, “The best is yet to come.” We are on the verge of more exciting possibilities, in our worship and in our congregational life, as our sanctuary is transformed this summer: our chancel will be rebuilt, with an open platform to allow for more flexibility and accessibility than ever before. Our community’s song will be more strongly supported by improvements to our pipe organ. And with worship leaders able to move and change their orientation in the room more easily, we will become more inclusive and welcoming towards one another, as we experience new perspectives on an old treasure: a renewed, revitalized, 147 year-old worship space!

It is hard to imagine the potential of such a transformation before it has begun... I encourage each of you, this July and August (while the work of construction occurs) to keep your minds and hearts open to the possibilities that may unfold, this fall and beyond. Pray for a fresh outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit, to guide those working on every aspect of this project. And please continue to give generously, as you are able, in support of this work. Together, let’s live into our congregational values (printed on the back of each Sunday bulletin): especially #3 (“We are adventurous, creative and open-minded and embrace the possibilities of Biblically-based change”), #5 (“We build a positive team and family spirit”) and #6 (“We are passionate about God’s future for Knox”).

I wish you all a summer season of rest and renewal. Let’s begin this chapter in God’s history of Knox, Guelph, as the hymn says, “secure and unafraid”. May it be so!



Generous Eyes...Generous Hearts

by Herb Gale

What do you see when you look at Knox Church? Some would say it depends on whether you are a “half empty” or “half full” sort of person. The “half empty” person can see lots of reasons for concerns for Knox; the “half full” sort of person can see lots of reasons to celebrate.

Well, let me tell you what I see: *I see overflowing generosity ready to burst forth in ever new ways.* And I can offer lots of evidence to back up that statement. Let me share with you some of what I have seen just since beginning my work as Minister of Stewardship and Generosity on April 1st:

- I have seen the WMS group recognized on Mission Awareness Sunday this past April 24th for their decades of faithful service. If you added up all the hours and all the money the WMS groups at Knox have shared over the years, it would boggle the mind!
- I saw the generous way Knox members thanked the WMS by donating \$1,380 to the Knox Endowment Fund to enable the WMS’s legacy of faith and generosity to continue for generations to come.
- I saw the completion of Vickie Leduc’s dream of making a quilt to raffle off in order to raise money for the Logos ministry at Knox. When Vickie’s fingers became unable to complete the quilt, she donated the Southern Belle quilting blocks to the church. Other women picked up where Vickie left off and completed the quilt, and many more people purchased tickets for the raffle. It wasn’t just a quilt on display in the fellowship hall; it was generosity on full display for everyone to see, and more than \$900 was raised for Knox’s Logos ministry.
- I see the transformative impact the Logos Ministry is having on Knox’s children and youth as the number of children coming to the front of the sanctuary for the Children’s Time continues to grow and the children themselves are taking more responsible roles in helping to lead worship.
- I have seen people giving of their time and energy to offer a warm welcome and hearty meals for the Wednesday night Logos suppers and for the monthly Seniors Connecting luncheons on the last Thursday of each month.

- I have seen the congregation's generous response to the Syrian refugee crisis, as Knox has partnered with St. Andrew's and First Baptist to raise \$60,000, enough to sponsor a large family. Arnold Bethune, Knox Church's contact for the project, says the key need going forward will be for volunteers to help when the family arrives.
- I have seen John and Nancy Gordon offering (and tilling) a part of their farmland to become Knox's "Enough to Share" community garden for the members and friends of Knox to do their own gardening (by the way, there is still space for more gardeners).
- I have seen the congregation's generous response to the chancel renovations and organ upgrades. More than \$79,000 has already been donated to the projects, leaving an additional \$24,300 to raise if we throw in the repairs needed for the grand piano. And the official invitation wasn't even extended to the congregation as a whole until the last Sunday of May!
- I have seen repair work being done on the outside steps of the church (which had been taped off because the cement had deteriorated to the point they were unsafe) – all of the work being paid for through the generosity of previous generations who have donated through their estates to the Knox Endowment Fund.
- And when I look in the mirror each morning, I see myself, and realize that I myself am the beneficiary of the Endowment Fund, since my new position as Minister of Stewardship and Generosity is being funded from the Endowment Fund.

And that's only a portion of what I have seen when I look at Knox. I haven't had time to mention the contributions of the choir and Sunday School teachers and Pastor's Aid visitors and coffee time hosts and Sunday morning greeters and...and that's after just two months on the job! Let me repeat, *I see overflowing generosity ready to burst forth in ever new ways.* So... let me ask you again. What do you see when you look at Knox Church? Are you a "half empty" or a "half full" sort of person? The good news is that Knox needs all kinds and Christ can use all kinds in his service. Where do you see yourself becoming a part of the generous sharing that lies at the very heart of Knox and the very heart of God? We can't do everything, but each of us can do something, and taken all together the generosity grows and multiplies, because God in Christ is part of the mix. And so I leave you with one final thought:

"Jesus teaches us that the proverbial cup is not half empty or even half full, but overflowing. That is the way our God has designed creation." -- David Ponting, *From Scarcity to Abundance*, p 20

Church School Chatter



I would like to send out a HUGE THANK YOU to the dedicated leaders in our Church School program... Grace Kim, Peter Kim, Karen Duffield, Lisa Hough, Victoria Mather, Nancy Stepien and Grace Thomson. The children are so very lucky to have such amazing role models leading them in their classes!

As I write this in May, warmer weather is FINALLY just around the corner. That means that our Church School curriculum and classes will change up for the summer. We will hold an all ages combined class each Sunday, beginning June 19 and running until September 4. Our regular teachers are looking forward to a well deserved break, so I am asking for volunteers to lead / teach one (or more) Sundays over the summer. The curriculum and all materials are provided. There is a sign up sheet in Metcalfe Hall where you can choose the Sunday that works for you! Feel free to chat with me if you have any questions, or if you are ready to pick up your summer Sunday curriculum!

Over the summer months, I would like to do a "spring cleaning" of our costume cupboard. If you could help out by taking a couple of costumes home to wash and mend that would be appreciated! I'd like to send these home the end of June, and we don't need them back until September. Please speak with me if you can help out with this.

On a final note, there will NOT be Sunday School classes at Knox on Sunday June 12. We hope everyone will be at Marden Park for the annual congregational worship and picnic.

Enjoy the summer everyone.

Blessings

Karen Bellamy

Church School Coordinator

SURF'S UP!

Come and Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love!!

This year's Vacation Bible School will be held from July 11 until July 15. Each morning we will learn more about God's amazing Love for us, as we visit **THE SURF SHACK!**

Our days start at 9:00 with singing, skits, and worship in the sanctuary. Throughout the morning, our "surfers" will rotate to Bible Stories, Crafts, Science, Mission, Recreation/Play and of course Snack. We end our morning with more songs and fun and worship in the Sanctuary, finishing by 12:00 daily.

We have an amazing team of volunteers who are ready to ride the waves! We can't wait to meet all our new friends and returning friends too!

The Surf Shack is open to kids who have turned 4 (by July 11) up to kids who have finished grade 6 in June.

There is NO COST for this amazing adventure (donations will be accepted). If you know a child who would love to join us for the week, please grab a registration form in Metcalfe Hall, or go to our website <http://www.knoxguelph.ca/> to download a registration form, or contact Karen Bellamy.

Please pass on this information to all eligible kids..... Friends, neighbours, cousins All are welcome!

VBS Wish List: We are looking for some items to help with VBS this year!

We will be participating in several Mission and Outreach projects through the week that require specific items that YOU can donate! Please check out the wish list and the Mission List in Metcalfe Hall.

A Few Facts About the Knox Church Bus



1. The bus is for anyone who needs a (free) ride to and from church services.
2. One phone call to Sharp Bus Lines (519-824-8480 ext. 0) secures your place on the bus every Sunday.
3. If you need to cancel your pick-up on a particular Sunday, you should call Sharp Bus Lines by the end of business hours on Friday.
4. At the present time, Margaret Bingham is providing a service – calling the usual bus people on Saturday and directing the bus driver to stop or not stop for each person.
5. We hope that the bus usage will become independent ie. people calling the bus line for themselves (as in #2 and #3 above).
6. This bus service costs \$107.35 (including tax) each Sunday. This money comes from the church's Operating Budget as approved at the Annual Meeting, March 2016.
7. Session feels that this money is well spent, providing an easy way for (sometimes, long-time) church members to worship with our church family.
8. A future consideration might be to arrange drivers for those who need a ride to church. The Worship Committee would be interested in hearing from anyone who would volunteer to drive. Volunteers would be matched to those needing rides with the understanding that drivers are under no obligation to attend church every Sunday.

Those with questions about the bus or volunteer drivers are encouraged to call Judy Steer (519-822-2263).

Congregational Life Activities

Mark your calendars for the following events planned by your Congregational Life Committee:

Sunday, June 12, 2016 – Church Picnic – Marden Park

July & August – Coffee Hour – Summer Cold Refreshments

Sunday, November 6, 2016 – 172nd Knox Anniversary – Lunch in Metcalf Hall



Church Picnic:

The church picnic will take place rain or shine at the Marden Park pavilion on June 12. Sunday service will start at 11 am at the park followed by a picnic lunch including games, prizes and lots of fun. Please bring your cup, plate, cutlery, lawn chair and a salad or dessert. Refreshments, BBQ hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided. A free-will donation will be collected to offset food purchases. Come and enjoy the outside festivities and fellowship at our annual Knox picnic.

July & August:

During the summer months of July and August, Coffee Hour will be serving up cold lemonade and ice tea. Join us after Sunday worship in Metcalf Hall for fellowship and a cool drink.

172nd Knox Anniversary:

An anniversary lunch celebration will be planned for November 6. Lunch will follow the Sunday church service at 12 noon in Metcalf Hall. Further details commemorating the 172nd Knox anniversary will be provided in the fall.

Wendy Darroch
Convenor, Congregational Life Committee



Church Register:

Deaths:

Mary McEwen

Died April 09, 2016

Age 85 Years

Margaret Lindsay

Died May 23, 2016

Age 103 Years

FROM THE LIBRARY

New Fiction in the Church Library

Have you read them all?

Until the Dawn

By Dee Henderson

Taken

by Dee Henderson

Water from My Heart

By Charles Martin

Atonement

By Beverly Lewis

What Once was Lost

By Kim Vogel Sawyer

When Love Returns

By Kim Vogel Sawyer

Girl from the Train

By Irma Joubert

Come Rain or Come Shine

By Jan Karon

Adult NonFiction

Emergence Christianity: what it is, where it is going and why it matters

By Phyllis Tickle

Healing a Spouse's Grieving Heart

By Alan Wolfelt

Twelve Keys to an Effective Church

By Kenneth Callahan

SPOTLIGHT ON: Irene Hannon

Award winning author, Irene Hannon is well-known for penning romantic-suspense novels that leave readers on the edge of their seats. She has more than 45 books to her name. The library has her latest bestseller:

Thin Ice (Men of Valour – 2)

It's Summertime

@ the Library
Why not check out
the library for the
latest novels for your
summer reading?

Family DVD's

War Room

Courageous

Kid's DVD's

**MacLarry & the
stinky cheese battle
(Veggie Tales)**

**What's in the
Bible: Vols. 1 – 13**

Gigi

Mission Notes



Later this year in October, Carolyn Creighton and I will be travelling together with a small group to Malawi! Are we excited about this! It will be an amazing opportunity for us to encourage & experience God's love with communities there and bring that back to our Knox church family.

Where in Malawi will we be and what exactly will we be doing you might wonder? We will begin our 2 week adventure by arriving in Blantyre where we will meet up with our hosts who are long time mission personnel (over 25 years) in Malawi through Emmanuel International Canada (EI). EI Malawi partner with area churches i.e. the Presbyterian Church of Canada (Blantyre & Livingstonia Synods & PWS&D) to assist & support in many areas such as health, training in sustainable agricultural practices, education, employment training, and drought & food relief.

While there we will be visiting 3 areas – Zomba, Balaka and a community in the area of the Shire River (near Liwonde National Park). We will be spending time with partners who are involved in the Prison Fellowship Mission and encouraging some of those learning new employment skills through a half-way house. One of the communities are working to implement an irrigation system that will mean planting can happen more than once a year so less chance of hunger when a single crop fails. Another initiative will have us bring love & support to a widow who runs a preschool program that feeds upwards of 200 preschoolers 5 days a week. Many of whom are orphans! We will be spending time attending community church services & participating in their children's time. I know we will have amazing opportunities to witness God's abundant Grace in the lives of each individual in these communities.

There will be opportunities for our Knox Church Family to help support us with donations as we are planning to do some fundraising. Mark the date on your calendar as there will be a Progressive Euchre & Games night on **Saturday, September 17th** at the Guelph Curling Club. If you are not a card player there will be board games and a raffle table. Keep the date & watch for more information a little later in the summer. You may

also want to make a tax deductible donation directly through EI Canada. I am not sure if our group donation account is set up with them just yet but will put this information into an upcoming bulletin once I know for sure. **Zikomo kwambiri!** (Thank you very much! in Chichewa the language spoken in the communities we will be visiting.)

Blessings,
Karen Duffield, Mission Coordinator & Carolyn Creighton