

# Building the Vision of Knox Presbyterian Church September, 2005

## Our Vision

Building on our strong faith, energized by the possibilities God holds for us, we covenant to work to spread The Word, to welcome all in a spirit of inclusion, through a special focus on the generations under forty.

## Our Strategy

Our primary strategy will be focusing on attracting children and their parents in the early years (ages 0-8), since we are convinced that having a church home is especially helpful to young children and their parents. Because our neighbors are both diverse and transient, we will need to develop skills in areas that are new to us, especially multi-cultural community and excellent welcoming/assimilation.

## Next Steps:

1. Rummage Sale with Young Children's Focus  
October 15
  - Open playground (men clean up)
  - All kids things there (no clothes) – Linda
  - Craft and storytelling alternating time –
    - Becky crafts on the hour (10, 11, 12)
    - Karen story reading on the half hours (10:30, 11:30, 12:30)
  - Flyer to get people to the Rummage Sale (Linda)
  - Brochure to pass out AT the Rummage Sale (Linda)
  - Floater to direct children (Eric)
  - Sign/Banner (Jack and Mary Pat)
  - Entry signs (Jack and Mary Pat)
  - Balloons (Lois)
  - Web Site
  - Flyer distribution at Monticello and Kingsley (ask Amy and Ryan)
  - Bubbles
  - Face Painting
  - Budget \$100.00
  
2. Vacation Bible School April 10-14
  - Spring break
  - Recruit staff beginning January 06

- Advertising on the web
  - Daycare?
  - Times? 9-12?
3. Playground Bench for parents to sit on (Building and Ground will investigate)
  4. Fellowship hour to utilize the whole concern group as hosts for the month
  5. Rocking chairs at the back of the sanctuary (move some pews) in 2005.
  6. Spruce up nursery and have excellent signage, with consistent coverage – ushers be aware of nursery to direct those seeking a nursery.
  7. Host childbirth classes, parenting classes, parents of teen classes, single parent classes (run by others) (research options, advertise heavily, be excellent hosts).
  8. Talk to existing Mom’s Morning Out groups – what do they need? (next meeting)
  9. Use September 24 workday to get the playground in order, clean up nursery and move pews
  10. Adopt a grandparent (devise matching system and begin by Jan 06)
  11. Single parent network (recruit leaders)
  12. December: provide a shopping day (cookie bake for kids?)
  13. Quarterly speakers (grief and children, developmental faith, coping with anger, forgiveness for families, being new in the neighborhood, prayers for toddlers...)
  14. Invite! Be enthusiastic!

Other ideas/concerns about this goal:

1. We will need to train new teachers – and be aware that they might teach things differently than the way we have always done things.
2. We hope for a diverse set of people on Sundays, and will need to be welcoming.
3. We will need more parking – perhaps we will need to car pool or have a shuttle bus.
4. Newly marrieds would be a potential group.
5. Service and mission works are areas we do well, and can invite newcomers to join us in that work.
6. We need to have fun.
7. We may need to modify our worship, possibly offering occasional “different” services.
8. Kids love to get mail – for any child who comes send at least a dozen follow-up postcards.
9. Put signs on the lawn for every new opportunity
10. Explore ecumenical affinity groups (youth groups, single parent groups, young adult groups)
11. Meet our neighbors, build relationships.
12. As we focus on families with young children, we should offer things that will help them discover what it is to be a family that share faith and values
13. We understand the importance of helping to build early church memories.
14. With transient neighbors, we need to be about “instant” incorporation, making the most of the 2-5 years people live in our neighborhood. It cannot take 6 years to become involved or to be a leader, since the turnover is faster than that.

15. New resident campaign (realtor connection)
16. Offer transportation from Bethany House
17. don't duplicate library programs
18. Have many outward signs of child-friendly (from type of signs, to activities that are mentioned on the lawn, to excellent looking playground)
19. Include children in fellowship hour
20. Group baptism preparation classes for parents
21. have a nativity scene on the lawn (children love that story)
22. Every member meets babies (regains comfort level with children under 8)
23. learn the children's names when they come
24. Have a "first two years" parent's group

## Appendix 2

### **Moving Into the Future - Knox Presbyterian Church June 26, 2005**

Following worship, some 35 people stayed for a workshop on where the church has been in the past half century (plus). Themes or generalizations about the church were developed, completing the sentence "this is a church that...". Participants were asked to mark 2 things that most needed our attention as we move forward. That resulted as follows:

This is a church that....	Votes
...is missing the generation of 19-40 year olds	18
...is in a changing community (with starter homes or apartments, largely filled by Hispanic, Asian, or other groups from which we are largely disconnected)	14
...has few children and does not keep a "family-friendly" consciousness in all its activities (such as Sunday schedule)	8
...needs to expand its core of leaders	7
...has strong friendships within (which may be excluding others and need some adjustment)	6
...has lost members and not replaced them, which has also caused the loss of some of the activities that were points of entry	6
...doesn't look at the revolving door	3
...has a lot of "competition", both Presbyterian churches in the area and other churches	3
...has a great sense of community service through the years (core identity)	3
...is friendly, loving, and has a great sense of humor	2
...where people move to other regions (transient population)	0

We will return to look at these items and ask the questions "if we took this seriously, what would we do" and "do we sense a call from God to address this issue"?

I asked small groups to list all the Bible people who God asked to make changes in their lives, and from that list to identify the one that feels most like Knox Church at this time. You said:

- Job (two groups) – he persevered and stayed faithful
- Jonah (two groups) – reluctance, having to “go again”
- Noah – got busy
- Moses – had to work through resistance (too old, we can’t...)
- Abraham – was old, but did it anyway
- Sarah – laughing
- Paul – yearned for the good old days, thought he was on the right path but discovered that he wasn’t

I invite you to read about and ponder these Bible people – how did they change, how did they hear God’s call, and what did they do. We will meet again after church on July 10 to look at the habits of the congregation.

## Appendix 3

Knox Presbyterian Church: The Present Reality July 2004

In this workshop, small groups wrote the “unwritten rules” or norms for certain assigned aspects of church life. Each person got 4 dots to place next to the unwritten rules that MOST NEED ATTENTION.

The unwritten rules about leadership and decision making	17
1. We pigeon hold people. People who are never asked might say yes – this prevents change	8
2. Volunteer for life: saying yes leads to it being your job.	4
3. Find consensus in decision making – Session takes issues to congregational vote	3
4. People volunteer others (i.e. youth)	2
5. Too much interest, involvement leads to leadership	
6. (We assume) people all know who to call.	
The unwritten rules about conflict	36
1. In matters of general communication we get feedback	4
2. We strive not to offend anyone.	12
3. Some unwritten rules cannot be changed or I will leave (which gives power to those who threaten).	5
4. This is no way/mechanism to address conflicts, so they simmer.	14
5. Some people leave because we don’t change and it isn’t discussed.	1
The unwritten rules about newcomers.	32
1. Greet both formally at front door and members welcome at fellowship	1
2. Overwhelm for a few weeks – after a few weeks we “assume” they are assimilated and drift to old groups.	12
3. Expect newcomers to figure out how Children’s programs work,	13

how fellowship and church activities work without giving directions or guidance.	
4. Not asked to join activities (except choir).	2
5. Assume newcomers don't know us well enough to take on leadership activities.	4
6. We give too much to new people and overwhelm them.	0
The unwritten rules about change and differences.	34
1. We need a crisis in order to make/accept change.	15
2. We are tradition bound.	4
3. People "do their own thing" regardless of committee or leadership decisions.	11
4. Conflict is ignored.	4
The unwritten rules about faith sharing	25
1. We share in small groups only (study groups, women's circles..)	2
2. It's okay for pastor or sometimes in special services.	2
3. What happens in Knox stays in Knox.	13
4. I almost said "amen" (keep orderly).	3
5. Actions better than words.	5

## Appendix 4

### Knox Presbyterian Future Vision

<p>1. Remember a time when you felt most alive, most fulfilled, or most excited about your involvement in the church.</p> <p>When you were a leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastor nominating committee</li> <li>• When on session</li> <li>• When on deacons</li> <li>• Deacon, helping other people</li> <li>• When a deacon</li> <li>• On session, energized by the fellowship of like thinkers</li> <li>• Involvement in the larger church</li> <li>• When I got involved</li> </ul> <p>When you were involved with the children and teens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing VBS</li> <li>• Sharing in adult Sunday school</li> <li>• When teaching Sunday school</li> <li>• When teaching Sunday school</li> <li>• Teaching</li> <li>• Enrichment</li> </ul>
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- Children's sermons – conducting
- Scouts/ youth service Sunday
- Rummage sale and talent show
- Whole family involved
- Stewardship dinner, talent show with our kids

When you served others/mission

- First rummage sale
- Concert for Cameron
- Supporting Kevin Harris
- Mission
- Mission outreach
- Food pantry – making a difference
- Working in the Clothes Closet
  
- When church was growing
- Inspired by everyone
- Friendship
- Christmas Eve Service

2. Without being shy, what do you most value about yourself as a person and as a member of this congregation?

- Public speaking
- So much time and energy and willing to give
- Creativity
- Ability to help other people
- Counseling – good listener/interpersonal skills
- Ability to guide a diversity of people – people person
- Good work on short term projects, enthusiastic
- Ability to fulfill that to which I have obligated myself
- I am not judgmental
- Commitment to the church
- Willingness to do my part
- Opportunity to be creative
- Variety of tasks – Christian education, etc
- Ideas and follow-through
- Willingness to volunteer/organize people
- Baking, singing
- Singing, empathy for people – learn people's issues

- Reach out to people, deliver food
- Reaching out to people, community services
- Ministry to women, teaching Bible study
- Supporting church even from a distance
- Speak and be friendly to everyone, especially foreigners
- Historian
- Friendly and make people feel welcome
- Try to keep people from taking themselves seriously
- Like to decide what needs to be done and get it done
- People know I'm a Christian
- Being able to sing
- Being a Christian
- Being able to exercise leadership

3. What do you value most about this church?

- Unconditional acceptance
- Sense of extended family
- Support can give and receive
- Fellowship
- Extended family – willing to help as if they are a family member
- Extended family
- All of the above – graciousness of the people here
- Fellowship of kindred minds
- Reliable support of fellow members
- It is a family – feel welcomed and loved
- Acceptance of who I am
- I can be myself
- True friends here – music
- Loyalty
- Friendship
- Has been a family
- Wonderful people
- Willingness of so many members to take responsibility

- Support family-friendships, music/choir
- Total acceptance of everyone who comes through the doors
- Friendly
- Not too big – can know everyone
- Sense of belonging
- Sense of community and knowing everyone
- Comfort level some people don't have at home
- Desire of church to reach out to others outside of congregation
- The return on investment
- Worship, closeness to God
- Spiritual inspiration
- Opportunities for service
- Service

4. What is the most important thing this church has contributed to your life?

- Unconditional support
- Deep family-like bonds
- Helped raise their children
- Feeling of wanted to be here
- Friendship
- Friendship
- Source of extended family
- Part of community
- Support, friendship, compassion
- Encouragement
- Meeting so many wonderful people
- Center of spiritual focus
- Spiritual growth – growth in faith
- Spiritual strength – relationship with Christ
- Worship and refuge
- Christian growth
- Opportunity and faith to discover God's call
- Pushes me closer to God

- Spiritual values and it is a family
- Understanding of the Bible, feeds you with information
- Better understanding of the Bible
- Wider sense of purpose
- Spirituality
- Chance to lead
- Marriage
- Gave a reason to keep living and be responsible

5. What is the core ingredient in the church's makeup, without which it wouldn't be this church?

- Everyone here truly cares about our church family and the outreach
- Our mutual concern as a family of God
- Mutual caring and action
- Loyalty to church
- Quality of worship, fellowship and outreach

6. Make 3 wishes for your church's future.

- Membership growth of young families with children
- Young adults and children
- Membership – 20 young families
- More membership
- More opportunities for worship and Sunday school, VBS
- Children
- With expansion, maintain sense of family and community and faith in God
- What we experience – word of God and family be extended to more people
- Large Sunday School – children and good teachers
- Greater visibility in the community the church as part of the community
- Buy adjacent property, to expand parking lot and expand facility
- Worship service being an experience of continuing spiritual growth
- Improve our cultural understanding and ability to reach out to groups not like us
- Good communication and ability /mechanism to deal with conflict
- More parking
- Miracle
- More evangelism at low key level

## Appendix: Our Priorities

After our three workshops (history, norms and future), the leadership and other interested members worked for a day to draw out the themes and directions that the workshop priorities suggested. We asked “what do you notice” about the priorities of the various workshops, and “if you took that seriously, what would you do”. This generated many possible focus areas, which we were then able to group into seven large directions. We discussed these seven areas, and prayed about them, and then assigned them “top”, “middle” and “bottom” priorities. Clearly, some of the items overlap with each other and cannot be entirely separated. The following is that chart:

Category	Score
<p><b>Spreading the Word</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We envision telling everyone we have a fabulous church family that welcomes all.</li> <li>• We prioritize evangelism in a way that matches us (not high pressure, but steady witness).</li> <li>• We focus on outreach.</li> <li>• Tell people about Knox.</li> <li>• We must invite people to Knox, and to do so we must understand our neighbor, get to know their needs, and become diverse-sensitive</li> </ul>	63
<p><b>Family Focused</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a church that offers support by helping parents raise kids, offering an extended family, and offering friendships</li> <li>• We want to focus on children and teens and involve ourselves in leading and supporting children/teen programs</li> <li>• We envision a large Sunday school with at least 20 young families.</li> <li>• We want to focus on 19-40 year olds</li> </ul>	57
<p><b>Inclusion – All Member Assimilation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will focus on an expansive inclusion</li> <li>• We will beware of cliques</li> <li>• We will expand leadership</li> <li>• Help newcomers get oriented and assimilated</li> <li>• Develop an excellent assimilation process</li> <li>• Focus on inclusion, break open our friendship circles</li> </ul>	56
<p><b>Developing Faith</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on spiritual growth – relationship with Christ, moving closer to God</li> <li>• Build ourselves up in the Lord, be a joyful presence</li> <li>• Worship as an experience of continuing spiritual growth</li> <li>• Grow – share God’s love</li> <li>• We need to use our talents and gifts</li> </ul>	50
<p><b>Embracing Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build up trust (so we can speak the truth in love)</li> <li>• Create mechanisms for dealing with conflict</li> </ul>	50

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be okay with change, being willing to get out of our own comfort zones</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Serving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a church of action</li> <li>• Be mission focused</li> <li>• Be visible in the community</li> </ul>	39
<p><b>Welcoming Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on external/outreach – mass mailing, find out who lives in 22042</li> <li>• Improve our cultural understanding</li> <li>• Understand our neighbors</li> </ul>	37