

## **Buildings, Knox and Ministry outside our walls- September 21, 2018**

Dear Knox;

You and also community members are asking lots of good questions about the renovation process at Knox! So I'm writing this letter based on your questions, and hoping to answer some of them while offering a little more ability to plan ahead, and an assurance of information flow.

### **Will people who need shelter have a place to sleep after October 1st?**

Yes! The temporary shelter at NWHU has received an extension until the end of January.

### **Will there still be meals for people who need them?**

These details are being worked out but there are volunteers still interested in helping, and Fellowship would like to host the meals to keep them all in one place. Co-ordinating volunteers requires more staff so Fellowship is trying to work out a plan. But yes... people will be fed and if you would like to volunteer we have need of volunteers on Wed evenings (Miriam MacDonald) [mmacdonald@kmts.ca](mailto:mmacdonald@kmts.ca) ) If you would like to volunteer on Tues, Thurs or Friday mornings at Fellowship Centre get your name on the list with Ruth Illman [illmanruth@gmail.com](mailto:illmanruth@gmail.com)

### **When will we be back in our own space?**

We don't know definitively. The next evaluation time is November. We will have more information then. The current public completion date for the Hub is the end of December and the new opening of the service Hub is to be the end of January. By the time the Hub is open much of the work on our side should be complete - the biggest and longest project is the Lift completion and safety assessment. I have personally set my sights on our return being in February.

### **What made Leadership Team chose First Baptist as a place?**

First Baptist offered a gracious welcome and is fully accessible with a lovely accessible washroom right outside the sanctuary. FB is also more than accommodating in terms of allowing us to book space, use space and share space. And its right down the street! Our kidsnyouth programming can happen there in a variety of spaces.

### **Why can't we worship in our own building this fall? Wasn't that part of the formal agreement?**

Yes it was. The serious delay in renovation start time seriously impacted progress at this point. At present the intensity of the demolition process (to create a new elevator shaft on our side, and to realign stairs, to create our new kitchen and to sever the electrical and the heating and the plumbing) has created a lot of dust. This very intense and dangerous work (severing systems) should be done by the end of

September if all goes well. Once that work is done, much work remains particularly in the area of plumbing infrastructure upgrades. Kenon is working hard to make sure that the heating system is functional as winter approaches.

There are **many reasons** why we cannot be in the building at present:

**Dust** (requiring professional cleaning that Kenon will do), **no power, no heat, no consistent access to water, no readily accessible washrooms, nowhere for our children on Sunday mornings, no lift, ramp or other form of temporary access** (although temporary options have been explored with great creativity by Tom Hallas! (thanks Tom!), **inadequate fire exits from the lower hall due to the “hoarding” off of construction zones.**

**What is “hoarding”?**

Hoarding is construction language for creating temporary physical barriers to block access to construction zones and to contain dust and keep overly curious people from getting hurt.

**Why can't we just use our old elevator as was promised by KDSB in the contract?**

The extent of the renovations make access to the elevator dangerous at this stage on all levels of the building. Leadership has been working with KDSB to facilitate access but in the interest of this project getting done quickly, our best hope is that Knox stays out of the way and lets the builders get on with things as quickly as possible.

**Has the Leadership Team pressed KDSB regarding the contract?**

Yes those conversations have been held. Leadership Team has been clear with KDSB. KDSB is working with Knox to “make the best” of things but in reality the job is too mammoth. By working on all parts of the building at the same time, the construction company is able to make progress on one portion while held up with delays on another section.

**Is there something for young families and youth still in the new space? Or should we just wait till the “dust settles” to return?**

**We hope you come back now!** Be part of the change you want to see in this world! If you are waiting to come back, please know that this will not be just a few weeks. You are a vital part of the Knox community. If you're not back yet, we miss you and we hope you miss us enough to walk with us through this time of journey and learning. I believe that times like these are things that bond us more deeply as community and teach our children about working together as the body of Christ. In an increasingly individualistic world, it's an important learning to understand that community is stronger than any individual and for children to experience that they (and their families) are part

of what makes a community thrive and grow. Knox as a congregation is a wonderful community who always seem to know how to journey together with laughter and grace. Knox is still Knox! This next few months will open us to new possibilities, encourage us to be creative and to think “outside of the building”. Its a wonderful metaphor for the journey of faith. God is always calling us on new paths. We don’t see it coming but ours is the work of living with courage and encouragement in these times. We are carving out spaces for youth and kids on Sundays and have access to their hall for bigger events. The smaller space improves the singing and the music is better than ever! We are bumping elbows with the FB congregation and that is lovely! Sarah Pyzer is working hard to listen to families and youth and to create spaces for everyone to explore faith. Try out a Friday Messy Church and bring friends!

### **Can we access our stuff (choir books and other things for Kids Church?)**

**Yes with limitations.** Most of our “stuff” is in the lower hall or decorations room. During construction hours, we must sign in at the gym door and out when we leave. If weekday access can be avoided, that is preferable. Our side of the building is accessible by those few people who have keys and the best access time is after construction hours, during daylight with no more than 4 adults (no kids) in the building. Safely protocols to entry include carrying a cell phone or taking a buddy or making sure that someone knows when you plan to enter and to expect when you will be out.

### **Where is Cheryl?**

**Cheryl is at St. Albans** during her regular morning office hours. Her cell phone receives calls to the church office number: 468-6924. Cheryl is there weekday mornings and is open for visitors and to help in anyway needed with printer and computer all hooked up!

### **Where is Meg?**

**I have moved to Gillons insurance** where I have access to my books again and to a place to go where Mango is also welcome. I have been out and about in the community and pastoral care work but am generally there Wednesday afternoons and other assorted times. I can be reached at 613-261-8500 (cell) and despite the area code (Fido doesn’t have numbers in Kenora yet) this is my “work cell” so please use it to contact me! or email [minister@knoxunitedkenora.ca](mailto:minister@knoxunitedkenora.ca) Special thanks to the Gillons team for offering this space as part of their community service. I am so grateful - especially as the cold weather approaches and as I unpack my books again!