



# 65TH ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 15, 2026

# CORE VALUES

## LIVES ARE CHANGED BY JESUS.

We follow the living Christ, and our lives are different because we know him. In all we do, we want to put Jesus at the center, and share him with others.

## WE'RE TOGETHER IN HIGHS AND LOWS.

We are authentic and vulnerable with one another, showing up as our real imperfect selves. We celebrate in good times and show up in hard times with prayer, caring, and support.



## WE TAKE FUN SERIOUSLY.

'Doing church' and 'having a good time' are not mutually exclusive! Laughter, joy, and good clean fun are an essential part of our life together. We take Jesus seriously, and ourselves less so.



## SERVICE IS HANDS-ON.

We express our faith by serving others—rolling up our sleeves and getting our hands dirty. When there is a need, we want to respond like Isaiah did: 'here I am, send me!'



## WE CULTIVATE CURIOSITY.

We recognize that following Jesus is a lifelong process of engaging with scripture and pursuing God in a community of faith.

## KIDS GROW HERE.

We believe that passing the Christian faith onto the next generation is crucial. We welcome and support families of all kinds to help kids of all ages build a faith that



# CO-PASTORS REPORT

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights..." -James 1:17

It is not an uncommon occurrence for one or both of us, when driving home from any function at Knox, to turn to the other and say, "I'm so grateful for this church. They are such a gift to us!" We have said some form of this to one another after worship services, after small group gatherings, after staff brainstorming sessions, after helping lead a youth retreat... even after several Session meetings! Knox Church really is a gift! And over this last year, through Knox Church, God has given us all some pretty incredible gifts.



We've added three incredible people to our staff:

- Ginny Van Blaricom took on the volunteer staff role as our Coordinator of Connection & Engagement in January, organizing opportunities for every Knox member to find their people and their place here in the community.
- Sue Curry, our Pastoral Care Associate, started last year on a very part-time basis but ramped up her pastoral care ministry in 2025, bringing her incredible gifts of attentive care and compassion to all.
- Evan Young came on board as our Director of Youth Ministries back in June with students, leaders and parents all thrilled with his leadership.

We are experiencing the gift of numerical growth, as people are drawn to the warmth of Knox, the wonderful programs we offer, and the beauty of Jesus Christ. This year we welcomed 52 new members and we had 13 baptisms, including two adult baptisms. We had so many preschoolers attending Sunday school that we had to create a new Sunday school class just to hold them. Attendance at our fall kickoff Sunday has increased for four years straight. In 2022 it was 275; in 2023, 315; in 2024, 381; and in 2025, 400. Our worship attendance is growing - slowly, but steadily.

In 2025, Knox had the privilege of giving more than \$170,000 to mission partners serving those in need. More than a third of that was right here in DuPage County. In addition, we were able to give over \$57,000 to people in need through our Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Many of those were Knox members who needed a helping hand, and many of them were folks out in the community you referred to us. But our service went way beyond financial generosity. Almost 300 Knox members donated more than 4500 hours of volunteer time to our mission partners this year! To provide a frame of reference, a full-time employee will typically work 2000 hours in a year. That means Knox volunteers worked hours equivalent to TWO full time employees at mission partners this year!

God, our heavenly Father, is the giver of every good and perfect gift. And He is giving great gifts to Knox Church and through Knox Church every day. We are so grateful to get to be a part of it!

# PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care Associate is responsible for providing essential pastoral care with a focus on seniors within our congregation. This role plays a vital part in ensuring that members receive the necessary spiritual and emotional support to navigate life's challenges, celebrate joys, and find solace during difficult times. There is close collaboration with the Head of Staff, Board of Deacons, Stephen Ministers, Congregational Care Team, and Prayer Team.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The Congregational Care Team seeks to engage and connect with members of Knox who are no longer able to regularly attend church services and activities at Knox. Congregational Care Team members visit their assigned Knox parishioners in their homes-including Senior Living Communities and Care Facilities. They work in concert with the Pastoral Care Associate, the Deacons, the Prayer Team and the Pastors -praying together, sharing Holy Communion and fellowship and ensuring a communication pathway.

The CCT meets bi-monthly.

Stephen Ministry trained 4 new Stephen Ministers in 2025, and I completed the 20 hours of Leadership Training via zoom. After a 4 month pause the ministry is ready to flourish and serve our congregants in 2026 in their time of need.

This year we offered a 4-week Grief Support Group and an ongoing Caregiver Support Group facilitated by Priscilla Messana.



In my role as Pastoral Care Associate, I made 47 visits, 78 calls, sent 32 emails and 30 cards to congregants in need and attended all Deacon and CCT meetings.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Looking forward to 2026 to further enrich and expand the Stephen Ministry and Congregational Care programs. We will continue to host a monthly Caregiver Support Group and continue to serve those treasured members who can no longer get to church as well as all members who need prayer and compassionate care.

# CLERK OF SESSION REPORT

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP AS OF JANUARY 1, 2025 946

## Gains

By return to Active Membership Status	0
By Letter of Transfer, Profession or reaffirmation of faith	40
By Confirmation of Baptism	15
Total Gains	55

## Losses

By Transfer to other churches	0
Placement in Inactive Status	99
Deaths	11
Total Losses	(110)

Net Gain (Loss) (55)

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025 891

Baptisms	14
Weddings	2

## Necrology:

Pat Carter	02/15/25
Bonnie Poole	04/11/25
Nancy Coonce	06/07/25
John Janke	07/12/25
Char Haidley	08/08/25
Marge Nevin	08/18/25
Ginny Burton	09/15/25
Marion Singer	09/16/25
Dale Colby	09/20/25
Brooks Reid	09/27/25
Bill Langham	12/20/25

## ATTENDANCE

Average Weekend Attendance 2024	650
In-person (total for all services)	326
BoxCast	161
YouTube	181
Average Weekend Attendance 2025	668

# CHURCH OFFICERS

## 2026

### SESSION

Moderators: Rev. Dr. David Bruner & Rev. Becca Bruner • Clerk of Session: Amanda Hartley

#### CLASS OF 2026

Jim Cowan  
Ed Crylen  
Allison Donofrio  
Randy Johnson  
Kim Lynn  
Joan Tanck  
Beth Schlegel  
Chloe Wieczorek

#### CLASS OF 2027

Ruth Dispensa  
Jeff Hild  
Missy Jung  
Dawn Pakkebier  
Tom Rose  
Donna Thomson  
Frank Whittaker

#### CLASS OF 2028

Gina Meeks  
Kirk Seitz  
Josh Weir

### BOARD OF DEACONS

Moderator: DeeDee Porter

#### CLASS OF 2026

Barb Barhamand  
Karen Van Iten  
Renee Hicks  
Jenna Goeringer  
Sara Young  
Diane Heintz  
Ann Smith  
Lisa Bonomo  
Georgia Harle  
DeeDee Porter  
Kathy Schulte  
Pam Carron  
Linda Teets

#### CLASS OF 2027

Jayne Durham  
Peg Redding  
Sarah & John Reid  
Krystyna Cruickshank  
Patty Heinekamp  
Mary Horek  
Dee McHale  
Arlene Beslic  
Amy Bratsos  
Ruth Browne  
Joella Rose

#### CLASS OF 2028

Dan Iverson  
Marse Weir  
Cindy Wills  
Cindy Laughlin  
Beth Burner  
Joan Marlow  
Kristin O'Brien  
Kim Wigger  
Stacey Barrett  
Molly Brischetto  
Carolyn Frank

The PCUSA Constitution states that an officer cannot be re-elected after serving 2 full terms until that person has been out of office for a year.

# SESSION 2026

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## Adult Discipleship Council

Donna Thomson (27) 630-456-8906, donna.micklich@gmail.com  
Josh Weir (28) 312-961-0565, weir.josh@gmail.com  
(Staff: Rev. Dr. David Bruner)

## Building & Grounds Council

Ed Crylen (26) 630-369-1866, ed.crylen@gmail.com  
Jeff Hild (27) 312-375-6675, jahild62@gmail.com  
(Staff: Brian Hubbard, Director of Operations and Administration)

## Children & Family Ministries Council

Allison Donofrio (26) 901-568-1051, elfynne@gmail.com  
Gina Meeks (28) 630-445-3905, gnmeeeks@gmail.com  
(Staff: Erin Hartman, Director of Children & Family Ministries & Angel Seitz, Children & Family Coordinator)

## Mission Coordination Council

Chloe Wieczorek (26) 630-456-5755, csreece2@comcast.net  
Tom Rose (27) 630-306-1362, tljrose@sbcglobal.net  
(Staff: Rev. Dr. David Bruner)

## Outreach & Membership Council

Jim Cowan (26) 815-954-5015, jcowandesign@gmail.com  
Missy Jung (27) 630-217-6202, missala@sbcglobal.net  
(Staff: Rev. Becca Bruner)

## Personnel Council

Joan Tanck (26) 630-853-7879, joan.tanck@gmail.com  
Frank Whittaker (27) 630-357-2070, fwhittaker@comcast.net  
(Staff: Rev. Becca, Rev. Dr. David Bruner & Brian Hubbard, Director of Operations and Administration)

## Stewardship & Cash Management Council

Randy Johnson (26) 630-207-8198, rjjdlh@gmail.com  
Ruth Dispensa (27) 630-369-3277, grcddisp@comcast.net  
(Staff: Rev. Dr. David Bruner)

## Worship, Music & Arts Council

Kim Lynn (26) 630-842-6224, mskim.littleblessings@gmail.com  
Dawn Pakkebier (27) 630-251-0442, dawn\_pakkebier@ipsd.org  
(Staff: Anna Board Worship, Music, Arts Director & Rev. Becca Bruner)

## Youth & Young Adult Ministries Council

Kirk Seitz (28) 480-225-5594, kirk.seitz@yahoo.com  
Beth Schlegel (26) 630) 207-2690, bethschlegel@comcast.net  
(Staff: Evan Young, Director of Youth Ministries)

## Moderator & Member of Session

Rev. Dr. David Bruner, 630-710-8283, dbruner@knoxpres.org  
Rev. Becca Bruner, 309-830-9975, bbruner@knoxpres.org

## Clerk of Session (Non-Voting Elder)

Amanda Hartley, 630-640-0950, amandashartley@gmail.com

# BOARD OF DEACONS

The Deacons are one of several facets of the Care Ministry of Knox. Deacons serve the entire Knox community by providing families and individuals with emotional, physical and spiritual support. Our support may be needed to help in times of difficulty (providing meals, transportation, prayer, encouragement, assistance during funerals), in times of joy (celebrating births, graduations and confirmations with meals, cards or prayers), and as a connection to the church throughout the year (mailings, visits, listening, special events).

## HIGHLIGHTS

Our year is always highlighted by Chilimania. This is a very enjoyable event as well as being our only fund raiser. All the deacons bring a pot of chili or soup and there is an amiable competition amongst us. Attendees pay a small entry fee and vote for their favorite chili or soup by putting money in tip jars at each station.

The Ice Cream Social is another event that highlights our year. This is a free event that has recently followed the Vacation Bible School week. All children and adults are welcome to come create their own sundae!

We also host a monthly coffee bar, deliver Thanksgiving baskets provided by an anonymous Knox donor to parishioners and friends who have had a tough year, and provide a staff appreciation luncheon for the church team.



The crux of our mission however is providing day to day support to those who need it. This is where I see God at work among us. It is here that our group of 33 individuals shine by helping to provide the warmth and concern that our congregation deserves.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026 our new class of deacons will be educated in the ways of our ministry by Pastor Dave's presentations, Pastoral Care Associate Sue Curry's advice and their fellow deacons' experiences. We seek to be fully present for all of Knox's congregants in the year to come.

# ADULT DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL

Over the past year, the Adult Discipleship Council has focused intentionally on the central question: What does real discipleship look like for the people of Knox? Our conversations were shaped in meaningful ways by our engagement with John Mark Comer's *Practicing the Way*, which challenged us to consider discipleship as more than just participation in programs: it is a holistic way of life shaped by apprenticeship to Jesus. This shared learning created a common language and vision that has guided our work throughout the year.

Out of this renewed clarity came the crafting of a new Mission Statement for the council, articulating our commitment to foster practices, communities, and pathways that help adults grow as lifelong followers of Jesus. This statement now serves as the foundation for how we think about ministry, discern new initiatives, and evaluate our existing efforts.

Our study and conversations also launched the early work of shaping a Discipleship Pathway, a long-term framework we hope will eventually guide Knox's ministry offerings into a clearer and more intentional structure. While this work is still in its beginning stages, our aspiration is to develop a pathway that aligns our ministries around shared goals and supports deeper engagement with God, with one another, and with our neighbors. This will remain a major focus of the council's work in the coming year.

In addition to this work, the council devoted significant time to exploring Missional Small Groups, one of the key initiatives that emerged from Knox's *Isaiah 6* visioning process. A team led by council elders Brandon Board and Donna Thomson examined several models and ultimately recommended that Knox partner with 3D Movements (3DM) to support this effort. After further discernment, it became clear that our pastoral staff did not have the capacity to engage fully with 3DM's intensive process at this time, and we chose not to move forward with the program. Even so, the council continues to explore other ways to incorporate the practices and principles at the heart of missional discipleship as we seek models that fit Knox's current context and capacity.

In addition to these efforts, we hosted several classes and events over the course of the year.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Spring 2025 Programming:

The council hosted a Small Group Leader Training Luncheon in January. Nearly 20 leaders gathered for lunch, training, and conversation about strengthening small groups at Knox. Key themes included the challenge of welcoming new members into long-standing groups, interest in new study resources, and the need for clearer on ramps into groups.

This event clarified the need for ongoing efforts to strengthen small group ministry. The training surfaced opportunities and needs such as improving communication and recruitment and exploring new types of groups and study formats. These insights are shaping the council's continued work to support and grow small group life at Knox.

In February, the council hosted a half-day Saturday Prayer Retreat that drew about 25 participants. The retreat introduced a variety of prayer practices and received very positive feedback, with attendees expressing interest in exploring these practices more deeply in the future. Given the strong engagement, the council sees this as a model worth offering again in the years ahead.

In March, the council hosted its second Trivia Night, which was a great success and drew strong participation. However, as our focus has sharpened around core discipleship efforts, we have determined that Trivia Night (while a fun and well-received event) is not something the council should continue to lead long-term. We are assisting with planning and administering one final Trivia Night in January 2026, after which the event will transition to new leadership outside the council.



### Fall 2025 Programming:

In the fall, the council supported a variety of offerings aimed at spiritual growth and care. We offered both a Grief Support Group and a Caregivers Support Group, creating space for pastoral care and community among those navigating challenging seasons. We hosted Wheaton College's Dr. Amy Peeler for a two-session class on Women in the Bible. Pastor Becca Bruner and AD Council member Rudi Tanck led a class called Rooted; a discipleship experience designed especially for new or newer members exploring the foundations of Christian faith.

We also supported two significant teaching initiatives led by Pastor Dave Bruner. Verbum was a weekly, semester-long class designed to mirror a seminary-level theology course, providing participants with deeper, structured engagement with Scripture and doctrine. Additionally, Dave led three Theology on Tap sessions, each creating a relaxed, conversational environment for adults to explore different theological topics and ask meaningful questions together.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As we look back on the year, the Adult Discipleship Council is grateful for the many ways God has been at work in and through the ministries of Knox. Our study, conversations, and events have helped clarify our calling and deepen our commitment to fostering true discipleship: lives rooted in Christ, growing in community, and lived out in service. While some major initiatives remain ongoing, we are encouraged by the direction taking shape and the engagement we've seen across the congregation. We move into the new year with gratitude and hope, eager to continue supporting the people of Knox as they follow Jesus in every aspect of their lives.

# BUILDING & GROUNDS COUNCIL

The Building and Grounds Council oversees the maintenance, safety, and long-term care of all Knox facilities and grounds. We ensure our buildings remain welcoming, functional, and safe for worship, ministry, mission partners, and community use.

Our work includes planning upgrades, coordinating repairs, managing infrastructure needs, and supporting congregational life through thoughtful care of our shared spaces.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### New Council Members

Welcomed Jim Burner and Kerry Rousseau, whose gifts strengthen our team.

### Video Inventory

Produced a video inventory of the church property for insurance purposes.

### Site Improvements

Completed the following civil engineering projects:

- Replacement and expansion of the Gartner parking lot.
- Repair of sewer inlets in the Catalpa driveway.
- Replacement of drive aprons at the Basswood parking lot.

### Safety Ministry

Developed a Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness manual.



## Hospitality

Enhanced the beauty of our church campus through:

- Reception area redesign and remodeling.
- Painting the front stairwell to the lower-level senior high room and building a new janitor's closet.
- Refinishing the benches at the Catalpa entrance.



## Ministry Support

Provided needed improvements, including:

- Installation of internet-accessible HVAC controls.
- Replacement of dumpster-concealing gates.
- Updating the Sanctuary hearing-assistance system.



## LOOKING AHEAD

In the coming year, the Building and Grounds Council plans to continue adding to the functionality, safety, and hospitality of our facilities by:

- Improving the lighting, sound, and acoustics in the Sanctuary
- Upgrading our exterior signage
- Building a new Welcome / Information desk
- Updating selected areas of flooring
- Providing training in Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness for our staff and volunteers

With each project, we witnessed God working through our Council, volunteers, staff, contractors, and congregation to provide a safe and welcoming place to worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Burner, Gary Dispensa, Brian Hubbard, Charlie Johnpeter, Brian Ketner, Rebecca Kirov, Cindy Laughlin, Frank Mayer, Julie Milldrum, Ron Mobley, Ryan Pierce, Michael Smith  
Ed Crylen & Jeff Hild Elders

# CHILDREN'S DAY OUT

## MISSION STATEMENT

Children's Day Out operates as a ministry of Knox Presbyterian Church. Our objective is to provide a social foundation for each young child in a Christian environment. We strive to provide a loving and nurturing atmosphere in which each child can grow and:

- Learn about their world
- Communicate with others
- Develop a sense of independence
- Grow in Christian Fellowship

Children's Day Out is currently offered Monday-Thursday for children to attend one or two days per week, 9:00 am -1:00 pm, and a 2-hour enrichment class on Fridays. We are a school year-based program that coincides with District 203. Enrollment is always open depending on availability. Our license exempt status through DCFS limits children to attending 10 hours per week.



## HIGHLIGHTS

After a few years of building our reserve funds we were able to replace the playground area.

A completely new set was installed, the sand box filled and playground quality mulch was laid to 4" thick.



The 2025-2026 school year has a staff of 9 dedicated full-time teachers and 3 part-time teachers in 5 classrooms. Megan Minor was promoted to Assistant Director; she has been a blessing to our program!



By the end of 2025 Children's Day Out had 118 children enrolled under age 5, close to 90% of those children attending two days per week.



## LOOKING AHEAD

Last year, administrative changes were made to be in alignment with new IL employment laws for staff payroll, minimum wage and eligible benefits. These changes will result in a 5% increase in wage expenses for 2026. Accordingly, tuition rates have been increased for the 2026-2027 school year.

# CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY COUNCIL

Knox's Children and Family Ministry Council focus on creating an environment for children and families to come together and flourish as followers of Christ by experiencing love and fellowship while participating in our many activities, events, and programs we provide throughout the year. Kids Grow Here is one of our values, and we've certainly witnessed it this year!



## HIGHLIGHTS

### Vacation Bible School - June

This past year, we had our largest VBS yet, with close to 80 leaders and 155 children. Kids moved from station to station to learn about how God is our True North, and we can "Trust Jesus in this wild world." We are grateful for the many youth and adult leaders who help make our VBS so successful. We look forward to this summer, when we will be "Exploring the Nature of God."



### Parents of Preschoolers

Our Parents of Preschoolers (POPS) group has continued to expand this past year. The group, which meets monthly at Knox, studied the book Intentional Parenting by Doug and Cathy Fields. They also had social outings, gathering off-site at splashpads, parks, each other's homes, etc. A young family leadership team was created to help brainstorm and plan how to continue to grow our preschool ministry. In addition, preschoolers began to meet separately on Sundays at the 9 a.m. service in October to receive instruction more tailored to their age and to decrease the class size of the pre-K-2nd grade group on Sundays. Also, we have increased the number of nursery workers to help care for the growth in young families attending worship on Sunday mornings.

### Wednesday Night Growth - Sept.

Our Wednesday night children's program continues to grow each year. While attendance can be affected by after-school activities and sports, we have seen increased participation as the school year progresses. This year, approximately 42 kids have attended, 9 being new to the program. In addition to our usual program featuring music, dinner, recreation and Bible study, we have continued to make mission work a monthly larger group activity, supporting organizations such as Little Friends, Inside Out Club, and the Naperville Area Humane Society.



### Trunk-or-Treat and Holiday Parade - Oct./Nov.

Both Trunk-or-Treat and the Naperville Holiday Parade of Lights are outreach events for Knox Kids. Trunk-or-Treat is routinely well attended by both members and non-members. Guests tour trunks, play games and grab some candy, as well as pick up some Knox Kids information for upcoming activities and more information about our program. We began participating in the Naperville Holiday Parade last year, which always takes place the day after Thanksgiving. This year, our float theme was "Oh Holy Night," and we handed out light sticks to folks attending the parade with information about all the wonderful events happening at Knox during the Advent season.



### Biblical Knowledge of our Knox Kids

With the 252 Kids curriculum, which we use on both Wednesdays and Sundays, the kids are walking through the Bible; there is a memory verse each month. Kids receive a luggage/backpack tag to help them memorize the designated verse. At the end of each month, the kids can recite the verse to earn a little prize. We have seen more and more kids trying to memorize scripture each month, which is very exciting! Starting in the fall, Anna Board has been teaching the kids on Wednesdays the books of the Bible in a fun song. They love the song, and it has helped them start to learn the books of the Bible.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The Children and Family Ministry Council is excited to keep expanding our Knox family through connections and the programs we offer our children and families. We hope to partner with other councils for our two major outreach events: Trunk-or-Treat and Holiday Parade of Lights. We plan to continue helping kids grow in their Biblical knowledge through the curriculum taught by our wonderful leaders, as well as additional things, such as the monthly memory verse challenge. Our council truly loves sharing Christ's love for children, and we feel blessed to be tasked with this important mission.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Children's Ministry Council:  
Erin Clemons (Elder)- Moderator  
Allison Donofrio (Elder)

Erin Hartman – Director of Children and Family Ministries  
Angel Seitz - Children and Family Ministry Coordinator  
Lauren Brooks, Melanie Fang, Nikki Geron, Gina Meeks,  
Mary Beth Mulholland, Brandi Odgers, Dave Olson & Heather Urban



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement was formed to encourage fellowship and connections among Knox members. While our focus is on members, friends are always welcome to participate in activities as well. Members of the Community Engagement team attend the Knowing Knox classes and follow up with each new member to assist in connecting them with a Knox opportunity that matches their interests. Our focus is to ensure all members find a place to connect with others. Whether it be in a small group Bible Study, at an All Church event, or by joining a special interest group, there is a place for everyone at Knox!

## HIGHLIGHTS

Around the Table meals were held throughout the months of May and June. 15 members signed up to welcome Knox members and friends to their homes for a meal. Opportunities included Brunches, Lunches and Dinners. This is a great opportunity to meet new friends and break bread together.

On August 1 about 75 members and friends joined together at a Kane County Cougars ball game in Geneva. A great time was had by all as the Cougars brought home a WIN!

Knox members and friends alike joined together on August 24 for an All Church picnic. There were games and face painting for the younger generations, and the band Vital Signs entertained all ages. Our men's group stepped up to grill hamburgers and hot dogs for the masses and the congregation complemented the grilling with sides and desserts aplenty. Over 250 participants joined us for this day of fun, food and fellowship!



## LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue to attend the Knowing Knox classes and reach out to all new members to assist them in finding their place within our Knox home. We will offer Around the Table dinners this coming year as well as Trivia Night, the Kane County Cougars game, the All Church picnic and other activities designed to encourage community engagement. And we are always a good resource for anyone – new or not – looking for a way to connect here at Knox.

# 60+ ADULT

The 60+ Committee has been together for 2 years to provide fellowship for anyone Age 60+. We hope to have 3-4 events per year that everyone will enjoy attending.

## HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, we met on:

- April 5 - "Dueling Sopranos" (Anna Board & Lisa Bennett)
- July 19 - "Saturday in the Park" at DuPage River Park
- November 15 - "Groovin' to the Music"

We usually have food to eat and enjoy the fellowship of many. Our last event we had over 100 people attend. We strive to have programs that everyone will enjoy.

Those serving on the Committee in 2025 were: Diane Heintz, Mary Horek, Frank & Bev Mayer, Ed & Janice Wiles and Pat Warren. We had to secure additional volunteers during the year that were definitely needed. Jane & Bruce Burkelman, Sue & Charlie Johnpeter, Diane Mittelhauser, Rudi & Joan Tanck and Cindy Wills



## LOOKING AHEAD

We'd appreciate everyone to offer suggestions for entertainment. If you'd like to be a part of one of our events, we'd love your help. Please let Bev Mayer know (630-202-5097) or [bjmayer3@comcast.net](mailto:bjmayer3@comcast.net).

# MANKIND MEN'S MINISTRY

ManKIND is the men's ministry of Knox Church, committed to serving God by building Christ-centered relationships, supporting one another in faith, and strengthening our community through hands-on outreach. We create opportunities for men to grow spiritually, connect with others, serve those in need, and participate in meaningful fellowship throughout the year.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Continuing our bed ministry for veterans in need. God has richly blessed our long-standing partnership with the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans (MSHV), and our Bed Brigade has now grown to 16 dedicated volunteers. Thanks to a generous grant from the DuPage Foundation secured by Neil Goltermann and additional gifts from Knox members, we were able to purchase and deliver dozens of beds in 2025—bringing our ministry's total to more than 700 beds delivered and prayed over since its inception throughout Chicagoland.



**Spiritual formation and connection through key events.** We co-hosted the No Regrets Men's Conference virtually for the first time with River Glen Presbyterian, enabling broader participation. Our Men's Smoker gathered nearly 70 men and kids for fellowship, Grace BBQ, and friendly competition. We also partnered with Presbyterian Women to host the DuPage Foundation's Nicki Anderson for a Love-Led Leadership luncheon—an event where we saw genuine encouragement and faith-building conversations.



**Outdoor fellowship and community service.** Men enjoyed a Lake Michigan salmon fishing trip, a fall hike at Starved Rock, and our annual Winter Solstice bike ride. Throughout the year, volunteers supported Knox Wednesday Night meals, staffed the Sunday coffee bar, helped lead Knox Serves, and installed Christmas lights for Little Friends homes—visible reminders of God's love expressed through simple acts of service.



## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026, ManKIND plans to continue strengthening our veteran's bed ministry; host a Values-Driven Leadership breakfast with Lt. Col. (Ret.) and Naperville Councilman Benny White on January 24; livestream the No Regrets Conference on February 7; host our 9th annual Smoker on March 7; and organize another Lake Michigan fishing trip on June 6. Additional events under consideration include a father/kid paintball outing, a golf event, a fall retreat, and a fall hike. Our prayer is that God continues to deepen relationships, increase service, and expand the spiritual impact of this ministry.

# MISSION COORDINATION COUNCIL

The Knox Mission Council was very busy in 2025! We manage relationships with 13 Mission Partners and coordinate events supporting them. We provide financial and volunteer support to help each partner reach their goals helping people in the Naperville Area and beyond. We are so grateful for your generosity, both in your pledges and designated gifts to individual mission partners.

God is at work in so many ways through our Mission Partners and those who have volunteered with them. He has poured His blessings on recipients and donors alike. His hand is seen in everything from guiding an asylum-seeking family to supporting food pantries and school registrations. We've seen Him assist high schoolers in North Lawndale with starting small businesses, provide a fresh-water well and a new clothing facility for a village in South Sudan, and bring clean drinking water to those in need in Honduras.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Hesed House

Knox continued support for Hesed House homeless shelter in Aurora with three meals and supplies on the 4th Saturday and the next Sunday morning of each month. We also thanked Bruce and Jane Burkelman for their dedication over the past five years as they retire from leading this mission. They worked through the pandemic and championed a big change in the operation which streamlined deliveries and expanded the number of monthly volunteers. Thanks also go to the 50+ volunteers each month who sign up to prepare food items or bring needed supplies to the drive thru, and the volunteers who deliver and serve the meals. We are now serving well over 200 guests every month. Hesed House recently opened a remodeled space which doubled the available beds. The new space includes a large common eating area, commercial kitchen, laundry rooms, new ADA-accessible showers as well as personal lockers, a supply store, and separate men's and women's sleeping areas with hundreds of new beds. Next up is remodeling of the Family Shelter.

### Loaves & Fishes Community Services

This year saw a sharp increase in need for food and support to struggling families in our community. Over 10,000 people pass through L&F every week. Knox makes a financial contribution as well as staffing two shifts at the food distribution warehouse on the first Saturday of each month. Many also volunteer on their own during other times to help sort and pack food boxes and deliver them to cars pulling through the parking lot.



### Little Friends

We were happy to distribute undesignated budget amounts totaling over \$8,000 to Little Friends this year in addition to their regular budgeted donation. Little Friends empowers people of all ages experiencing autism, intellectual and emotional disabilities, and their families to live, learn, work, and thrive in their communities. We also stocked the snack pantry, school/art supplies, and clothing closet. Knox Serves provided much-needed landscaping support for three Naperville group homes. ManKIND (Jeff Hild) recruited a small crew of volunteers to set up holiday decorations for the group home located on Tanoak near Knox.



### YMEN

The relationship between Knox and YMEN continues to expand significantly. Nearly 30 Knox volunteers spent over 600 hours with YMEN. They enjoyed Saturday University tutoring and events like Saved By the Ball, Museum of Science & Industry, bowling, Feed My Starving Children, Knox visits, Knox Serves, My Brother's Kitchen (feeding approximately 150 area residents hot breakfast every other month), Race Against Gun Violence, Lawndale 5K, Sport Court, Bike Box / ride, Wheaton College Gospel Choir, Feast of the Hunters Moon, and the Annual Christmas Party at Knox. What a blessing these people are to our friends in North Lawndale.



### World Relief Chicagoland

The sudden loss of federal funding for refugee and asylum-seeker resettlement at the beginning of 2025 caused a tremendous shortfall in programming. Knox members really stepped up and contributed nearly \$25,000 in short order to help fill the gap. Our HOME Team has continued support for our Venezuelan family as they navigate the asylum-seeking process. Knox members and friends have been so generous donating food, clothing, toys, bicycles, and time to walk with this family through last school year and a move to Harwood Heights over the summer. The team has developed close bonds with this family and were there to support them when Dad was detained by ICE this fall. Again, donations and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund met the need for an Immigration Lawyer, and Dad is home for the holidays with his family. This truly transformational experience is a blessing to the team as well as the family. We now have a second Home Team trained and ready to assist another family.



### South Sudan Voices for Hope

The Technical Center is now graduating their third class of garment makers. More contracts are coming in for school uniforms locally. We continued to help supply food to boys and girls at the Confident Children out of Conflict (CCC) orphanage. Our donation of the 2024 end-of-year budget surplus has fully funded the Tech Center expansion project. With some design adjustments and navigating a dangerous civil war situation in neighboring Sudan, the building start-up was delayed. But it is well on its way to completion now!



### CareLink

The CareLink / Knox Fall Mission Trip was delayed by Hurricane Melissa and then again by travel disruptions related to the government / TSA shutdown. Plans are to reschedule for Spring 2026. Funds were delivered, however, and an additional 8 businesses received micro-loans, including a bakery, a metal working shop, and a general store. We have now funded over 80 new businesses! Knox Serves children and adult volunteers assembled over 200 "goodie bags" for distribution to children on our next trip. Over 600 water filter kits distributed to needy families in Honduras, far surpassing the goal. This was our most successful year ever.



## SamaraCare

Knox is a founding sponsor of SamaraCare, a non-profit mental health counseling and psychiatric practice offering in-person and virtual sessions. Reduced cost care for clients with insurance and/or financial limitations is available. Services include Counseling, Psychiatric Care, Autism Services, Educational Programming, Spiritual Direction, and Congregational Care & Consulting. Services are for Adults, Children and Adolescents, Couples, Families, and Seniors.

- Clients served 3,832
- 90% of clients experienced symptom reduction in their emotional, social and occupation functioning.
- 87% agreed they were better able to manage daily responsibilities, including work, school, and home life.
- 85% agreed they had an improved sense of well-being and overall satisfaction with life since beginning therapy or treatment.
- 91% agreed the interventions provided by their therapist were helpful in addressing their concerns.

## Habitat for Humanity

A new mission partner in 2025. Volunteers helped at three home builds during Knox Serves weekend.



## NIST/ILU – Scott Moreau Scholarship

Named for and managed by Scott Moreau, a child of Knox, since 1992, Knox supports several students at the International Leadership University (ILU) in Nairobi, Kenya. This academic year, three recipients graduated and 9 ILU students received much needed partial scholarships. The main goal of these students is to become future African church leaders where the need for pastors remains very high.

## CROP Walk

The 43rd Naperville Area CROP Hunger Walk raised \$59,000, with 22 Knox volunteers contributing \$5,923 this fall. Funds are used at Loaves & Fishes, national projects, and international programs.

### Dakota Partnership / Sisseton

The Dakota Partnership is made up of several Presbyterian churches in Illinois and was founded by Pastor Ken Lehman, Pastor emeritus of Knox. For many years, the Dakota Partnership has been supporting Native American churches and families in Sisseton, South Dakota and Fort Peck, Montana. Each summer, Dakota Partnership volunteers head to Sisseton and Fort Peck to run the Vacation Bible School and undertake building repair projects. This year participation grew to 106 VBS students daily! We also provided 208 back-to-school backpacks in 2025. Also, the Angel Tree provided Christmas presents generously donated by Knox members to 175 children of the Wahpeton Sisseton Reservation in December.

### ManKIND / Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans

The Knox men's group, ManKIND, has sponsored a Bed Brigade for over 10 years providing beds to veterans and their families moving out of homelessness and into homes of their own. Mission Council donated \$3,000 toward the purchase of eight Queen-sized beds.



## LOOKING AHEAD

Goals for 2026 include increasing in-person volunteer opportunities, including adult mission trips, and looking for broader relationships with our Mission Partners. For those partners far away or without volunteer opportunities, we are looking for more ways we can support their programs. We will also increase awareness of our Mission Partners and the extent of our work with them. Thank you, Knox, for your giving spirit to those less fortunate. You are a blessing.



Respectfully submitted,

Knox Mission Council: Don Fleschut, Suzanne Harris, Rachel Koritala, Diane Mittelhauser, Ineke Pelella, Tom Rose (Elder, Moderator), Jennifer Vollbrecht (Elder), Chloe Wieczorek, Lori Wood, Pastor Dave Bruner

# OUTREACH & MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL

As we reflect on the past year, the Outreach and Membership Committee is grateful for a season marked by connection, service, and steady growth. Together, we've worked to strengthen relationships within our congregation while extending Knox's presence and care beyond our walls. Below are highlights of our work in 2025.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Growing Our Church Family

This year, we offered three sessions of the Knowing Knox class, welcoming 38 new members into the life of our church. These new members have brought fresh energy and new perspectives, enriching our community and helping Knox continue to grow as a welcoming and inclusive congregation.

### Realm Directory Update

In the fall, the committee co-led a campaign to update Realm, Knox's online directory. Over three Sundays, we hired a professional photographer to take updated portraits and assisted members with reviewing and updating their contact information. A total of 136 member photos were taken, with many additional members updating their profiles. This effort strengthened our directory as a valuable tool for connection and communication within the church.



### Serving Our Community

#### Naperville Women's Half Marathon

We continued our longstanding tradition of volunteering at the Naperville Women's Half Marathon. Our team supported runners by distributing water and Gatorade gels while cheering them on near the Washington Street station, just down the road from Knox. This visible presence allowed us to serve the community and represent Knox in a meaningful, encouraging way.

#### Summer Outreach: Cones for the Community

During the summer, we partnered with the Dairy Queen on Wehrli Road to offer a simple act of hospitality. Postcards were mailed to nearby neighbors offering two free ice cream cones, and additional coupons were shared with church members to pass along. Coupons were redeemed through Labor Day, and around 200 cards were turned in for a summer treat courtesy of Knox.

## Knox Serves

Knox Serves 2025 was a powerful reminder of what is possible when our church family comes together with open hearts and willing hands. Over three days, more than 275 volunteers of all ages served throughout the community—building, packing, planting, cooking, cleaning, writing, and caring for others in Christ's name.

Homes were improved, meals were prepared, kindness was shared, and hope was renewed. Each project, large and small, reflected the spirit of Knox: a church rooted in compassion, generosity, and love in action.

Organizations and efforts supported this year included:

Feed My Starving Children, Little Friends, Hesed House, YMEN / DELTA, Loaves & Fishes, Operation Support Our Troops, care packages for Knox military members, the Naperville Half Marathon, meals and gifts for local fire stations, CROP Hunger Walk, Lincoln Junior High.

New organizations added were CareLink and Samaracare.



## Additional Support for Knox Events and Groups

The committee also provided financial and logistical support for several Knox events and initiatives, including the All-Church Picnic, the Kane County Cougars baseball outing, and the Naperville Lights Parade.

In addition, we purchased a branded outdoor tent for use at future church and community events.

We continue to stock the Commons with Knox-branded shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and mugs to support hospitality and outreach efforts.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, the Outreach and Membership Committee is focused on expanding our reach and visibility within the community. Key goals for the coming year include applying for the Google Ad Grant Program. This initiative was introduced to us in a "Grow Your Church" Workshop that the elders and Pastor Becca attended. We also plan to develop a New Mover Postcards campaign to welcome new residents to the area and invite them into the life of Knox. As we move into 2026, we are excited to build on this momentum and continue finding new ways to love sacrificially, serve generously, and seek Jesus together—trusting God to grow His kingdom in Naperville and beyond.

# PERSONNEL COUNCIL

The Personnel Council oversees the supervision of all staff members, policies and procedures. This includes recruitment, interviews, and compliance with federal and state labor laws. The Council also reviews benefits and assists with staff recognition.

## HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the Council joined Knox in celebrating the service of departing staff members and welcoming new members to our team:

- We welcomed Evan Young as our new Director of Youth Ministries.
- We celebrated the addition of Ginny Van Blaricom as Coordinator of Connection and Engagement (volunteer position).
- We were excited to announce three internal promotions within our staff – Kedra Smith to Director of Communications and Design, Megan Minor to Assistant Director of Children's Day Out, and Kerry Rousseau to Buildings and Grounds Supervisor.
- We welcomed Laura Harter as our new Financial Assistant.
- We joined Knox in thanking John Bowersox and Lori Rose for their years of service.



## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026, the Personnel Council will continue to focus on new ways to support our staff, as well as recruitment of a director for the after-school program. We also continue to monitor the rising cost of health care as we seek to provide our staff with benefit options that best fit them.

The Personnel Council thanks our pastors, directors, office staff, CDO staff and custodians for their tireless dedication to Knox. We are truly blessed to have such an amazing group of people on our staff.



Respectfully submitted,

Frank Whittaker, Joan Tanck, (Elders), Rob Bednar, Becca Bruner (Pastor), Norm Canfield, Brian Hubbard (Director of Operations and Administration), Jill Johnson, Dotty Mobley, Barb Silverman

# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN MINISTRY

Presbyterian Circles have been on the move this year, focusing on causes that support women and families. In meeting each month in Bible study and fellowship, we encourage and sustain one another. These connections are at the heart of who we are – the faithful hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**February:** PW co-hosted a Lunch & Learn with ManKIND. Nicki Anderson spoke to "Love Led Leadership."

**March:** "An Evening with Jane Austen," featuring Debra Ann Miller in a one-woman show. Nearly 100 people attended this event, a benefit for Knox Go & Serve.

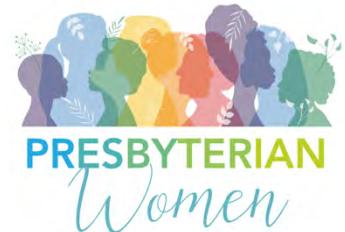
**May:** Annual Flower Sale chaired by Dee Dee Porter.

**July:** Six lush gardens were featured on Knox PW Garden Walk. \$5000 was raised for Northern Illinois Food Bank.

**September:** The women of Knox enjoyed a catered luncheon and heard from the director of Feed My Starving Children in Aurora raising \$820 for FMSC which will feed two families for a year.

### Fall and Winter 2025:

PW contributed to numerous missions helping those in need locally and globally - Feed My Starving Children packing Manna Packs, Families Helping Families and Operation Support Our Troops. In December, the circles, along with many of our Women Bible studies took love offerings for the Conedo family to help make their Christmas a bit merrier. The power of women acting in the name of Jesus Christ is a wonderful gift we can all celebrate.



Coordinating Team for 2025-2027: Lori Wood, Moderator; Susan Burns, Secretary; Pat Warren, Treasurer; Nancy Whitmer, Fellowship; Bev Mayer and Peg Redding, Mission; and Ann Beran Jones, By-laws/Presbytery.

Circle leaders are Ann Beran Jones, Deborah; Ann Naubert and Jan Wiles, Mary Martha; Debbie Geraci, Rachel-Rebekah; and Bev Mayer, Ruth.

Bible study leaders are Robin Kolar and Margaret Lambka, Women on Wednesday (WOW); Sue Curry, Tuesday morning Bible study; Daryl Varney, Tuesday night Google meet; and Sally Kenaston and Karen Van Iten, Women's Pit Crew Bible Study.



## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026 PW will hold a bake sale in February with proceeds going to Go & Serve.

The March Social will be a Mother/Daughter event on March 15th.

May will once again bring our annual flower sale.

2026 Missions will include Teen Parent Connection, 360 Youth Services and The Basics DuPage.



# SCOUTS BSA TROOP 505 & 1505

As a member of the three fires council, Boy Scout troop 505 aims to teach the next generation of adults and foster positive physical and cognitive skills that will greatly benefit them in the future, near or distant. Whether our scouts are brand new or have been scouting their whole lives, we ensure that everyone is having fun, learning, building strong relationships, and staying safe while doing so. Once a week, our troop gathers with our sister troop: troop 1505, and we have meetings to prepare for future campouts, work on rank advancements, learn a new skill, craft something useful, introduce our troop to the next generation of scouts, or just play a fun game to get some energy out. Additionally, every month our troop goes on a campout, a trip to a camp site where we set up tents, cook our own meals, partake in fun once in a lifetime opportunity, and enjoy the great outdoors. None of this would be possible without our charter: Knox Presbyterian Church, you are deserving of our deepest gratitude for all you have done for us. Thank you!

## HIGHLIGHTS

Our troop has had some very notable adventures this year, some that will stick with us far into the future of our troop.

Some of these highlights include:

### Cabin Campout

Troop 505 and 1505 slept in a cabin during late winter, and while there we cooked our own meals, went ice skating, and played games and ate snacks late at night in the cabin. Some notable memories include getting locked out of the cabin on arrival and realizing that there were no beds and having to sleep on the hard floor. Despite these events, we still make the most of it and had a blast!



### Maquoketa Caves campout in Iowa

Our troops drove 3 hours away to Maquoketa caves, a large park with copious different caves and beautiful landscapes. Our notable memories include spending half an hour exploring this super deep cave and getting covered in clay and mud, and the rumor of "Scary Gary" living in the house that was part of our campsite.



### Summer Camp at Cole Canoe Base

For our summer camp this year, we went to Cole Canoe Base in Michigan, a new camp for our troop. I'm sure well-being going back sometime in the next few years. That camp left some impressions on us, some that we dare not soon forget. Our notable memories include the rump bump down Rifle River, where our troop all got into tubes and rode the river running next to the camp for a few hours, and when one of our scouts "mauled" a bear that entered our campsite (he ran at it screaming and it ran away)



### Big Deal Campout

505 got to go to St. Louis during Presidents' Day weekend, and while there we did tons of cool stuff, like going to the St. Louis Zoo during the winter, going to an arcade, going up in the arch, and, my personal favorite, going on an alpine roller coaster!



## LOOKING AHEAD

2026 is a promising year for troop 505, with the new batch of scouts right around the corner, our troop is expected to see continued growth in numbers, along with experience, as our scouts continue to rank up and strive to become Eagle scouts. We hope that our new scouts enjoy our troop, and use every chance they get to learn, grow, and develop themselves as much as possible, and that our troop can one day be restored to our former numbers. But right now, we are making the most with what we have. I am hoping that our troop continues to find new experiences for our scouts in meetings and campouts, and that when they grow up, they can look back at their journey in scouting and remember all the new things that Boy Scouts allowed them to do at a young age.

# STEWARDSHIP & CASH MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Stewardship and Cash Management Council ensures that the Mission of Knox is fully funded by designing, implementing and maintaining a stewardship process year-round.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Knox ended the year with a surplus of \$78,350 in our operating accounts.
- All bills were paid in full and on time.
- Our mortgage debt was reduced by \$113,923 bringing the combined balance of our two loans to \$1,027,539.
- Due to the overall generosity of our congregation, we were able to provide a 3% pay increase to our staff.
- Our Certificate of Deposit investments generated additional interest income for our church.
- A detailed annual audit was conducted by the accounting firm Dugan & Loptka. No major issues were discovered.

## 2025 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

### Sources and Uses of Funds

Revenues	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	Difference	% Change
Pledges	\$ 1,467,051	\$ 1,437,739	\$ (29,312)	-2.04%
Un-Pledged Offering	216,482	165,952	(50,530)	-30.45%
Rental Properties	92,400	99,630	7,230	7.26%
CDO - Facilities & Support	42,000	42,000	0	0.00%
Interest Income	16,850	22,699	5,849	25.77%
Other General Fund Revenues	38,099	47,567	9,468	19.90%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,872,882</b>	<b>\$ 1,815,587</b>	<b>\$ (57,295)</b>	<b>-3.16%</b>
Expenses	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	Difference	% Change
Pastors	\$ 300,912	\$ 274,744	\$ (26,167)	-9.52%
Other Staff	702,776	643,287	(59,489)	-9.25%
Cash Mgt / Mortgages / Admin.	268,929	275,271	6,341	2.30%
Mission	172,452	172,452	0	0.00%
Building / Technology	262,644	224,288	(38,356)	-17.10%
Rental Properties	35,000	33,343	(1,657)	-4.97%
All Other	130,169	113,852	(16,317)	-14.33%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,872,882</b>	<b>\$ 1,737,237</b>	<b>\$ (135,645)</b>	<b>-7.81%</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 78,350</b>	<b>\$ 78,350</b>	

### Higher Interest Payments:

On May 1, 2026 the smaller of our two loans (\$338,591 balance as of 12/31/2025) will have an interest rate reset.

The current interest rate on that note is 3.64%. We expect the higher rate on this loan will increase our interest payments by \$8,000 on an annualized basis.

### MORTGAGES: SCHEDULED PAYMENTS

	2025 Actual	2026 Projected
Beginning Balance	\$ 1,141,462	\$ 1,027,539
Less:		
Scheduled Principal Payments	(112,308)	(112,656)
Additional Principal Payments from Designated Gifts.	(1,615)	0
Year End Balance	\$1,027,539	\$914,883
 Mortgage Interest Paid	 \$45,849	 \$51,357

### The Need to Replenish Reserves:

As of January 1, 2025 the Capital Reserve account had a balance of \$298,973. Capital improvements reduced the balance by almost \$245,000. Listed in the table are the major outlays for the last year.

### CAPITAL OUTLAYS FOR 2025

Project	Expenditure
New parking lot on Gartner; improvements and upgrades to drains on Catalpa; new curbs and aprons on Basswood	\$141,000
Office improvements	\$ 48,000
New piano for the Sanctuary	\$ 45,000
HVAC repairs	\$ 9,000
Fencing around garbage station	\$ 2,000

The cost for some of these outlays was offset by generous donations from our congregation. The surplus of \$78,350 generated last year will be used to replenish the funds in the Capital Reserve bringing the balance to \$131,993. However, our buildings and grounds are aging. Consequently, future expenditures on capital projects must be factored into maintaining adequate reserves. This will be an ongoing challenge for our church.



### STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

We established a goal of \$1.505 million in pledged support, an increase of \$50,000 above last year's level of giving. To date, the amount we have received as pledged income is well below last year's level and our 2026 goal. If you haven't yet pledged, please consider doing so. Your financial support helps continue the mission of Knox.

### PLEDGE CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

	2026	2025	Actual (+/-)	Percent (+/-)
Number of Pledges Received	265	281	-16	-5.69%
Total Amount Pledged	\$1,443,361	\$1,454,921	-\$11,560	-0.79%
Average Pledge	\$5,447	\$5,178	\$269	5.20%

# 2026 BUDGET SUMMARY

## Sources and Uses of Funds

Revenues	2026 Budget	2025 Actual	Difference	% Change
Pledges	\$ 1,462,327	\$ 1,437,739	\$ 24,588	1.71%
Un-Pledged Offering	265,971	167,847	98,124	58.46%
Rental Properties	92,400	99,630	(7,230)	-7.26%
CDO - Facilities & Support	40,000	42,000	(2,000)	-4.76%
Interest Income	15,034	22,699	(7,665)	-33.77%
Other General Fund Revenues	32,118	45,672	(13,554)	-29.68%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,907,850</b>	<b>\$ 1,815,587</b>	<b>\$ 92,263</b>	<b>5.08%</b>
Expenses	2026 Budget	2025 Actual	Difference	% Change
Pastors	\$ 288,343	\$ 274,744	\$ 13,599	4.95%
Other Staff	614,834	519,618	95,216	18.32%
Cash Mgt / Mortgages / Admin.	300,188	234,236	65,952	28.16%
Mission	171,948	172,452	(504)	-0.29%
Building / Technology	253,512	224,288	29,224	13.03%
Rental Properties	35,700	33,343	2,357	7.07%
All Other	243,325	278,556	(35,231)	-12.65%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,907,850</b>	<b>\$ 1,737,237</b>	<b>\$ 170,613</b>	<b>9.82%</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 78,350</b>	<b>\$ 78,350</b>	

As members of the Stewardship and Cash Management Council, we've seen God's spirit shine through our congregation's generosity. Despite economic and social challenges, the Knox family stepped up.

Through increased support for World Relief, Hesed House, and Loaves & Fishes—along with facility donations and holiday food baskets—your kindness has been clear. We are deeply grateful for these blessings.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The 2026 budget includes a 3% pay increase for eligible staff and approval for additional staff as needed. Higher benefit costs, especially for health care, will be covered. The decrease in the 2026 Mission budget is due to a small reduction in the per capita payments Knox makes to the Chicago Presbytery. \$98,000 has been designated from operating reserves, if necessary, to supplement revenue in 2026. This is reflected in the unpledged offering. The amount designated in the 2025 budget was \$91,000 and was not needed.

# PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Thank you for your generous gifts to the Knox Pastors' Discretionary Fund and for the difference it has made in so many people's lives! This fund allows us to come alongside people with tremendous needs to offer assistance and encouragement. In the unexpected crises of life, the encouragement and hope provided is almost as important as the financial support received. This helps people realize that they are not alone, for there are people here at Knox Church offering prayer and support. Here is special thank-you notes we have received:

*"We were overwhelmed with gratitude when we received the (Pastors' Discretionary) check from the church. It will pay our December mortgage. Words can't really explain how we feel right now, but please know how appreciative we are of you both – and our entire Knox family."*

*"Thank you both for your generous gift to our family from the Pastors Discretionary fund. As expenses mount during this time of year, it was a welcome relief. We truly appreciate your continued prayerful and financial support.*

*Your support has been an essential cornerstone of our peace of mind. We ask for your continued prayers as our family continues to navigate this season of instability. "*

We thank you for joining us in this ministry, following in the way of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who said, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Thank you.

*"We would like to thank you for the note of encouragement you sent and the disbursement from the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. I have been fortunate that in the 30 years we have been members this is the first time I have needed or received any money from this fund. It could not have come on a better day. I had received three job rejection letters that morning and had prayed again for more patience. Receiving your envelope was like a big hug from God saying, "I got you. I've still got a use for you yet even though you may not yet understand." It was a well-timed delivery just exactly when I needed it. Thank you for your continued thoughts and prayers during this extended season of job searching. We appreciate it more than you know."*

Your generous giving to this fund over the years has allowed us to come alongside and assist over 18 people with needs such as...

- Paid counseling at SamaraCare
- Damage to homes
- Food and household goods
- Legal assistance
- Educational needs and fees
- Rent or utilities

2025 Beginning Balance:	\$ 48,233
2025 Gifts Received:	\$ 31,515
2025 Disbursements:	(\$ 57,424)
2025 Ending Balance:	\$ 22,324

# KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT & SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

## Knox Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund

Organized in 2004-2005, The Knox Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund has grown over the years through a combination of generous legacy gifts and positive investment performance. The Endowment Fund balance now stands at \$847,394 on December 31, 2025 (\$739,462 on December 31, 2024), increasing by 14.6% in 2025, driven by \$1,775 in new gifts along with positive investment performance. The Fund consists of contributions over the years from the Rex Nelson Memorial, Linda Burner Memorial, John and Laurabell Fry Memorial, Lin and Patricia Carter Fund, Mildred Hasner Memorial, Larry & Carol McCoy, Millie Blumenfeld Memorial, Byard & Barb Ebling, Carl & Leona Haworth Memorial, Sue Johnpeter and Glenn King, and past Committee members.

Dividend and interest income generated by the Fund's investments provide support to the two designated areas specified by the Endowment policy: Capital Facilities; and Mission, Program and Benevolence. In 2025, a total of \$15,800 (from 2024 income) was allocated to these areas: \$13,000 to Capital Facilities, to be used for Sanctuary audio-visual improvements, and \$2,800 to Mission which has been provided to our Little Friends mission partner. In 2026, a total of \$18,000 (from 2025 income) will be allocated, with \$14,900 to Capital Facilities and \$3,100 to Mission.

## The Dr. Anne T. Sherren Scholarship Fund

In 2024, we were saddened by the passing of Dr. Anne T. Sherren, the namesake and founder of the Dr. Anne T. Sherren Scholarship Fund. For over 30 years, Anne and the Fund's contributors have provided support and encouragement to those seeking to pursue a career of Christian service.

In 2025, a total of \$3,000 was awarded to Lukas Boynton who is pursuing a program that includes religious studies at Marquette University. The awards were \$1,000 for the 2024/2025 academic year and \$2,000 for the 2025/2026 academic year. Lukas has also been nominated and approved to represent the Chicago Presbytery at the 2026 General Assembly Meeting to be held in Milwaukee this summer.

At the close of 2025, the book value of the Scholarship Fund was approximately \$234,000, buoyed by positive investment earnings. The committee wishes to thank all the people who donated to the fund over the years.

# WORSHIP, MUSIC & ARTS COUNCIL

The members of the Worship, Music, and Arts Council work behind the scenes to facilitate our weekly and special worship services. We are passionate about creating aesthetically meaningful worship spaces through intentional decor, ordering supplies and flowers for special church seasons and special services. We coordinate volunteers serving within the worship gathering through the scheduling of ushers, setting up communion, and arranging for communion servers. We also host baptisms and weddings.

**We hosted the following special services throughout the year:**

Star Sunday • Ash Wednesday worship • Maundy Thursday service • Lenten Art Experience  
Prayer Vigil • Good Friday worship • All Saints Sunday • Veterans Appreciation Sunday  
Thanksgiving Sunday • Service of Healing and Hope • Carols and Candlelight • Christmas Eve Worship

## HIGHLIGHTS

A communion table was ordered for our 10:45 am contemporary worship service. Funds were provided by a generous donor.

We began using all gluten-free bread for communion so that all may share from a common loaf. Communion at 10:45 am is now by intinction.

New t-coil hearing devices were acquired for use in the sanctuary.

Lenten Art Experience 2025 used pieces created by Rev. Shawna Bowman.

Summer combined worship was very well attended.

Bells were refurbished.

The Maundy Thursday worship service included hand washing and communion.

Good Friday service during which we hosted the Joliet Junior College community choir to sing with the Knox choir as we presented John Rutter's Requiem.



Our council also supports "Praying in the Pews", a new ministry of prayer for our congregation and ministries organized by Karen Van Iten.

#### Members of Worship, Music & Arts Council

Elders: Kim Lynn, Dawn Pakkebier

Staff: Anna Board, Director of Worship Music & Arts, Rev. Becca Bruner

Bells: Cheryl Ameiss

Ushers: Brian Smith

Baptisms: Jerri Picha

Communion: Susan Burns

Weddings: Dee Dee Porter, Joella Rose, Tricia Ullestad, Lindsey Morgan

Decorations: Helen Young, Kay Dostal

Pew material maintenance: Sue Petrowich



## LOOKING AHEAD

We are looking forward to the ways God is using our council to help direct people's hearts and minds on Jesus within the worship services. The beauty of the decor, the variety of music, the intentional images of the slides and banners, the way we are using lighting to create a more intimate feel are all in service of drawing people into prayer, praise, and worship.

# YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY COUNCIL

2025 was an eventful year in the life of Youth & Young Adult Ministries at Knox. The year began with YYA Council members maintaining programming as the APNC continued to search for a new youth leader. In June, Evan Young was hired as the Director of Youth Ministries. He started just in time to attend Go & Serve on his second week.

Andy Meeks and Beth Schlegel served as Elders for Youth and Young Adult Ministry in 2025. Continuing council members from 2024 were Jeff Hartman, Tracy Olsen, Kirk Seitz, Kristine Thornton, and Greta Williams with Kaila Mugford, Joe O'Brien and Ann Smith joining the council this year. Megan Minor, Youth Ministries Coordinator, continued to keep everything running smoothly.

## HIGHLIGHTS



**Middle School Group Wednesday Night Fellowship:**  
We gathered each Wednesday evening in the Middle School Room from 5-7:00pm for Bible study, team building, dinner, and games led by parent volunteers

Kaila Mugford and Jeff Hartman for the spring semester. Evan took over programming in the fall with Joe O'Brien, Emily Latham, and Andy Meeks leading small groups. We averaged 12 students each week, culminating in the annual Christmas sock exchange.

**Middle School Fellowship - Special Events:**  
In January, 16 middle school students and four adults attended a retreat at Camp Timber-lee in Wisconsin. We had a late night in the spring and summer where we played all-church games, ate pizza, and enjoyed fellowship.



**Confirmation:** The Confirmation class of 2025 was led by Directors Kirk Seitz and Greta Williams, with help from Pastor Becca and Pastor Dave. High school students Morgan Bell, Ashley Drevalas, Gwen Narney, Elena Seitz, and Alex Weir mentored the Confirmands throughout the year. The classes met on Sunday nights at 6pm for dinner and lessons from 6:30-7:30 pm. Confirmation culminated with Weekend of Decision at Stronghold. All 15 were confirmed and joined the church.

The class of 2025-26 began meeting in September with 11 confirmands and Evan at the helm. The Directors are Jeff Mach, Jen Mach, and Tom Smith. The high school mentors are Kelsey Driscoll, Payton Minor, Gwen Narney, and Alex Weir.



### High School Wednesday Night Fellowship & Sunday Night Worship/Bible Study:

Wednesday night youth group met weekly during the school year with dinner and fellowship starting at 6:30pm and ending at 8:00pm. Andy Meeks led the average of 10 high schoolers in large groups and games. Tracy Olsen, Beth Schlegel, and Kirk Seitz helped with dinners and small groups.

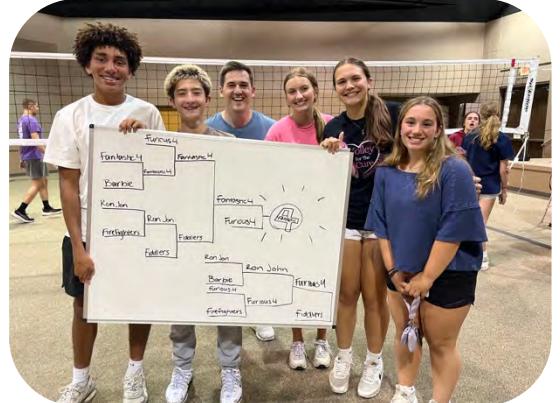
Evan began leading in August with the kick-off cook-out. We meet every Wednesday from 7-8:30pm. Each week Evan leads a large group lesson followed by small group discussions led by Jeff Hartman, Andy Meeks, Tracy Olsen, Beth Schlegel, Kirk Seitz and Stephanie Young. One week each month is a game night.

Sunday Night Bible Study at 7:30pm was led by Andy and guest speakers from the congregation in the spring. This was a time for deep wrestling with scripture, as well as light-hearted consideration of religion in popular culture.

### High School Fellowship – Special Events:

We had our yearly Spring Retreat at Stronghold. This weekend focused on discovering more about us and our spiritual gifts. We welcomed the graduating confirmants in May with a Top Golf outing and a volleyball themed late night in July. The school year began with an afternoon on the lake. Our Fall Harvest Party was a hit with a big thanks to the Thornton family for hosting. For the second time the high schoolers and confirmants teamed up this year at Knox Serves with several projects at Lincoln Junior High. We had our Winter Retreat at Camp Wonderland.

This December we decorated the outside of Norah Johnson's home with Christmas lights and had our annual white elephant gift exchange/Christmas party.



### Go & Serve:

Knox's Go & Serve team, some 65 strong including 44 high schoolers, guided by the Go & Serve Steering Committee, headed to Cedar Rapids, Iowa for a week of service while staying at Coe College and eating dinner at First Presbyterian Church.

The theme was "You are the Light of the World." We partnered with Feed Iowa First, Hope CDA, Central Furniture Rescue, and Catholic Workers House. The 2025 Steering Committee, led by Greta Williams and Kristine Thornton, included Rob Bednar, Chris Brischetto, Beth Burner, Katy McMullen, Ken McMullen, Andy Meeks, Beth Schlegel, and Terry Thornton.



### Young Adult Ministries:

Approximately 75 care packages were sent to Knox college age students during their spring and fall exams organized by Tracy Olsen. Eleven young adults dedicated a week of their summer to help lead on Go and Serve. In July the young adults had a game night at Knox.

The young adults got together over Thanksgiving break to enjoy waffles and fellowship. In December we had a spirited white elephant gift exchange.

It is with gratitude and humble hearts that we thank the Knox congregation for making the work of the Youth & Young Adult Council possible through prayer and financial support.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The Youth & Young Adult Council is looking forward to sustaining and enhancing our current programs as well as finding new ways to reach out to more students and young adults in our church family. We hope to continue to encourage our students towards connecting deeper with the church and serving the community alongside other councils. Plans are in place to create regular connections with Young Adults, both local and distant, through regular virtual meetings and local hangouts in addition to our regular holiday events. Our council is always grateful for the opportunity to care for students and help them grow in their relationships with Christ and with others.



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JESUS  
together.





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