

[DRAFT ONLY]

Knox Church

Knox Church Plan 2017-2020



Mission

To be a community following Jesus, joining God's Spirit active in the world.

Vision

A growing movement of people joyfully living the way of Jesus.

Values

To be a community following Jesus we seek to

- Include a diversity of cultures and generations;
- Act justly including for climate justice;
- Lift our hearts and voices to God in worship, including through music;
- Love and care for each other and be hospitable including to visitors, guests and newcomers;
- Celebrate our unity in Christ;
- Listen and respond to our neighbours, sharing the good news;
- Steward faithfully the gifts of time, talents and resources with which God has blessed Knox Church.

Goals

1. Deepen relationships and expand learning

We will deepen and extend our relating to each other so people feel connected to and engaged with one another and able to converse about faith thoughtfully, safely and freely.

How:

- We will visit every person connected with Knox four times a year;
- In such visits and in our life together we will converse naturally, among other things, about the connections of faith and life;

We are not sure our congregation can achieve quarterly visits and raise this for consideration.

- We will establish and participate in **small groups** in each pastoral area so our bonds with one another deepen as we share our faith, explore questions and support one another.
- We will have open, clear and timely **communication** among groups in the congregation.

A small group is a regular gathering of people who study the Bible, explore themes, and encourage, pray for, serve with and support each other. Small groups may be organized by gender, by age, by geography, by life stage or any combination of factors.

Why: For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them. (Matthew 18:20). We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. (Rom. 12:5)

Who: People willing to participate, Church Council, pastoral leaders and visitors, welcoming teams and committees, especially Education and Caring Community.

2. Extend inclusion:

We will enjoy a positive experience of cultural, demographic and theological diversity, as a church which reflects the makeup of our neighbourhood.

How:

- We will seek closer relationships with other congregations worshipping in Knox buildings and with people in our neighbourhood from overseas partner churches;
- We will welcome the contribution of people's cultures of origin in our life together;
- We will further express our Kids' Friendly identity and extend initiatives including Piccolo;
- We will continue to increase involvement of students and young adults in our life together;
- We will find ways to offer hospitality to visitors and newcomers to worship.

Why: On the road to Emmaus, Jesus as stranger joined the journeying disciples and was eventually recognised in the breaking of bread. In our diversity we are all "stranger" in some way. In the stranger Christ journeys with us. Christ builds us as community, forming us as disciples. We will continue to welcome a diversity of people, including people unfamiliar with church or liturgical traditions.

Who: Council, the Minister, worship leaders, committee conveners especially Outreach, Education and Worship committees, the Young Adults Group leader(s)

3. Expand worship:

We will enable diverse voices and hearts to be lifted in worship, valuing classic worship and offering less formal opportunities.

How:

- We will continue our present mainly classic style morning service;
- We will continue our present less formal, varied evening service;
- We will take opportunities for more informal gatherings for worship that reflect our cultural and generational diversity and enable people to use their gifts, as people express a desire to participate and lead.

Why: “Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before God with joyful songs.” Psalm 100 “Be filled with the Spirit as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves ... giving thanks to God at all times.” (Ephesians 5:19). We value classic worship patterns. At the same time our inner-city location and our nearness to tertiary institutions bring among us people unfamiliar with a classic pattern and intimidated by “church”. In less formal settings we can welcome people and help them connect with Knox’s theological heritage. We seek to learn from other inner-city churches.

An example of an inner city church with a wide approach is Riverside Church in New York that retains its distinctive ethos, is inclusive and diverse, is active in mission and has a tradition of inspiring music.

<https://www.trcnyc.org/>

Who: Council, the minister, worship committee, worship leaders

4. Enhance relationships with our neighbours

We will partner other churches, tertiary institutions, local businesses, government and other groups for the common good including for social and climate justice, for creating a healthy community and for offering a welcome in the city. We will encourage the Minister and other authorized people to work with partners and, in the light of the gospel, to speak about issues of importance to the city and nation.

How

- We will continue to support organisations such as Presbyterian Support, A Rocha and Christian World Service;
- We will work with neighbouring businesses and organisations to add vibrancy to our part of the city;
- We will continue to invite guest speakers from the University and other bodies;
- We will continue to expand our social media activity;
- We will publicise community actions consistent with our mission and vision;
- We will pursue issues of justice through the national church;
- We will continue to deepen common understandings and address common concerns with people of other faiths;
- We will continue to participate in ecumenical initiatives.

Why: Christ is active in our community. The Church exists by participating in the life of Christ in the community. He accompanies people who are poor and marginalized and builds a society in which everyone is valued. Our call is to follow him there and be part of what he is doing. This includes highlighting issues of justice, furthering a long Knox tradition of speaking out on issues of community concern.

Who: Members who participate in community, business and professional organisations, minister, authorised Knox spokespersons, Church Council sub-committee for interacting with local businesses.

5. Improve resourcing:

We will continue to maintain and update our facilities and provide revenue and resources to support our vision.

How:

- Council and Deacons Court will work closely together on a shared purpose;
- The Knox Enterprise group will energetically pursue innovative and ethical funding sources and proposals;
- The congregation will aim to give according to their means as part of their ongoing commitment to Christian Giving;
- We will find more ways for our buildings and land to be used to support the mission and vision of Knox.

Why: The Biblical notion of stewardship is a broad one; that everything in the world and those in it belong to God (24th Psalm). What we receive, therefore, all our gifts, talents, and wealth, belong to God. We are simply the guardians, managers, administrators of what is God's. We are called to give back what we receive to further God's purpose in the world. Jesus' Parable of the Talents also urges us to be good stewards of the resources we have been given by God.

Who: Council, Deacons Court, Knox Enterprise Group, members of the congregation.