

KNOX UNITED CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

January 24, 2017



Knox United Church

Communications Strategy and Plan

January 24, 2017

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Mission and Objectives

The Communications and Welcoming team aligns its activities and planning with the Knox Vision, Mission and Values statement and themes identified in the 2014 New Directions Document. In particular, we have noted the following guidance:

From New Directions

Pushing off from the familiar shores of the past, we journey forward, experiencing the Holy, seeking justice, and comforting the lonely.

The following portions of the Vision, Mission and Values statement guide and direct this team:

From Micah: "...do justice, love kindness..."

Vision: The winds of the Spirit are blowing us in new directions; Love and care support us in rough waters

Mission: We journey forward

Values: Mutual respect and neighbourliness, Integrity and authenticity

Priorities: Being a good neighbor

Key Themes From the New Directions Document 2014:

The diversity of the surrounding community and Knox congregation will be a significant consideration in all our future planning.

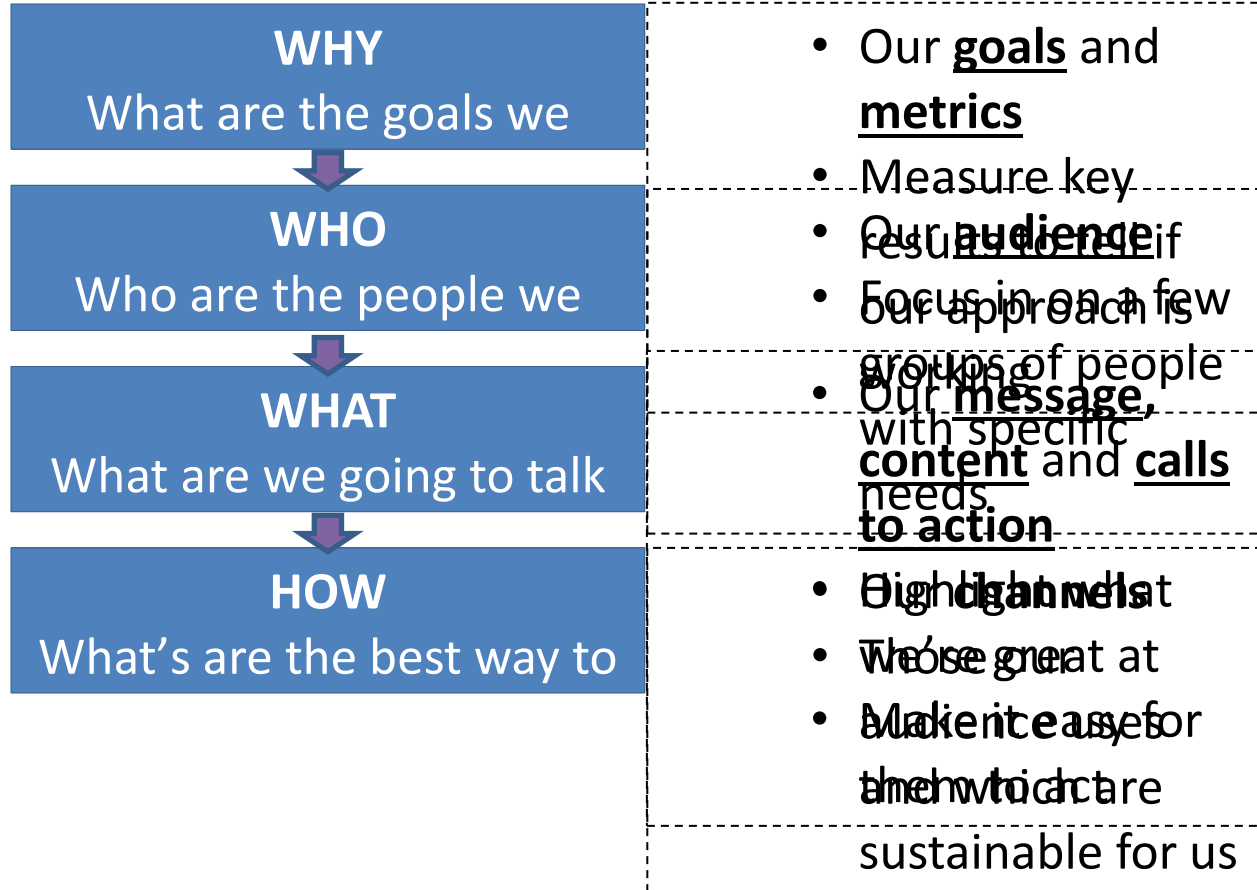
Collaboration, sharing, and building on our own strengths, and those of the faith communities in our neighbourhood, is highly desirable and should be encouraged. None of us has the resources to be all things to all people.

Social media are key to communication and supporting a vital faith community. We will be attentive to the advantage of using term-limited working groups for task related work rather than permanent teams or committees

It is essential that we put in place evaluation processes that give us reliable feedback on the changes we are implementing.

Communications Framework

The following is a high level framework for thinking about communications at Knox United. Given limited human and budget resources, we need to be selective to be successful. We need to prioritize and focus our efforts—we can't "boil the ocean!"



Goals

Goals will continue to be refined and updated as the Board determines the future direction of Knox's programs, however the team has set the following standard goals:

- Weekly updates to the website focused on priority personas & regular construction project updates
- Upgrade newsletter to a more modern look and feel
- Promotion of events & special services

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Target Audiences

Audience Overview

We have segmented our audience into internal and external groups, then further segmented and prioritized certain personas within those two groups. Prioritization will likely change over time.

Internal personas generally speaking would identify Knox as their home church. External personas would not (yet) consider Knox their home church.

Persona (Segment)	Internal or External	Prioritization
Frequent Attendees	Internal	Maintenance mode
Extra Curricular Affiliates	Internal	High priority
Special Occasions and Events	Internal	High priority
Cyber Followers	External	Medium priority
Church Seekers	External	High priority
Current Renters	External	Maintenance mode
Future Renters	External	Lower priority
The Lonely	External	Medium priority
Spiritual Seekers	External	Not yet a priority; would need refinement

Audience Personas, Messaging, and Calls to Action

For each of the eight personas we have captured a description of who they are, what needs they have that we *might* fulfill, the priority of reaching them with our communications plan, how we plan to reach them, what calls to action and messaging to use in our communications, and items for further consideration.

Frequent Attendees

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mostly women over 65 with a social circle here who find spiritual fulfillment; not a heavy technology user• Partner may not also be attending• Attends events• Lives locally or used to live locally
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make a difference – make things better• Social activities• Pastoral care• Comforting worship traditions

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Respect
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance Mode
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Note this group currently has low use of website</i> • News & Notes • Emails • Posters • Word of mouth • Announcements
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the website • Keep coming to worship / volunteering / donating
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has not specified messaging for the Frequent Attendees group. Current messaging revolving around continuing to keep up awareness of events and news, seems to be appropriate.
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority, but the majority of current communications tactics are working generally well and smoothly. • News & Notes needs to be amped up – commit to delivering it via the ChurchOS tool.

Extra Curricular Affiliates

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and age varies, but generally younger • Attends as a family member, more likely to attend events and special services • Grandchildren, children, spouses • Sometimes involved in service roles • Less involved in activities outside of worship • Lives locally or used to live locally.
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to contribute actively, not sit and listen, but be heard and respected • Development of leadership skills • Contributing positively, serving, connecting
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth (frequent attendees) • Possibly Website • Possibly N&N • Possibly neighbourhood adverts (coffee shop posters, newspaper, etc.)
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread the word • Join a group • Become involved • Read the website or contribute • Learn more

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give us feedback
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has not specified messaging for this group. Current messaging revolving around continuing to keep up awareness of events and news, seems to be appropriate.
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Special Occasions and Events Attendees

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees Knox as their home church, but doesn't attend very often anymore • Attends socially, and on high holidays • Socially conscious • Wants a sense of belonging / spiritual belonging but can't or don't necessarily act on it • Age and gender varies • Lives locally or used to live locally • They attend as part of their routine habit / culture
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual support &/or pastoral care around life events (and follow up) • Info about events and opportunities here
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family member word of mouth • Possibly website
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our goal is to increase participation from Special Occasions and Events to become an Extra Curricular Affiliates. • Learn more; tell others; make a donation
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has not yet specified messaging for this group, but it should align with the calls to action.
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to focus on the Welcome and the Welcome Back • Why would they come more than once a year? • Donations: money, in memoriam, sponsor a community lunch, in gratitude...

Cyber Followers

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lonely, seeking answers • Age and gender varies: kids, seniors; 60% female; 19% under 25 • Geographically concentrated in Greater Vancouver • High percentage of return website visitors
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayers, graces and recipes are popular • Photos • Readings and sermons are downloaded • Live vicariously through others • Cyber company
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website, Facebook
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate now (help us keep running) • Share this page • Send us your feedback • Send us your prayer needs
Messaging	<p>Knox is very active in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating great music as part of our worship. • Social justice initiatives • Helping through outreach • Faith exploration, for example we do an introduction to the readings to help "unpack scripture" • Adding thoughtful art to the website, linked to our faith <p>...and we invite you to be part of this through our digital channels.</p>
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey them; there is a lot we don't know: • Have they become part of our church family? (No obligation is required. Are they looking for church but can't get here? Embarrassed? Afraid to commit by coming through the door? Scouting for a church?) • Provide 24/7 access to church: Knox basics, UCC basics, "Christianity 101" info, hopeful messages – prayers, access to prayer list; upload worship services; they will also have access to the content built for other groups and posted on the site.

Church Seekers

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally new to the area: Dunbar / Kerrisdale / Southlands generally / westside • May be attending another church and looking at new options • Recent change or new circumstances (e.g. moved, new baby, life crisis) • Age: all over • Likely exposed to Christian church in the past - or their partner / parent has • Likely to do their research first; they are web savvy with a technical background • Likely a very small percentage of the Vancouver population who are actively church shopping
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Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sources that give a sense of who we are • Brand impression / more than one media platform • Awareness of Knox • To be acknowledged when they arrive / feel welcome / human contact • More information when they arrive – orientation: hymn book, bulletin, what to do, etc. • Invitation back but no assumption of commitment • A chance to talk and tell their story and be heard
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local publications like The Courier • Website • Signs • Signage at our physical location • Search engines & key words • Facebook
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit us at location • Keep coming • Participate • Tell someone else
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today we are a flexible, easy to access space in a residential community • We have several diverse community groups using us today for: music, sport, meeting space, and drama. • We are on the cusp of a brand new development, and we invite you to please tell us how the future Knox space could work for you.
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Current Renters

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low or no rent, may be non-profit • Likely to be Local residents: young, family-oriented (generally) • Non-profit, registered charities, and societies – must have by-laws and be not for profit
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their purpose is fulfillment of a social need is their purpose • Space – short-term (e.g. Films) and long-term (e.g. Preschool) • A safe environment • Amenities like kitchen, gym, washrooms, first aid, phone, larger spaces, flexible spaces • A liaison (a program coordinator would be ideal) • May need insurance coverage • Preschool may need access to gym and outside, secure dedicated space

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access • Parking / transit • Visual information – photos blueprints
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance mode
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Josie / Alan; posters; word of mouth; physical presence
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep renting • Get involved; tell us what you need; partner with us; sign up for N&N; visit website; follow Facebook
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has not yet specified messaging for this group, but it should align with the calls to action.
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could we target stratas?

Future Renters

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally the same as Current Renters, but these are groups who would rent from us in the new space
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally the same as Future Renters
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower priority
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defer and begin work on messaging once we are closer to "spades in the ground" for the new building
Calls to Action	
Messaging	
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	

The Lonely

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing human connections – lost family members • Feels alone for large portions of the day or missing adult company • Needs a safe place • May worry about obligations or commitments if comes to the church • All ages, genders, cultures • May be too busy or not busy at all • May have had a recent change of circumstance makes them feel disconnected • Many may be very depressed; may not trust; may not admit or recognize it
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs are needed that meet specific needs of these people. Otherwise they have no reason to come. • Intentional invitations and hellos • Provided opportunities to gently connect without strings • Someone to listen to them and offer dignity (not problem solvers) • Stability

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Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority.
Channels/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally 1:1; perhaps people who have come through our doors for community lunch.
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messaging (and CTAs) for this group are not one size fits all. It is personalized, gentle, constant/repetitive, and generally delivered 1:1.
Messaging	
Parking Lot (For Further Consideration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Spiritual Seekers

This is a group that needs further discussion in the future depending on whether Knox sees this group as a priority persona. The aspects of this group needs to be “fleshed out” further. The team's initial brainstorm is included below.

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking spiritual growth but not in traditional ways. Curious, unsure, likes to debate spiritual matters. They don't want to come on Sunday and be preached to. They want to have open discussions, have questions answered. Biggest group we don't reach. Don't want to come in Sunday. Not Religious. May or may not have a religious background. May be actively rejecting organized religion due to history of hypocritical behaviour and perceived conservative values. May look for smaller more intimate groups. Willing to share differently – has to be trust, etc. Sort of like Prayer & Share, but without Prayer. Yoga, beaches, meditation. Open to many kinds of spiritual traditions. Want to be “good” in what they do – good people, good parents, socially conscious. Curious. Age: generally middle-aged or younger.
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space or groups that offers non-traditional or non-religious ways to explore or develop their spirituality. These groups probably shouldn't be truly Knox led. Variety / newness / excitement. Opportunities to learn.

Channels and Content

We will use a number of channels to reach our target audience. We rely on different people and within Knox staff and the broader congregation to the create the content for each channel. The content should align with the messaging for each group described in the previous section.

Channel	Content Creators
Website	Debra Danny, members of the Congregation

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Social Media	Debra Danny, members of the Congregation
News and Notes	Members of the Congregation, Knox teams, input from Knox staff
Print Advertising	Communications and Welcoming team, with help from members of the Congregation
Quarterly Updates to the Congregation	Members of each team

Schedule and Calendar

2016-2017 Communication Team Areas of Focus

As a standing directive, the team is focused on connecting with high priority personas. The Communications and Welcoming team also has two primary initiatives underway at this time.

The first is an initiative designed to invite and welcome new attendees to Knox, beginning in October 2016. The timing of the campaign is based on an expected increase in attendance around Advent and Christmas. The campaign has the following core elements:

- Print advertising in local papers with messaging targeted primarily at the Church Seeker persona, emphasizing Knox' unique elements and specifically highlighting the Knox Christmas services as we approach those dates.
- Website and social media promotion targeting the same group and audience.
- Recruitment and training of new volunteers to help with greeting at our services. Our goal is to ensure a consistent and structured welcoming experience for new visitors, and to explicitly collect information on which channels they heard about us through, so that we can better target future advertising.

The second initiative is designed to increase the frequency and effectiveness of internal communication at Knox, specifically with regards to increasing awareness of the activities the different teams are engaged in. Beginning in November, we will begin to integrate short quarterly updates from teams during the community announcements time in our worship services.

- Each week, one team will have one minute to provide a quick update on what their team has been working on, and invite questions and follow up discussion over the coffee time in the fellowship hall.
- The team will also provide Josie with a short blurb for the following week's News and Notes, repeating what was in the verbal announcement for those not in attendance.
- The schedule will continue for 9 weeks until each of the teams has reported out. After three weeks hiatus (assuming 12 weeks in a quarter) the schedule will begin again for the next three month period.

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Communications Calendar

Action: Susan to edit

The Communications and Welcoming team maintains an annual calendar in order to plan ahead for campaigns, communications and content. This is a living schedule that is subject to change based on the team's work and planning during the year. A snapshot of this calendar is provided here for reference - this is now an example of what was drafted for 2016.

Some items are specific content strategies, and others are more general themes that could be appropriate for certain times of year. Content should be driven by the Minister and Worship team as well as the Communications Strategy.

Month	Theme	Call for Content – Publish in N&N	Ministry Feature	General	2016	Ideas
Jan	New Year, new things - Resolutions		Pastoral Care Chapel Service Opera Preview	Week 1: Epiphany Week 2: Week 3: Week 4: ACM details		Will there be a Bible study Strive for getting interior videos?
Feb	Love one another		Board Nominations	Week 1: Week 2: Lent prep – a 40 day activity? Carbon fasting as theme? Week 3: Week 4: ACM & Annual Report	e-valentines or cyber flowers Cookie exchange	Scriptures that tie to love An intergenerational event? If prayer shawls are ready, could fit here
March	Loss & Lost		Baptisms	Lent Remaining Prayers for life (darker poem)	Ash Wednesday March 1	Lenten Bible study? PREP FOR EASTER Easter baskets or crosses New angle is needed

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				Need info on special appeal at the start of Lent		Could Liz write an article on the crucifixion / resurrection?
April	Easter		TTT	Roll out Easter prep from March Easter special Appeal		Thrift Sale?
May	Mother Earth		Prayer & Share Preschool	Mother's Day Pentecost?		Stewardship of earth and local food production / bees Master gardener advice Plant sale pre-order? Cyberflower shop
June	Better men for a better earth	Prayers, videos, book reviews, what's on your fridge, photos	Men's Breakfast Stewardship & Social Justice	Blessing of the Animals – need 2 weeks ahead	SummerSpirit details Knox Strings & Winds for Fathers' Day	Invite Scott Swanson to speak or preach?
July	Religious aspect of our life					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to read the Bible. • Resource: Debra has a book. • Past sermons, intros to readings • Prayers • Camping • Book reviews, books for kids, camping songs • Self-study opportunities,

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Videos etc. related to SummerSpirit Leaders
August	Religious aspect of our life;				Welcoming Sunday Content to Debra by 3 rd week August	
September	Welcome		<p>2 ministry focus – Exploring Faith Cubs & Brownies</p>	<p>Weekly building updates Group start-ups, meeting dates Week 1: Welcome Sunday Week 3: Need info on Thanksgiving Special Appeal</p>	<p>Sermon exchange with Presbyterian church Posters form new groups, a financial goal / stewardship goal, leaders present on what their teams have been doing, Building update, Paypal?</p>	<p>Possible timing for stewardship – a mini campaign?</p>
October	First United		<p>First United & Community Lunch</p>	<p>General: Renter profile Thanksgiving, special appeal Stewardship Campaign 2 – 3 weeks ahead of campaign start Week 3: We Remember ministry</p>	<p>ADDED BY BRUCE: Fall 2016 welcoming and advertising campaign kicks off, targeting Church Seekers.</p>	<p>2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pos. first united new mister profile? Fall Fling? Knox Strings & Winds Dance? Food justice? <p>Lists of needed items at First UC</p> <p>Thank you cards through the website</p>
November				<p>General Theme: Community Focus –</p>	<p>ADDED BY BRUCE: Kick off of the rotating quarterly</p>	<p>November 2016: Can we re-invent Advent Fun Night? Focus on UBC</p>

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				<p>Start of November: Prep a website advent special web presentation?</p> <p>Stewardship Campaign</p> <p>Remembrance Day</p> <p>All Saints</p> <p>Stewardship & Social Justice</p> <p>Christmas Special</p> <p>Appeal info needed after All Saints</p> <p>MID NOVEMBER: Need information on dates and high level info about Advent & Christmas events</p>	<p>team updates during the community announcement time.</p>	<p>students? Books boutique, Advent wreath making, tree decorating, soup. Conversation café – serve soup, invite UBC kids, Presbyterian friends</p> <p>Post the slides of the fallen from Knox</p> <p>E-card sending site – pick greeting, verse, images, etc.</p> <p>Advent Prep – can we do something nice for the Knox community? Would Tacye do a day of card making? Advent study?</p> <p>Christmas caroling at save-on foods to advertise carol singalong? Acting up and choir together? Connection cards to give out.</p>
December	Theme: Family, Los Posadas		Rip & Stitch	<p>Christmas Special</p> <p>Appeal – should end on epiphany</p> <p>Week 2: Office closure (details)</p> <p>Week 3: Epiphany details needed</p>		<p><u>December</u></p> <p>Challenge each of the teams to think of something they can do locally – eg. make cookies for local fire station</p> <p>Educational video with Liz?</p> <p>Carol Singalong – Family, friends and neighbours event</p> <p>2 worship services -</p> <p>Something for families</p> <p>Optional: Banners articles</p>

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Current State Analysis

Congregational and Communications Statistics

Knox United Church has the following as of October 2016:

- 140 people in the congregation
- 160-180 subscribed to the News and Notes
- 642-1000 website impressions/month

Knox has social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, however none of these are currently actively managed.

Situational Analysis (SWOT)

Strengths

- Knox congregation is close-knit and can often achieve communications objectives on a direct and interpersonal level.
- Organization is small; does not take many resources to deliver messages through.

Weaknesses

- Aging congregation, slow to adapt to new technologies that would streamline communications.
- Habits have made congregation grow accustomed to certain (outdated) modes of communication.
- Congregation not fully supporting one of the biggest areas of potential engagement with both the broader community and the Knox community: social media.
- Limited technology & resources to produce the best quality communications material (e.g. News and Notes, lack of proper video reflections)
- Difficult to come on same page about what our purpose is.
- Balance between status quo and modernization.
- Haven't installed Church Software, puts directory online, integrates newsletter (2013)

Opportunities

- Digitalization. We have begun to somewhat adapt to emerging trends.
- Sister organizations and communities in the Greater Vancouver area who are dedicated to the same causes. Potential for collaboration. As an individual church, our reach and

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influence may be small, but when we team up, we double our reach without doubling investment of resources.

- Team up with Westside churches, BC Conference, First United
- With ambassadors
- Cross-promotion: events

Threats

- The United Church of Canada's governance structure is being reorganized due to declining membership and large deficits. This changing environment raises lots of questions about the future of the church.
- United Church of Canada as a whole facing declining numbers
- Skepticism toward organized religion

Budget

Needs to be updated here.