

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2026

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“We Are One In The Spirit”

Based on Acts 2:42-47

Some years ago, a visitor arrived at the Church Office and began to talk of a difficult life with many ups and downs through the years and the need to find a new place to live. She impressed upon me her religious beliefs, and her desire to live in a church affiliated complex. I offered some suggestions of various local agencies that might be able to assist, with both her financial and housing needs. And off she went.

A few weeks later, the same woman appeared at the door again. This time, a little more insistently, she told me again of her situation once. Sensing that we weren't really getting to the question on her mind, I asked her directly, “What is it that you want from me?” She replied, “I want you to put in a good word to the housing authority for me!”

“Have you spoken with the minister of the church affiliated with the housing complex,” I responded. “No,” was the answer. “I figured you could do that when you talk to him! You're both ministers. You must talk to one another,

right?”

I was both astounded and humbled all in the same moment:

- Astounded that this individual had come to the conclusion that I somehow was going to arrange for her new apartment because she was a good Christian
- Humbled because she made me realize:
 - o No, I did not know the name of the Minister of the church she mentioned.
 - o Rarely do I chat with Ministers from other churches around town.
 - o I have little understanding of what other Christian churches in my own community were doing to serve their people.

Here we are, ordained clergy of some twenty or so churches in the same town, each and every one of us taking care of our flocks, visiting at the hospital, preparing sermons; each of us caring passionately in our own ways to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and draw people closer to God, faith and salvation, and I'd be lucky to be able to name more than five of them!

This was not a welcome revelation!

The scripture lesson from Acts makes me thoughtful, yet a little cynical...

- Wouldn't life be wonderful if we could just figure out a way to share everything, all the time?
- Wouldn't church be wonderful if all we ever had to do was sing and pray and eat together?
- Wouldn't it be amazing if people watched us to this and immediately turned their life over to Christ. Our church would grow and grow and grow!

Then of course, reality sets in.

- People are people; we talk a lot about sharing, but we're really not as good at it as we'd like to think we are.
- There's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure your hour of worship runs smoothly and is meaningful.
- My neighbours have watched me go to church every Sunday since I moved in, and it doesn't seem to have inspired them to find the Lord yet? (The day the car wouldn't start and I had to beg a ride to church from next door doesn't

count)

And then the whispers within begin...

- What am I doing wrong?
- What are we missing?
- Are we failing at this church thing?

The believers in Acts succeeded as they worked together:

- Because they had to.
- Because there was no other option.

You can't tell me that there weren't differing opinions in the room about how the scalloped potatoes should have been prepared or whether they should have started worship with Holy, Holy, Holy or Thine Be the Glory. But at that time, and in that moment, they worked together,

- Because they had to.
- Because they wanted to.
- Because they chose to.

At this time in history, small clusters of believers were worshipping and watching their backs all at the same time. They were a determined group, but they were in a dangerous position if they were caught by the Romans or ratted out by their neighbours. They were good, every day folk, who had no more or no less than anyone

else. Life was a struggle, but they chose

- To struggle together;
- To share with each other,
- To encourage one another,
- To be there for one another.

And what they discovered as they shared, struggled, encouraged and supported one another, was that the Spirit of Christ shared, struggled, encouraged and supported them alongside their efforts. That quiet joy that comes with, emerged and spread through the believers gathered.

- Some looking in saw that joy on faces.
 - Others felt the warmth in the room.
 - Everyone wanted to be a part of it.
- These believers didn't have more., but they had everything.

My friends, I wonder if the church is calling us again, to be like those early believers in the Book of Acts.

- Most churches don't have the money they used to.
- We know we don't have the people we used to.
- And we are fully aware that there is no way we can compete with the glitz and the glam that this world offers today.

But...

We can gather, and share, and laugh.

We can worship and sing and pray.

We can eat together, exchange recipes and offer soup to the sick and lonely.

We can tell stories of life and of faith.

And people will see the joy on our faces.

Others will feel the warmth in the room.

We might be little.

But we will have everything we need.

And others will want to be a part of it.

Oddly enough, this is how we will begin to grow again.

Knowing each other's names.

Bringing the Spirit of Christ into the room.

Because we want to.

Because we need to.

Because we have to.

Amen.