

Geoduck Circuit Report – June 2018

Saviour of the Nations - Vancouver, BC

Blessings

- We continue to work hard connecting to people in the community via our ESL classes, WeChat, Meetup, and Facebook and see a steady stream of new people through them.
- Qiang Wang was installed as our vicar in the Spring. Qiang continues to do well in his studies. He is leading worship and working hard to learn to do this in English; he is teaching two Chinese language Bible studies each week and focusing on outreach to Chinese.
- We continue to have a great deal of Kingdom Work to do--we sent three people home to their countries (China, Japan & Korea) praying they will connect with WELS ministries. The Lord knows how our work will bear fruit, but there continues to be regular opportunities in this regard. On the receiving end, we also are welcoming a new woman who came to us from a WELS ministry in the Philippines.
- We are working on building relationships and Lord willing a mass BIC instruction class to South Sudanese people in Surrey. If God blesses this ministry opportunity it will lead to SOTN having a second worship site and target area. We are focusing on an area called Surrey Central (which will one day be the downtown) in which 68(!!) high-rise towers are planned or being built.

Challenges

- As our expected offering contributions rise and subsidy falls, we are beginning to see a widening rift, or inability to keep up with our stewardship. So far we attribute this to the fact that most of our prospects and new members are immigrants with little stable income, inconsistent worship attendance, and general spiritual immaturity to the grace of giving.
- Ministering in shared rented space will always present challenges to our congregation: less than ideal worship times or space usage, frustrations working with our landlord congregation & pastor, very limited storage space, etc. We work hard at maintaining a positive relationship with Wilson Heights United (our landlord) because the location and situation is as affordable as conceivably possible in Vancouver.

Grace - Seattle, WA & Salem - Edmonds, WA

Blessings

- WELS Home Mission accepted our Ministry Enhancement proposal. The process of calling an urban ministry pastor will begin in July.
- Worship on Saturday evenings has been fairly consistent with 12-18 people.
- The 4 man leadership team (2 from Grace and 2 from Salem) are working well together and beginning the process of the two congregations become one new

congregation. Gary Ide has volunteered to lead the group as an outside consultant.

- The people of Salem have been very generous in offering to lease the Salem - Edmonds campus to help fund a restart at Grace, knowing that this will be a long term commitment (5 to 10 years). We are real close to signing a large long term lease with another Christian Church.

Challenges

- Change is slow and progressing in the right direction. After consulting with Lucas Bitter in Intown Atlanta, Paul Biedenbender in Denver and Al Schleusener in St. Paul, we still have a long way to go. We will need to progress a little faster in order to be ready for a new mission minded pastor. This may cause some issues with a small handful of people.

Beautiful Savior - Everett, WA

Blessings

- We continue to be blessed with lots of “people power” for our various areas of ministry. This is huge when it comes to our current budget restraints.
- We have made tremendous progress in paying down the principle of our current CEF loan through a debt retirement program. We are now under \$1.5 million. Still a long way to go for a congregation our size.
- All of our major tenants have renewed their leases.
- We have begun to renovate our worship facility with a “pay as you go” plan. New chairs and paint have been taken care of and make a tremendous difference. New commercial glass doors have just been installed and make a big difference. Next: flooring (\$35,000 to \$40,000)
- First Fruits is our community “food bank” garden. Half of the food harvested goes to local food banks. This year we will open it up for all people. It’s our hope to connect with our community in several ways through this effort.

Challenges

- Like most of our WELS congregations in the Pacific Northwest, we continue the challenge of connecting with the unchurched in our community. Most traditional forms of outreach are dead ends for us. Taking an idea from Intown Lutheran in Atlanta, we are hoping to have a table at our local festivals, farmer markets and charity runs. And we continue our friendship evangelism emphasis.

Christ the King – Bremerton, WA

Blessings

- CtK recently completed a 3-5 year strategic plan focusing on the “goal” of 20% growth in worship attendance and a 20% growth in school attendance.
- This led to an understanding by our membership that a facility addition is not just a dream but a necessity as worship space is past capacity as we have averaged

210-215 in worship (when our “max zone” of attendance is 95 per service) for the past 2 years offering 2 services on Sunday and 1 on Monday (which isn’t even close to capacity but...). We have hired on with an architect and by the reading of this report will have met with the county for our pre-app. We pray we find a resolution with moving forward with this, or with staffing by the summer. We are thankful that God provided a little cushion for some of the pre-building costs of planning with a gift of \$300K from a member who went to heaven last spring!

- We continue a plan to reach out to our straying/non-attending members to get more realistic with our numbers (438 souls on the roster when in reality we are at more around 350) but man, this takes work!
- 26-1 plan looking at being implemented by the end of this year (group of similarly life/age/occupation matched members seeing a Friend Who Needs Jesus)
- Our school is growing and we have responded with adequate staffing. We thank God for Jill Sarro and Sammi Koepsell's faithful service this past year at CTK! After this year Jill will no longer be able to teach and by God’s grace Nikki Hintz accepted the call to replace her position for this next school year. We are also welcoming Vinny Hallwas as our Principal Training Program (PTP) candidate and 5-6 teacher! He moves here early July. We are grateful for all of our teachers, and as another Synodically trained teacher Nikki will also be a great blessing to our ministry at CTK School!
- The building plan will affect school as well as church as any addition will be with a gym and extra classrooms/office space.
- We are looking at implementing training for emergency situations at church and school including ALICE (active shooter response program) training and planning.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Implementing a strategic plan with a volunteer ministry.
- Building excitement over the possibility of a building plan which will probably include a dedication of over 3million dollars in a blue-collar, sugar-daddyless congregation.
- Encouraging faithful, first-fruit giving of our members to avoid another offering-budget shortfall.
- Praying God leads a bunch of lost/straying souls back to the fold or to another WELS/ELS fold.
- Balancing time with family, ministry, and staying healthy.

Living Hope – Redmond, WA

No Report

Calvary - Bellevue, WA

No Report