

## Geoduck Circuit Report – June 2017

### **Christ the King – Bremerton, WA**

Greetings in Christ! We praise God from whom ALL blessings flow as we seek to carry out His Great Commission at our church and school!

Major highlights of this past year include, but are not limited to:

- Our church was blessed with increase in attendance both at church and school. We are grateful to the God of the Church, and yet we are going through an extensive elder-focused time that may bring our numbers down around 50+ souls in the next several months- but positively impact our membership as we plan ministry in the future based upon “real numbers” and not “book numbers.”
- The Lord in His wisdom blessed one of our members, Eric Rudolph, by bringing him home to heaven! Eric, a single man, saw fit to leave CTK in his will and we have received from his estate a gift of around \$320,000! Now what to do with it?!
- CTK’s leadership wisely used this gift as an encouragement to lead our congregation into a strategic SWOT planning process. As a result, we have identified many different ways we are able to continue in the ministry and with this generous gift in the near future. We have found our facilities to be the most lacking and as of this news have entered into a contract with an architecture firm to provide us with a site plan analysis of our current property and what possibilities exist for God’s people at CTK in this endeavor. Please keep this all in your prayers- for peace of mind and the stewardship of God’s people here and abroad that support our ministry to remain faithful and regular- in time, talents, and treasure!
- Our school is going through a blessed growth in enrollment. That brings unique challenges and opportunities to our (WELS typical) understaffed ministry. This is part of what was identified by our strategic planning group, as well as a CLS site visitation team that came out and visited our school this past year under the team-leadership of Paul Hartwig and Cyndi Holman. We are truly grateful for their insight and the honesty and integrity of their mission-minded critique of our ministries. I’d mention Pat Cortright being an integral part of this team, but he’s leaving so he no longer is relevant in our great PNWD. ☺ The CLS visit was a huge success and identified many areas of our ministry that are going well, and many areas of our ministry that we can examine and even improve upon in the months and years to come. We can’t encourage use of this tool in our Synod enough- whether you “feel” your ministry is succeeding or struggling.

We have an exciting year to come! Again, Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

### **Grace - Seattle, WA**

Grace Lutheran Church of Seattle had a good year. This year we have been blessed with a few new people who are very active in the church. Lately a number of people in their 20’s have been attending. Offerings are up. We tried a wine and cheese tasting

evangelism event. We had a small turn out but had an interesting time. We continue our work with autism. The public preschool that rents our basement is asking to renew the contract for another 3 years.

### **Salem - Edmonds, WA**

Salem Lutheran Church of Edmonds has dwindled down to about 20 people. There will be discussions with the District Leadership on where to go from here. The highlights of this year was the Passover meal and the hosting of the LWMS rally. Our community garden continues to move forward. We are meeting new people and they are asking questions about God while we garden.

### **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 about to go under \$1.5 million. Still a long way to go for a congregation our size.
- 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. Next: new commercial glass doors to replace old, cracked wooden doors.
- First Fruits is our community “food bank” garden. Half of the food harvested goes to local food banks. Last year it was just our members gardening so that we could work out the kinks. This year we have families from the schools on our church campus joining us. Next 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.
- We again lost some families this past year to job transfers. This has made things a bit more challenging. We continue to pray that the Lord will use us to bring the gospel to the elect he has already called and will one day call to faith.
- We had two break-ins over the past year. One in the church and the other in our Outreach Center. Because of the schools that lease from us, we have had to up our security. Our local police shared with us that many of the churches in our area have been targeted – empty at night with electronics to trade for drugs. Like many of our congregations – the opioid epidemic is all around us even in upper middle-class suburbia.

## **Savior of the Nations – Vancouver, B.C.**

### Blessings

- We have six adults preparing and close to confirmation in our instruction class, including one woman who speaks only Chinese. We are glad to see three new people confess faith Christ in the last month. And we have another set of students just starting instruction class at this time. We are grateful for the opportunities to see the Holy Spirit working in people's hearts!
- Our ESL classes have been a blessing to us in helping us meet people from around the city, including people from Brazil, the Czech Republic, Hong Kong and China.
- Qiang Wang continues to progress through his coursework as part of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's PSI program (Pastoral Studies Institute). Qiang is completing level 2 of the program and finishing Greek this summer. We are hoping to call him as a vicar at the start of 2018.
- Our Chinese members are exploring the possibility of starting a "Chinese Language School" as an outreach effort. We are excited to see so many of them stepping up in leadership to work on this project. We are hopeful if the Lord holds it open to have trained 3-4 Chinese Sunday school teachers this summer and develop curriculum in the fall. A possible opening date will wait until early 2018 or by fall 2018 at the latest.

### Challenges

- Although God has blessed us recently with a number of new men in our congregation, yet we also face a quandary of those available being not-quite-ready to serve in key leadership roles. Some are new Christians, others struggle with family/work balance and feel unable to step up. At the same time our current leaders are needing to step aside. Our president is terming out. We are saying goodbye to our other key council member/musician this summer who is relocating to Oklahoma to pursue a career opportunity. And our treasurer is needing to retire from his role.

## **Living Hope – Redmond, WA**

No Report

## **Calvary - Bellevue, WA**

No Report