

Geoduck Circuit Report – June 2016

Christ the King – Bremerton, WA

Greetings in Jesus fellow PNW ministries!

The Lord continues to bring blessings of faith to Christ the King in lovely Bremerton and Silverdale Washington! By “blessings” I most certainly mean gifts, opportunities, *and* challenges.

Last year saw the departure of our brother and sister in Christ, Principal Bruce and Beth Babler. They have moved to the land of delightful cheese but awful beer, and so the Lord in His wisdom gave us the opportunity to call Principal Christopher Hintz and his family-wife Nikki, sons Kaden (3rd grade) Logan (1.5 years old) and daughter Kirsten (2nd grade), they are also expecting another little blessing who, if the baby ends up being a boy, I already “know” they are planning to affectionately name Andrew David Schwartz Hintz. Oh, by the way, he accepted that call too! J We welcome the Hintzes and ask you to keep them in prayer as they have all been plenty busy since their arrival in July plugging in to our church family and some of the unique aspects that come with ministry to the ever-transitioning military and our community at CtK!

In other school-ministry news, we are looking at remodeling some rooms at our school to better serve us as we seek to expand our classroom structure from a K-1 to a stand-alone Kindergarten with the added goal of getting to a 2-class per room structure sooner than later (we currently are K-1; 2-4; 5-8). Recently, our congregation unanimously voted to call a .75 FTE teacher to help in that endeavor by teaching 1-2nd grade next year. Mrs. Erica Hoffman has accepted that call and we look forward to greeting her as they move back from Hawaii this July! The school has also started the WELSSA accreditation process. Pray that the Lord of the church continues to bless our enrollment and outreach efforts to that end with us please!

Worship attendance and church membership have grown steadily under the Holy Spirit’s blessing for the last several years, yet with that comes the training of our laity to assist our now-solo pastor, still missing Big Poppe Lambert, in reaching out to members under our care and seeking the straying, which as many of you know full-well is no small task indeed. Moving forward in technology (transitioning to livestream and powerpoint for worship as well as updating our computer system), in our “larger-scale” outreach opportunities (soccer camp now needs a separate PreK camp in addition to our K-3rd grade camp; Fall Festival is almost to the size where we need to have traffic controllers; our end of the year carnival with a few bounce houses saw great success in year 2; Easter and Christmas 4 families; etc.), and in the way we nurture our members in worship, Bible study, and fellowship events has led many at CtK to get involved and become more active in sharing Jesus and serving our fellow members. We are really at the point of a great struggle at church with what the future holds and what direction(s) we are looking at heading in ministry to the North Kitsap Peninsula. Thankfully, we know who holds the future!

God help us not to be the “perfect” church, but to be the ever-struggling “faithful” church you ask us to be! Thank you dear Jesus for showing us perfection we never need to attain, giving that up on Calvary for our shortcomings and sin, and rising again

so we can be a “living in forgiveness” Church through the one who lives and reigns now and forever! To God be the glory! Keep us in your prayers as you all are in ours!

Grace - Seattle, WA

Grace Lutheran Church in Seattle is called a Kingdom Church by the District Mission Counselor. This means that Grace serves the needs of God’s Kingdom.

- We have WELS members from 4 to 5 states come to Seattle for Hospital and cancer care.
- We serve college campuses with WELS members.
- Many members live in apartments in Seattle, but move to homes outside the city because of cost.
- The numbers at Grace go up and down. It is hard to have a solid nucleus to keep the church going and leadership to organize events.

We are blessed with

- A public preschool that rents space at Grace for the last 9 years. This preschool brings 60 new people in contact with the church each year. Sadly, we have not picked up any new members.
- We host an Asperger socialization group that meets twice per month at Grace. Over the 4 years Pastor Gumm has been able to build relationships and have started talking about God. The progress is slow

Salem - Edmonds, WA

Salem Lutheran Church of Edmonds is a small but dedicated group of Christians in a building far too big for its needs.

- We rejoice that we were able to sell the parsonage and put a new roof on the church.
- We are few and we need to pick what we do very carefully.
- We have a community garden as a way to meet people and build relationships which, hopefully, will lead to membership.

It is our goal to bring parts of the building up to where we can host public preschools and pass the permit process.

Calvary - Bellevue, WA

Blessings

- Two new confirmed members
- Average church attendance has seen a notable increase over the past 3 months

Challenges

- Calvary will be evaluating her current ministry over the next several months and looking for ways to improve current ministries as well as searching for areas to possibly expand with new ministry opportunities

Beautiful Savior - Everett, WA

Blessings

- We are 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 have begun to renovate our worship facility with a “pay as you go” plan. New chairs and paint will be taken care of by the fall.
- We have started a community “food bank” garden. Half of the food harvested will go to local food banks. 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.
- Losing some families this past year to job transfers 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.

Savior of the Nations – Vancouver, B.C.

Blessings

- Qiang Wang has almost completed level 1 of PSI program and continues to work hard studying for the ministry. He will come on board as a part-time staff in July.
- God has really been blessing our congregation in cross-cultural ministry that has seen our Chinese ministry really blossom with new adult baptisms, confessions of faith, and opportunities to share God's Word.

Challenges

- We have more on our plate than our little congregation can handle--a blessing in itself, but we miss opportunities for the Gospel because of language, manpower, etc.
- David Sigrist and his wife Katie are working through a difficult time because the child they are expecting has numerous complications and potential birth defects.

Living Hope – Redmond, WA

Living Hope was blessed to participate in a door-to-door canvassing campaign with the help of Mr. Dave Malnes and his newly-founded ministry, *Praise & Proclaim* on the weekend of May 20-21. Friday night's 3-hour long training session was attended by 20+ people and Saturday's 4-hour (2 a.m., 2 p.m.) door-to-door effort was conducted by seven teams of two who went out to sow the seeds of the gospel in our surrounding

community. The "mighty warriors" visited hundreds of homes, many with Hindu families, and were able to share the gospel of God's love in Christ with 130 individuals! The plans are to continue with this type of outreach effort, going out again on Saturday, June 4, for two hours in the morning to follow up on our original mailing for the 4 Sunday sermon series, "Finding Freedom" and then do a mass-mailing to the homes directly around our congregation for our "Road Trip" VBS to be held July 18-21 and then go door-to-door again to those homes with a half-sheet handout emphasizing the 4-day themes we'll be teaching on during our VBS. We are also in the process of extending a call to a Synod-trained called worker to serve as our Preschool Director/Lead Teacher. Exciting times! We currently have a preschool staff of 3 teachers and 3 aides and an enrollment of around 55 students. Our current lead teacher/director, Aimee Heimbigner, is stepping down after serving in that role for the first 8 years that our preschool has been in operation. In addition, we are resurfacing and re-striping our parking lot at the end of June. Challenges remain for us to integrate our Preschool with our congregation under one Mission Statement as well as integrating the budgets of both. Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to do what we can do with the resources of manpower and money to reach out with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ to our surrounding community. On another note, we celebrate 10 years this August in our new facility.