

spring report

WILLOW PARK CHURCH NETWORK - JUNE, 2018



Looking back...

It has been a great few months here at Willow Park Church.

I have asked each of our key leaders to share some thoughts that will help you gain a clearer picture of the life and energy across the Willow Park Church network. What is reflected in this report is, in many ways, just the tip of the iceberg; one could fill a whole book with the fantastic stories and ministries across the church.

We have so much to be thankful for!

- Pastor Phil

Our Vision: REAL Life

Our vision is to see lives transformed by Jesus in the Okanagan Valley. These key ideas guide all that we do:

The Redeemed Life is about living a Gospel-centred life. Many of our ministry programs and events are designed to introduce people to Jesus for the first time - Alpha, Living Nativity and Community Groups to name a few.

The Empowered Life is where we really begin to change! God loves us too much to leave us the way we are. Our key ministry programs for the Empowered Life are Set Free and Community Groups.

The Active Life describes what we are called to DO and how we are called to be representatives of Jesus in our world. Life Tracks is the program at WPC that helps people discover their God given natural strengths as well as their spiritual gifts.

The Listening Life is where we believe true life is found. Prayer is of ultimate importance in our church and we make it a high priority in all we do.

Youth

- Pastor Joel Feddersen

We have had an incredible 2018 so far in the Youth Department. It all started with RUSH, and this was a huge highlight for our youth. Many young people gave their lives to Jesus or encountered God for the very first time. The prayer and ministry room was full. There was a felt desperation for God, and many beautiful miracles happened.

During Spring Break we traveled to LA with our older Sr. High students. This year was extra special. We drove four buses with 125 people right into a storm - torrential rain on Skid Row! This turned into the biggest blessing. We set up a coffee shop in a little church right in the middle of Skid Row, and hundreds of desperate homeless people poured into the building to our waiting youth! We greeted them with coffee, and spent three days serving them with prayer; loving the ladies by doing their nails, hair, and make-up, while dozens of people picked up instruments and created a joyful worship team of who sang their hearts out! God created the happiest place on earth right in the middle of one of the darkest places on earth.

This trip was transformative on so many levels. On Easter Sunday we baptized 15 of our youth and celebrated new life with all of their families.

We are so excited about what God is doing and can't wait for the Ark this summer! We're expecting large camps and are hoping to sponsor at least 100 kids to spend a week in our family and experience the love of Christ.

Families

- Pastor Tanya Shiosaki

21 Days of Prayer

We started January with 21 Days of Prayer, and so many people were eagerly anticipating answers to prayer - diving even deeper into their faith.

(Families, continued...)

Deeper, Gather and Tiny Blessings

Women and their little ones, growing deeper, sharing life and filling our rooms with laughter and prayer! Each of these programs are unique to the women and children that they serve.

Volunteers

We are so blessed here at Willow Park Church with amazing people who step up and serve each year at our RUSH Youth Conference! Each area of service was full and then some throughout the weekend, so many willing to jump in and lend a hand to serve our youth. Serving together in this way builds a healthy community. Loving and encouraging each other seems to come so naturally and is a beautiful gift.

Spring Break

My view for 11 days was the backside of 4 school busses as the youth team went to LA to serve the homeless community on Skid Row and joined with Metro Kids. There is something beautiful about seeing the busses, one behind the other; they almost dance on the freeways as they drive to the same destination... community... together... unified... it doesn't get better than this. Our young people are brave and courageous and most definitely on fire for Jesus!

IF: Gathering (Women's Conference)

The planning came together beautifully, and over 170 ladies gathered for our spring conference. The organizing team did a terrific job and we experienced many life-changing moments. Fan into flame, love & share life with each other: those were the powerful messages communicated at IF.

Watson Lake

Watson Lake is always on our minds, but as spring closes we see our teams form and again the beauty of His people come together to serve others incredibly. God is good, we are looking forward to seeing all of our Yukon kids again and can't wait to see what He has planned for summer camp.

Worship Arts

- Pastor Curtis Tulman

As a worship department we consistently provide meaningful and quality worship experiences for all six congregations at the four sites we gather at each week. This is due in no small measure to the many dozens of volunteer musicians and technicians who give their time and talent to serve.

Chris Neufeld is our technical director, and he has the incredibly huge and complex task of designing, maintaining and staffing all the systems necessary for our worship services – and he makes it look easy.

Coordinating these teams are musical and technical directors and coordinators and campus pastors who make my job as the worship pastor for the network almost redundant.

Special thanks to Sarah Madden, Josh Leventhal, Chris Baxter, Karin Geleynse, Jordan Pilgrim, Doug Wiebe, Dru Carlsson, the Dorseys, the Holtslanders, Scott Hildebrand, Michaela Burger and the many other worship leaders and technical crew members who serve so consistently well – we are grateful for all of you.

Levite Summit

Our worship department has been helping organize the Levite Summit since its inception over five years ago. This year hundreds of worship leaders from across western Canada gathered in Kelowna on March 2nd and 3rd for a weekend of workshops, worship concerts and keynote speaker Bruxy Cavey. It was a wonderful weekend of equipping for many people at Willow Park Church.

Children's

- Pastor Tanya Shiosaki

Kids Club & Thrive

Our winter session (January - March) of Kids Club was amazing. We had 35 children attending each week with over half of those children being from outside of our church. Kids were excited to learn and explore about the life of Jesus and the gift of salvation He has offered to everyone. Thrive saw a similar number of grade 4-5 kids who continued to engage in worship and grow in their faith in Christ. These kids have grown to develop a deep relationship with their leaders that we are confident will continue to develop over time.

Kids Church

We have continued to establish a sense of community at each of our services. Saturday night is a quieter time in our classrooms with about 15-20 children from birth to grade 5. They are a committed group though who enjoy hanging out with their leaders as they explore the Bible. Sunday morning has seen many new and returning faces to kids church. It's been exciting to see and hear how God has led these families to join us. Sunday nights Pursuit service continues to grow as families are expanding and others are seeing this as more of a multigenerational service for all ages, not just youth and young adults.

Spring Break Camp

This year's camp was mind blowing with close to 170 kids and 60 volunteers through the week. It officially passed the numbers we would see at our summer camp. Over 50% of the kids were from outside Willow Park Church. Through the week we spoke of having courage and trusting in Jesus to lead the way. Our "kid to kid" project during camp raised over \$800 towards MCC school kits, as kids once again proved generosity comes easily to them when they are given an opportunity to help. **3**

Ministry of Presence

- Pastor Curtis Tulman

The Ministry of Presence (MOP) has several aspects, each designed to foster connectivity within and health for our church community.

Our "Fellowship for Six" has over 100 people gathering each month in groups of six for food and fellowship.

Our Home Visitation, Care Facility Visitation, and Hospital Visitation teams provide a warm and comforting presence for a large number of shut-ins and elderly as well as those facing medical challenges. We are developing a Parish Nursing program – a health ministry for our faith community which emphasizes the wholeness of body, mind, and spirit – and we are very excited about this. Special thanks to team leaders the Parsons, the Kings, the Blocks, the Goshulaks, and Tracy Foster – and a very, very special thanks to Ken Gerbrandt for conceiving and building this vital ministry from the ground up.

Prime Timers (55+)

- Pastor Curtis Tulman

Plans are in the works for creating more connecting points and worthy programs for our vibrant and diverse community of older-aged adults. Jim Church holds weekly Bible studies on Wednesday mornings at 10 am (Church@33 Fireside Room). We renewed the "Hymn Sing" which takes place the first Saturday of every month at 10 am (Church@33 Fireside Room). Our recent Hymn Sing saw close to 40 participants including four guitars, a piano, an accordion, a bassist, a saxophone and pedal steel! In January we hosted a 55+ Outreach Lunch at Church@33 that served up soup and sandwiches along with some great musical entertainment and an inspirational speaker to over 120 guests. We enjoyed another 55+ Outreach Lunch on May 25 where Pastor Phil shared an inspiring story about the last preacher on the Titanic. Many people responded to the Gospel!

Church@33

- Pastor Steve Johnson

Christmas & New Years

Christmas was such a busy time. So many new people attended from the community & we have seen the ongoing fruit of this beautiful start to 2018. The New Years celebration service was well attended and the spiritual devotion was so inspiring.

A Church of Prayer

We began the year with 21 Days of Prayer, and it was terrific to see a growing number of our congregation engaging with the Lord in a more profound way.

Willow One Prayer nights continue to be a highlight of the month as these very special gatherings certainly build community and spiritual momentum, which is reflected in the amount of people that come to Christ through our weekend gatherings.

Groups

Two new community groups started this spring. Grief Share, Divorce Care and Alpha have all been well attended. We ran our first ever Men's Set Free with 36 attending and it was a powerful time. Men Unite gathered every month and went through the Andy Stanley series called "Follow".

The Work as Worship Retreat had 35 people attend, it has been inspiring to see people catch a vision for mission in the workplace.

The Vancouver Marathon running group raised over \$25,000 for Child of Mine in May. Amazing!

Hope Centre

The Hope Centre is now working in partnership with the Kelowna Gospel Mission, and we see between 20 and 50 people visiting this weekly outreach. Many receive help with our "Baby Basket" program and counselling.

Easter

12 responded on Easter morning and 20 baptisms have taken place through this period. A blessing!

South

- Pastor Glen Madden

Willow Park Church South got off to a great start in 2018! Despite the thick snow, our Sunday gatherings continued to be well attended, and the presence of God has touched the times of worship and teaching.

We have had baby dedications, testimonies and prayer times in our services that give us a continual reminder that God is at work.

Prayer at the South

We now have a weekly prayer meeting on Sunday morning (9 am), and it has been a joy to see that grow (especially with young adults) as well as getting 20% of our church out to our own once a month WillowOne Prayer meetings.

Community Groups

The primary ministry focus at the South is our Community Groups. Two new ones started in the fall, and it has been great seeing them flourish into the new year. I am very grateful to the Community Group leaders who give pastoral care, prayer and teaching leadership in all of our groups.

Outreach

Everything from continually sharing the gospel to supporting the "Coldest Night of the Year" walk en masse; giving gift bags to the LA missions trip and visiting one another when there is extreme sickness; ladies gathered in the South Art Project and neighbours are being served.

I am grateful that we have such a vibrant community at South!

Glenmore

- Pastor Jordan Pilgrim

I want to give you all a little update on what has been going on at the Glenmore campus since the New Year.

Christmas

We had such a special time over Christmas with many people coming out to join us at our Christmas Eve service. It was so encouraging to see the church alive over Christmas. Since then we have been building off that momentum and working to build a solid foundation for a great future in the Glenmore area.

A Growing Church Community

When I reflect on all the exciting things that have been happening in our church over the past number of months three key areas are brought to mind.

First, I see how we as a church are maturing into a community that genuinely cares for one another and is committed to each other and to those in our lives that don't yet know the love of Jesus.

Second, I am encouraged by the excitement that has been growing with us meeting together and praying in Glenmore on a monthly basis. There will be no real growth in our community if it is not rooted in prayer.

Third, it has been so encouraging to see new faces regularly attending on Sunday mornings and choosing to call Willow Park Glenmore their home. Over the past month or so we have been averaging nearly 70 people per week. There has been a really positive feeling in the church. It has also been encouraging to see our young adults group grow to 25. Such a great group.

Thank you for caring and continuing to pray for us in Glenmore.

Creekside

- Pastor Doug Wiebe

Creekside continues to experience the faithfulness of God and the faithfulness of His people. After a challenging summer and early fall which found us moving from venue to venue, it has been good to resettle into our regular home. The challenges we faced could have set us back as a church, but instead, the church family has rallied and we are as strong numerically as we have ever been, with over 100 adults and likely 50 or more children and youth most Sunday mornings. We are truly a multi-generational church and it is our goal that our services would be inclusive of all ages as much as possible.

Children & Youth

Our children's department has continued to be a thriving part of our church community, as Jeanette and Sean Lipinski have given us such consistency and strength as leaders.

Other volunteers run separate grades 4-6 and 7-12 youth classes every Sunday morning and this willing heart is so key to the spiritual health of Creekside. A young couple, Steven and Kelsey Warkentin continue to serve as midweek youth leaders, opening their home to our young people every other Tuesday evening. They have done this now for several years and they have been such good models for our youth in terms of a healthy marriage, family and what it means to live as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Seniors 55+

We have a strong seniors group that meets regularly each month for fellowship, prayer and mutual support. This group has been an integral point of connection for many people. There are 20-30 who show up regularly each month and this group has gone from being purely a social gathering to becoming more of a spiritual support group - prayer has become a significant part of each meeting.

(Creekside continued...)

Worship

We have been without a worship pastor since April 2017, but God has raised up volunteers from within the church to fill this role on most Sundays which has been a blessing.

It has been good to work alongside Chris Wiens who fills many different roles and oversees many aspects of our grades four and up programs. He often hosts on Sunday mornings, he occasionally speaks, he runs floor hockey for the men mid-week and he and his family are key small group promoters within Creekside. His passion for mission has also broadened our perspective as a church.

We serve a faithful God and God continues to raise up faithful servants in order to grow His Church. As of the end of May I step down from my role and I look forward to supporting the community as we seek a new campus pastor.

Closing thoughts...

- Pastor Phil Collins

As the Senior Pastor I am deeply grateful to all of our administrative staff, our accounting department, the janitorial team and the communications team who work tirelessly to keep such a diverse church moving forward and enable us to serve our wider community.

I am also thankful for the spiritual leadership our board of elders give to the strategic vision of the church.

I hope that this report has given you a wider understanding of the ministry of Willow Park Church.

May we all work together to build a church of prayer, that will proclaim the truth of the gospel throughout this region.