



# *The Monthly Heartbeat*

**The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter**

Volume 23 JULY 2016 Issue 7

Embrace

Enfold

Encourage

Equip

Exalt

## **COMMUNICATION STYLES and SKILLS!**

Dear Congregation: Attached to this Heartbeat is a summary of the May 15 Vitality History Workshop Herm Laninga led. The Vitality Team once again wants to thank you for your attendance and participation and to the Hospitality Team for hosting the potluck! It was outstanding. It took some time to digest and then summarize all that was recorded by each “decade” table so please review the summary and if there are any misrepresentations/errors, please call it to his attention.

In our review, the Vitality Team agreed that the most common thread running through all the decades was communication – good or lacking! In our successful ministry times, communication was strong – everyone was on the same page working toward a clear vision. In difficult times, the congregation disagreed about key issues or ministry goals/direction. We were definitely not all on the same page. So what is the next step on the Vitality pathway we have chosen to follow? The Vitality Team recommended to the Elders, and they have approved, that we engage a communications workshop specialist to teach/train us how to improve our communication environment. A flyer introducing Tena Crosby is attached. Tentatively this workshop is scheduled for Friday evening Sept. 16 and Saturday morning, Sept. 17. So please mark your calendars!

## **Mission Drift**

By Pastor Scott

The ocean is an amazing thing. The beauty of the waves, the constant lapping of water on the shore, the beach and the sand as they squish through your feet. And most im-

portantly the fun of finding the things the water washes up. One of the amazing things of the ocean is its current. Something dropped overboard from a cruise ship or tossed into the ocean from a pier on one side of the world can turn up on the opposite side all because of the current. Currents are powerful and unless there is an engine or some other force exerted against the current, an object will move and drift and get washed up.

While beach combing is fun as a pastime, the lesson of the current ought to be taken to heart by every organization. It is easy to drift, much easier than fighting against the current. It is easy to get in the water and let it take you wherever it goes. Unfortunately, many churches, nonprofits and businesses adopt exactly this perspective. To let life carry you along without intentionally charting a course, correcting your course, and staying on course is dangerous. The passive process is called mission drift.

It happens when a group forgets why it exists. Every person and group of people must ask the question of purpose. The man must ask, “Why has God put me here?” The answer, “To love him. To lead his church. To enjoy an obedient relationship with Jesus.” The marriage must ask the same thing. But the answer is different. God made marriage to be a picture of Christ’s love for the church and the churches submission to Christ. Furthermore marriage exists to bring forth godly offspring. So why does the Church exist? The church exists to proclaim the gospel to the world. Now if a man, or a marriage or a church forgets why it exists and starts letting the current of culture carry it, then the answers to that question will begin to change. It will lose its created purpose and substitute a false purpose. When this happens, it is really, really hard to reclaim the original purpose, though not impossible.

....continued on page two

## **Items of Interest from June's Council Meeting**

By Michael Boer

The council members, including the outgoing and incoming members were treated to homemade pie from Ruth Stadt prior to the meeting.

Council approved Denise Doezema to purchase a printer for accounting use as she is the treasurer for the church.

Council decided to put the "Talking About God" evening meetings on hold during the summer months. Ideas and suggestions were made for topics. Darlys and Bekka volunteered to work with David on ideas and more volunteers to help would be welcomed.

Building and Maintenance Team is still planning to sell the three-section portables and bids are being gathered. The plan is to have them removed from the property by the end of summer.

David and Terry will be working on the forum to have those campaigning for local judge positions speak at our church. They are waiting to see who will be filing for the local positions.

## **Thank you from the Ruiter Family**

We wanted to say one more thank you to our church family for your faithful prayer and financial support over the past 3 years as we worked to bring Eliana home. We have been overwhelmed with God's grace and goodness as we saw Him answer our prayers and provide everything we needed to complete our daughter's adoption.

Thank you to all who kept us uplifted in prayer; bought cookies and candy; donated items to, made purchases at or helped out with our garage sales; and made monetary contributions. We have been truly blessed to see God meet all of our needs through the faithfulness and generosity of His people and pray that God will continue to use this body to "care for the orphan (James 1:27)" with an outpouring of support for the Konings!

Mark and Rockelle Ruiter

## **Mission Drift...cont. from page one**

Through repentance, and a commitment to God's original intention any man or woman, marriage or church can be renewed.

So why am I writing about Mission Drift? Because part of the renewal and revitalizing process of Hope in Christ Church depends upon each and every one of us believing and guarding the original vision. It depends upon us believing that we exist to be a light to the nations. It is grounded in our praying for God to make us what he desires, not what we desire. Churches, like any institution can drift, but God wants to renew us. That is the gospel. He wants to breath life into the dry bones. He wants to raise the spiritually dead and the metaphorically sick and he wants to do it through us. That is his intention.

Are we willing to give up our comfort to be a part of his plans? Are we willing to change and let go of some of the things that might actually be drift instead of original? The barnacles that grow on stuff weren't there in the beginning but getting rid of them can be really hard. Are we willing to change the way we live, the people we talk to, the content of our conversations, the way we manage our time and the things we do with our money in order to see the lost in our world reached with the gospel of Jesus?

This encompasses the meat of our next great question for the fall. Do we have the vision, the intention and the means to be all that God intends us to be? I believe we do, for God promises to give us every spiritual blessing in Christ. We are not lacking in courage, in wisdom, in fortitude, in a message, in hope, in the power of the supernatural, or in any thing else that really matters. God has given it all to us. We are more than conquerors and by the winds of the Spirit, we can once again hoist a sail and correct course and become an evangelistic congregation that enjoys the mission of the Lord.

## **Update from the Konings**

After much prayer and several encouraging conversations with medical specialists, we accepted a referral for our son! He is a cute 3-year old little guy from an orphanage in Beijing. Because his paperwork has not yet been completed, we will probably be waiting 4-6 months until we are able to travel to pick him up. The Lord has given us PEACE and JOY as we look forward to bringing him home! Please continue to pray for both our family and our son as we continue to make plans for joining our lives together.

Brian and Melissa Koning and children

# GEMS 2015-2016 - Year in Review

By Darlys Recker, Club Coordinator

GEMS (Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior) is a Christian ministry for women and girls. Using the Bible as our guide, women mentor girls and help them grow in their love for God and for others. The Hope in Christ Church GEMS has had an amazing year reflecting on the theme "Choose Truth" based on Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." We had 22 girls participate in GEMS this year with an average attendance of 17 girls per meeting. Our counselors were Jennifer Boer, Tricia Bravener, Rosa McAlister, Darlys Recker, Ida Richards, Rockelle Ruitter, and Jolene Skovron. The counselors started the year with the Annual Regional Workshop August 12 and club started September 21. We met on the first and third Mondays from 6:30 - 8:00 PM. Our first highly anticipated event was the Annual Sleep-over and Theme Night held in the church. Participation in the theme night earned the girls their first badge for the year. During club we started each meeting with Praise and Worship led by Rockelle, had a business meeting led by our president, Amber Obbink, and recited our aim, "To do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. Micah 6:8." Then the girls broke out into small groups for the lesson, prayer, and badge work or crafts.

Other annual events we enjoyed were the Whatcom Co. GEMS' roller skating party January 18, Baked Potato Dinner and Bunko Night February 5, GEMS' Sunday April 17 and the Family Celebration May 16 - our closing ceremony, including skits for the families illustrating the theme lessons we learned throughout the year and recognition of the girls for the badges they earned. The girls selected the Esther school for their service project. The coin jars have been collecting loose change and so far over \$400 has been collected. If you still have a jar, please turn it in this month so we can get the check to the Esther school in time for the new school year. This school provides cloths, food and a Christian education for orphans and underprivileged children, built and funded by the GEMS clubs of North America. For more information, check the web site: <https://www.facebook.com/theestherschool> or <http://gemsgc.org>.

The club has an annual commitment to pay a \$3 membership due per girl and to collect an annual offering for the GEMS service center. Both the dues and offering benefit our local club by reducing the cost of the annual regional training for counselors of the clubs in our area. Additionally, the money is used to publish the SHINE magazine for grades 4-8 and SPARKLE for grades 1-3. Samples of the magazine are on the foyer counter. Two other major events have been fundraisers: Butter Braid Pastries raised \$534 and the Annual Baked Potato Dinner and Bunko Night raised \$737. Thanks to all who support the GEMS

ministry with prayers, participation in GEMS events, and financial support.

This summer, Darlys will be attending the Annual Leadership Conference in Bozeman, MT July 21-24. [Don will tag along since this is the location of their first pastorate - 1968-73]. Next year's theme is "Love Overflows": 1Thessalonians 3:12 "May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you." In August, Don and Darlys will be transporting Mairi Bravener and her friend Alexis Oostra to the GEMS Get Connected Camp (for grades 6-8 August 14-19) located west of Toronto, Canada. They fly into Chicago (8-12-16) and drive the 8.5 hours the rest of the way. While the girls are at camp, Don and Darlys will visit their grandkids in Ohio. God has gone before us, blessing us abundantly in so many ways. Keep your eyes open to see His work in your life and tell your story because it's really His story.



## Deacon's Digest

By Terry Vander Woude

After expenses were covered for the Mission Trip to the Okanagan area, we have a "seed" balance of \$200 for the next mission trip.

Did you know our church provides gas vouchers for those in need? For several years now, the deacons have set aside money in the benevolence fund to assist those referred to our church by Love, INC. by giving out a gas voucher. Love, INC. confirms the person has car insurance and has a valid reason for the gas voucher and then will send them to the church office to pick up a voucher that allows them to purchase up to \$15 in gas. This has been a very good way for us to fill a need within the community.

### Giving in May 2016

<u>Date</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Year-to-</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 2,098	\$ 10,011
General Fund Offerings	\$ 15,252	\$ 91,734
Rent / Utilities Income	<u>4,815</u>	<u>15,779</u>
Total Undesignated Income	20,067	107,513
General Fund Expenses	<u>(16,932)</u>	<u>(101,815)</u>
Income Over(Under) Expenses	\$ <u>3,135</u>	\$ <u>5,698</u>
Total 2016 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 201,659
Year-to-Date Budget for 6 months		\$ 100,830
Total Undesignated Income		<u>107,513</u>
Income Over (Under) Budget		\$ <u>6,683</u>

#### Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 22,500

## Lessons from a Hospital Bed

By Pastor Scott

How will you use the precious moments God gives you during your next hospital stay? Will you complain? Will you wonder about God's goodness? Will you hang on by sheer force of will? Or will you take the opportunity now to prepare so that God is glorified, your soul is fed and Christ is proclaimed?

In his short booklet by the same name as this article, John Piper presents a number of lessons he learned while undergoing a procedure in the hospital for a few days. The booklet is broken into 2 section. Piper reminds us of God's character in the first section and he gives us some insightful lessons in the second. In every lesson, Piper admits his own failings, the difficulties of keeping Christ in the midst of pain, and the challenge of focusing on the goal for which we strive – Christ-likeness.

As usual, his advice is poignant and helpful, with the greatest piece of advice being this one: Prepare yourself now before you are hospitalized so that you can undergo the challenge with grace.

The booklet is only \$7, but for all of us who love a good deal there is a free pdf version available at <http://document.desiringgod.org/lessons-from-a-hospital-bed-en.pdf?1455817291>.

## Volunteer opportunities at Love In The Name of Christ (Love INC)

Do you enjoy helping others in your community? Do you have a few hours to spare one morning a week? Even if you've never volunteered before, we could use your help. Love INC is looking for a few people to help us with our ministry outreach in Whatcom County. We have a wonderful group of volunteers but could always use a few more!

Clearing House Phone volunteers: 4 hours (9 am to 1 PM) a week, on Tuesday or Thursday mornings. Take calls from clients and fill in intake forms. No experience necessary, training provided.

Furnished With Love Ministry: Help our crew of volunteers, pick up donations and deliver gently used furniture to our clients in Whatcom County. We have a great bunch of retired guys but could use a few more volunteers so that each crew only has to volunteer one or two days a month.

Love INC is looking for Christian Volunteers to serve this Fall as a Budget Coach or Coach Assistant with the finance ministry of Love Inc. This is a great opportunity to serve and love someone in need!

Help someone through steps to take control of their finances and find hope and peace in Christ on the way. This program meets weekly on Thursday evenings for individuals or couples with childcare provided.

This Program entails:

- 12 weeks of one-on-one coaching
- Prioritizing & Scheduling debt payoff
- Setting up and keeping a budget
- Help with financial decisions and fears
- Negotiation with Creditors
- Encouragement, support & Prayer
- Group presentations offered periodically on various topics related to money and budgeting.

Location: Bellingham Covenant Church  
Contact [shannon@whatcomloveinc.org](mailto:shannon@whatcomloveinc.org) or call office line 671-6201 and ask for Cindy.

## Preaching Series:

- 7/3 The Grain Offering: Lev. 2
- 7/10 Fellowship Offering: Lev. 3
- 7/17 Guest Pastor Joe Strong
- 7/24 Sin Offering and Christ: Lev. 4
- 7/31 The Guilt Offering: Lev. 5

## Greeters Schedule

Outside Doors

- 7/3 Jay and Avis Kaemingk
- 7/10 Del and Pat Bosman
- 7/17 Lou and Ev Kooistra
- 7/24 Don and Tena Vanderpol
- 7/31 Jerry and Faye Hop

## Nursery Schedule

NONE

## Coffee/Snack Schedule

- 7/3 Faye Hop and Lisa DeSalvo
- 7/10 Denise Doezema and Lorraine Brouwer
- 7/17 Gloria Groothuis and Avis Kaemingk
- 7/24 Connie Knutson and Melissa Koning
- 7/31 Evelyn Kooistra and Ali Laninga

## Serving Assistants

- 7/3 None
- 7/10 Caleb, Amber, Mattea, Maggie
- 7/17 4 children attending the service
- 7/24 Chantel, Mairi, Zeke, Michal
- 7/31 Grace, Faith, Evan, Caleb

## Offering Schedule

- 7/3 General Fund
- 7/10 General Fund
- 7/17 Outreach Fund
- 7/24 General Fund
- 7/31 Benevolence Fund

## Ushering Schedule

- 7/3 Don Knutson and Helen Bowman
- 7/10 Dale and Deloris Perry
- 7/17 Len Vander Woude and Bud Brouwer
- 7/24 Lou Kooistra and Joe Pruitt
- 7/31 Don Knutson and Len Vander Woude

## Congregational Birthdays For July

- 03 Solomon McAlister Jr.
- 05 Marlene Butenschoen
- 05 Darrell Renne
- 08 Mike Cunningham
- 09 Ken Wick
- 12 Jay Kaemingk
- 15 Donna VanBeek
- 15 Karen Funk
- 15 Michal Ruitter
- 16 Evan Boer
- 17 Chuck Dean
- 19 Tena Vanderpol
- 24 Arlene Veenstra
- 27 Arbadella McAlister



## Prayer Room

- 7/3 Ali Laninga
- 7/10 Lanny Speyer
- 7/17 Lorraine Brouwer
- 7/24 Del Bosman
- 7/31 Lou Kooistra

# July 2016

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**Sun**      **Mon**      **Tue**      **Wed**      **Thu**      **Fri**      **Sat**

					1	2
3 9:30 Worship Service	4	5	6 7pm Elders and Deacons Meet	7	8	9
10 9:30 Worship Service	11	12	13 7pm Council Meets	14	15	16
17 9:30 Worship Service	18	19	20	21 Set up for garage sale	22 Garage Sale in Sanctuary	23 Garage Sale in Sanctuary
24 9:30 Worship Service	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 9:30 Worship Service  11:00 Hotdog Barbecue and potluck						



*Fast Track  
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**Tena Crosby**, President of Fast Track Communication, is a gifted speaker and workshop facilitator. Her skills as a trainer have been utilized by businesses in both the public and private sectors to enhance communication between employees, increase time management, decrease conflict and strengthen motivation and productivity. She has also facilitated retreats on such topics as strategic planning, problem solving, team building and program development. With over 20 years of employer-based training experience, Tena can design specific, customized courses to meet your organization's needs. She also has a collection of standardized workshops to benefit your staff.

## Communication Styles and Skills

Participants in this workshop leave with a better understanding of who they are and the talents they possess to help to improve their communication environments. Tena has developed a communication style assessment called "Differing Rules." This assessment helps participants determine their primary and developing "Communication Muscles." In addition, the assessment helps point participants toward the fact that individuals judge "effective communication" by different sets of "rules." The communication class will help participants learn the different "rules" so they can tailor their communication appropriately. Each participant will receive specific, pointed advice and critique on the aspects of their communication pattern that are effective and those that are not. Participants have been amazed at the insight they have gained during class and the immediate application of the concepts and skills they have learned. In addition, participants continually comment at the long lasting effects of the valuable information they have gained.

*"Serious eye-opener. Should be required training for everyone."*

*"This is by far the most valuable training I have been to."*

*"Thank you! I have been grappling with what I am doing that so offended certain staff and you clarified succinctly what, why, where, and how."*

# Congregational Vitality (CV) History Workshop Report

## June, 2016

Our May 15 Potluck and Vitality History Workshop was a real success! Nearly 80 of our church family attended the potluck and nearly 60 people, age 13+ stayed to participate in the workshop while childcare was provided for the children. **Once again, a heart-felt thanks from the Vitality Team and the Elders to the Hospitality Team for hosting the potluck and to all the attendees for continuing to show this high level of commitment to the Congregational Vitality journey that we, as a congregation, voted to follow.**

One of the 10 markers of a healthy, missional church is “Compelling Christian Community” which our CV brochure describes as follows: “We understand that our love for one another is a powerful testimony to the deity of Jesus (Acts 2:42-47; John 17:20-23).”

The initial CV workshop, Veritas held Jan. 15/16, taught that “Vitality is the responsibility of each church regardless of its current state of health. Churches need to invest in their own vitality. Vitality is not dependent on age, size, location, style or **past performance**, but upon healthy habits. The church is in need of constant renewal.” (Quote from p. 34 of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vitality workshop booklet, “Veritas”)

In addition we learned the importance of unity if we are to achieve our goals. Two of the quotes we used to open the Vitality History Workshop were these:

“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity. It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.” (Psalm 133)

“Something I’ve picked up from church is that unity makes the impossible possible and division makes the possible impossible.” (Quote by Reinhold “Reince” Priebus, Chairman of the Republican National Committee: p. 16, TIME magazine, May 16, 2016)

Following this introduction, the work began as facilitators at each of the six decade tables opened the discussion. Each group was asked to recollect positive memories and difficult memories from their decade. Finally, they were asked to identify which of the following ten healthy, missional markers were evident in their decade: 1. Centrality of the Word of God 2. Life Transforming Walk with Jesus 3. Intentional Evangelism 4. Transforming Communities through Compassion, Mercy & Justice 5. Global Perspective & Engagement 6. Compelling Christian Community 7. Heartfelt Worship 8. Sacrificial & Generous Living & Giving 9. Culture of Godly Leadership 10. Fruitful Organizational Structures

Those who volunteered to be recorders, wrote down the comments that were made at their table. At a given time, each table gave a summary of the comments that had been reported at their table to all present. Additional time was given so that anyone from any decade could add comments as well. What follows now is a summary of what was reported by each decade.

### **1959 – 1969: Struggles and triumphs**

#### Positive Memories included:

- 1959 - planting a mission chapel of the Christian Reformed Church in Bellingham
- April 7, 1961 church organization service held establishing Bellingham CRC + purchase of property
- 1963 sanctuary was erected (now Light of the World Prayer Center)
- 1968 parsonage was added
- 1969 Campus ministry begun at Western Washington State College (now WWU)

Members of this decade table remembered this as a period of strong unity of purpose and direction with active involvement in the life of the church by most of its members. This was when the church was planted and everyone was needed! Outreach included offering Vacation Bible School to the neighborhood followed by visits with the parents of those attending. A vibrant women’s ministry, Harmony Workers, was founded to encourage one another in the Christian faith and also assisted the Deacons (all male in those years) in ministering to women. Cottage Groups met in homes monthly to promote fellowship and integrate newcomers.

Difficult Memories – Few in number, but remembered differences between the Bellingham Consistory and Church Visitors (official classical representatives) over Boy Scouts versus Cadets (a new boys program created by and promoted by the denomination) and promotion of Christian Education. Bellingham Consistory indicated they supported both, but left it up to individual members to make their own choices in these areas.

Decade members agreed that most of the 10 healthy, missional markers were in evidence at this time.

### **1970 – 1979: Stability and growth**

#### Positive Memories included:

- Continuation of Vacation Bible Schools, Campus Ministry, Harmony Workers and Cottage Groups
  - Coffee Break Ministry – A women’s Bible Study with an active community outreach element – This ultimately replaced the Harmony Workers program by the end of the decade
  - Church Van Ministry and entry ramps – Allowing disabled members to attend our services
  - Strong Cadet and Calvinette (now GEMS) programs with emphasis on outreach
  - Some families were active in supporting a Vietnamese refugee family displaced by war
- 1977 – the current Education/Administration building was added due to growth

Members of this decade remembered a warm enfolding church, especially for young families with children. Pastor Bob Koornneef introduced “Chuckie, the church mouse” during his message for children. Chuckie was very popular with children of all ages. Church family campouts (several at Silver Lake) were hugely popular and well attended which strengthened the bond of fellowship.

Difficult Memories – Few in number, but remembered the death of Laurie Kok after a long illness and Peggy Paauw’s contracting ALS as difficult days. It was also remarked that the traditional home visits were old fashioned and “harsh” at times rather than encouraging and uplifting.

Decade members remembered the following missional markers as being evident: Centrality of the Word of God; Intentional Evangelism; Global Perspective & Engagement and Compelling Christian Community

### **1980 – 1989: Growth forces major decisions**

#### Positive Memories included:

- Pastor Bob and Chuckie the church mouse continued to be a hit
- Continuation of VBS, church campouts/retreats, Coffee Break ministry and Van pickup ministry
- First youth pastor was hired as a significant teen group was in attendance – As the focus shifted to youth ministry, the Campus ministry was phased out
- Music ministry was growing with a choir/choir director and many talented musicians
- Men of the church were involved in church league sports and we had a bowling team
- Cadets and Calvinettes continued to be popular programs and were effective in outreach
- Monthly soup and sandwich Sundays allowed members to mingle and bond in member homes
- Sponsoring of 3 Laotian refugee families + extended family members

Purchase of homes west of the church for future expansion and a new sanctuary

Members of this decade remembered a church filled with young families and lots of children. Care Groups replaced the Cottage Groups as a key to building fellowship. Each person was assigned to a group whether they attended or not. Elders/Deacon Teams led the groups.

Difficult Memories – The Elders made a decision to ask Pastor Bob to seek another call after serving us for 13 years. This did not sit well with many members and created tension in the church. Due to growth, we had also gone to two morning services which weakened the bond between members as some chose the early service and others the late. Sunday School was offered between. It was also observed that our hard folding chairs were not a fond memory.

Decade members remembered the following missional markers as being evident: Centrality of the Word of God; Intentional Evangelism; Transforming Communities through Compassion, Mercy & Justice; Compelling Christian Community; Heartfelt Worship and Sacrificial & Generous Living & Giving

## **1990 – 1999: Growth, then decline**

### Positive Memories included:

- Two pastors hired, 1 for Congregational Life (Pastor Jim Petersen) and 1 for Evangelism/Outreach (Pastor David Kotzebue)
- Seen as a visitor friendly church and many new worshippers were drawn in – baptisms held at Wisser Lake and Lake Whatcom – Many special events were held with great food offered
- Continuation of VBS, church campouts/retreats, Coffee Break ministry
- Cadets/Calvinettes continued to thrive as did the youth group ministry
- House Church replaced Care Groups - Rather than being led by Elder/Deacon teams, each group led by 4 leaders: Facilitator – Worship Leader – Hospitality Leader – Evangelist/Outreach Leader - Also took the place of 1 Sunday evening service a month – Helped to bond members
- Plans for a new sanctuary gained momentum
- Evergreen Christian School rented space on our campus

At the end of the decade, a new pastor, Gordon Terpstra, was hired.

Members of this decade remembered the vibrant worship times led by many gifted musicians. Music ministry was a high-light and was an evangelism tool as the choir offered public performances of The Young Messiah and The David Project, an original musical created by our staff/members. Children in Worship was introduced and a quality ministry for children through young adults (including post-high school) was offered. The Worship Team matured during this period and conducted the service, other than bringing the message.

Difficult Memories – The pastor of Outreach was released for harassment. This led to an unraveling of the effective outreach program. Shortly thereafter, the second pastor accepted another call which led to further decline. During a two year vacancy, the Worship Team and its paid leader took over much of the operation of the church. Teams were sent to well-known mega-churches to learn how they attracted and kept “seekers.” The worship team strove to introduce these “seeker friendly” concepts, including abandoning use of the organ, but rather than bringing unity, a number of members felt alienated by this process and several left. A divide grew within the body. This was also the time that key Coffee Break leaders left and the program ended.

Decade members remembered the following missional markers as being evident: Centrality of the Word of God; Life Transforming Walk with Jesus; Compelling Christian Community; Heartfelt Worship and Fruitful Organizational Structures

## **2000 – 2009: Worship wars and continued decline**

### Positive Memories included:

- A Neighborhood Block Party was held to introduce our new name, Hope in Christ Church
- Three church-wide studies held: Purpose Driven Church/Purpose Driven Life and 40 days of Prayer
- The new sanctuary was completed
- The Friendship Ministry for adults with disabilities was begun
- A new program, Young Adults Night Out, promoted inter-generational relations
- Church-wide campouts at Ferndale Campground were a high-light during this period
- Members of this decade remembered the warm welcome new families received when visiting the church.

That resulted in several becoming members. The church emphasis changed from programs to families. The church-wide studies bonded members as everyone studied the same materials and messages were coordinated with the readings. Church work-parties were promoted and many participated, especially during the construction of the new sanctuary! Many hours of donated labor helped keep the cost under control.

Difficult Memories: Pastor Gord was a more traditional pastor and he soon clashed with the leader of the worship team. Ultimately this led the Elders to ask the worship leader to resign. This led to several families leaving the church, just at the time we were ready to transition to the new sanctuary. This was very difficult for all involved. The impact was long-lasting as some long existing programs such as Cadets, GEMS, VBS and House Church lacked the necessary leaders and so were discontinued. That again led to more families leaving the church as they felt their needs were not being met while some fast growing churches in the area offered attractive alternatives. Finally, near the end of a difficult decade, Pastor Gord, who was a Chaplain in the army reserve, was called to active duty in Iraq. He left mid 2007 and we hired a new pastor, J. Scott Roberts, in December of that year.

Decade members remembered the following missional markers as being evident: Centrality of the Word of God; Life Transforming Walk with Jesus; Transforming Communities through Compassion, Mercy & Justice; Compelling Christian Community and Heartfelt Worship

## 2010 – Present: Striving to grow

### Positive Memories included:

- Two key long-range initiatives were launched:
  - ◊Emphasis on corporate prayer, including study groups and two workshops
  - ◊Spiritual gifts weekend workshop with members encouraging one another
- A volunteer Janitorial Team was formed with the express purpose of applying the money saved from paying for this service to pay off the Denominational based building loan (new sanctuary) – this goal was attained in 2015
- Mission trip to Telkwa, B.C. – The congregation raised 20K + and a large group traveled 700 north to build a much needed workshop for the Streetcorners Ministry of Mike and GERALYN CUNNINGHAM
- GEMS ministry was revived and is a vibrant ministry to girls of our congregation and the community
- Adoptions and sponsorship of needy children in orphanages around the world are an active part of our ministry – a world map prominently displayed in the sanctuary is a visual representation of this vital ministry
- Mission trip to Ethiopia – Again the congregation raised nearly 20K to fund the building of a much needed water well and help send 4 members from the congregation to be first hand representative to show of love and support, especially for the communities where 3 children of our congregation were born
- Trips to Romania – Several members made trips to Kids Town orphanages in Romania where a number of children sponsored by members of our congregation live to bring supplies to help with completing building projects
- A team of volunteers supports the local LOVE INC ministry through furniture delivery which serves people in need in our community – the Deacons organization
- A youth music team was organized and leads the congregation in worship on a regularly schedule basis.
- Welcome Light of the World Prayer Center to our campus and we are engaged with them monthly via 24hr. “burn” teams that cover Whatcom County with prayer
- A volunteer group adds to our worship time/experience with the waving of flags to music
- Partnership of adults matched with children in the congregation for prayer
- A parish nurse program was started and is much appreciated

The congregational renewal program, Vitality, was proposed by the Elders and adopted by the congregation. Two workshops have been offered and have been well attended.

As can be seen by the list above, members of this decade enjoy the many initiatives undertaken in this decade and were/are active participants in them! The failed initiative to partner with Grace Community Church, which would have provided more kids and kids programs and additional inter-generational opportunities, was mentioned. Still the fact we were will as a congregation to step outside the box to explore this was seen as a positive. Also mentioned was the need to offer Children In Worship year-round as they are too young to understand the messages and yet still need discipling. A Cadets program is also needed for the young boys of the church. Finally, would like to see more trust in leadership (Elders/Deacons/Pastor).

Difficult Memories: More than 20 individuals have left the church in this period. Felt we did not have a good exit strategy in place to determine the cause. Feel we need to identify marginal people and reach out to them – provide a caring safety net. The letter signed by 29 members to the Elders expressing concerns about the direction of the ministry was talked about. The contents and concerns were later shared with the entire congregation and the Elders committed to addressing the concerns.

Decade members remembered the following missional markers as being evident: Centrality of the Word of God; Transforming Communities through Compassion, Mercy & Justice; Compelling Christian Community; Heartfelt Worship; Sacrificial & Generous Living & Giving and a Culture of Godly Leadership

